

The National

Critically acclaimed alt-rockers in North Adams, Mass. in their only Northeast headline show in 2016

Concert to benefit MASS MoCA and Hawthorne Valley Association



NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS — We've been following **The National** since 1999, the same year we flung open our doors. Since then, the Ohio-raised, Brooklyn-based band, which consists of vocalist Matt Berninger, plus two pairs of brothers: Aaron Dessner (guitar, bass, piano) and Bryce Dessner (guitar), and Scott Devendorf (bass, guitar) and Bryan Devendorf (drums), have landed on every "best of" list in print. The band's half dozen albums receive critical praise surpassed only by the adoration of their devoted

audience. *Rolling Stone* declares, "The National has always been fueled by a mix of big-time artistic ambitions and deep-rooted family values." The band is in North Adams on **Saturday, June 11, at 8pm**, in its only Northeast headline show in all of 2016. The concert benefits MASS MoCA and Hawthorne Valley Association, in Ghent, New York.

Throughout its 16-year career, The National has been renowned for its signature sound. The band got its start in 1991, when Matt Berninger and Scott Devendorf majored in graphic design at the University of Cincinnati, where they together spearheaded a series of experimental bands. In 2001, their latest band, The National (comprised of Berninger, brothers, Scott and Bryan Devendorf, and Aaron Dessner), released its self-titled debut album on Brassland Records, an independent record label founded by Dessner and his twin brother, Bryce. Bryce eventually joined the band as full member in 2003, for The National's follow-up album, *Sad Songs for Dirty Lovers*. In 2016, the band will release a much-hyped Grateful Dead tribute album, with contributions from Bon Iver, Sharon Van Etten, the War on Drugs, and Stephen Malkmus.

The group's longevity is largely due to the consistency in sound across its six albums. Berninger's now trademark vocals are instantly recognizable for a dry baritone that provides sincere honesty to poetic lyrics. Over the group's enduring career, lyrical dexterity has remained steadfast, tackling themes of American anxiety such as white-collar work, crumbling relationships, and general paranoia. These dark, tension-filled words combine seamlessly with lush and alluring melodies that swell and crash around Berninger's vocals.

The National's star truly started to rise with the release of the 2005 album, *Alligator*, where the band started openly experimenting more with instrumentation. With each album, the band grows more

ambitious, more aware and subsequently, more successful. Much of The National's success is due to its textbook-indie approach: release strong albums and then tour tirelessly around the globe with exacting and mesmerizing performances. Through its tenure, the band has attracted a who's who of collaborators, such as Justin Vernon, Sufjan Stevens, and Feist.

The National takes the outside stage on Joe's Field at MASS MoCA in North Adams, Massachusetts on **Saturday, June 11, at 8pm**. Onsale and Presale ticket info to be announced shortly. Check massmoca.org for updates. All events are held rain or shine.

Co-Presentation

The National is co-presented by Higher Ground Presents, Burlington, Vermont. The benefit concert supports both MASS MoCA and Hawthorne Valley Association, a 400-acre farm and cultural center integrating agriculture, education, and art in its mission of social and cultural renewal.

Sponsorship

This performance is sponsored by WRSI and WEQX.

About MASS MoCA

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest (and largest) centers for making and enjoying today's most important art, music, dance, theater, film, and video. Hundreds of works of visual and performing art have been created on its 19th-century factory campus during fabrication and rehearsal residencies, making MASS MoCA among the most productive sites in the country for the creation and presentation of new art. More platform than box, MASS MoCA strives to bring to its audiences art experiences that are fresh, engaging, and transformative.

MASS MoCA's galleries are open from 11am to 5pm every day except Tuesdays through spring 2016. Gallery admission is \$18 for adults, \$16 for veterans and seniors, \$12 for students, \$8 for children 6 to 16, and free for children 5 and under. Members are admitted free year-round. For additional information, call 413.662.2111 x1 or visit massmoca.org.

About Hawthorne Valley Association

Hawthorne Valley was founded in 1971 by a pioneering group of Waldorf teachers and Biodynamic farmers who were concerned with the future of small and midsize independent farms as well as the need to provide children from urban environments with meaningful opportunities to connect to nature, agriculture and vocational activities. Inspired by the work of Rudolf Steiner, Hawthorne Valley Association seeks to promote social and cultural renewal through the integrations of education, agriculture and the arts by engaging a mix of cultural and economic endeavors. Among its numerous dynamic programs, the association includes **Hawthorne Valley Farm**, a 400-acre biodynamic farm with a dairy herd, creamery, CSA, natural foods store, organic bakery, a sauerkraut cellar summer camp programs and a Farm Learning Center, and **Hawthorne Valley Waldorf School**, a nursery through grade 12 boarding school. For additional information visit hawthornevalleyassociation.org.