

THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, February 21, 2017

**MOCA GRAND AVENUE  
SPRING 2017 EXHIBITION SCHEDULE**

***KERRY JAMES MARSHALL: MASTRY***

***PATRICK STAFF: WEED KILLER***

**March 12–July 3, 2017  
MOCA Grand Avenue**



***KERRY JAMES MARSHALL: MASTRY***

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**MOCA Grand Avenue**

**Curator: Helen Molesworth**

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA), is pleased to present a 35-year retrospective of work by painter Kerry James Marshall. From his seminal *Portrait of the Artist as a Shadow of His Former Self* (1980) to his most recent explorations of African American history, Marshall's first major retrospective in the United States contains nearly 80 paintings—all of which depict Black subjects, presented with utter equality and humanity, going about their daily business. The exhibition is co-organized by MOCA, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art under the leadership of MOCA Chief Curator Helen Molesworth.

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The exhibition unfolds in chronological order, charting our nation's evolving ideas and attitudes towards race and its role in the history of the United States. Beginning with Marshall's exploration of Ralph Ellison's classic novel *Invisible Man*, which explores the lack of African Americans in the culture at large, the exhibition continues on to a suite of paintings dedicated to the exploration of Black love and portraits of members of the Cato's Rebellion; it culminates in paintings made during the Obama presidency, including a stunning set of portraits of Black artists at work in their studios.

A deeply accomplished painter of ravishing works, Marshall has a threefold strategy. First, he decided as a young artist to paint only Black subjects, and he continues to do so in an unapologetic ebony black that occupies the paintings with a sense of authority and belonging. Second, Marshall works to make a wide variety of images featuring Black subjects—exquisite portraits, lush landscapes, everyday domestic interiors, and depictions of historical events—infiltrating all of the major categories of Western painting in which they have historically been absent. Third, Marshall concentrates on painterly mastery as a fundamental strategy: by mastering the art of representational and figurative painting during a period when it wasn't in vogue, Marshall is able to produce a body of work that bestows beauty and dignity where it has long been denied.

An accompanying catalogue chronicles Marshall's career and includes sumptuous color plates of all of the works in the exhibition. The most comprehensive book on the artist to date, it collects all of Marshall's published writings for the first time and presents them alongside contributions by Molesworth, MOCA Assistant Curator Lanka Tattersall, and others.

Kerry James Marshall (b. 1955, Birmingham, Alabama) grew up in Watts, Los Angeles, and is a 1978 graduate of the Otis College of Art and Design. After being an artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem in 1986, he moved to Chicago, where he continues to live and work today. Marshall is the recipient of several awards, grants, and fellowships including the MacArthur genius grant in 1997 and an honorary doctorate from Otis College of Art and Design in 1999. In 2013 he was named to President Obama's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. Marshall has exhibited widely, both nationally and internationally. *Kerry James Marshall: In the Tower* was most recently on view at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (2013). Other recent solo exhibitions include *Kerry James Marshall: Painting and Other Stuff*, organized by the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen, Antwerp, Belgium, traveling to the Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Denmark; the Antoni Tàpies Foundation, Barcelona; and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2014); and exhibitions at Secession, Vienna (2012); the Wexner Center for the Arts (2008); Camden Arts Centre (2005); MCA Chicago (2003); and the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago (1998).

Marshall has completed murals and public projects in Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia, and has work in dozens of public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Birmingham Museum of Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Art Institute of Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

*Kerry James Marshall: Mastry* is organized by The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The exhibition was co-curated by Helen Molesworth, Chief Curator, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Dieter Roelstraete, Guest Curator for the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; and Ian Alteveer, Associate Curator, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Lead support is provided by Suzanne and David Johnson.

Major support is provided by Mandy and Cliff Einstein, Fox Television Group, and Lillian P. Lovelace.

Generous support is provided by Maria Seferian, Jack Shainman Gallery, Tom and Janet Unterman, and David Zwirner Gallery.

Additional support is provided by Pasadena Art Alliance, Carolyn Powers, Blake Byrne, James W. Kenyon, Rennie Foundation, Nancy Adams-Sims and Charles Sims, Mara and Salim Akil, Janine and Lyndon Barrois, Joshua Friedman, Kwanza Jones and José Feliciano SUPERCHARGED Foundation, Dee Kerrison and Gianna Drake-Kerrison, Koplín Del Rio Gallery, Arthur Lewis and Hau Nguyen, Thao Nguyen and Andreas Krainer, and V. Joy Simmons, MD.

Exhibitions at MOCA are supported by the MOCA Fund for Exhibitions with lead annual support provided by Delta Air Lines, Shari Glazer, Hästens, and Sydney Holland, founder of the Sydney D. Holland Foundation. Generous funding is also provided by Allison and Larry Berg, and Jerri and Dr. Steven Nagelberg.

In-kind media support is provided by KCETLink, KCRW 89.9 FM, and *Los Angeles* magazine.

