

MASS MoCA



Image courtesy of the artist

Daniela Rivera: Hacia Cuando (To When)
**Reimagines Pre-Columbian Fresco Traditions Through
Interactive Installation and Performance**

**On view July 11, 2026–June 13, 2027
Building 4.3**

In Conversation: Daniela Rivera and curator Evan Garza, Saturday, October 10, 2pm
Hacia Cuando: An Opera, Saturday, October 10, 1pm & 4pm

[Press Images](#)

North Adams, MA, May 11, 2026 — Chilean-born and Boston-based artist Daniela Rivera creates a newly commissioned exhibition *Hacia Cuando (To When)*, featuring a large, inclined platform floor comprised of handmade tiles fabricated in pre-Hispanic fresco traditions, an installation which operates simultaneously as painting, sculpture, and sonic device. The exhibition focuses on the migration of histories, materials, cultural objects, narratives, practices, and myths by addressing political, art historical, and material histories. Through her reinvigoration of craft tradition, Rivera aims to question history and address the historical, cultural, and colonial narratives present in these materials and their varied places of origin.

By shifting the fresco's location from its typical placement on the wall to the floor, and by hand-painting the tiles to resemble parquet flooring, Rivera creates a visual illusion which simulates volume and points to the critical inquiry and ethics of simulation.

"Simulation has always been a strategy of subversion and resistance in Latin America," Rivera explains. "The history of fresco is complex, as it developed across multiple locations from the 4th century BCE to the 1st century CE — ranging from classical Greek antiquity to pre-Columbian era Mexico. Drawn to the fresco for its ancestral history, I chose to specifically focus the exhibition on Teotihuacan fresco traditions, which I have been learning about and studying in Oaxaca, Mexico."

Curator Evan Garza adds: "Conceptually informed by matters of migration and materially rooted in pre-Columbian building techniques indigenous to the Americas, Rivera's project for MASS MoCA is both about movement and how we are moved by the world around us. *Hacia Cuando (To When)* has been shaped by the artist to reflect a recalibration of cultural heritage which prioritizes process over notions of historical authorship. Through this exhibition Rivera invites us to question the linearity and fixedness of history, cultural significance, and materiality."

Rivera's floor fresco will gently tilt upwards from the existing floor, decentering the physical experience of the space as well as upending traditional expectations of museum behavior by inviting visitors to walk across the artist's handmade floor. This act of involuntary mark-making by visitors is a collaborative exchange with Rivera. The void made by the floor's incline will act as a resonance space, amplifying the sounds through contact microphones as viewers make their way across the platform's surface — creating further evidence of transitory and migratory pathways.

As a means of activating Rivera's resonant fresco floor as a musical instrument, in October 2026 Rivera and MASS MoCA will present a new opera work in the gallery using the amplified sounds of both visitors and performers, combining recordings from visitors' migrating across the surface with the sound of performers' voices and movement. *Hacia Cuando: An Opera* will feature collaborators Javier Gustavo Bustos (Buenos Aires, Argentina), Jenny Olivia Johnson (Los Angeles, California), and Sebastian Muirhead (Santiago, Chile). In addition, fresco-making workshops will be held with Rivera to keep traditional craft methodologies alive from place to place and generation to generation.

About the Artist

Born in Santiago, Chile, Daniela Rivera received her BFA from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in 1996 and her MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts, Boston, in 2006. She is currently Professor of Studio Art at Wellesley College. She has exhibited widely in Latin American cities including Santiago, Chile, as well as in the United States at the Davis Museum, the Fitchburg Art Museum and the MFA. She was awarded residencies at Surf Point, Proyecto ACE in Buenos Aires, Headlands Center for the Arts, and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She was the recipient of notable fellowships and grants including The Rappaport Prize, Now + There, the Massachusetts Cultural Council Award, VSC, the National Association of Latino Arts and Culture, the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, The

FONDART in Chile, and the St. Botolph Club Foundation Distinguished Artist Award. Recent exhibitions include: *Donde El Cielo Toca La Tierra / Where the Sky Touches The Earth* at Matucana 100 in Santiago, Chile, *Praxis of Local Knowledge* at the San Francisco Art Commission, and *New Worlds: Women to Watch* at the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

About MASS MoCA

MASS MoCA is a contemporary art museum that emphasizes bold creative exploration and fosters surprising connections between people every day. It upholds artistic freedom and is an indispensable home for artists who stretch toward what has yet to be created. From its beginnings as the major textile mill Arnold Print Works in the mid-19th century, to its days as the Sprague Electric Company in the mid-20th century, to its current existence as a globally renowned, contemporary art museum and fabrication center, the MASS MoCA campus has a rich history of serving as an economic engine of the City of North Adams and the surrounding region. With vast galleries, artist studios and a variety of indoor and outdoor stages, MASS MoCA is able to embrace art in all forms. For more information visit massmoca.org or follow on Instagram at [@massmoca](https://www.instagram.com/massmoca).

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