



# Media Announcement

**MTA Arts & Design and the International Center of Photography Present  
Photography by Paul Pfeiffer at Grand Central Madison**



*Still Life* (2022) © Paul Pfeiffer, Grand Central Madison. Commissioned by ICP in partnership with MTA Arts & Design.

(NEW YORK, NY — November 30, 2022) In partnership with the International Center of Photography (ICP), MTA Arts & Design is pleased to announce a new body of eye-catching photographic artwork by Paul Pfeiffer commissioned for Grand Central Madison, a new 700,000-square-foot Long Island Rail Road terminal below Grand Central Terminal along Madison Avenue between 43 and 48 Streets in Manhattan. The body of work, *Still Life*, pays homage to the iconic New York City street performer “Da Gold Man.” The artwork is the first in a series of contemporary photography exhibitions to be featured in the large-scale lightboxes in the south concourse of the new Grand Central Madison terminal.

“Arts & Design is pleased to be collaborating with ICP as we expand our photography program to Grand Central Madison,” said **Sandra Bloodworth, Director, MTA Arts & Design**. “In this inaugural exhibition, the performance of the iconic Da Gold Man is brought to life through Pfeiffer’s perceptive lens. We are very excited to share this body of work in the new large-scale lightboxes, steps from permanent works by Kiki Smith and Yayoi Kusama, which together form a rich cultural corridor in Grand Central Madison.”

“ICP is thrilled to partner with MTA Arts & Design to present contemporary art and photography for this new, state of the art transit center in Midtown Manhattan. Photography is a democratic art form found everywhere, so this partnership with MTA’s art team is an ideal way to bring art to daily commuters. For nearly 50 years, ICP has presented socially engaged images as an important part

of our shared cultural experience. Paul Pfeiffer's installation continues this conversation with this new public art project that explores the power of images to alter our awareness of the everyday world," said **David E. Little, Executive Director of ICP**.



*Still Life* (2022) © Paul Pfeiffer, Grand Central Madison. Commissioned by ICP in partnership with MTA Arts & Design.

Pfeiffer's *Still Life* celebrates the iconic street performer known as Da Gold Man, who has appeared as a living statue on the sidewalks of Times Square for more than 17 years, covered in gold and standing motionless on a common milk crate. Da Gold Man fascinates and entralls passersby with his uncanny, statue-like presence. When amazed audiences drop money in his tip box, he moves as a sign of appreciation.

"Presenting *Still Life* in the new transit terminal is an opportunity to consider both the language of advertising that saturates Midtown Manhattan and the everyday rhythms of people moving through the city's public transit hubs: some as commuters who will see the art repeatedly over time and some visitors who will walk by only once," said **artist Paul Pfeiffer**. "Either way, the images are made to be seen in passing and in a distracted state, in the periphery of people's awareness. This is similar to how people come across Da Gold Man as a living statue when he's working in his native environment of Times Square. Creating this series of photographs was a unique opportunity that came together with the help of ICP, the MTA, and also the collaboration of Da Gold Man who agreed to become a part of this project, trusting me to explore the relationship of photography and performance with all of the texture and history that Da Gold Man already embodies."

*Still Life* features 10 large-scale photographs, each measuring approximately 75 inches tall and 100 inches wide, printed on backlit film and displayed in five custom-made, double-sided lightboxes. The images on view remove Da Gold Man from his usual spot on the corner of Broadway and 43rd Street and install him within the infinite white space of a commercial advertising studio – a seamless backdrop typically used to photograph high-end jewelry, designer fashions, and other luxury products. The pictures resulting from this unlikely mixture blur the line between studio portraiture and product photography.

## **ABOUT PAUL PFEIFFER**

Born in Honolulu in 1966, Paul Pfeiffer grew up between Hawaii and the Philippines before moving to New York in 1990 to attend Hunter College and the Whitney Independent Study Program. Pfeiffer is known for his highly sophisticated use of digital technologies and new media, and has created celebrated works of video, photography, installation, and sculpture since the late 1990s. Using digital erasure, magnification, and repetition, Pfeiffer samples and retouches images or video footage from sporting events, concerts, game shows, and Hollywood films to enhance their psychological effects.

By drawing attention to certain aspects of visual culture and concealing others, he underlines the spectacular nature of contemporary media and its consumption.

Pfeiffer has had one-person exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art (2001); the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (2003 and 2017-18); the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2005); MUSAC León, Spain (2008); the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2009) and Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany (2011). Pfeiffer has presented work in major international exhibitions in recent years, including the Performa Biennial (2019), the Honolulu Biennial (2019), the Seoul Mediacity Biennial (2022) and the Toronto Biennial (2022). His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Inhotim Museu de Arte Contemporanea, Inhotim, Brazil; the Pinault Collection, Venice; and Kunst Werke, Berlin, among others.

## **ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

The International Center of Photography (ICP) is the world's leading institution dedicated to photography and visual culture. Cornell Capa founded ICP in 1974 to champion "concerned photography"—socially and politically minded images that can educate and change the world. Through exhibitions, education programs, community outreach, and public programs, ICP offers an open forum for dialogue about the power of the image. Since its inception, ICP has presented more than 700 exhibitions, provided thousands of classes, and hosted a wide variety of public programs. ICP launched its new integrated center on Manhattan's Lower East Side in January 2020. Located at 79 Essex Street, ICP is the cultural anchor of Essex Crossing, one of the most highly anticipated and expansive mixed-use developments in New York City. ICP pays respect to the original stewards of this land, the Lenape people, and other indigenous communities. Visit [icp.org](http://icp.org) to learn more about the museum and its programs.

## **ABOUT MTA ARTS & DESIGN**

[MTA Arts & Design](#) encourages the use of public transportation by providing visual and performing arts in the metropolitan New York area. The Percent for Art program is one of the largest and most diverse collections of site-specific public art in the world, with more than 350 commissions by world-famous, mid-career and emerging artists. Arts & Design produces Graphic Arts, Digital Art, photographic Lightbox exhibitions, as well as live musical performances in stations through its Music Under New York (MUSIC) program, and the Poetry in Motion program in collaboration with the Poetry Society of America. It serves the millions of people who rely upon MTA subways and commuter trains and strives to create meaningful connections between sites, neighborhoods, and people.

### **PRESS CONTACT**

MTA Press Office (212) 878-7440

For email inquiries:

[arts@mtahq.org](mailto:arts@mtahq.org)

### **CONNECT**

Instagram: [@mtaartsdesign](#)

Twitter: [@MTAArtsDesign](#)

Facebook: [@MTAArtsDesign](#)