

# PS1

## MoMA PS1 ANNOUNCES NEW PROGRAMMING FOR OUTDOOR COURTYARD FEATURING PARTICIPATORY INSTALLATION BY RASHID JOHNSON OPENING SEPTEMBER 17

LONG ISLAND CITY, New York, August 26, 2020— This fall, MoMA PS1 will launch *PS1 COURTYARD: an experiment in creative ecologies*, a year-long program to reimagine the uses of and access to the Museum’s outdoor courtyard, which is the interstitial space between the institution, its neighborhood, and the community. Featuring a series of new initiatives, including a participatory installation by artist Rashid Johnson, a series of Thought Collectives that will test out creative and forward-thinking propositions for the use of public space, and a generative commissioning program to reanimate the Courtyard’s concrete walls, the program will recast one of the few plots of open land in Long Island City—the fastest growing residential neighborhood in the US and a site of rapid gentrification—as a place for experimentation and engagement with urban ecologies.

“Courtyards are, by their nature, meeting places between built environments.” said Kate Fowle, Director of PS1. “Through these initiatives, we are metaphorically breaking down the concrete walls and transforming the courtyard into a year-round laboratory for exploring the potential of equitable, sustainable, and creative interaction that can test out future thinking for new models of how and why we gather, and whose voices and narratives are amplified.

The centerpiece of the courtyard is Rashid Johnson’s *Stage*, a participatory installation and sound work that draws on the history of the microphone as a tool for protest and public oratory, while recalling the metonymic references to microphones in hip-hop lyrics from the 1980s to the present. The work features a yellow powder-coated stage, with Johnson’s signature markings, on which stands of varying heights hold five SM58 microphones, the legendary model that has become a music industry standard since its introduction to the market in the mid 1960s. Echoing unofficial sites of public intellectual and cultural life, such as Speaker’s Corners in London’s Hyde Park and Harlem’s 135th Street and Lenox Avenue, the public is invited to step up onto the stage and speak their mind from Johnson’s *Stage*. Participants’ statements will be recorded and rebroadcast into speakers installed throughout the courtyard. *Rashid Johnson: Stage* will also function as a flexible site for programs and performances, featuring performers, poets, activists, and musicians, all available on MoMA PS1’s digital platforms as an archive that captures the urgencies and interests of our unstable times.

“This project starts with the idea of amplification and the microphone as a device that grants agency and the ability to make your voice heard,” said artist Rashid Johnson. “In addition to their pivotal role in the development of hip hop, the microphone is also intertwined with the history of protest and activism—Martin Luther King Jr.’s early use of a microphone during the March on Washington for example.”

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Also over the course of the next year, a series of Thought Collectives will test ideas on how to progressively use or reimagine public spaces using PS1's Courtyard as a test site. Through these Thought Collectives, PS1 will respond and contribute to the specificities of the urban environment it inhabits, experimenting with new approaches to public engagement. Thought Collective participants—a combination of artists, designers, architects, urbanists, scientists, and diverse local constituencies—will create a space where emerging cultural voices intersect with leading specialists and voices new to the Museum. Each Thought Collective will be based on a hypothesis, starting with questions around the future of gathering post-COVID-19, food justice, and the intersection of physical and virtual spaces. In contrast to theoretical discussions on urbanism, these public programs will center around a series of events and interventions—ranging from discussions and workshops to screenings and temporary constructions—engaging audiences and participants in order to test their hypotheses. The process and results from each Thought Collective will be documented and displayed throughout the year, enabling visitors to follow along with the evolution of each hypothesis and discover what answers, propositions, or further questions each one generates.

Later this fall, the concrete walls that surround PS1's entrance and courtyard will be transformed through a series of mural commissions, shifting the walls from barriers to invitations to the surrounding neighborhood. This process will unfold through discussion with a group of artists convened to explore the history of murals and their resonance today. Conceived as an outdoor exhibition space that evolves and grows, the project fosters connectivity between the street and the interior courtyard of PS1, responding to both the museum's architecture and local community concerns.

## **SPONSORSHIP**

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Support for *Rashid Johnson: Stage* is provided by the Junior Associates of the Museum of Modern Art.

## **ABOUT MoMA PS1**

MoMA PS1 champions how art and artists operate at the intersection of the social, cultural, and political issues of their time. Providing audiences with the agency to ask questions, access to knowledge, and a forum for public debate, PS1 has offered insight into artists' diverse worldviews for more than 40 years. Founded in 1976 by Alanna Heiss, the institution was a defining force in the alternative space movement in New York City, transforming a nineteenth century public schoolhouse in Long Island City into a site for

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artistic experimentation and creative expression. PS1 has been a member of New York City's Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) since 1982, and affiliated with The Museum of Modern Art since 2000.

**Hours:** Beginning September 17, 2020, MoMA PS1 is open from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Thursday through Monday. Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

**Admission:** \$10 suggested donation; \$5 for students and senior citizens; free for New York City residents, MoMA members, and MoMA admission ticket holders within 14 days of visit. Free admission for NYC residents is made possible by The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation.

**Directions:** MoMA PS1 is located at 22-25 Jackson Avenue at 46th Ave in Long Island City, Queens, across the Queensboro Bridge from midtown Manhattan. Traveling by subway, take the E, M, or 7 to Court Sq; or the G to Court Sq or 21 St-Van Alst. By bus, take the Q67 to Jackson and 46th Ave or the B62 to 46th Ave.

**Information:** For general inquiries, call (718) 784-2084 or visit [moma.org/ps1](http://moma.org/ps1).

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