

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ST. PETE

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG (MFA) HAS UNVEILED A CAPTIVATING LINEUP FOR THE UPCOMING FALL 2023 PROGRAMMING SEASON, SHOWCASING AN EXPANSIVE NEW EXHIBITION AND EXCITING ARRAY OF EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

The Nature of Art exhibition will highlight exceptional works from the MFA Collection while related programs feature dynamic curators, renowned artists, art historians, and entrepreneurs.



ST. PETERSBURG, FL (August 25, 2023) – [The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg](#) (MFA), is excited to announce the 2023 Fall Programming Season to include *The Nature of Art* exhibition and a myriad of related educational programs featuring an exceptional lineup of presenters and subjects. The museum continues with popular series, including *The Story of Art*, *Museum Studies Institute*, and *Yoga at the MFA*, while introducing a new *Art on Film* series. The exhibition and the programs enable attendees to explore the intricacies of the MFA Collection, acquire diverse viewpoints from specialists, and contemplate the effects of contemporary issues on the art museum environment and our individual experiences.



The MFA has also reanimated the Mary Alice McClendon Conservatory as a platform for art and community. "By reimagining the Conservatory as a dynamic "Third Space" for people to gather, interact, and relax, we're able to expand our mission of bringing art to the widest possible audience, without any barriers to access," said Darcy Schuller, Chief Strategy Officer. "The gorgeous rays of light and reflections of color beaming from Christian Sampson's *Tempus volat, hora fugit* installation provides the perfect environment, not only to contemplate celestial movement inspired by the art but for enjoying a bite to eat at the Café, unwinding with friends and family, and browsing a selection of books and objects that allow you to extend your visit by taking the mission home with you." The MFA Shop has relocated to a new flexible-use space that the museum plans to expand with the opening of *The Nature of Art*.



The Nature of Art



As an encyclopedic museum, the MFA is dedicated to the eternal preservation of art objects. Doing so also allows the museum to collectively “interpret” these objects and to use them as prompts to engage, educate, and excite the community. This fall, the MFA is taking a sweeping look at the subject of “nature” across a collection spanning 5,000 years. *The Nature of Art* exhibition looks at the disparate ways humans have engaged in artistic expression to comprehend our environment, mediate our relationship with nature, and attain a deeper understanding of our role within the natural world. Spanning from the prosaic aspects of resource management to the powerful exploration of the spiritual connection between nature and art, artists have employed a diverse array of creative approaches to shed light on this theme. Encompassing a spectrum that ranges from a nearly 5,000-year-old Neolithic Chinese ceramic vessel to a sculpture crafted in response to a recent hurricane, and spanning decorative arts, video, and landscape painting, *The Nature of Art* will present an extensive selection of extraordinary objects that offer a profound perspective on this expansive subject.

For the first time, the MFA will activate both the special exhibition galleries in the Hough Wing and the MFA Collection galleries in the Volk Wing around a central theme, in this case, nature. The connected ideas generated from *The Nature of Art* will traverse throughout the MFA Campus, sparking conversations with works in the collection and allowing visitors to experience them through a new lens. Living artists will enliven the collection and spark engaging dialogues with the works of artists from the past.

