

MASS MoCA announces October and November programming, including exhibitions, performances, and artist talks

Featuring the exhibitions *Ceramics in the Expanded Field* and *Yto Barrada: Ways to Baffle the Wind* and a new opera from *esperanza spalding* and *Wayne Shorter*

North Adams, MA, September 15, 2021—MASS MoCA announces October and November programming featuring performances, artist talks, and two exhibitions—***Ceramics in the Expanded Field*** and ***Yto Barrada: Ways to Baffle the Wind***—on view beginning October 16 and November 20, respectively.

Artist talks and performances include a conversation with exhibiting artist **Marcos Ramirez ERRE** on transnationality and the rich culture of the USA-Mexico border region; composer and bassist **Michael Olatuja's** *Lagos Pepper Soup*, an exuberant blend of African folk dance music and contemporary soul; avant-garde percussionist **Eli Keszler**; and **Yuka Honda** and **Susie Ibarra's** *Fragility Etudes*, a series of musical compositions inspired by natural environment studies. **Wayne Shorter** and **esperanza spalding** will be in residency working on *Iphigenia*, a modern operatic re-imagining of the ancient tale of a daughter sacrificed to the gods. The museum will host two preview performances before the production debuts as a traveling operatic performance later this year.

Ticketed events go on sale to MASS MoCA members beginning Thursday, September 16, at 12pm. General on sale begins Friday, September 17, at 12pm.

Beginning September 21, MASS MoCA will be open Wednesdays–Mondays, 10am–5pm, and closed on Tuesdays. Timed entry reservations are encouraged.

EXHIBITIONS

***Ceramics in the Expanded Field* | On view beginning October 16**

Featuring eight artists who are changing the way we think of ceramics by creating ambitious, large-scale, and innovative installations, *Ceramics in the Expanded Field* presents the work of artists who go beyond treating ceramics as a discrete medium and instead use clay as one material or medium among many, from neon to paint and video to performance. The exhibition will include five new installations made for MASS MoCA, including new work by Nicole Cherubini, Armando Guadalupe Cortés, Francesca DiMattio, Anina Major, and Linda Sormin. Works from Jessica Jackson Hutchins, Kahlil Robert Irving, and Rose B. Simpson will also be featured. While some of the featured artists were trained with a traditional ceramic focus and others arrived at the medium from other disciplines, all have utilized MASS MoCA's expansive galleries to push clay in new directions in *Ceramics in the Expanded Field*. At the same time, they all connect their work to the complex material and social histories of pottery as well as other crafts that lie outside fine art definitions. *Ceramics in the Expanded Field* is curated by Susan Cross.

Generous support for Ceramics in the Expanded Field is provided in part by the Artist's Resource Trust (A.R.T.) Fund, a fund of Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, and the Ford Family Foundation. Additional support is provided by Patricia Sweetow Gallery. We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

Yto Barrada: *Ways to Baffle the Wind* | On view beginning November 20

Yto Barrada: Ways to Baffle the Wind is an exhibition of new and recent work—sculpture, textile, films, and games—assembled to model, to parody, and to learn from attempts to regulate and organize nature. *Ways to Baffle the Wind*, Barrada’s exhibition extends the artist’s study of the tensions between personal experiences and scientific studies of our environments, both natural and constructed, and human interventions in matter and movement beyond our control. The exhibition is the product of collaboration between MASS MoCA and Rivers Institute for Contemporary Art & Thought in New Orleans, and foregrounds Barrada’s film, “Tree Identification for Beginners” researched in the archives of Amistad Research Center, also in New Orleans. *Ways to Baffle the Wind* is guest-curated by Andrea Andersson from the Rivers Institute.

PROGRAMMING

3 Familiar Views from/at the USA-Mexico Border | October 7 at 6pm EST

Exhibiting artist Marcos Ramírez ERRE is joined in conversation by his two brothers: poet and visual artist Omar Ramírez-Pimienta and Professor Juan Carlos Ramírez-Pimienta, expert on border culture, as well as the *narcocorrída*—a genre of ballad inspired by the drug trade. Together they share their intimate knowledge of transnationality, and the rich culture of the border region, bringing us a fuller picture through family stories from the Colonia Libertad neighborhood of Tijuana and their varied artistic and academic studies of the U.S. Mexico border and its development since the 80s.

This event will be streamed live on MASS MoCA's YouTube channel.

Opening Reception: *Ceramics in the Expanded Field* | October 16 at 5:30pm

An opening reception for the group exhibition *Ceramics in the Expanded Field*. A performance by artist Armando Guadalupe Cortés will take place at 6:30pm in the galleries.

