The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery Inaugural Schedule of Exhibitions
The Lenfest Center for the Arts

Inaugural season will survey the work of contemporary “Uptown” artists, consider Frank Lloyd Wright’s visionary housing design in dialogue with Harlem’s housing of the period, and explore the changing representation of black female models in modern French and American art

An important resource for exhibitions and scholarship on the Columbia University campus since 1986, the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery will dramatically increase its public profile in New York City in spring 2017 when it moves into Columbia’s new Lenfest Center for the Arts. Designed by Renzo Piano Building Workshop as part of the University’s ambitious Manhattanville Campus project in development just north of 125th Street, the Lenfest Center is the first multidisciplinary public arts complex for Columbia’s School of the Arts and the Wallach Art Gallery, providing exceptional facilities for film screenings; performances of all kinds; readings, lectures and symposia; and visual arts exhibitions.

Deborah Cullen, director and chief curator of the Wallach Art Gallery, recently announced the inaugural schedule of exhibitions. Following the presentation of the annual MFA Thesis Exhibition, the Wallach will highlight the creativity of the neighborhood and survey contemporary work by artists active in upper Manhattan; examine residential work by Frank Lloyd Wright in relationship to simultaneous modern housing design in Harlem; and explore the changing representations of black women in modern art from 19th-century Paris to the Harlem Renaissance and successive generations.
Deborah Cullen said: “I joined Columbia in 2012 after more than 15 years at El Museo del Barrio because I wanted to be a part of this incredible new chapter in the Wallach’s history. Thanks to Renzo Piano’s wonderfully sensitive, flexible and open design for the Lenfest Center for the Arts, the Wallach can now operate at the intersection of contemporary art, art historical scholarship and community engagement, becoming an increasingly important part of New York City’s cultural life. Our dynamic first year’s schedule highlights our work with living artists on our campus and in our communities, with Columbia’s rich collections and with the latest scholarship generated by Art History and other campus scholars.”

Lee C. Bollinger, president of Columbia University, said: “Our Manhattanville campus is designed to draw the University community together in new ways through a range of multidisciplinary facilities while also connecting Columbia with the uptown community as never before. The twin goals are to advance our work as a great research university and to make good on the premise that our work has to effect positive change and engage us with our city. That’s why we decided that the first two buildings to open on the Manhattanville campus would be dedicated to the process of thought and the act of creation: multifaceted subjects that address everyone in the University and have an undeniable impact on our neighbors. We are proud to inaugurate this campus with the Jerome L. Greene Science Center, housing the neuroscience researchers of the Mortimer B. Zuckerman Mind Brain Behavior Institute, and the Lenfest Center for the Arts, including the new home of the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery.”

Following the MFA Thesis Exhibition (which had previously been presented at the Fisher Landau Center for Art in Long Island City), the Wallach Art Gallery will present Uptown, a summer survey of contemporary artists who live and work north of 99th Street, curated by Deborah Cullen. “There are so many artists to showcase, Uptown will become an ongoing project, including mature artists, midcareer practitioners and newer names from Harlem, El Barrio and Washington Heights, and all areas in between,” she said. Several additional uptown venues will be presenting collaborative, complementary exhibitions and programming, and Uptown will kick off an ongoing, lively slate of artist-centric programming to serve artists and provide access to their processes.

In fall 2017, to celebrate the joint acquisition of Frank Lloyd Wright’s archives by The Museum of Modern Art and Columbia University’s Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, the Wallach Art Gallery is partnering with Columbia’s Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture to present Living in America: Frank Lloyd Wright, Harlem and Modern Housing. This exhibition considers Wright’s well-known designs for Broadacre City and other largely suburban housing projects in dialogue with housing projects in Harlem, designed simultaneously. The Wallach Art Gallery’s exhibition, on view from September 9 through December 17, 2017, will overlap and be presented in correlation with MoMA’s summer 2017 exhibition Frank Lloyd Wright at 150: Unpacking the Archive, which will also draw from the archive.

