

Greensky Bluegrass, Andrew Bird, Mavis Staples, Kronos Quartet's Music for Change: Pete Seeger @ 100, Aoife O'Donovan: Freshgrass Artist-in-Residence, Tinariwen, Steep Canyon Rangers, The Travelin' McCourys, Jade Bird, and Alison Brown Lead First Wave of 2019 FreshGrass Festival Lineup



Greensky Bluegrass

NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS — FreshGrass, MASS MoCA's 3-day festival of bluegrass and progressive roots music, announces the first round of bands for its upcoming September fest, with **Greensky Bluegrass, Andrew Bird, Mavis Staples, Kronos Quartet's Music for Change: Pete Seeger @ 100, Aoife O'Donovan: Freshgrass Artist-in-Residence, Tinariwen, Steep Canyon Rangers, The Travelin' McCourys, Jade Bird, Balsam Range, Alison Brown, Hanggai, Sam Amidon, John Reischman & The Jaybirds, Darol Anger and Mike Marshall, Tony Trischka and Bruce Molsky,**

Flor de Toloache, Berklee College of Music American Roots Music Program, and 2018 FreshGrass Award winners Man About a Horse and Lauren Pratt. FreshGrass, to be held at MASS MoCA on **September 20-22, 2019**, features bluegrass traditionalists and innovators on four stages and in every nook and cranny of the museum's 28-building, 16-acre campus.

FreshGrass is three days of concerts, pop-up performances, instrument and industry workshops, and a bounty of Berkshire harvest-season food and spirits. The event takes over the entire museum campus, including courtyards, galleries, grassy fields, bridges, and every place in between. Berklee College of Music's American Roots Music Program returns to lead workshops in which festival-goers fine-tune their picking skills and learn from bluegrass veterans about the inner workings of songwriting, producing, and marketing music — events that often erupt in wild, rollicking jam sessions with festival-goers strumming alongside main-stage talent. FreshGrass-owned *No Depression* — the quarterly journal for roots music and online



Andrew Bird

roots music authority — sets up an eponymous stage in the festival’s inner courtyard, Compass Records brings its pop-up record store back to the center of the festival, and local luthiers demonstrate their craft.



Mavis Staples

“Greensky Bluegrass, Andrew Bird, Mavis Staples, and FreshGrass favorites Steep Canyon Rangers — and that’s just for starters. FreshGrass consistently presents one of the liveliest and all-encompassing lineups of any music festival in the nation. Musical chops, songwriting innovation, community participation, great food and drink in a really beautiful arts complex... all that makes for a special weekend, and we are so proud to host this flagship event in North Adams,” says MASS MoCA Director Joseph Thompson.

The festival continues to nurture fresh takes on the tradition of bluegrass music with its FreshGrass and No Depression Awards, a music contest for unsigned talent judged by industry professionals, featuring up to \$25,000 in cash prizes and recording time at Compass Records’ studio in Nashville for the winners. The annual award categories include band, banjo, and fiddle, and the *No Depression* singer-songwriter award. Twenty finalists, five in each category, travel to the festival to perform in front of a live audience and a panel comprised of No Depression editors and artist judges. All finalists will perform throughout the weekend on pop-up stages and in the galleries, and award winners in each of the four categories will earn a main-stage slot at the 2020 FreshGrass Festival. The FreshGrass Award prizes are funded by the FreshGrass Foundation, whose mission is to promote, produce, and create innovative grassroots music and support emerging artists.

“Great music, strong community, preservation, and advancement will always be the guiding lights of FreshGrass,” says festival producer Chris Wadsworth. “With the success of the FreshGrass commissions, FreshScores, Awards, and the addition of the *No Depression* singer-songwriter award, we offer our audience a singular festival experience and access to truly innovative ideas in grassroots music. The FreshGrass family has really grown over the last eight years with *No Depression* and this festival at its heart; we have gathered one of the largest and most vibrant roots music communities out there. And we still have a few tricks up our sleeves.”



Steep Canyon Rangers

In addition to the award, films, workshops, and the festival’s legendary jam sessions — during which professional musicians pick and play among the crowd, many of whom bring their own instruments — festival events include camping (located a short distance from MASS MoCA’s campus) and children’s programming. FreshGrass friend Aoife O’Donovan returns as the first-ever Artist-in-Residence, and she will be a presence all three days of the festival. FreshScores — a film and live music event commissioned by the FreshGrass Foundation to pair original music with enlivened silent films — returns in September

with new screenings and performances during the festival, with the lineup to be announced this spring. Art is on view all weekend — admission to MASS MoCA's galleries is included with every festival pass — and festival-goers will enjoy dozens of pop-up concerts set among dramatically scaled exhibitions of contemporary art.

Still Early 3-day adult tickets are now available for \$120, with student tickets priced at \$99, \$46 for kids 7-16, and free admission for kids 6 and under. MASS MoCA members receive a 10% discount on festival ticket prices. Amplify your festival experience with a FreshPass ticket, now available for \$350, which includes preferred seating or standing sections at the main stages, access to the FreshPass Lounge (free beer, snacks, juice to charge your phone and a festival concierge), meet-and-greet opportunities with FreshGrass artists, and an exclusive tour of the galleries with a museum curator. Single-day tickets may be offered closer to the event, as space allows. FreshGround camping is on sale now for \$90. Camp Aggie camping is on sale now for \$110 for tent plots and \$135 for RV spots. FreshGrass details will be updated on the festival website, freshgrass.com. FreshGrass is held rain or shine.

Images

High-resolution images are available through this link: bit.ly/FG19_1

Sponsorship

FreshGrass 2019 is sponsored by No Depression, The Porches Inn at MASS MoCA, Compass Records, the American Roots Music Program at Berklee College of Music, Circle Strings, EASTMAN, Deering Banjo Company, Girardi Distributors, Berkshire Gas, AccessPlus Communications, and ReverbNation.

About FreshGrass

FreshGrass is committed to preserving, supporting, and creating innovative grassroots music. The FreshGrass Foundation, which co-produces the festival with MASS MoCA, funds the FreshGrass Awards and FreshGrass Presents, creates new music through FreshScores and the FreshGrass Commission, and operates the *No Depression* Fellowship for writers. The foundation operates *No Depression*, the roots music authority both online and in print.

About MASS MoCA

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest (and largest) centers for making, displaying, and enjoying today's most important art, music, dance, theater, film, and video. MASS MoCA's 250,000 sq. ft. of gallery space includes partnerships with Laurie Anderson, the Louise Bourgeois Trust, Jenny Holzer, Anselm Kiefer with the Hall Art Foundation, Sol LeWitt, and James Turrell.

Gallery admission is \$20 for adults, \$18 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. The Hall Art Foundation's Anselm Kiefer exhibition will re-open on May 25. For additional information: 413.662.2111 x1 or visit massmoca.org.