Image credit: Kerry James Marshall, *Untitled (Club Couple)*, 2014, acrylic on PVC panel, 59 5/8 x 59 5/8 in. (149.5 x 149.5 cm), The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, promised gift of Mandy and Cliff Einstein

## **RELATED PROGRAMS**

### **MEMBERS' OPENING: *KERRY JAMES MARSHALL: MASTRY***

Saturday, March 11

MOCA Grand Avenue

INFO 213/621-1794 or [membership@moca.org](mailto:membership@moca.org)

FREE for MOCA members; no reservations necessary

### **ARTISTS ON ARTISTS: LARI PITTMAN ON KERRY JAMES MARSHALL**

Thursday, March 23, 7pm

MOCA Grand Avenue

INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)

FREE

### **SUNDAY STUDIO**

Sunday, March 26, 1–4pm

MOCA Grand Avenue

INFO 213/621-1745 or [education@moca.org](mailto:education@moca.org)

FREE

### **KERRY JAMES MARSHALL AND HELEN MOLESWORTH IN CONVERSATION**

Thursday, March 30, 7pm

Colburn School, Zipper Hall

INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)

FREE; priority entry for MOCA members

### **READING: HARRYETTE MULLEN**

Sunday, April 9, 3pm

MOCA Grand Avenue

INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)

FREE with museum admission

### **LECTURE: HELEN MOLESWORTH**

Thursday, April 20, 7pm

MOCA Grand Avenue

INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)

FREE

### **READING: ROBIN COSTE LEWIS**

Sunday, May 7, 3pm

MOCA Grand Avenue

INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)

FREE with museum admission

### **LECTURE: GREG TATE**

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Thursday, May 18, 7pm  
MOCA Grand Avenue, Ahmanson Auditorium  
INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)  
FREE; priority entry for MOCA members

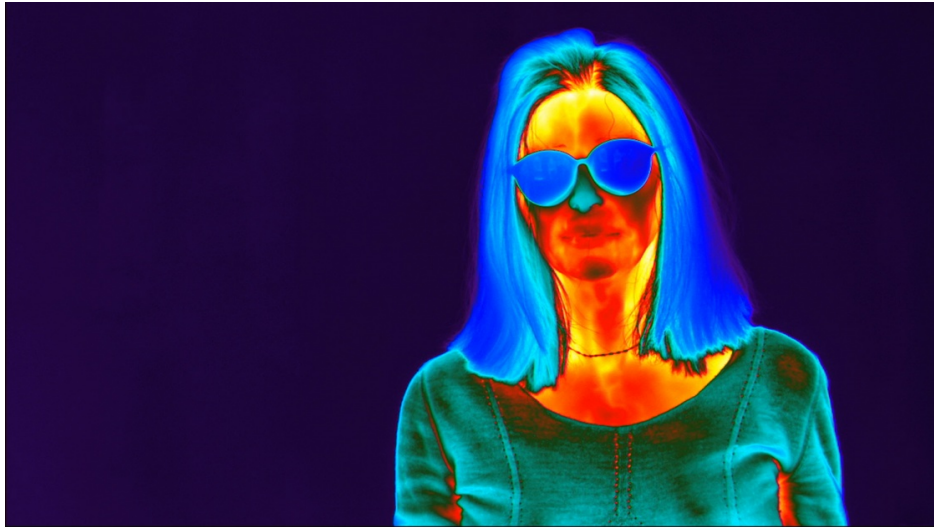
**READING: WILL ALEXANDER**

Sunday, June 4, 3pm  
MOCA Grand Avenue  
INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)  
FREE with museum admission

**ARTISTS ON ARTISTS: DEANA LAWSON**

Thursday, June 29, 7pm  
MOCA Grand Avenue  
INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)  
FREE

Please check [moca.org](http://moca.org) for updates on related programs.



***PATRICK STAFF: WEED KILLER***

**March 12–July 3, 2017**

**MOCA Grand Avenue**

**Curator: Lanka Tattersall**

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA), presents *Patrick Staff: Weed Killer*, the premiere of a newly commissioned work by UK and Los Angeles–based artist Patrick Staff. Staff’s starting point is artist and writer Catherine Lord’s memoir, *The Summer of Her Baldness* (2004), a moving and irreverent account of the author’s diagnosis, treatment, and transformation through her experience of cancer. At the heart of Staff’s installation is a video featuring a monologue, adapted from Lord’s book, in which an actress likens the devastating effects of chemotherapy drugs to “mainlining weed killer.” Presented as an immersive environment, *Weed Killer* draws into focus the fine line between poisonous and curative substances.

