MASS MoCA, MCLA, and The Clark Welcome 300 Art Educators to the Berkshires

Hosts of the 2015 MAEA Annual Conference: Curiosity, Inquiry, Wonder

NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS – The 2015 Massachusetts Art Education Association (MAEA) Annual Conference will be held in North Adams on November 7 and 8. Hosted collaboratively by MASS MoCA, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA), and The Clark Art Institute, the conference is titled Curiosity, Inquiry, Wonder, and offers over sixty content-specific professional development opportunities focusing on these themes. Approximately 300 art educators from across the Commonwealth will attend the hands-on workshops, best-practice and research lectures, gallery/museum tours, awards ceremonies, exhibitions, and more. Workshops will be held at MASS MoCA, The Clark, and in the newly renovated Bowman Hall at MCLA.

Featured artist of MASS MoCA’s 2016 exhibition *Explode Every Day: An Inquiry into the Phenomena of Wonder*,Jen Bervin presents the conference keynote address. Her talk promotes the importance of curiosity and wonder in art education as she reflects on the questions that led her to the use of silk bioengineering and nanofabrication labs in her art. In addition to the keynote, throughout the two-day conference, art educators, specialists, curators, and museum educators showcase their own methods of unlocking creativity and stimulating imagination in a variety of art education settings. From the “Cultural Terrain of Tattoos” and “The Art of Climate Change” to teacher evaluation, assessment, and technological integration, a wide variety of workshops offer many opportunities for professional growth and reflection. Sessions featuring local speakers include a panel discussion on youth development and the arts from the perspective of educators from host institutions MCLA, The Clark, and MASS MoCA, in collaboration with the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. Several sessions will be led by Berkshires’ art teachers and educators from MASS MoCA specifically inspired by the museum’s exhibitions. A follow-up session to the keynote is held with Bervin, MASS MoCA curator Denise Markonish, and *Explode Every Day* co-curator and artist Sean Foley.

A juried exhibition of MAEA member artwork, *Curious Encounters*, can be viewed November 2-26 at MCLA Gallery 51 on Main Street, North Adams. Jurors include Jay Clarke, curator at The Clark; Denise Markonish, curator at MASS MoCA; and Julia Morgan-Leamon, manager of MCLA Gallery 51. A reception will be held November 7, from 5 to 6:30pm. Occurring concurrently, *Navigating the Imagination*, will be on view at the Press Gallery located at 49 Main Street, North Adams. This exhibition features work by National Art Honor Society students (grades 10-12) from across the Commonwealth and a reception will be held November 7, from 3 to 5pm.

As part of the MAEA annual awards ceremony luncheon on Saturday, two Berkshire leaders in arts education will be honored. High School Art Educator MaryBeth Eldridge from Taconic High School will be awarded Secondary Art Educator of the Year and MASS MoCA’s Director of Education + Curator of Kidspace Dr. Laura Thompson will be awarded Museum Educator of the Year.

An affiliate of the National Art Education Association, MAEA is the state’s professional association for art educators. MAEA’s mission is to advance high quality visual arts education throughout the state by empowering art educators to excel in the practice, instruction, promotion, and celebration of visual art. Members include visual art educators of grades preK-12, pre-service and retired art educators, researchers, professors, administrators, art museum educators, non-art educators, artists, and those invested in art education.

Art educators of the hosting institutions are delighted to collaborate with MAEA, and to open up the wonders of art education in the Berkshires to colleagues from throughout the Commonwealth. MCLA professor Dr. Lisa Donovan notes, “This is a wonderful example of how we can feature the best of the Berkshires by collaborating and aligning our resources working across institutions.” The Clark’s Head of Education, Dr. Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, agrees, “Northern Berkshire County has so much to offer arts educators and their students and we are thrilled with this opportunity to ‘show our stuff!’”

For more information or to register for the conference, please visit [massarted.com](http://www.massarted.com) and follow the links for the conference. For additional information, contact Laura Thompson (MASS MoCA) at 413.664.4481 or lthompson@massmoca.org; Lisa Donovan (MCLA) at 413.662.5581 or Lisa.Donovan@mcla.edu; Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer (The Clark) at 413.458.0563 or rtulgan@clarkart.edu; and Kristi Oliver (MAEA) at 617.973.7290 or conference@massarted.com.

**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 11am to 5pm every day except Tuesdays. The Hall Art Foundation’s Anselm Kiefer exhibition is open seasonally, through November 30. 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](https://www.massmoca.org).