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THE HIGH TURNS 100: ATLANTA'S ART MUSEUM MARKS ITS CENTENNIAL

Celebrating its centennial through major exhibitions, new acquisitions, reinstalled American and African art galleries, citywide partnerships and a new brand identity that reflect Atlanta's emergence as one of America's leading cultural capitals.

ATLANTA, Sept. 1, 2026 — In October 1926, Mrs. Hattie High donated her stately residence on Peachtree Street to the city of Atlanta, and the High Museum of Art was born. For 100 years, the High has been a beacon of the arts, growing to become the leading cultural institution of the American South and a preeminent forum for education and community engagement, both in the region and on a national stage. The museum's Centennial initiatives and programming celebrate the institution's storied history while casting a vision for the High's future.

This fall, the High will mark its centennial with curator-driven reinstallations of its American and African Art collection galleries, which will debut significant acquisitions and solidify the museum's emphasis on collection strengths, including folk and self-taught art; an exciting exhibition lineup including Martin Puryear's acclaimed survey *Nexus*; partnership activations with major international brands, including Delta Air Lines, and iconic Atlanta landmarks, such as MARTA and the Beltline; a commemorative publication; a contemporary rebrand; and a slate of dynamic, community-focused events, inviting Atlantans and visitors alike to experience the impact and innovation that will lead the museum into its next 100 years.

The High emerged from the ambitious belief of Atlanta's cultural visionaries that art should play a central role in shaping public life in the rapidly growing city — a transformative moment for early 20th-century Atlanta and the wider American South. Over the last century, the High has evolved alongside the city, growing from a modest regional institution into one of the nation's leading art museums and a major cultural hub for the entire Southeast. Under the leadership of Director Rand Suffolk, the High has significantly transformed its audience, collections and civic role. Since 2015, visitors of color have grown from 15% of attendance to 55%, bringing the museum's audiences into closer alignment with Atlanta's demographics, while younger audiences have become a defining part of the institution's community. Membership has grown substantially, and initiatives ranging from free admission programs to after-hours events have helped position the High as a national model for community-centered museum engagement.

In its recent history, the High has also executed initiatives to diversify its collections and the museum field more widely. The David C. Driskell Prize in African American Art and Art History, established by the High in 2005, is the first national award to recognize leading contributions to African American art and art history by US-based African American artists and scholars. Prize alumni include Amy Sherald, Rashid Johnson, Mark Bradford, Naomi Beckwith, and more, with scholar Cheryl Finley of Spelman College recently named as the 2026 recipient of the prize. Since 2016, an average of 61% of the High's exhibitions each year have featured women



artists, artists of color and LGBTQIA+ artists. The High also partners with the Atlanta University Center Art History + Curatorial Studies Collective to train the next generation of arts leaders.

“Over the past decade, we have made significant strides toward becoming a profoundly different magnet in Atlanta and to being the art museum that our city deserves,” said Suffolk. “We are poised to enter our next 100 years as a dynamic, intentional and essential contributor to the cultural fabric of our city — an organization, in fact, dedicated to connecting and strengthening our community.”

As the High has grown and evolved in recent years, the city of Atlanta has become a thriving creative ecosystem. Already recognized as the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement, it is now considered a global capital of hip-hop and the “Hollywood of the South,” and the visual arts are following suit. This year alone, the Atlanta Art Fair will return for its third edition at Pullman Yards, The Other Art Fair will make its debut in the city, and MOCA GA announced plans to relocate to the Goat Farm Arts Center in West Midtown. Looking ahead, CTR will transform the former CNN Center into its Culture Studios, and a new \$64 million Molly Blank Center for Opera & the Arts is slated to open in 2027. It’s against this backdrop that the High marks 100 years of investment in Atlanta’s cultural infrastructure.

Today, the museum holds a collection of more than 20,000 artworks spanning centuries, continents and media — including significant holdings of artwork by Southern artists — and welcomes diverse visitors from around the world to create and discover while gathering its community through programs and special exhibitions. In addition to an exhibition line-up featuring the acclaimed survey [“Martin Puryear: Nexus”](#) and [“I SPY! Walter Wick’s Hidden Wonders,”](#) the High’s Centennial events and initiatives will include:

Sweeping Reinstallations of the American and African Art Collection Galleries

- The High’s collection galleries will debut new installations that expand traditional categories and unite cross-disciplinary approaches, organized by thematic and material connections as opposed to purely chronological or linear presentations. The reinstallations will also mark the public debut of significant Centennial acquisitions. In the American galleries, these include a rare painting by Jacob Lawrence, a quilt by Carolyn L. Mazloomi, and a work by Grandma Moses; in the African galleries, these include paintings, textiles, prints, drawings and ceramics by artists such as Ben Enwonwu, Ladi Kwali, Nike Okundaye, Bruce Onobrakpeya and Jimoh Akolo.

Additional Centennial Acquisitions

- In addition to African and American Art, the High will introduce more than 200 important additions to the museum’s holdings across photography, contemporary design and contemporary art.

Publication Celebrating the High at 100

- The High will produce a book featuring 100 large-scale reproductions of landmark artworks in the museum’s collection alongside accompanying texts and a photo-rich timeline of the institution’s history.

Art Activations and Partnerships



- The High will stage public art installations and activations with local, regional and international partners including MARTA, the Atlanta Beltline, the Atlanta Hawks, Havertys, UPS and Delta Air Lines, with product partnerships to be announced.

Free Admission for Atlanta Public Schools

- To demonstrate its continued commitment to arts education and access, the High will provide free admission to all Atlanta Public Schools for K-12 field trips throughout the 2026-2027 school year. The High welcomes an average of 4,000 APS students each year.

A Revamped Brand

- The High will introduce a contemporary rebrand this fall to mark 100 years and lead the institution's visual identity into the future.

Community Events

- The museum will stage a robust slate of community programming to celebrate the Centennial, anchored by the Centennial Community Block Party on Sunday, October 18, which will feature activities on its piazza, gallery tours, a public talk celebrating 100 years of art in Atlanta and more. Guests will also enjoy Centennial-themed activities and tours throughout the year during the High's monthly free admission days (UPS Second Sundays and Access for All days).

For more information on Centennial initiatives and events, and to purchase tickets, visit high.org/100.

Presenting Centennial Sponsor



As Presenting Sponsor of the High Museum of Art's Centennial, Invesco anchors a citywide celebration of the museum's 100th year — honoring a century of impact in Atlanta while investing in a creative vision that will define its next 100 years.

About the High Museum of Art

The High is Atlanta's art museum. For over a century we've been a source of inspiration for the city and a model for how museums can connect with people. Home to a world-class collection, engaging exhibitions, and events for every age, background and interest, we champion the arts as an essential part of our community. Today, we're internationally recognized yet firmly rooted in Atlanta. We're located on Peachtree Street, where Harriet "Hattie" High donated the land that would become the High's home. Our award-winning architecture by Richard Meier and Renzo Piano houses a collection of 20,000+ works spanning centuries, continents and media. Each year we curate exhibitions that recover overlooked histories, challenge conventions and expand the boundaries of art. Our events and ongoing series set us apart, offering our community new ways to connect with art. From lively events on Friday nights to programs specially designed for families, we ensure that art enthusiasts and newcomers alike have something to enjoy. Our aim



is simple: bringing art and people together. For more information about the High, visit www.high.org.

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