The work’s central monologue is intercut with otherworldly sequences of choreographed gestures (performed primarily by Staff) shot with high-definition thermal imagery and a passionately lip-synced rendition of a love song by a performer in a gay bar. The actions in these scenes position desire as an intoxicating illness in which internal states and external appearances are blurred. The thermal scenes draw attention to the ways our ostensibly uniform bodies are actually composed of various zones of heat and coolness, suggesting a visual analog for the complexity of identity. With skin temperatures registered in a radiant

spectrum of colors, the bodies look simultaneously unsettling and mesmerizing, erotic and infected. At one point in the thermal footage, Staff is accompanied by a revolving cement mixer, which stands in as a prosthetic body, in a duet between human and machine, or the organic and the constructed.

All the performers in *Weed Killer* identify as transgender. By probing both trans experiences and a narrative about cancer, Staff points to conditions that are similarly marked by the treatment, regulation, and transformation of the body through pharmacological means, from chemotherapy and antidepressant drugs to hormone therapies. *Weed Killer* suggests a complex relationship to one's own suffering and community, evoking the ways in which the impact and movement of illness extend beyond the visible.

Patrick Staff (b. 1987, Bognor Regis, UK; lives in Los Angeles and London) is an interdisciplinary artist who works with film, installation, dance, and performance to investigate dissent, labor, and the queer body. Recent solo exhibitions have taken place at Chisenhale Gallery, London, UK; Spike Island, Bristol, UK; Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia; and Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada. *Patrick Staff: Weed Killer* is the artist's first solo museum exhibition in the United States.

*Patrick Staff: Weed Killer* is organized by Lanka Tattersall, Assistant Curator, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Exhibitions at MOCA are supported by the MOCA Fund for Exhibitions with lead annual support provided by Delta Air Lines, Shari and Ed Glazer, and Sydney Holland, founder of the Sydney D. Holland Foundation. Generous funding is also provided by Allison and Larry Berg, and Jerri and Dr. Steven Nagelberg.

In-kind support is provided by FLIR Systems.

Image credit: Patrick Staff, *Weed Killer*, 2017, video still, courtesy of the artist

## **RELATED PROGRAMS**

### **MEMBERS' OPENING: PATRICK STAFF: WEED KILLER**

Saturday, March 11

MOCA Grand Avenue

INFO 213/621-1794 or [membership@moca.org](mailto:membership@moca.org)

FREE for MOCA members; no reservations necessary

### **CATHERINE LORD, PATRICK STAFF, AND LANKA TATTERSALL IN CONVERSATION**

Sunday, March 19, 3pm

MOCA Grand Avenue, Ahmanson Auditorium

INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)

FREE with museum admission; priority entry for MOCA members

### **EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGH: LANKA TATTERSALL**

Thursday, June 8, 6pm

MOCA Grand Avenue

INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)

FREE

### **LECTURE: S. LÖCHLANN JAIN**

Thursday, June 8, 7pm

MOCA Grand Avenue, Ahmanson Auditorium

INFO 213/621-1741 or [visitorservices@moca.org](mailto:visitorservices@moca.org)

FREE; priority entry for MOCA members

Please check [moca.org](http://moca.org) for updates on related programs.

## THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, LOS ANGELES (MOCA)

**About MOCA:** Founded in 1979, MOCA's vision is to be the defining museum of contemporary art. In a relatively short period of time, MOCA has achieved astonishing growth with three Los Angeles locations of architectural renown; a world-class permanent collection of more than 6,800 objects, international in scope and among the finest in the world; hallmark education programs that are widely emulated; award-winning publications that present original scholarship; groundbreaking monographic, touring, and thematic exhibitions of international repute that survey the art of our time; and cutting-edge engagement with modes of new media production. MOCA is a not-for-profit institution that relies on a variety of funding sources for its activities.

**Hours:** MOCA Grand Avenue (located at 250 South Grand Avenue in Downtown Los Angeles) is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11am to 6pm; Thursday from 11am to 8pm; Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 5pm; and closed on Tuesday. The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA (located at 152 North Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012) has the same hours as MOCA Grand Avenue during exhibitions. Please call ahead or go to [moca.org](http://moca.org) for the exhibition schedule for The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA. MOCA Pacific Design Center (located at 8687 Melrose Avenue, West Hollywood, CA 90069) is open Tuesday through Friday from 11am to 5pm; Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 6pm; and closed on Monday. The MOCA Store at MOCA Grand Avenue (located at 250 South Grand Avenue) is open Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 10:30am to 5:30pm; Thursday from 10:30am to 8:30pm; and Saturday and Sunday from 10:30am to 6:30pm.

**Museum Admission:** General admission is free for all MOCA members. General admission is also free for everyone at MOCA Grand Avenue and The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA on Thursdays from 5pm to 8pm, courtesy of Wells Fargo. General admission is always free at MOCA Pacific Design Center. General admission at MOCA Grand Avenue and The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA is \$15 for adults; \$8 for students with I.D.; \$10 for seniors (65+); and free for children under 12 and jurors with I.D.

**More Information:** For 24-hour information on current exhibitions, education programs, and special events, call 213/626-6222 or access MOCA online at [moca.org](http://moca.org).

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