

The Myth of Normal

a celebration of authentic expression

MassArt
Art Museum

150
YEARS

Freedom Baird M'16

Paul S. Briggs M'16

Nancy Callan '96

Cedric "Vise1" Douglas '11

Rashin Fahandej '06

Kate Finneran '92

Stephen Hamilton '09

Maya Hayuk '91

Gail Hendricks-Hill '75

Steve Locke '97, M'01, H'22

Christian Marclay '80

Chandra Méndez-Ortiz M'05

Tony Millionaire '81

Felipe Ortiz '09

Shannon Palmer '92

Loretta Park M'16

Jack Pierson '86

Luther Price '87

Erin M. Riley '07

Heather Rowe '93

Mark Skwarek '01 and
Joseph Hocking

Mimi Smith '63

Corinne Spencer '10

Richard Streitmatter-Trần '03

Tabboo! '81

Kathleen White '86

Jackie Winsor '65

Ezra Wube '04

Bahar Yürükoğlu M'11

Zhidong Zhang M'20

MassArt Art Museum (MAAM) is pleased to announce *The Myth of Normal: A Celebration of Authentic Expression* exhibition opening Thursday, October 5, 2023 and will be on view through May 19, 2024. Guest-curated by **Mari Spirito '92**, Executive Director, Curator, [Protocinema](#), this exhibition looks at societal norms that have been codified over our

collective past. Focusing on the achievements of MassArt's alumni, this presentation is on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

Gabor Maté's 2022 book, *The Myth of Normal: Trauma, Illness, and Healing in a Toxic Culture*, written with Daniel Maté, examines beliefs and behaviors that are generally considered normal even though they are in fact making us emotionally and physically sick. Because of unhealthy norms, such as overworking, human beings are contorting themselves in order to survive day to day life. The Matés emphasize authentic expression as a means to work towards becoming whole. Building on the Matés' writing, Spirito proposes that art, as a form of self-expression, plays a pivotal role in overall wellness.

The Myth of Normal: A Celebration of Authentic Expression takes over the museum: moving from the exterior to the lobby, foyer, and into both galleries. Three thematic, interrelated groupings guide the visitor. The first zone holds architecture as an extension of the body; the continuum of consciousness; breaking containment; and violence and violation. This section includes artworks by **Kate Finneran '92; Chandra Méndez-Ortiz M'05; Shannon Palmer '92; Heather Rowe '93; and Zhidong Zhang M'20.**

Deeper into Bakalar Gallery, untold and unheard histories are revealed and personal stories interwoven through artwork by **Rashin Fahandej '06; Tony Millionaire '81; Loretta Park M'16; Luther Price '87; Erin M. Riley '07; Corinne Spencer '10; Richard Streitmatter-Trần '03; and Ezra Wube '04.**

Ascending to the Paine Gallery, we encounter the way in which painful experiences can precipitate optimistic innovation and forward-looking dynamism through artwork by **Paul S. Briggs M'16; Nancy Callan '96; Stephen Hamilton '09; Maya Hayuk '91; Gail Hendricks-Hill '75; Christian**

Marclay '80; Felipe Ortiz '09; Jack Pierson '86; Mark Skwarek '01 and Joseph Hocking; Mimi Smith '63; Tabboo! '81; Kathleen White '86; Jackie Winsor '65; and Bahar Yürükoğlu M'11.

On the museum's façade and within the lobby, newly commissioned artworks by **Cedric "Vise1" Douglas '11; Steve Locke '97, M'01, H'22; and Freedom Baird M'16**, challenge existing belief systems and accepted traditions are questioned. Each of the exhibition's artists have put authentic expression into action encouraging mutual re-learning and well-being.

With gratitude to all galleries, artist estates, family, friends, MAAM team, and MassArt students who collaborated with us:

Friedman Benda, NY	Estate of Kathleen White with Rafael Sánchez	Harry Liao
Gallery Kayafas, Boston	Patrick Brennan	Jenn Lima
Gordon Robichaux, NY	Emily Canales	Janna Longacre
Habatat Galleries, MI	Wendy Díaz	Kylie Marden
Ed Halter	Lexie Dowgiert	MassArt Compass Program
KARMA Gallery, NY	Reid Drum	MassArt Print Lab
Laisun Keane, Boston	Emily Elliott	Jonise McCalla
Light Industry, Lisson Gallery, NY	Joy Feasley	Jennifer Nguyen
Martos Gallery, NY	Ethan Flematti	Dylan Reid
Microscope Gallery, NY	Erin Gallagher	Shan Ross
Jeremy Palmer and Family	Arielle Gordon	Faeryn Seddon
Paula Cooper Gallery, NY	Nell Gould	Michelle Stevens
P.P.O.W., NY	Matthew Hinçman	Paul Swenbeck
Schantz Galleries	Brian Hone	Aryn Tedstone
Trần Thị Thu Trang	Elodie Hornedo	Willow Trodden
	Gabby Kay	Lisa Tung
	Aleks Laffey	Chloé Zaug