



The Cathedral
Church of **Saint John**
the Divine

1047 Amsterdam Ave.
at 112th Street
New York, NY 10025
T (212) 316-7541
F (212) 932-7348
stjohndivine.org

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The Value of Sanctuary: Building a House Without Walls

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York

February 14 – June 30, 2019

The Value of Sanctuary: Building a House Without Walls, the latest in an ongoing series of art exhibitions and public program initiatives centering on essential aspects of human dignity, will open on February 14 at **The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, located at 1047 Amsterdam Avenue (at 112th Street), Manhattan.**

Beginning with the historic framework of the Cathedral as a site of welcome and refuge, this multidisciplinary exhibition explores the question of sanctuary through the work of modern and contemporary artists. Using the Cathedral's sacred space as a canvas, these works illuminate the intersections between spiritual and social identity, and the ways in which personhood and community cohesion speak to and are formed by notions of dignity, inclusion, and exclusion.

The exhibition will feature works by **Juan Jose Barboza-Gubo & Andrew Mroczek, Alexandra Bell, Louise Bourgeois, Francis Cape, Cassils, Jules de Balincourt, Anthony Discenza, Mark Dukes, Alicia Eggert, Nona Faustine, For Freedoms, Fredericka Foster, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Nicholas Galanin, Jacob Hessler & Richard Blanco, Lewis Hine, Jenny Holzer, Juliana Huxtable, ICY and SOT, Sister Corita Kent, Baseera Khan, Adam Kuby, Robert Longo, Rania Matar, John Moore, Eiko Otake, Eva Petrič, Michael Rakowitz, Cinthya Santos-Briones, Kiki Smith, Tomas van Houtryve, Alisha Wormsley**, and selections from the Cathedral collection. The Cathedral is pleased to collaborate once more with Magnum Foundation on an installation on the Cathedral grounds.

The Preamble to the Constitution of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, chartered in 1873 as the church of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, describes the Cathedral as a “house of prayer for the use of all people.” In the almost 150 years since the signing of that charter, notions of community, of inclusion, of sanctuary have persisted as frequent topics of discussion and dissent. The current political discourse about national borders and identity, about human rights and their application in an often unpredictable world, has only made these discussions more urgent.

The Value of Sanctuary reaches back to the Cathedral's founding and forward into the most pressing issues of the 21st century. The works in the exhibition and their placement within the Cathedral context raise many questions on the path to encompassing many definitions: What does it mean to be a house of welcome and of refuge, to offer sanctuary to those in need? What are the threads connecting us, as individuals and as communities? And where do we draw the line?

Throughout the course of the exhibition, visitors will be invited to explore the meaning of sanctuary through many viewpoints, expanding upon the Cathedral's guiding mission and role as a sacred space, cultural center, and platform for the urgent issues of our times. The artwork on view will be paired with a series of public programs, talks, children's workshops, and tours coinciding with the exhibition. Programmatic partners for *The Value of Sanctuary: Building a House Without Walls* include Planned



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Parenthood International, PEN America, and Working Theatre, among others. A full list of programs and events will be listed on the Cathedral's website, stjohndivine.org.

About the Cathedral

The Cathedral of St. John the Divine is the Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of New York. It is chartered as a house of prayer for all people and a unifying center of intellectual light and leadership. For more than a century, it has been deeply involved in education, social justice and active support of the arts and the environment. People from many faiths and communities worship together in services held more than 30 times a week; the soup kitchen serves roughly 25,000 meals annually; and social service outreach has an increasingly varied roster of programs. The distinguished Cathedral School prepares young students to be future leaders, while Advancing the Community of Tomorrow (ACT), the renowned preschool, afterschool and summer program, offers diverse educational and nurturing experiences. The choral music concerts, Paul Winter's Solstice concerts and a variety of other musical programming attract large audiences. The American Poets Corner, with a new writer inducted each year, is the only such landmark in the country: a place of pilgrimage and the inspiration for diverse literary programming.

The Dignity Initiative, launched in 2011, exemplifies the Cathedral's holistic approach to religious, civic, and cultural programming, which encompasses civil and human rights, immigration, gender equality, environmental concerns, and the inherent value of all people. Exhibitions in the Dignity Initiative series, including *The Value of Water* (2011); *The Phoenix Project: Xu Bing at the Cathedral* (2014); *The Value of Food* (2015); *The Christa Project: Manifesting Divine Bodies* (2016); and the current exhibition. *The Value of Sanctuary: Building a House Without Walls*, were made possible by generous support from Susan and Jack Rudin on behalf of the Rudin Family; the Panta Rhea Foundation; the Helen Clay Frick Foundation; the Roy A. Hunt Foundation; Lambent Foundation, a project of the Tides Center; Grace Communications; Compton Foundation; Kalliopeia Foundation; The Henry Luce Foundation; and friends of the Cathedral.