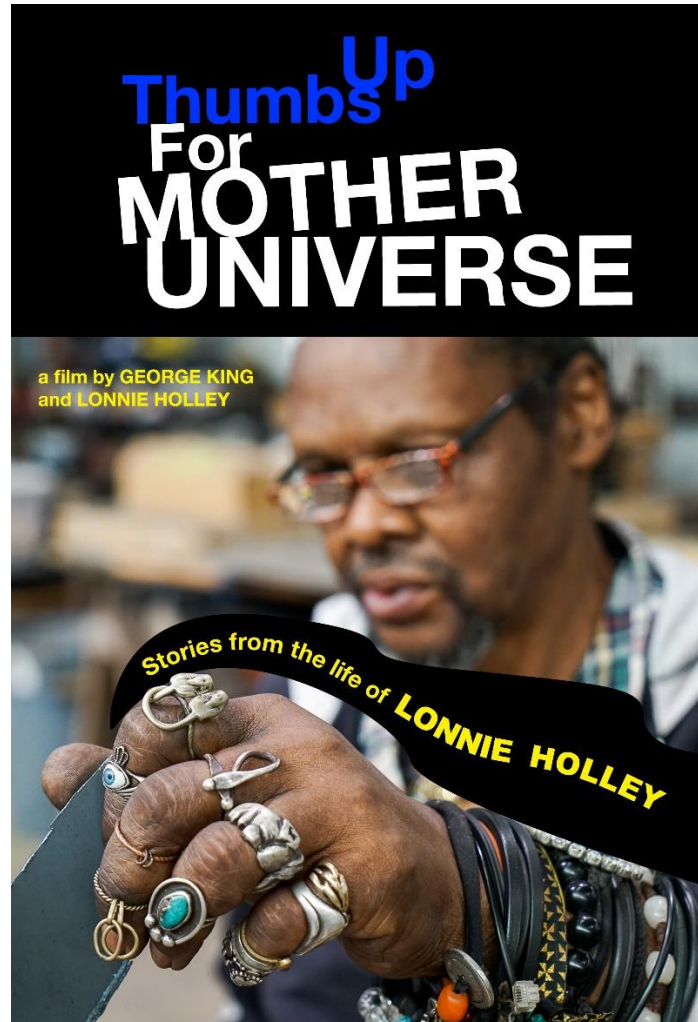
"This fall marks a transformative time at the MFA," noted Anne-Marie Russell, Executive Director & CEO. "Over the last six months, our curators have taken a fresh look at our collections, resulting in new discoveries, new scholarship, and new perspectives. *The Nature of Art* exhibition will feature works from the MFA Collection that have never been on view to the public, as well as familiar favorites chosen by contemporary artists, prompting fresh interpretations. Extending these ideas throughout the Campus will infuse new vitality into the collection galleries. Whether you are a long-standing Member or a first-time visitor, this exhibition will allow you to explore works in the collection through a fresh new lens."

This exhibition will be on view to the public from **Saturday, October 28, 2023 through Sunday, April 14, 2024.**

The Fall 2023 Programming Season

Art on Film

Through this series, we explore the intricate interplay between visual art and cinematic storytelling. Art on Film features thoughtfully curated films, documentaries, and audiovisual presentations that offer a dynamic and immersive experience.



- [An Evening with Lonnie Holley](#)

Join us for a screening of *Thumbs Up for Mother Universe: Stories from the Life of Lonnie Holley*. This 58-minute documentary film by George King covers the life and work of Alabama visual artist and musician Lonnie Holley over the course of 22 years. A captivating conversation between Lonnie Holley and George King will immediately follow the screening. Holley's works are in the collections of renowned museums across the globe, including distinguished institutions like The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the National Gallery of Art. The MFA is honored to hold more than a dozen of Holley's works in the collection, the initial acquisition dating back to 2007.

Thursday, September 7, 2023

6:00 pm–8:00 pm

The Story of Art

This series focuses on the story of art history, one that is continually being retold as we discover new things and look afresh at the familiar. Join MFA curators on a journey to learn more about our collection, contextualized with other objects from around the world, as we take a grand tour through the story of art.



- **[The Nature of Art: “America” Personified](#)**

Senior Curator of Collections & Exhibitions Dr. Stanton Thomas

In conjunction with the upcoming *The Nature of Art* exhibition, this program will examine ways in which U.S. and European artists gave physical form to this so-called “new world.” Dr. Stanton Thomas will explore an array of imaginative depictions of the natural terrain, unraveling their intricate meanings and cultural nuances.

