

MASS MoCA ANNOUNCES SPRING EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS, OPENING FROM MARCH TO MAY 2019

NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS—Each season MASS MoCA offers a powerful range of visual arts presentations that leverages its 250,000 square feet of gallery space, on-site fabrication capabilities, and adventurous spirit. The Spring 2019 season is no exception. Among the highlights are artist **Trenton Doyle Hancock**'s largest solo project to-date; the most comprehensive survey of works by artist **Cauleen Smith**; a site-specific installation by celebrated musician **Annie Lennox**; and an **expansive group exhibition** that examines the human condition in this particular socio-political moment. All of these exhibitions feature new works and debuts by the featured artists, and provide audiences with in-depth views of some of the most topical dialogues and innovations in contemporary art.

Spring 2019 also marks MASS MoCA's 20th anniversary, and the institution will celebrate on May 25, Memorial Day weekend, with a reception that celebrates three of its exhibitions, a block party, a benefit performance by Annie Lennox, and a rollicking concert — events that speak to MASS MoCA's equally robust visual and performing arts programs and that activate its vibrant 16-acre campus.

Further details on each of the exhibitions follow below. Information on accompanying public programs and events will be announced in the coming weeks and months. Images and additional relevant materials are available on request.

Trenton Doyle Hancock: Critical Mass **Opening March 9, 2019**

In his largest solo project to-date, artist Trenton Doyle Hancock invites visitors into the layered and complex universe of the Mounds, a mythology he's been developing for more than two decades and which he tells through his wide-ranging creative practice. Occupying the whole of Building 5—MASS MoCA's football field-scaled gallery—*Trenton Doyle Hancock: Critical Mass* includes new large-scale, interactive sculptures, a selection of paintings and drawings, the artist's dolls and costumes, and the first pages of a graphic novel that he is currently developing—reproduced in a larger-than-life, 16-foot format— all of which highlight the incredible depth of his artistic output. Together, the featured works capture the stories and experiences of the Mounds, peaceful creatures whose existence is under constant threat. Melding the visual vocabulary of comics, superheroes, and pop culture with the formal qualities of fine art media, Hancock creates work that is deeply accessible and yet speaks to some of the most complex issues of our time, including moral relativism, racism, and the dynamics of power and authority. Throughout the duration of the exhibition, these themes will be further illuminated, and the work further activated by a series of performances—the roster for which will be announced in the coming weeks.

Suffering from Realness **Opening April 13, 2019**

Realness in the 21st century is an increasingly complicated concept. In this deeply political exhibition, MASS MoCA Curator Denise Markonish brings together 16 contemporary artists to examine the fluidity of truth and the rituals performed by media, vehicles of authority, and the public, to establish what is “realness,” and in turn, its counterpart, “fakeness”. Through a wide range of media and creative

approaches, the featured artists examine the varied and complicated facets that shape our sense of reality, including notions and experiences of racism, violence, gender, the body, war, and responsibility. Many of the artists are creating new work especially for the exhibition, including Aziz+Cucher, Joey Fauerso, MPA, Allison Schulnik, Keith Sklar, and Adriana Corral and Vincent Valdez, who are creating an installation together. Among the artists presenting recent work are Cassils, Jeffrey Gibson, Hayv Kahraman, Titus Kaphar, Jennifer Karady, Robert Longo, Christopher Mir, Wangechi Mutu, and Robert Taplin. Despite the unsettling happenings that have borne the inspiration for the exhibition, the featured works provide important glimmers of hope and optimism, rooted in moments of tenderness and the power of collective action. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue that includes writings from the exhibition's artists.

Cauleen Smith: We Already Have What We Need

Opening May 25, 2019

Trained as a filmmaker, Cauleen Smith's wide-ranging practice explores "the fragile, the forgotten, the flawed, and the fugitive." Her subjects range from the African Diaspora and the image of black women in film to the music and legacies of Sun Ra and John Coltrane to the post-hurricane landscape of New Orleans, among so much more. Spanning the entirety of MASS MoCA's first-floor galleries, Smith's exhibition, her most comprehensive to-date, will feature a new immersive installation, a survey of her videos made over the last decade, new textiles, works on paper, and a selection of banners from her "In the Wake" series, featured in the 2017 Whitney Biennial. At the heart of the exhibition is Smith's new video installation, which meditates on humanity's relationship to the environment by projecting images of flora, fauna, and man-made detritus onto twenty-foot tall textile screens. Live-feed projections of visitors and objects in the gallery transform spectators into both subjects and collaborators, encouraging further consideration of the subject. Also debuting as part of the exhibition is Smith's newest *Reading List*, which focuses on the intersections of feminism, cultural production, and theories of "black fugitivity." Featuring drawings of book covers, the *Reading List* proposes a new canon of must-reads. Experienced together, the works in the exhibition highlight Smith's expansive oeuvre and underscore her innate ability to capture and speak to some of the today's most critical societal challenges.

Annie Lennox: Now I Let You Go...

Opening May 25, 2019

Celebrated singer-songwriter Annie Lennox will create a site-specific installation comprised of hundreds of artifacts culled from a collection of memorabilia, found objects, and personal affects. The exhibition will be accompanied by a printed "field guide" in which Lennox will annotate many of the objects in the installation, identifying them and adding recollections, personal stories, and provenance. Of the installation conception, Lennox says, "We interact with an infinity of objects from birth to the grave. Over time our 'belongings' become more steeped and resonant with memory and nostalgia. In many ways, personal objects express aspects of who we are—our identity: our values: our statements and choices." The exhibition will kick-off with an intimate benefit performance, at which Lennox will share stories and play songs.

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

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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.

We thrive on helping artists make work that is fresh, forward-looking, and engaging of the mind, body, and spirit...but we also believe that both our guest artists and audiences should enjoy their time with us. Our campus features free parking, affordably priced cafés, a full-service restaurant, delicious ice cream, great coffee, and an innovative microbrewery that spotlights locally malted grains and hops grown in our own Berkshire valley.

Visual Arts

MASS MoCA exhibits art by both well-known and emerging artists, focusing on large-scale, immersive installations that would be impossible to realize in conventional museums. The broad-shouldered, raw industrial character of our soaring galleries (of which we have 250,000 square feet) has proven both inspiring and liberating to artists.

Performing Arts

MASS MoCA presents more than 75 performances year-round, including contemporary dance, alternative cabaret, world music dance parties, indie-rock, progressive bluegrass, outdoor silent films with live music, documentaries, and avant-garde theater. Indeed, the word “museum” in our name is misleading because fully 50% of MASS MoCA's programmatic resources, staffing, and emotional bandwidth is devoted to the performing arts, and our commitment extends to hosting work-in-progress showings, residency workshops, and support of experimental R&D.

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