

# Press Release

## Brooklyn Museum to Honor Carrie Mae Weems at 2023 Brooklyn Artists Ball, Made Possible by Dior

Taking place April 25 in the Museum's sweeping Beaux-Arts Court and featuring a special collaboration with artist Mickalene Thomas



Brooklyn Artists Ball, 2022. (Photo: Matthew Carasella)

# Brooklyn Museum

On Tuesday, April 25, 2023, the Brooklyn Museum will host its twelfth annual Brooklyn Artists Ball, presented by Dior. This year, the Artists Ball honors Carrie Mae Weems for her innumerable contributions as both a trailblazing artist and a community-focused activist. The Artists Ball is the Museum's largest fundraiser, generating pivotal revenue in support of programming that spans special exhibitions and reimagined collection installations as well as educational programs for visitors of all ages.

"We are overjoyed to be honoring Carrie Mae Weems, an artist who has made a profound impact on our contemporary culture," says Anne Pasternak, Shelby White and Leon Levy Director, Brooklyn Museum. "Over the years, the Museum has collaborated with Weems in numerous ways—from mounting exhibitions to supporting her important COVID-19 relief efforts—and we're thrilled to highlight her remarkable achievements at this year's Artists Ball."

Throughout her artistic career of more than forty years, in works of photography, text, fabric, audio, video, installation art, and more, Weems has redefined the canon by documenting the Black experience; exploring sexism, class, and political systems; and challenging systemic violence against Black people. The Museum is proud to have played a small role in Weems's expansive practice by including her works in such important exhibitions as *Burning Down the House: Building a Feminist Art Collection* (2008) and *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–85* (2017). Weems's

work will also be on view in the Museum's soon-to-open exhibition *A Movement in Every Direction: Legacies of the Great Migration*, which highlights the movement of millions of Black Americans from the post-Reconstruction South to other parts of the country. In addition, the Museum collaborated with Weems on COVID-19 relief efforts by taking part in *RESIST COVID TAKE 6!*, a public-art campaign the artist initiated to raise awareness among communities of color disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. The project began in her home city of Syracuse, New York, and spread to cities across the country, including Dallas, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Atlanta. Weems continues to guide and inspire the next generation by mentoring artists in her community as the first-ever artist-in-residence at Syracuse University.

This year, Dior has joined as the new lead sponsor of the Artists Ball. The fashion house has formed a strong partnership with the Museum, from the blockbuster exhibition *Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams* (2021) to the 2022 Artists Ball, which honored Maria Grazia Chiuri, Dior's Creative Director of women's haute couture, ready-to-wear, and accessories collections.

Mickalene Thomas, artist and Brooklyn Museum Trustee, is collaborating with Dior and the Museum to reimagine the Beaux-Arts Court for the 2023 event, drawing on the scenography she recently created for the backdrop of Dior's latest haute couture show. Thomas has worked closely with Dior to select table settings and decor inspired by Weems's series *Slow Fade to Black* (2010), which highlights Black women in popular culture.

The evening will begin with a cocktail reception in the Museum's lobby at 6:30 pm, followed by an elegant seated dinner in the Beaux-Arts Court at 7:30 pm. Guests will be treated to a menu developed and catered by Great Performances. At 9 pm, Swizz Beatz will headline the Artists Ball's always-lively After Party alongside a set of to-be-announced guest performances.

Tickets for the 2023 Brooklyn Artists Ball start at \$2,500, and tables including tickets for ten guests start at \$25,000. Tickets to the After Party start at \$100, with discounts for Museum Members. For more information about the Artists Ball, please email [brooklynartistsball@brooklynmuseum.org](mailto:brooklynartistsball@brooklynmuseum.org).

### **Event Chairs**

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Marley B. Lewis  
Janet Mock  
Carla Shen

### **Honorary Chairs**

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Barbara and John Vogelstein

### **Creative Art Advisor**

Mickalene Thomas

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Alicia Keys and Kasseem “Swizz Beatz” Dean  
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Tonya Lewis Lee and Spike Lee  
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Amanda and John Waldron  
Heather and Sean Ward  
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Matt Wilson and Sarah Chen

*As of 2/23/2023*

### **About Carrie Mae Weems**

Carrie Mae Weems (born 1953) is considered one of the most influential contemporary American artists living today. Over the course of more than forty years, Weems has developed a complex body of work employing text, fabric, audio, digital imagery, installation, and video, but she is most celebrated as a photographer. Activism is central to Weems's practice, which investigates race, family relationships, cultural identity, sexism, class, political systems, and the consequences of power.

### **About Mickalene Thomas**

Mickalene Thomas (born 1971) is an internationally renowned contemporary artist. Thomas's paintings, collages, photographs, videos, and installations draw on art history and popular culture to create a contemporary vision of female beauty, sexuality, and power. Blurring the distinctions between object and subject, concrete and abstract, and real and imaginary, Thomas constructs complex portraits, landscapes, and interiors to examine how identity, gender, and sense of self are informed by the ways women (and "feminine" spaces) are represented in art and popular culture.

### **About the Brooklyn Museum**

The Brooklyn Museum contains one of the nation's most comprehensive and wide-ranging collections, enhanced by a distinguished record of exhibitions, scholarship, and service to the public. The Museum's vast holdings span five thousand years of human creativity from cultures in every corner of the globe. The Brooklyn Museum is both a leading cultural institution and a community museum dedicated to serving a broad audience. Located in the heart of Brooklyn, the Museum welcomes and celebrates the diversity of its home borough and city. Few, if any, museums in the country attract an audience as varied with respect to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, educational background, and age as the audience of the Brooklyn Museum.