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First Major Solo Museum Exhibition of Jonas Wood at Dallas Museum of Art

The Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) will present the first major solo museum exhibition of work by American painter Jonas Wood. Bringing together approximately 35 works across 13 years of Wood's career, the exhibition *Jonas Wood* traces the artist's fascination with psychology, memory, and the self to shed light on a practice that is both deeply personal and universal. It will be on view exclusively at the DMA from March 24, 2019 through July 14, 2019.

"As a platform for creative expression, the DMA is always seeking to engage audiences with the most influential and exciting artists of our time," said the DMA's Eugene McDermott Director Dr. Agustín Arteaga. "Jonas Wood is certainly an artist whose work deserves deeper exploration and resonates with a wide audience. We are proud to provide this museum setting for a solo exhibition that further reveals his incredible skill, powers of observation, and distinct perspective on contemporary life."

Known for his colorful and compressed depictions of the people, places, and things that populate his daily life, Los Angeles-based painter Jonas Wood (b. 1977, Boston) creates works that bear clear traces of his biography in both form and content. Wood's grandfather was an amateur painter whose personal collection of art included works by notable modernists such as Alexander Calder, Robert Motherwell, and Helen Frankenthaler. These artists, in addition to other modern masters ranging from Henri Matisse to David Hockney, have inspired Wood's signature use of playful geometries, bold colors, and a distinct graphic style. Wood's family members are recurrent characters in his paintings, as are the ceramics produced by his wife, artist Shio Kusaka, stressing the importance of familial dynamics in shaping identity, a notion central to his approach.

While the artist's works are often based on intense real-life observation, the worlds they depict are ultimately fictive, subjected to a process of manipulation through preparatory photo collages. Through this process, the places and things that the artist depicts become personifications, and the intimate becomes public—an intertwining of fact, fiction, and deeper meaning that has intensified in the digital age.

Curated by Dr. Anna Katherine Brodbeck, the Hoffman Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art at the DMA, *Jonas Wood* brings together numerous facets of Wood's artistic production. The exhibition juxtaposes works across subject matter

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and chronology—including snowy New England landscapes and Japanese gardens, still lifes abundant with plant matter, richly decorated modernist interiors, and portraits of the artist and his loved ones—to provide insight into Wood’s willingness to engage with traditional genres of painting while simultaneously exploring distinctly contemporary ideas grounded in his own signature brand of image making.

Often featuring reflections and images culled from photographs, Wood’s work questions the relationship between reality and illusion in a world saturated with images. Examples included in the exhibition:

- In *Face Painting* (2014), an iPhone captures Wood’s daughter making herself up in a mirror, depicted in the act of art making, a familial riff on Wood’s portraits of artists Mark Grotjahn, Akio Takamori, Magdalena Suarez Frimkess, and Philip Guston included in the show.
- In *The Bat/Bar Mitzvah Weekend* (2016), a painting based on a photograph by Elsa Dorfman, past photographs of the family members are placed at their feet as they pose for the current session. Both are captured in the painting, making it a commentary on the relationship between painting and photography, family and aging.
- The passage of time is similarly captured in *The Still Life* (2007), an early work in a genre for which Wood is now well known. A skull lies atop a plinth in an illusion to the art historical motif of *memento mori*.

“Jonas Wood makes us reconsider the everyday. At once autobiographical and widely relevant, representational and abstract, his innovative approach to form provides a wealth of meaning that resonates with contemporary audiences who have been primed by digital culture,” said Dr. Brodbeck.

Jonas Wood is organized by the Dallas Museum of Art. The presentation is made possible by Gagolian, TWO x TWO for AIDS and Art Fund, the DMA Contemporary Art Initiative, and the Gay and Lesbian Fund for Dallas. Additional support is provided by David Kordansky Gallery, Anton Kern Gallery, Claire Dewar, Elisabeth and Panos Karpidas, Marilyn Lenox, Yusaku Maezawa, Maurice Marciano, and Jessica and Dirk Nowitzki. Support for the catalogue is provided by The Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation. *Jonas Wood* can be seen for free as part of the Museum’s general admission policy.