



THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, August 30, 2022

**MOCA PRESENTS GARRETT BRADLEY: AMERICAN RHAPSODY**

**September 10, 2022–February 19, 2023**

**The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA**

**ADMISSION IS FREE**



**LOS ANGELES**—The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) presents *Garrett Bradley: American Rhapsody*, the first solo museum presentation of the work of Los Angeles- and New Orleans-based artist and filmmaker Garrett Bradley (b. 1986, New York, New York). Bradley works across narrative, documentary, and experimental modes of filmmaking to address themes such as race, class, familial relationships, social justice, southern culture, and the history of film in the United States. She explores the space between fact and fiction, blurring the boundaries between traditional notions of narrative and documentary cinema.

“Bradley’s major installation *America* consists of four sheer fabric suspended screens, which hang and wave as flags, on which she projects historical and original film footage representing early 20th-century Black life—American life—and through which we see and experience history as layered, as partial, as simultaneous with the present moment. This intellectually and aesthetically complex sense of history, and of how memory is made and remade through film, carries throughout the exhibition, where Bradley creates prismatic sonic and visual ‘scapes’ and open-ended narratives to give

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MOCA PRESENTS *GARRETT BRADLEY: AMERICAN RHAPSODY*  
Page 2 of 3

form to the lived experiences of her subjects,” said MOCA Curator Anna Katz. “As a filmmaker, Bradley has found a method of working and shooting alongside her subjects as collaborators, rather than surveying them, and I suspect it is this proximity, this interiority, intimacy, and sensitivity in her work, that fills the viewer’s cup.”

For the last ten years, Bradley has employed a collaborative and research-based approach to filmmaking, which is often inspired by the real-life stories of her subjects. For Bradley, this research takes multiple forms—deep dives into historical archives, in-depth dialogues prompted by Craigslist want ads, or an extended engagement with the communities and individuals she seeks to represent—and results in works that combine both scripted and improvisatory scenes. Bradley’s films embrace modes of working and representing history that resist linear chronologies and, instead, foreground fragmentary and affective experiences of time.

“I have always looked to MOCA Geffen as being a place of endless possibilities and I am honored to be sharing space with both Judy Baca and Tala Madani. I hope the show can be a welcoming respite for the people of Los Angeles,” said Bradley.

Organized by Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH), the exhibition features a selection of recent single and multi-channel films and videos. In *America* (2019), Bradley constructs a visual archive of early African American cinema and poignantly asks what it might mean to model a history of Black visibility and representation that privileges depictions of pleasure over spectacles of pain. This multi-channel installation presupposes the existence of a body of cinema made by and for African Americans and since lost to history and depicts the everyday lives of early 20th-century African Americans.

*AKA* (2019) explores relationships between mothers and daughters born into interracial families or families of varying skin tones. In this kaleidoscopic series of portraits, the artist points toward the multiplicity and intersectionality of identity.

In *Alone* (2017), Bradley provides a glimpse into the life of Aloné Watts as she contemplates a recent proposal of marriage from her incarcerated partner, Desmond Watson. *Alone* considers the continued precariousness of Black life through an intimate look into the ways in which love and loneliness remain intricately bound for the incarcerated and their families.

Together, these works reveal Bradley as an artist intent on creating modes of Black visibility that are intimately tied to daily life while remaining equally aware of the enduring power the image continues to hold as a key site in the production of knowledge and, reflexively, a site where this knowledge can be questioned, contested, and reimagined.

The Los Angeles presentation of *Garrett Bradley: American Rhapsody* is the culmination of the exhibition’s US tour. It was presented at the organizing institution, CAMH, from December 2019 through March 2020. The exhibition was then presented at the Momentary, Crystal Bridges, in Bentonville, Arkansas, from July through September 2021 and at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from March through May 2022.

Garrett Bradley received her MFA from University of California, Los Angeles and BA from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. Her short films and feature-length projects have been exhibited internationally at museums and festivals including the New Orleans Museum of Art, Whitney Biennial 2019, The J. Paul Getty Museum, The Museum of Modern Art, The Sundance Film Festival, The Tribeca Film Festival, SXSW, Austin, Texas, among many others. Bradley has received numerous awards and honors, including a 2019-20 Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome. Her documentary *Time* premiered at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival where Bradley won the Directing Award in the U.S. Documentary Competition. *Time* was nominated for the 2021 Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature. Her acclaimed documentary miniseries *Naomi Osaka* was released by Netflix in 2021.

MOCA PRESENTS *GARRETT BRADLEY: AMERICAN RHAPSODY*

Page 3 of 3

*Garrett Bradley: American Rhapsody* is organized by Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) and curated by Rebecca Matalon, CAMH Curator.

The Los Angeles presentation is organized by Anna Katz, Curator, with Anastasia Kahn, Curatorial Assistant, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Admission to *Garrett Bradley: American Rhapsody* is free courtesy of Carolyn Clark Powers.

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This exhibition is carbon calculated. The museum reduced greenhouse gas emissions through planning efforts and balanced the remaining emissions through Strategic Climate Fund donations. Support provided by the MOCA Environmental Council.

Image caption: Garrett Bradley, *America* (still), 2019, multi-channel video installation, with 35mm film transferred to video (black and white, sound), 23:55 minutes. Image and work courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery.

## THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

**About MOCA:** Founded in 1979, MOCA is the defining museum of contemporary art. In a relatively short period of time, MOCA has achieved astonishing growth; a world-class permanent collection of more than 7,500 objects, international in scope and among the finest in the world; hallmark education programs that are widely emulated; award-winning publications that present original scholarship; groundbreaking monographic, touring, and thematic exhibitions of international repute that survey the art of our time; and cutting-edge engagement with modes of new media production. MOCA is a not-for-profit institution that relies on a variety of funding sources for its activities.

**More Information:** For 24-hour information on current exhibitions, education programs, and special events, call 213/626-6222 or access MOCA online at [moca.org](http://moca.org).

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