In 2018, the Wallach Art Gallery will present Posing Modernity: The Black Model from Manet to Matisse and Beyond. The first exhibition to examine the evolving depiction of the black female model, Posing Modernity will feature major works by artists including Manet, Bazille, Matisse and Bearden, on loan from institutions across the United States and Europe. The exhibition is curated by the Wallach’s first Postdoctoral Research Scholar, Denise Murrell, who wrote her 2013
dissertation on this topic for Columbia’s department of art history and archaeology, and whose research is generously supported by the Ford Foundation.

About the Wallach Art Gallery

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery advances Columbia University’s historical, critical and creative engagement with the visual arts. Serving as both a laboratory and a forum, The Wallach Art Gallery offers opportunities for curatorial practice and discourse, while bridging the diverse approaches to the arts at the University with a welcome broader public. The Wallach presents projects organized by graduate students and faculty in Art History and Archaeology or by other Columbia scholars; offering new scholarship on University special collections; or focusing on the contemporary artists of our campus and communities. Established in 1986, the Wallach is the University’s premier visual arts space, serving as a platform for critically acclaimed exhibitions, a dynamic range of programming and publications that contribute to scholarship. The gallery also animates other university spaces as opportunities arise. The Wallach Art Gallery operates in close relationship with the Department of Art History and Archaeology, School of the Arts and the University Libraries, particularly Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library. The work of the Wallach Art Gallery is made possible by an endowment established by Miriam and Ira D. Wallach.

About the New Manhattanville Campus

The largest and most ambitious capital project undertaken by Columbia University since its landmark Morningside Heights campus (McKim, Mead and White, dedicated 1896), the Manhattanville campus was proposed by University President Lee C. Bollinger in 2003. It is designed to provide the innovative academic space that will keep Columbia at the forefront of the world’s research universities and fulfill its mission to address society’s challenges through the creation of new knowledge. Defining Columbia’s building footprint for decades to come, the 17-acre campus is intended to create a different kind of space than in the past, with facilities that encourage the University-wide, cross-disciplinary interaction that is crucial to advances in all fields, and reflective of New York’s dynamism. At the same time, the open, sustainable campus is designed to deepen the connections between Columbia and its local community, so that the City and the University can enliven and strengthen each other. The Manhattanville campus plan will enable Columbia to extend beyond its beloved but enclosed Morningside Heights setting with an open, welcoming campus, embedded in New York’s existing street grid without traditional gates or barriers. The long-term plan will eventually create 6.8 million square feet of new academic space, as well as more than an acre of publicly accessible green space, landscaped paths and street-level commercial and civic facilities open to the public.

Situated a few blocks northwest of Morningside Heights, the Manhattanville campus occupies an area from 125th Street to 133rd Street, and from either side of Broadway to 12th Avenue. The site was characterized since the late 19th century by industrial buildings, some of which will be adaptively reused amid the new construction. Distinct from the campus, but directly connected with it and financially supported by Columbia, is the West Harlem Piers Park on the Hudson River.

Posing Modernity: The Black Model from Manet to Matisse and Beyond
Frédéric Bazille. Young Woman with Peonies, 1870. Oil on canvas; 23 5/8 x 29 1/2 in. Courtesy the National Gallery, Washington.
About Columbia University

Among the world's leading research universities, Columbia University in the City of New York continuously seeks to advance the frontiers of scholarship and foster a campus community deeply engaged in the complex issues of our time through teaching, research, patient care and public service. The University is comprised of 16 undergraduate, graduate and professional schools, four affiliated colleges and seminaries in Manhattan and a wide array of research institutes and global centers around the world. More than 40,000 students, award-winning faculty and professional staff define the University's underlying values and commitment to pursuing new knowledge and educating informed, engaged citizens. Founded in 1754 as King's College, Columbia is the fifth-oldest institution of higher learning in the United States.

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