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Tucson Museum of Art presents *Dress Matters: Clothing as Metaphor*

TUCSON, ARIZONA— The Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block presents *Dress Matters: Clothing as Metaphor*, the inaugural exhibition in TMA’s new James J. and Louise R. Glasser Galleries. Opening on October 21, 2017, the exhibition explores the intersection between clothing and art.



Wendy Red Star, *Four Seasons: Winter* (detail), 2006, archival pigment print on Sunset Fiber rag, edition of 15, 35.5 x 40 in. Courtesy of Wendy Red Star, Artist

Curated by Dr. Julie Sasse, TMA’s Chief Curator and Curator of Modern, Contemporary, and Latin American Art, *Dress Matters* examines clothing as symbols of power and identity, and reveals how artists use concepts and images of clothing to relay messages about gender, age, ethnicity, history, and the world in general.

“Conceived out of necessity and spurred by the imagination, garments continually change with the conventions of the time,” Sasse said. “What I find exciting is the variety of ways that contemporary artists acknowledge the symbolic power of dress to express themselves and comment on society.”

Over time, clothing has evolved from purely functional to a powerful signifier of who we are as individuals and groups. As clothing became a symbolic marker of power, influence, and identity, it has sparked debates about the virtues of simplicity, unadorned beauty, usefulness, and conformity versus vanity and avarice. *Dress Matters: Clothing as Metaphor* explores such

tensions, and highlights a variety of diverse artists who examine how clothing delivers compelling messages about who we are as human beings.

At its core, clothing communicates many things about ourselves: where we are from, what we do for a living, our economic status, the community and people with whom we associate, and how we perceive ourselves, among others. It repels us, attracts us, inspires confidence in ourselves, and elicits a sense of belonging. Garments are subject to widespread change, yet they are also among the most revered objects of our lives, governed by deeply entrenched traditions. What we wear during different decades of our lives serves to mark time. Clothing tells stories. It is our constant companion, there to shield us, to herald us, and to define us. With all its real and symbolic power, clearly, dress matters.

More than 50 artists are represented in the exhibition, including Sama Alshaibi, Laura Schiff Bean, Joseph Beuys, Willie Birch, Christian Boltanski, Robert Bracketti, Bob Carey, Nick Cave, John Coffey, Maureen Connor, John Singleton Copley, Béatrice Coron, Kate Daudy, Claudio Dicochea, Jim Dine, Simon Donovan, Bailey Doogan, Jay Dusard, Johann George Edlinger, Angela Ellsworth, Fausto Fernandez, Julia Fullerton-Batten, Adam Fuss, Guna Culture, Panama, Valerie Hammond, George E. Huffman, Illman Brothers, Graciela Iturbide, Susan Jamison, Benjamin M. Johnson, Walt Kuhn, Karen LaMonte, Robert Longo, Annie Lopez, Robert Mapplethorpe, Robyn Stoutenburg McDaniels, Richard Mosse, Mark Newport, Catherine Opie, Ruth Orkin, Ebony G. Patterson, Barbara Penn, Wendy Red Star, Miriam Schapiro, Raghubir Singh, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Raphael Soyer, Agata Stoinska, and Andy Warhol.

The exhibition remains on view through February 18, 2018, and will include educational events and workshops with artists including Palestinian/Iraqi artist, Sama Alshaibi, and French-born, New York City-based paper artist, Béatrice Coron.

The exhibition is accompanied by a full-color catalogue, produced for the exhibition and published by the museum, featuring an essay by Sasse and foreword by Jeremy Mikolajczak, CEO of the Tucson Museum of Art.

Lead support for *Dress Matters: Clothing as Metaphor* is provided by the Tucson Museum of Art Contemporary Art Society and Kautz Family Foundation. Additional support provided by Betsy and Frank Babb.

Exhibitions at the Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block are supported in part by the Connie Hillman Family Foundation, James J. and Louise R. Glasser, Anne Y. Snodgrass, BMO Private Bank, and the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

For additional information, please visit www.tucsonmuseumofart.org

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About the Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block

The Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block's mission is *Connecting Art to Life*. The Museum was founded in 1924 in the El Presidio Historic District of downtown Tucson. It is Southern Arizona's premier presenter of fine art and art education programs.

The Museum features permanent and traveling exhibitions of Modern, Contemporary, Native American, American West, Latin American, and Asian art. The 74,000-square-foot Museum offers guided tours, education programs, and studio art classes in a contemporary building. The Museum's Historic Block of 19th and 20th C. adobe and Mission Revival-style buildings, encompassing an entire four-acre city block, includes the John K. Goodman Pavilion of Western Art, the highly acclaimed Museum restaurant Café a la C'Art, and additional exhibition and studio spaces. For more information, please visit www.TucsonMuseumofArt.org or call (520) 624-2333. Follow the latest events on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. TMA is a private 501(c)(3) charitable arts and education organization.

Museum Directions

The museum is located at 140 N. Main Avenue in historic downtown Tucson at the crossroads of West Alameda Street and North Main Avenue. Parking is free in the museum's lot on West Washington Street.

Museum Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday: 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Free First Thursday @ TMA: 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Free admission for all, make, drink, and explore.

Second SundAZe: Family Day @ TMA, Sponsored by The Stonewall Foundation: 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Free admission for Arizona and Sonora, Mexico residents every second Sunday of the month. Art-making activities and music. Fun for all ages.

Closed Mondays.

Admission

Adults, \$12; Senior (65+), \$10; Student (with college ID), \$7; Youth (13-17), \$7; Child (12 and under), free; Veteran and active military with ID, free; Museum Member, Free