Tickets \$20, free for MASS MoCA members.

Michael Olatuja: *Lagos Pepper Soup* | October 16 at 8pm

London-born, Lagos, Nigeria-raised, New York-based composer, bandleader, and bassist Michael Olatuja blends the sounds of these three cities into what he describes as a “cinematic Afrobeat,” with a high-energy blend of jazz and funk. One of the most inventive and in-demand bassists, Olatuja has worked and recorded with the likes of Dianna Ross, Stevie Wonder, Shakira, and Angelique Kidjo, among others. In support of his second solo album, *Lagos Pepper Soup*, Olatuja will perform a blend of African folk dance music and contemporary soul with a full band.

Tickets start at \$12.

Eli Keszler | October 23 at 8pm

Avant-garde percussionist, composer, and artist Eli Keszler “is experimental electronic music’s favorite drummer” (*Pitchfork*). Keszler’s live performances often incorporate his sound installations and blur the boundaries between composition and improvisation. From intricate and eerie to dazzling chaos, this virtuosic percussionist brings surreal sound to life.

Tickets start at \$12.

esperanza spalding & Wayne Shorter: *Iphigenia* | November 5 & 6 at 8pm

A modern operatic re-imagining of the ancient tale of a daughter sacrificed to the gods, created by visionary composer Wayne Shorter and librettist and performer esperanza spalding. Against a set designed by luminary architect Frank Gehry, classical and jazz forms collide in a full orchestral score, while a deeply poetic and radical libretto sees Iphigenia herself multiply and stare down opera’s history. Preview performances at MASS MoCA will take place following a two-week residency at the museum and before *Iphigenia* debuts as a traveling operatic performance.

Nine vocalists, including spalding, will lead a local 10-person chorus and chamber orchestra, accompanied by Brian Blade, John Patitucci, and Danilo Pérez from the Wayne Shorter Quartet, and Jeff “Tain” Watts. The production is directed by Obie Award-winner Lileana Blain-Cruz, and conducted by Clark Rundell with scenic design by Frank Gehry, costume design by Montana Levi-Blanco, lighting design by Jen Schriever, and sound design by Mark Grey. A cappella vocal arrangements are by Caroline Shaw, and additional text by Joy Harjo, Safiya Sinclair, and Ganavya Doraiswamy. *Iphigenia* is produced by Jeff Tang (Executive Creative Producer), Cath Brittan (Producer), and Mara Isaacs (Octopus Theatricals, Tour Producer). The opera is made possible by Real Magic, a company created by spalding and Tang, to develop *Iphigenia* in an environment of radical experimentation and open collaboration.

Tickets start at \$20.

Co-commissioned by Cal Performances at the University of California, Berkeley; The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, DC); The Broad Stage (Los Angeles), ArtsEmerson (Boston); Carolina Performing Arts (Chapel Hill, NC); and MASS MoCA (North Adams, MA).

Generous support for Iphigenia is provided by the Ford Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Alexander Leff, Thomas M. Neff, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, New Music USA, and everyone who gave to the Iphigenia crowdfunding campaign.

***Fragility Etudes*, Music by Susie Ibarra & Film by Yuka Honda | November 20 at 8pm**

Fragility Etudes features a series of musical compositions by composer and percussionist Susie Ibarra. The pieces are studies into a world of sound that reflect humanity's interdependence and mutual existence alongside the natural environment. Ibarra’s dynamic score explores this interconnectedness through polyrhythms and concepts from the physics of glass. Ibarra's research in glass physics and music was conducted in collaboration with physicist Bernard Grossman. *Fragility Etudes* will be performed by an ensemble of renowned musicians conducted by Ibarra.

Tickets start at \$12.

Commissioned by Asia Society Museum, New York, for the inaugural Asia Society Triennial 2021: We Do Not Dream Alone.

Programming at MASS MoCA is made possible in part by the Barr Foundation, Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, Mass Cultural Council, and the Joe Thompson "Yes" Fund.

MASS MoCA's Artist-in-Residence program is supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Additional support is provided by the Arthur F. & Alice E. Adams Charitable Foundation and the New England Foundation for the Arts through the New England Arts Resilience Fund, part of the United States Regional Arts Resilience Fund, an initiative of the U.S. Regional Arts Organizations and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with major funding from the federal CARES Act from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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 information about MASS MoCA, visit www.massmoca.org.

For more information, please contact:

Christian Barclay
Communications Manager, MASS MoCA
cbarclay@massmoca.org