



PORTLAND MUSEUM *of* ART

NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

Portland Museum of Art Names Curator for 2018 Biennial

Portland, Maine (March 24, 2017)— The Portland Museum of Art is pleased to announce that Nat May is the guest curator for the 2018 Portland Museum of Art Biennial. Nat draws from a deep familiarity with Maine's contemporary arts landscape through his 13 years as [Executive Director of SPACE Gallery](#), one of the state's leading venues for contemporary, emerging, and unconventional

artists, and will bring together work from living artists with connections to the state for the exhibition. The Biennial opens on January 26, 2018.

“From our earliest conversations, Nat has impressed the staff at the PMA with the depth of his thoughtfulness and his commitment to being inclusive. His research is meticulous, his eye is keen, and his curiosity is unbounded. We are so honored to work with him,” says Deputy Director and Robert and Elizabeth Nanovic Chief Curator Jessica May (no relation), who curated the 2013 PMA Biennial.

A Cape Elizabeth native, Nat was a founding member of the [Bakery Photo Collective](#) and has also served as a Board member at [Creative Portland](#) and Portland Arts and Culture Alliance. Since 2014, he has served as a founding member of Common Field, a nationwide network of contemporary, experimental, and noncommercial visual art spaces, and as a founding Board member at [Hewnoaks Artist Colony](#) in Lovell, Maine.

“I am flattered by the invitation to work with the Portland Museum of Art on the 2018 Biennial,” says May. “The Maine arts community is rich and varied, and there are so many talented artists to consider. I am thrilled to have this new opportunity to invite conversation about contemporary art.”

The PMA’s Judy and Leonard Lauder Director Mark Bessire adds: “Through my time at the PMA, working with the city and community in Portland, and my work on the Board of Advisors at SPACE Gallery, I’ve gotten to know Nat well and admire the way he approaches art. I can’t wait to see what he does with the Biennial—it’s going to be something truly special.”

This is the 10th Biennial exhibition at the PMA and the second Biennial that will be organized by an independent curator, who will spend nearly a year visiting artist studios. Funded through the generous bequest of William E. Thon, the PMA Biennial is intended to highlight artists with meaningful connections to Maine and enrich the cultural lives of the people of the state. Inspired by his own experience and love of biennials, Thon entrusted the PMA with the means to offer rich contemporary art experiences to its audiences. *You Can’t Get There From Here: The 2015 Portland Museum of Art Biennial* was curated by Alison Ferris of Edgcomb, Maine.

The *2018 Portland Museum of Art Biennial* is made possible by the William E. and Helen E. Thon Endowment Fund.

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