

## **MASS MoCA AWARDED GRANT FROM THE ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION**

### **\$500K Grant Will Support Expansion of Artist Residencies at MASS MoCA**

**NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS — December 16, 2020** — The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a \$500,000 grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in support of expanding performing and visual arts residencies at the museum. In response to the new needs of artists during the COVID-19 pandemic, the museum is seeking to quadruple its Artist-in-Residency Program in the coming year, increasing the number of residences from 3-6 per year to 2-4 per month.

“As the pandemic has shuttered studios and rehearsal facilities and cancelled most live performances, artists are in particular need of safe spaces and support systems to help them continue to develop and refine their work,” said Joseph Thompson, Founding Director of MASS MoCA. “MASS MoCA’s own performing arts program has been significantly scaled back, and so we now have a number of resources available to redirect to residency programs and are looking to increase our role as an incubator of ideas during this difficult time.” Tracy Moore, the Museum’s Interim Director, added, “We’re grateful to the Mellon Foundation for its continued support, and for helping us achieve our goal of quadrupling the number of artists who come to MASS MoCA to evolve existing work or develop new ideas and collaborations on our stages and in our rehearsal halls.”

For over two decades, MASS MoCA has been one of the nation’s most productive venues for nurturing and facilitating the creation of new art — especially art which requires sophisticated equipment, generous spaces, and extended time — by offering excellent infrastructure and top-notch professional support and facilities. Because of MASS MoCA’s tremendous size and unique location in a sprawling complex of factory buildings, the museum is able to stay in partial operation while so many venues throughout the country remain closed because of the pandemic. With the adoption of new health and safety measures, MASS MoCA continues to employ highly skilled performing and visual arts professionals and to support artists in the creation of new work. Select upcoming artists-in-residence include Bearthoven, Found Sound Nation, Bobbi-Jene Smith and Derrick Belcham, Shara Nova and Helga Davis, Treya Lam, Miguel Anggelo, L’Rain, Peter Glazer, Zoe Scofield, and Martha Clarke.

“Since the pandemic started and the events and festivals we normally organize have been postponed, my department has been looking for ways to continue to share our state-of-the-art rehearsal and workshop spaces, scalable stages, and skilled production and technical staff,” said Sue Killam, Director of Performing Arts and Film at MASS MoCA. “Over the past 20 years, our unique assets have helped over 162 different projects and at least 3000 artists – including William Kentridge; David Byrne, Annie-B Parson, and Alex Timbers; Taylor Mac; and Bill T. Jones. Artists workshop and develop ideas, test out technical details, grow their works, and we are thrilled to be able to welcome even more artists to our residency program in the coming year.”

This grant supports the continuation of MASS MoCA’s Confluence Artist Residency Program, which bridges the visual and performing arts. These residencies serve to advance deep programmatic collaborations between visual and performing artists, encouraging the expansion of their practices in new interdisciplinary ways.

"My residency at MASS MoCA was invaluable," said documentarian Sam Green, whose documentary *A Thousand Thoughts: A Live Documentary by Sam Green and Kronos Quartet* follows the Kronos Quartet's momentous career and was edited during a residency at MASS MoCA. "Being in the same place with the Kronos Quartet for a week was exactly what my team needed to get over some hurdles and get closer to finishing the project. It was extremely helpful to test out the piece with an audience and learn what works and what doesn't. It was a great experience for us to be in residence at MASS MoCA—not just in terms of progress on the project, but also the pleasure of being at the museum surrounded by a supportive creative community for an extended period of time."

MASS MoCA is developing new digital engagement strategies around the residency program, increasing access to the creative process and supporting artists in sharing their work with the public through digital platforms, an endeavor now more relevant than ever.

### **About MASS MoCA**

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest centers for making and enjoying today's most evocative art. With vast galleries and a stunning collection of indoor and outdoor performing arts venues, MASS MoCA is able to embrace all forms of art: music, sculpture, dance, film, painting, photography, theater, and new, boundary-crossing works of art that defy easy classification. Much of the work we show in our light-filled spaces, on our technically sophisticated stages, and within our lovely network of late 19th-century courtyards is made here during extended fabrication and rehearsal residencies that bring hundreds of the world's most brilliant and innovative artists to North Adams all year round. For more about MASS MoCA, visit [www.massmoca.org](http://www.massmoca.org).