

THE BMA HOSTS LIVE-STREAMING CONVERSATION WITH 'ME TOO.' MOVEMENT FOUNDER TARANA BURKE AND PUSSY RIOT CO-FOUNDER NADYA TOLOKONNIKOVA ON OCTOBER 22

BALTIMORE, MD (October 1, 2020)—On Thursday, October 22, The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) will host *The Necessity of Tomorrow(s): Tarana Burke and Nadya Tolokonnikova*, a free online conversation with activist and founder of the 'me too.' Movement Tarana Burke and conceptual artist and political activist Nadya Tolokonnikova on Facebook Live, YouTube Live, and on bmatomorrows.org. The event takes place 6–8 p.m. ET beginning with a performance by the interdisciplinary artist and musician JOJO ABOT. This is followed by conversation with Burke and Tolokonnikova at 6:30 pm ET, moderated by Jenna Wortham, a staff writer for *The New York Times Magazine* and co-host of the podcast *Still Processing*. A Q&A with the viewers follows the conversation, as well as a showing of short films from the [BMA Screening Room](#) that were selected by the speakers. Additional details are available at bmatomorrows.org.



Tarana Burke has dedicated her life to social justice work and giving strength to those who experienced sexual trauma or harassment. Nadya Tolokonnikova is an artist, political activist, and founding member of the feminist protest art collective Pussy Riot. They have been one of the world's most prominent activist art groups in recent years, bringing attention to human rights violations in Russia and abroad, and named among the "100 Women of the World" by *Time* magazine in 2012. In addition to writing for *The New York Times Magazine* and podcast, Jenna Wortham is a healer and community care worker oriented towards justice and liberation.

The Necessity of Tomorrow(s) is presented this year in conjunction with *2020 Vision*, the BMA's initiative to highlight the achievements of female-identifying artists and leaders through its exhibitions, programs, and acquisitions. Works by the following artists are currently on view at the museum: Candice Breitz, Zackary Drucker, Valerie Maynard, Elissa Blount Moorhead, Howardena Pindell, Jo Smail, Shinique Smith, and SHAN Wallace, and several other exhibitions will be opening throughout 2021. Launched in 2017, *The Necessity of Tomorrow(s)* borrows its title from an essay by science fiction author Samuel Delany that argues for the role for creative speculation in making a more just future. The series has previously hosted talks with artists Mark Bradford, Hank Willis Thomas, Mickalene Thomas, and Zoë Charlton; filmmaker Boots Riley; collector and activist Pamela Joyner; and writers Ta-Nehisi Coates and Nikole Hannah-Jones.

The Necessity of Tomorrow(s) is generously sponsored by Suzanne F. Cohen and the Cohen Opportunity Fund.

Tarana Burke

Tarana Burke is a social activist best known for creating the 'me too.' Movement that raises awareness of sexual assault, harassment, and abuse, and gives hope to survivors. A native of Bronx, New York, Burke's passion for community organizing began in the late 1980s when she joined a youth development organization called 21st Century Leaders and helped launch initiatives against racial discrimination, housing inequality, and economic justice. Following her education at Alabama State University and Auburn University at Montgomery, Burke held leadership positions with 21st Century Leaders, Black Belt Foundation, and Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts

