



Pennsylvania Academy
of the Fine Arts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 1, 2024

The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Opens *Making Strange: Sacred Imagery and the Self*

Exhibition is on view November 14, 2024 through April 6, 2025

PHILADELPHIA—October 1, 2024 - The **Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA)** opens [*Making Strange: Sacred Imagery and the Self*](#), an exhibition featuring paintings, sculpture, and works on paper from the collections of PAFA and the Brodsky Center that highlight the art historical concept of "making strange." The exhibition opens **November 14, 2024 and is on view through April 6, 2025** in the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Gallery in the Samuel M. V. Hamilton Building. *Making Strange: Sacred Imagery and the Self* is curated by Han McCoy, PAFA's Rhoden Curatorial Assistant. Visit pafa.org for more information.

The works included in [*Making Strange: Sacred Imagery and the Self*](#) explore the historic, modern, and contemporary application of "making strange," a term coined by art historian Dr. Marcia Hall in her book *Sacred Image in the Age of Art: Titian, Tintoretto, Barocci, El Greco, Caravaggio* (2011). It refers to a style that emerged during the Counter Reformation (1545-1648) where artists intentionally distorted forms and used symbolism as a technique to create a more engaging and interactive experience for the viewer. Inspired by this technique, Baroque artists (1600s - early 1700s) reinterpreted traditional iconographic images, taking creative liberties until the final composition significantly diverged from the original. The implementation of "making strange" as an artistic practice encourages longer, closer viewing, with the goal of inspiring emotion and deep self-reflection. As an exhibition, *Making Strange* is an exercise in close viewing and reinterpretation of sacred imagery across cultures as a means of fostering introspection and meaningful dialogue between art and viewer.

PAFA is open free to the public on Sunday, October 6 and on Sunday, November 24.

PAFA's regular hours are **Thursday and Friday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, and Saturday and Sunday 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM.** [Reserve tickets and access further information about visiting.](#)

About the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Founded in 1805 as the first school and museum of fine arts in the United States, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) celebrates the transformative power of art and art-making. A recipient of the National Medal of Arts, PAFA offers a world-class collection of American art, innovative exhibitions of historic and contemporary American art, and educational opportunities in the fine arts. The PAFA Museum aims to tell America's diverse story through art, expanding who has been included in the canon of art history through its collections, exhibitions, and public programs, while classes educate artists and appreciators with a deep understanding of traditions and the ability to challenge conventions. PAFA's esteemed alumni include Mary Cassatt, Njideka Akunyili Crosby, William Glackens, Barkley L. Hendricks, Violet Oakley, Louis Kahn, David Lynch, and Henry Ossawa Tanner.

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