Thursday, September 14, 2023

6:00 pm–7:00 pm

- **[Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists](#)**

Senior Curator of Contemporary Art Katherine Pill

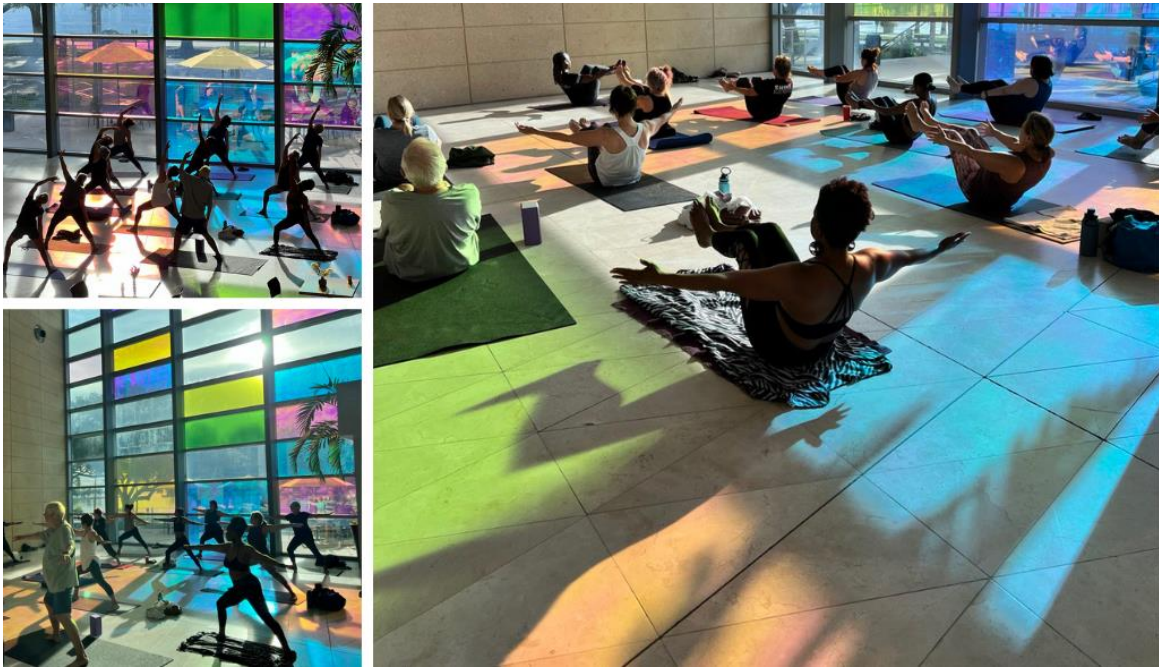
This provocative talk by Senior Curator of Contemporary Art Katherine Pill examines art historian Linda Nochlin’s 1971 essay, an epic examination of the institutional obstacles that prevented women from succeeding in the arts. This talk celebrates and contextualizes a recent reattribution of a significant artwork in the MFA Collection.

Thursday, September 21, 2023

6:00 pm–7:00 pm

Picture of Health

Picture of Health is a comprehensive initiative that explores interconnected notions of well-being transcending geographical and temporal boundaries, leveraging the MFA Collection as a starting point. This program fosters a holistic investigation of health, encompassing cognitive, physical, physiological, emotional, civic, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions, all with the aim of nurturing a sense of wellness within our community.



- [Yoga at the MFA](#)**

Bathed in the vibrant colors and light of Christian Sampson’s site-responsive installation [Tempus volat, hora fugit](#), Yoga at the MFA takes place every Thursday in September and October from 8 am to 9 am in the beautiful Mary Alice McClendon Conservatory. These sessions offer a serene and rejuvenating morning of stretching, breathing exercises, meditation, and mindfulness.

Every Thursday in September and October
8:00 am–9:00 am
- [Autumnal Equinox](#)**

Christian Sampson

We welcome MFA Members to join us for an exclusive opening reception for the third installation of [Tempus volat, hora fugit](#) by artist Christian Sampson. Meet the artist, enjoy coffee and pastries, and marvel at the beautiful play of light and color that will fill the Mary Alice McClendon Conservatory.

Saturday, September 23, 2023
8:00 am–10:00 am
- [Still Striking | Creativity & Aging](#)**

Dr. Doug Dreishpoon

Art historian, curator, and critic Dr. Douglas Dreishpoon will elaborate on some of the central issues—cultural, economic, political, and social—surrounding the topic of creativity and aging. He will discuss the late work of selected painters, musicians, and dancers, including Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Louise Bourgeois, Helen Frankenthaler, Willem de Kooning, Tony Bennett, Miles Davis, and Merce Cunningham.