Center, and also served as a consultant on exhibits and programs for the National Voting Rights Museum and Institute. In 2003, she co-founded an African-centered rites of passage program for girls called Jendayi Aza that evolved in 2006 to become a non-profit called Just Be Inc. This program focused on the well-being of young women of color and was later adopted by every public school in Selma. It was while working at Just Be Inc. that Burke first spoke the words “me too” when trying to empathize with a young woman who was being abused by her mother’s boyfriend. She then began promoting the idea of “empowerment through empathy” and designing a campaign to facilitate healing and train survivors to work in communities without crisis services. In 2008, Burke also became Managing Director of Art Sanctuary in Philadelphia, which focuses community building through black art, and in 2014 served as a consultant for the Oscar-nominated film *Selma*. Her ‘me too’ initiative gained worldwide recognition in 2017 during the Harvey Weinstein sexual abuse scandal, when the hashtag #metoo went viral and helped start a larger conversation around sexual violence. Burke became Senior Director of Girls for Gender Equity in Brooklyn, NY in 2018 and is currently Executive Director of the ‘me too.’ International organization. Among the many accolades she has received are the 2017 Person of the Year (along with other silence breakers) from *Time* magazine, 2018 Voices of the Year Catalyst Award from SheKnows Media, and Australia’s 2019 Sydney Peace Prize. Burke leads empowerment workshops around the world and has a forthcoming book about her journey titled *Here the Light Enters: The Founding of the ‘me too.’ Movement*.

Nadya Tolokonnikova

Nadya Tolokonnikova is a conceptual artist and political activist from Russia. She is a founding member of the art collective Pussy Riot, which focuses attention on feminism, LGBT rights, and human rights violations at home and abroad. In August 2012, she was sentenced to two years imprisonment following an anti-Putin performance by Pussy Riot in Moscow’s Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. This protest attracted international media attention and support from Sir Paul McCartney, Madonna, Björk, Aung San Suu Kyi, and many others. Shortly after her release in December 2013, Tolokonnikova announced the opening of an independent news service and media outlet, MediaZona, which reports on Russia’s courts, law enforcement, and prison system. She has spoken before the U.S. Congress, British Parliament, and European Parliament, and has appeared on stage with world leaders including former U.S. President Bill Clinton. Tolokonnikova is a Lennon Ono Grant for Peace recipient, has appeared as herself on season three of *House of Cards*, and performed the Pussy Riot song “Refugees In” as part of Banksy’s Dismaland exhibition. Most recently, she has produced and starred in three new Pussy Riot music videos: “Police State,” “Straight Outta Vagina,” and “Make America Great Again,” which portrays the future of the United States under President Trump.

Jenna Wortham

Jenna Wortham is a staff writer for *The New York Times Magazine* and co-host of the podcast *Still Processing*. She is the proud editor of the forthcoming visual anthology *Black Futures*, which is being published by One World in December 2020. She is also a sound healer, Reiki practitioner, herbalist, and community care worker oriented towards healing justice and liberation. Wortham is also currently working on a book about the body and dissociation.

JOJO ABOT

JOJO ABOT is a Ghanaian-born, nomadic interdisciplinary artist exploring themes of spirituality, identity, and community with self as the starting point to collective evolution. She has toured with Lauryn Hill and played on stages like Afropunk, Roots Picnic, Radio City Music Hall, The Apollo, and John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. She was the first unsigned artist to perform live for New York City’s Times Square New Year’s Eve

Concert, an event attended by over a million people. ABOT is an alumna of the New Museum's Incubator Program (New Inc.) and a former resident at National Sawdust.

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

Founded in 1914, The Baltimore Museum of Art is a major cultural destination recognized for engaging diverse audiences through dynamic exhibitions and innovative educational and community outreach programs. The BMA's internationally renowned collection of 95,000 objects encompasses more than 1,000 works by Henri Matisse anchored by the famed Cone Collection of modern art, as well as one of the nation's finest holdings of prints, drawings, and photographs. The galleries showcase an exceptional collection of art from Africa; important works by established and emerging contemporary artists; outstanding European and American paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts; significant artworks from China; ancient Antioch mosaics; and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000- square-foot museum is also distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped gardens featuring an array of 20th-century sculpture. The BMA is located in Charles Village, three miles north of the Inner Harbor, and is adjacent to the main campus of Johns Hopkins University. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The BMA is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the Sculpture Gardens are open Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to dusk. The museum and gardens are closed New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. General admission is free. Special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is located at 10 Art Museum Drive, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general information, call 443-573-1700 or visit artbma.org.

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