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**THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART DETROIT
ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Head of Tate's Tate Exchange, Dr. Cara Courage, to lead MOCAD as Executive Director, alongside newly-named Deputy Director Marie Madison-Patton, veteran MOCAD executive

DETROIT — After an intensive, collaborative search, the **Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD)** made an unanimous decision to appoint Dr. Cara Courage to Executive Director and promote MOCAD veteran Marie Madison-Patton to Deputy Director. Courage leaves her position as Head of Tate Exchange, Tate's platform for socially engaged art, to join MOCAD after being selected from a large pool of local and international candidates by a committee of board and staff members.

Courage brings worldly leadership and expertise from the arts sector with a specialization in collaborative placemaking and activist arts, which she will use to center Detroit's communities in developing MOCAD as a site for positive social, diverse and equitable change. Having worked closely with contemporary artists from various backgrounds through her work at Tate Exchange—including Tania Bruguera, Clare Twoney, the international collective Hyphen-Labs and organizations such as Museum of Homelessness and arts and migration leaders, Counterpoints Arts—Courage approaches every project seeking to understand how art can make a difference in our lives and to society.

Courage will assume her new position in Detroit this spring, in conjunction with the promotion of longstanding MOCAD Director of Business Operations Madison-Patton to Deputy Director.

"I am honoured to have been chosen for the role of Executive Director by the MOCAD team and Board," said **MOCAD Executive Director Dr. Cara Courage**. "I am a passionate advocate for the positive role art can play in society, and believe firmly in the potential of museums to offer a shared space for all to reflect upon their lived experience and work to create the world they want to live in. I am so incredibly excited to be working with them to make MOCAD the best that it can be for the communities of Detroit, for artists, the Museum's partners and collaborators and for all who come to visit."

Courage is a global leader in museums and in creative placemaking, and editor of *The Routledge Handbook of Placemaking*, who has dedicated her life and career to researching and implementing grassroots strategies that encourage citizen-led agency through arts practice. With

a focus on the urban realm, she expertly centers artists and constituents of local communities and collaborates with city administrators, architects and urban designers, among others, to develop major art projects, programs and initiatives. In her role as Head of Tate Exchange at Tate, Courage was instrumental in helping position the institution as a civic and activist museum through curation and programming that addressed social justice, climate emergency and migration.

“Having worked at MOCAD for over a decade, this museum feels like my second home—and I’m excited to work alongside Dr. Courage to envision our future,” said **MOCAD Deputy Director, Marie Madison-Patton**. “We’ve made sure to include all of our stakeholders in the director search and know Dr. Courage’s values align with our mission. Her broad academic background and work as a museum leader will continue to activate Detroit as a center for contemporary art and complement our diverse and ever-expanding team at MOCAD. Dr. Courage is an excellent addition to MOCAD and our community.”

The search for a new executive director, one with intent to elevate leadership from within, drove the searches for both positions. Further, these roles reinforce MOCAD’s conscious shift towards building an equitable community rooted in transparency and relying on art to break down barriers. The search committee included Detroit cultural leaders and MOCAD Board Members **Lisa Applebaum, Dr. Charles Boyd, Lynn Crawford, dream hampton** and **jessica Care moore**, along with Board Chair **Elyse Foltyn**, Board President and Co-Founder **Marsha Miro** and Deputy Director **Madison-Patton**. With input from and support of MOCAD staff and executive team, the decision solidifies the Museum’s commitment to art and artists from all backgrounds.

“During the past 18 months, MOCAD board members have taken the time to talk with our staff, community and stakeholders to determine our needs for the future,” said **Board Chair Elyse Foltyn**. “We have used this time to thoroughly conduct a search that delivered a person with the expertise and leadership we need to build upon our current momentum and make us even stronger for the next decade. The search committee unanimously agreed and our staff firmly believes we have found those attributes in Dr. Cara Courage. This leader will be especially important as we reignite our capital campaign, which will fund critical improvements to our 100+-year-old Albert Kahn building, tighten our connection with the community and enable MOCAD to serve more people.”

“I am thrilled with the direction in which MOCAD is moving,” said **Founding Board Member Linda Dresner**. “I am confident our new leadership will help us deliver our mission and expand our reach into our community and international art world. Dr. Courage’s expertise at Tate Exchange will help MOCAD continue to rely on art as a means to foster social change.”

As an institution, MOCAD bridges Detroit’s unmatched creative vitality with the global arts community. Courage’s deep attention to the theories and practices of the arts, museums and of placemaking will continue to drive institutional strategies that celebrate Detroit’s communities

and infuse the life of the Museum with intercultural solidarity. At Tate Exchange, which has physical spaces at Tate Modern and Tate Liverpool as well as online, Courage developed a culture of active engagement around ideas and projects inspired by contemporary art, effectively connecting the public, the museum and society. She also worked as a strategist for Futurecity, a leading cultural placemaking firm, to create alliances within communities internationally. All of her work rests in a rigorous foundation of practice-based research conducted around the world—in cities like Charlottesville, Va.; Indianapolis, Ind.; Walthamstow, London; and Dublin—where she has investigated the methods, outcomes and possibilities of using art to shape social change, and it is this work that first brought Courage to Detroit some years ago.

After a decade working in business operations and human resources at MOCAD, Madison-Patton's leadership will expand with her appointment to Deputy Director. Madison-Patton, an alumnus of Crain's Leadership Academy in 2020, will work closely with Courage to collaborate on institutional policy, strategic goals and operations.

Prior to her appointment to Deputy Director, Madison-Patton served as MOCAD Director of Business Operations, leading the museum's financial management, operations and strategic implementation. In addition to spearheading major museum projects—such as the restructuring employee benefits for more comprehensive health care and managing the museum's policy shifts during COVID-19—Madison-Patton more than doubled MOCAD's staff within 10 years, bolstering numerous departments and growing the museum's potential for community engagement. Her tenure at MOCAD was preceded by her work in financial operations at Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit.

As a non-collecting institution, MOCAD is ever-changing and adaptable to today's communities. In addition to supporting young and mid-career artists, MOCAD was the first institution in Detroit to present the work of influential African American contemporary artists Kara Walker, Mark Bradford, and Nari Ward. With this appointment and promotion, MOCAD bolsters its driving values: staging diverse programming, honoring Detroit's rich legacy of artistic production, and channeling resources towards uplifting BIPOC talent.

This past year, MOCAD was home to diverse projects including Asmaa Walton's Black Art Library, a mobile collection and interactive installation offering new modes of engagement with Black artists and Black art history. Other recent exhibitions at MOCAD include *Dual Vision*, an exhibition featuring 42 Detroit-centered artists that highlighted their approaches to collectivity and collaboration, and a solo exhibition by Danish-Trinidadian artist Jeannette Elhers.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART DETROIT

The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD) presents exhibitions and programs that explore the best of contemporary art, connecting Detroit and the global art world. MOCAD is focused on art as a means to nurture social change and human understanding, reflecting the community. MOCAD encourages innovative experimentation by artists, musicians, makers,

cultural producers and scholars to enrich all who participate and to educate visitors of all ages in the power of art. Whether from Detroit, or around the world, MOCAD welcomes creative voices who guide constituents to an equitable and inclusive future. The museum believes that art can change us, and it's a responsibility to hold a space where challenge, acceptance, hope and beauty can coincide.