

## **THE BMA PRESENTS VIDEO WORKS CREATED BY BALTIMORE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH GET YOUR LIFE!**

BALTIMORE, MD (September 25, 2018)—The Baltimore Museum of Art’s (BMA) fourth Commons Collaboration in the Joseph Education Center showcases an exhibition of video works created by Get Your Life!—a collaboration between Baltimore artists who produce narratives developed by and featuring local middle school students. On view November 14, 2018, through November 2019, *Commons Collaboration: Get Your Life!* presents the breadth of the group’s practice, including a dozen videos displayed in a brightly colored gallery with youth-designed furniture and lighting, as well as props, costumes, and other related ephemera.



“Get Your Life! is a perfect example of how the arts can make a real difference in the lives of young people in Baltimore,” said BMA Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director Christopher Bedford. “The BMA is proud to showcase the creativity of the Get Your Life! participants in close proximity to the video installations by the New York-based artist collective DIS and we’re looking forward to a year of programs that explore these connections.”

Get Your Life! (GYL!) emerged in 2014 from an extended relationship between artist Lee Heinemann (b. 1993, Kansas City, MO) and the Better Waverly community art center 901 Arts. GYL! puts adult artists to work producing video art projects written, directed, and designed by neighborhood middle school students. In addition to a dedicated group of 15 youth artists, GYL!’s organizing team includes artists Renee Anderson, Maggie Fitzpatrick, Derrick Johnson, Luz Orozco, Anais Perez, and Stephanie Wallace.

The exhibition centers around the serial reality show *The REAL Artists of Get Your Life!* (2016–17). For the project—conceived of by then-sixth- and eighth-graders Daja and Dalin Haleem—nine students created artist alter-egos and filmed three 15-minute episodes documenting their lives, complete with faux artworks and fabricated art events. Compiled for this exhibition, *As Seen on GYL!* showcases fake commercials such as *Crystal’s Crystal Gloves* and *L.J. Jewelry who.what?* for youth-conceived products. The gallery’s worktable will be stocked with related activities for visitors and a new publication chronicling the project through behind-the-scenes photos and documents, participant reflections, as well as essays from United States Artists President and CEO Deana Haggag, writer and performer Delali Ayivor, and artist Lex Brown.

“Get Your Life! has always worked to assert the voices of Baltimore youth, especially as forces within the arts,” said Lee Heinemann. “So it is a particularly exciting moment for us to have our youth-driven work recognized by and included within The Baltimore Museum of Art, and we look forward to sharing our practice with the city.”

*Commons Collaboration: Get Your Life!* is part of the BMA’s Commons Collaboration initiative, which commissions an artist along with a non-profit partner to create an exhibition and offer a series of public programs. It is presented in conjunction with *The DIS Edutainment Network*, an immersive video installation in the main exhibition gallery of the Joseph Education Center that invites visitors into critical conversations on the subjects of money, inequality, and economics.

## **GET YOUR LIFE!**

Get Your Life! was founded in 2014 in partnership with 901 Arts to connect the interests of the students to the resources of Baltimore's creative communities. The Baltimore-based, youth-run video production company creates multi-year, collaborative relationships between middle school students, practicing artists, and institutions. Get Your Life! operated as the youth program of The Contemporary in 2016 and 2017 and has hosted collaborations with artists including Balti Gurls, Jared Brown and Adi Shachar, Amanda Horowitz, Conrad Tao, and 0Zone. The program aims to foster creative and critical thinking by connecting students directly to contemporary artists and examining the practices of contemporary art globally. Currently based out of 901 Arts, GYL! produces youth-directed and -designed videos and events, including an annual public premiere. More information about GYL! is at [get-your-life.com](http://get-your-life.com).

## **THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART**

Founded in 1914, The Baltimore Museum of Art is a major cultural destination recognized for engaging diverse audiences through dynamic exhibitions and innovative educational and community outreach programs. The BMA's internationally renowned collection of 95,000 objects encompasses more than 1,000 works by Henri Matisse anchored by the famed Cone Collection of modern art, as well as one of the nation's finest holdings of prints, drawings, and photographs. The galleries showcase an exceptional collection of art from Africa; important works by established and emerging contemporary artists; outstanding European and American paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts; significant artworks from China; ancient Antioch mosaics; and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000-square-foot museum is also distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped gardens featuring an array of 20th-century sculpture. The BMA is located in Charles Village, three miles north of the Inner Harbor, and is adjacent to the main campus of Johns Hopkins University. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

**VISITOR INFORMATION** General admission to the BMA is free. Special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m.–5 p.m. The museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The BMA is located at 10 Art Museum Drive, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit [artbma.org](http://artbma.org). Connect with us: #ARTBMA • [Blog](#) • [Facebook](#) • [Twitter](#) • [Instagram](#) • [YouTube](#)

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**Image:** Get Your Life! team. Photo by Jaida Douglass.

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