

## JOHN WATERS

Over a career spanning four decades, Baltimore-based visual artist John Waters (b. 1946) has also been a film director, writer, actor, and journalist. His photography, sculptures, and installations are not spared from his satirical directorial glare, as he re-edits and re-contextualizes iconic film imagery in an often-hilarious queering of popular culture. Themes and motifs of provocation—race, sex, gender, consumerism, and religion—are central to his practice, and presented with a brand of wit and cynicism that is uniquely his.

### Visual Art

Waters has had numerous solo and group exhibitions in the United States and abroad since 1992. A complete retrospective, *John Waters: Change of Life*, opened at the New Museum, New York (2004), and traveled to the Fotomuseum Winterthur in Switzerland, the Orange County Museum of Art in Los Angeles, and The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh. Other solo exhibitions include *How much can you take?* at Kunsthaus Zürich, Switzerland (2015); *Artistically Incorrect: The Photographs and Sculpture of John Waters* at the Laumeier Sculpture Park in St. Louis, MO (2008); and *John Waters: Photograph* at the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, OH (1999). Solo exhibitions of Waters's work have been presented at Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York; Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco; Gagosian Gallery, Los Angeles; C. Grimaldis Gallery, Baltimore; Sprüth Magers, London/Berlin; Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris; and de Pury & Luxembourg Gallerie, Zurich; among others. Waters's work was also included in the *Viva Arte Viva* group exhibition in the 2017 Venice Biennale.

Four catalogues published on John Waters's art include *John Waters: Indecent Exposure* (2018); *Unwatchable* (2007); *John Waters: Change of Life* (2004); and *Director's Cut* (1997). Waters guest-curated the popular *Absentee Landlord* exhibition at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis (2011-12) as part of their Event Horizon project. His work is in the collections of The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New Museum, and Whitney Museum of American Art. He is a past member of the boards of The Andy Warhol Foundation and Printed Matter, is a former member of the Wexner Center International Arts Advisory Council, and was a juror for the 2011 Venice Biennale.

### Films

John Waters has written and directed 16 films, all set in Baltimore: *Hag in a Black Leather Jacket* (1964), *Roman Candles* (1966), *Eat Your Makeup* (1967), *Mondo Trasho* (1969), *Multiple Maniacs* (1970), *The Diane Linkletter Story* (1970), *Pink Flamingos* (1972), *Female Trouble* (1974), *Desperate Living* (1977), *Polyester* (1981), *Hairspray* (1988), *Cry-Baby* (1990), *Serial Mom* (1994), *Pecker* (1998), *Cecil B. DeMented* (2000), and *A Dirty Shame* (2004). Major retrospectives of Waters's films have been presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center in 2014 and by the British Film Institute in 2015. Waters is a member of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. He is also a member of the Board of Directors for the Maryland Film Festival and has been a key participant in the Provincetown International Film Festival since it began in 1999.

### Books

In addition to writing and directing feature films, Waters is the author of eight books: *Shock Value: A Tasteful Book About Bad Taste* (1982); *Crackpot: The Obsessions of John Waters* (1986); *Art: A Sex Book*, co-written with art critic Bruce Hainley (2003); *Pink Flamingos and Other Filth: Three Screenplays by John Waters* (2005); *Hairspray, Female Trouble, Multiple Maniacs: Three MORE Screenplays by John Waters* (2005); *Make Trouble* (2017); and the *New York Times* bestsellers *Role Models* (2010) and *Carsick: John Waters Hitchhikes Across America* (2014). He is currently working on his next book, *Mr. Know-It-All*, which will be published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

**Performances**

Waters has appeared in many motion pictures and television shows as an actor and voice-over artist, including *Something Wild* (1986) and *Sweet and Lowdown* (1999), *'Til Death Do Us Part* (2007), and on an Emmy award-winning episode of *The Simpsons* (1997). Waters continues to perform his one-man spoken-word shows—*This Filthy World* and *A John Waters Christmas*—at colleges, museums, film festivals, and comedy clubs around the world, and has hosted the punk rock festival, Burger Boogaloo, in Oakland, CA, for the past four years. His music compilation CD, *A John Waters Christmas*, was released in 2004 by New Line Records and was followed up by *A Date With John Waters* in 2007.

**Awards and Honors**

Waters was honored as the first recipient of the PIFF “Filmmaker on the Edge” award in 1999. In February 2017, he was presented the Writers Guild of America, East's Ian McLellan Hunter Award honoring his body of work as a writer in motion pictures. Waters was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in 2015 and from the Maryland Institute College of Arts (MICA) in 2016. In May 2017, he was bestowed the rank of Officer in the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Minister of Culture.