Thursday, September 28, 2023
6:00 pm–7:00 pm

Museum Studies Institute

The Museum Studies Institute is the MFA's internal "think tank" that encompasses all the intellectual and creative imaginings generated from, and orbiting around, an encyclopedic art museum. Art museums preserve things—art objects that represent the highest aspirations of humankind—in perpetuity. Yet we do so amid the reality of a complex and ever-changing world. Lectures by renowned experts on the history of art museums, conversations on engaging topics, symposia examining current challenges—from climate change to inclusivity to new media—allow us to open our internal discussions to engage our community in the conversation.



- **[The Nature of Art | The Overview Effect](#)**

Jane Poynter

The Overview Effect is part of a series of public programming events designed to illuminate our next exhibition, *The Nature of Art*, which looks at the myriad ways in which humans have used art to navigate and mediate our environment. Jane Poynter, co-founder of Space Perspective, will present a riveting presentation on the innovative approaches of humans to act as both stewards and survivors of our planet.

Thursday, October 19, 2023

6:00 pm–7:00 pm

- **[The Art of the Americas](#)**

Andrew James Hamilton

Andrew James Hamilton, associate curator of art of the Americas at the Art Institute of Chicago and author of the highly acclaimed book, *Scale & the Incas* (Princeton 2018), recounts how this Andean civilization created a host of fantastically scaled objects as a way of communicating meaning in their multi-lingual empire.

Thursday, October 26, 2023

6:00 pm–7:00 pm

Artist Talks

These engaging discussions provide a platform for artists, both emerging and established, to intimately share their creative journey, inspirations, and artistic philosophies with our community. This series offers a unique opportunity for art enthusiasts to connect directly with creators, fostering a deeper understanding of the artistic process and the stories behind the artwork.



- [Artist Talk | Jose Alvarez \(D.O.P.A.\)](#)

Globally renowned and celebrated for his exquisitely crafted lush and brilliant works, Jose Alvarez (D.O.P.A.) brings an extraordinary life story to a rich and compelling body of work in a variety of media. Born Deyvi Orangel Peña Arteaga, using his moniker Jose Alvarez (D.O.P.A.), creates paintings/collages on mica, videos, installations, and performances, through which he breaks down belief systems into intersecting components of science, spirituality, and mysticism.

Thursday, November 9, 2023

6:00 pm–7:00 pm

To learn more about each of these programs, visit <https://mfastpete.org/programs/adult-programs/>

IMAGES

From left to right, top to bottom.

Page 1: Lonnie Holley; Louise Bourgeois; Jane Poynter, Jose Alvarez, Christian Sampons's *Tempus volat, hora fugit*; Andrew James Hamilton

Page 2: MFA Mary Alice McClendon Conservatory; MFA Shop

Page 3: Georgia O'Keeffe, American, 1887-1986, *Grey Hills Painted Red, New Mexico* (detail), 1930, Oil on canvas, Anonymous gift

Page 4: Poster for *Thumbs Up for Mother Universe: Stories from the Life of Lonnie Holley*

Page 5: J.J. Kändler, German, 1706-1775 for Meissen Porcelain Works, Allegorical Figurine of America, c. 1750, Hard past porcelain, Private Collection; Katherine Read, Scottish, 1723–1779, *Portrait of a Woman*, c. 1765, Pastel on paper, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Ross

Page 6: Yoga at the MFA in the Mary Alice McClendon Conservatory

Page 7: Space Perspective balloon; *Earthrise*, NASA

Page 8: Jose Alvarez (D.O.P.A.) by Zachary Balber

###

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG

The Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg (MFA) has an encyclopedic collection of art from around the globe and across the centuries, with almost 5,000 years of civilization represented in thousands of objects extending from antiquity to the present. The collection includes works by Georgia O’Keefe, Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, Auguste Rodin, Kehinde Wiley, Jacob Lawrence, and many others, as well as ancient Greek and Roman, Asian, African, Art of the Americas and Native American art. The MFA’s photographic collection is one of the largest and well-respected in the Southeast. The museum’s rotating exhibition galleries feature a diverse selection of temporary exhibitions from all over the world, as well as exhibitions curated from the museum’s extensive collection. In addition to its robust exhibition program, the MFA engages the community through exciting public programs and events and serves students through youth programs and a partnership with the Pinellas County School System.

MEDIA CONTACT

Darcy Schuller

dschuller@mfastpete.org

727.896.2667 ext. 252