



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA

1280 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E. • ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30309

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**MARIA L. KELLY APPOINTED ASSISTANT CURATOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
AT HIGH MUSEUM OF ART**

ATLANTA, Feb. 7, 2022 — The High Museum of Art announced today the appointment of Maria L. Kelly as its assistant curator of photography. Kelly served as curatorial assistant in the High's photography department from 2011 to 2016, returning to the role in 2019 after completing her master's degree. During her time at the Museum, Kelly has helped organize more than 20 photography installations, including exhibitions featuring the work of Helen Levitt, Abelardo Morell, Sheila Pree Bright, Paula Chamlee, Sarah Hobbs, Wynn Bullock, Gordon Parks and Thomas Struth, among others. In 2021, she co-curated [*Underexposed: Women Photographers from the Collection*](#), featuring work by women photographers throughout history drawn from the Museum's holdings.

"Maria's been an integral part of the High family for a very long time. She knows the Museum; she knows and loves our city; and she brings great passion to her field and our mission," said Rand Suffolk, the High's Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr., director. "We look forward to her continuing work in strengthening our photography holdings and mounting exciting and thought-provoking exhibitions for our audiences."

Added Gregory Harris, Donald and Marilyn Keough Family curator of photography, "Maria's knowledge of the High's collection along her creative approach to interpreting modern and contemporary photography have made her an unparalleled asset to the Museum. She's a dynamic curator who always has an eye toward creating an engaging experience of the medium for our diverse audiences. I'm delighted to work with her in this new role as she helps shape the future of the High's photography program."

The High is home to the most significant photography program in the American Southeast, with a collection of more than 8,000 works spanning the 1840s to the present. With strengths in American modernist and documentary traditions from the mid-20th century and a robust commitment to contemporary practice, the photography collection features a strong base of prints related to the American South, which are situated within a global context that is both regionally relevant and internationally significant. Kelly will support the initiatives of the photography department through research, exhibition development and collection management.

“I am honored and delighted to step into this role within an institution that I believe in and in which I have invested deeply,” said Kelly. “I look forward to developing programming and pursuing acquisitions that center narratives from a wide range of artists, from our region and beyond, to help to broaden the scope of the history of photography.”

Kelly holds a Master of Arts from Columbia University and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Georgia, both in art history. Previously, she worked at the Brooklyn Museum and The Sir Elton John Photography Collection and has held internships at The Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the Georgia Museum of Art.

About the High’s Photography Department

The High Museum of Art is home to one of the nation’s leading photography programs. The Museum began acquiring photographs in the early 1970s, making it among the earliest American art museums to commit to collecting the medium. With more than 8,000 prints that span the history of the medium from the 1840s to the present, the collection has particular strengths in American and European modernist traditions and documentary and contemporary photography. Holdings include the most significant museum collection of vintage civil-rights-era prints in the nation as well as important holdings by Harry Callahan, Clarence John Laughlin, Evelyn Hofer, William Christenberry, Ilse Bing, Walker Evans, Peter Sekaer and Dawoud Bey. The collection also gives special attention to pictures made in and of the South, serving as the largest and most significant repository representing the region’s important contributions to photography.

About the High Museum of Art

Located in the heart of Atlanta, the High Museum of Art connects with audiences from across the Southeast and around the world through its distinguished collection, dynamic schedule of special exhibitions and engaging community-focused programs. Housed within facilities designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Richard Meier and Renzo Piano, the High features a collection of more than 18,000 works of art, including an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American fine and decorative arts; major holdings of photography and folk and self-taught work, especially that of artists from the American South; burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, including paintings, sculpture, new media and design; a growing collection of African art, with work dating from prehistory through the present; and significant holdings of European paintings and works on paper. The High is dedicated to reflecting the diversity of its communities and offering a variety of exhibitions and educational programs that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit www.high.org.

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