

MoMA PS1 PRESENTS FIRST MAJOR SOLO EXHIBITION OF MELISSA CODY OPENING APRIL 4

LONG ISLAND CITY, New York, April 2, 2024—MoMA PS1 presents the first major solo exhibition of fourth-generation Navajo/Diné weaver Melissa Cody (b. 1983, No Water Mesa, Arizona), co-organized with the Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP). On view from April 4 through September 9, 2024, *Melissa Cody: Webbed Skies* spans the last decade of her practice, showcasing over 30 weavings that include a major new work made for the exhibition. Using long-established weaving techniques and incorporating new digital technologies, Cody combines traditional Navajo symbols and patterns with references ranging from Arizona landscapes to video games. Honoring the medium's histories, Cody's works underscore critical conversations around placemaking through resilience and ingenuity.

The title of the exhibition, *Webbed Skies*, refers to the sky as a unifying element of all territories, connecting distinct narratives and methods of coexistence beyond borders. While adept at myriad styles of weaving, Cody primarily engages with the Germantown Revival movement, which emerged after the tragic period known as the Long Walk (1863–68). With the aim to expel the Navajo people from their territory, the US military burned homes, damaged fields, and killed livestock, forcing over 10,000 people to migrate hundreds of miles and enter a military camp. Along the way, weavers devised strategies to continue working with available means, unraveling supplied blankets and using the yarn for weaving. The commercially produced blankets came from Germantown, Pennsylvania, where the introduction of synthetic colors opened new horizons of experimentation within the context of confinement, a method crucial to Navajo cultural resistance. While acknowledging this history and working on a traditional Navajo loom, Cody's masterful works exercise experimental palettes and patterns that animate through reinvention, reframing traditions as cycles of evolution.

Utilizing enduring and evolving techniques, Cody addresses the transformations that Navajo tapestry has undergone as a form of reconnecting to ancestral land and knowledge. The tonal transitions in *Germantown Sampler* (2011) recall colors of the Germantown Navajo wool, an allusion to the way creativity has been used in resistance against colonial erasure. *Deep Brain Stimulation* (2011) borrows imagery taken from her ailing father's Parkinson's treatments, introducing modern technologies such as medical imaging into her visual lexicon. Disrupting colonial interpretations of Navajo production, *Navajo Transcendent* (2014) reimagines the whirling log, a spiritual symbol drawn from Diné healing imagery. The exhibition advances conversations around Indigenous futurity and provides a context to explore the complexity of Indigenous materials, techniques, and cosmologies.

Melissa Cody is a Navajo textile artist and enrolled member of the Navajo nation. Cody grew up on a Navajo Reservation in Leupp, Arizona and received a Bachelor's degree in Studio Arts and Museum Studies from Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe. Her work has been featured in The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia (2022); Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR (2021); National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (2019–2020); Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff (2019); SITE Santa Fe (2018–19); Ingham Chapman Gallery, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque (2018); Navajo Nation Museum, Window Rock (2018); and the Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe (2017–18). Cody's works are in the collections of the Stark Museum of Art, Orange, Texas; the Minneapolis Institute of Arts; and The Autry National Center, Los Angeles. In 2020, she earned the Brandford/Elliott Award for Excellence in Fiber Art.

Melissa Cody: Webbed Skies is organized by Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP) and MoMA PS1. The exhibition is curated by Isabella Rjeille, Curator, MASP, and Ruba Katrib, Curator and

MoMA PS1

22-25 Jackson Ave
Long Island City
NY 11101
momaps1.org

Director of Curatorial Affairs, MoMA PS1. Exhibition research and support is provided by Andrea Sánchez, Coordinator of Curatorial Affairs, MoMA PS1.

A publication accompanies the exhibition and includes original essays by the exhibition's curators, as well as by renowned scholars Ann Lane Hedlund and Jennifer Nez Denetdale. Edited by Isabella Rjeille, the publication is distributed by Artbook | D.A.P. / Distributed Art Publishers and KMEC Books and is available for \$50.

SUPPORT

Major support for *Melissa Cody: Webbed Skies* is provided by The Coby Foundation and The Deborah Buck Foundation.

Additional support is provided by Komal Shah and Gaurav Garg.

Special thanks to Becky Gochman.

ABOUT MoMA PS1

MoMA PS1 champions art and artists at the intersection of the social, cultural, and political issues of our 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 artistic experimentation and creativity. 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: MoMA PS1 is open from 12 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Friday, Sunday, and Monday, and 12 to 8 p.m. on Saturday. Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Admission: \$10 suggested admission; \$5 for students and senior citizens; free for New York State residents and MoMA members. Free admission for New York State residents is made possible by The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation. Tickets may be reserved online at mo.ma/ps1tickets.

Visitor Guide: Discover even more from MoMA PS1 with the Bloomberg Connects app. Read wall text, hear directly from artists, and uncover the building's history with this multimedia visitor guide. This digital experience is made possible through the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

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.

Press Contact: Julia Fesser, (845) 625-9041 or julia_fesser@moma.org

General Press Inquiries: press_momaps1@moma.org

For downloadable high-resolution images, visit moma.org/press