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# The Boston Globe

## New England's top 10 museum stops for fall

Murray Whyte



A still from Clarissa Tossin's 2017 work "Ch'u Mayaa," part of Mass MoCA's "Kissing Through a Curtain" exhibition. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND COMMONWEALTH AND COUNCIL, LOS ANGELES

**NORMAN ROCKWELL: IMAGINING FREEDOM** Rockwell's "Four Freedoms" paintings were his midcentury vision of the cornerstones of American democracy — freedom of speech and worship, freedom from want and fear. A homecoming for an exhibition completing a six-city tour, this show inserts the paintings into an urgent moment where a cascade of misinformation, surging demand for racial and social justice, economic depression, and a devastating public health crisis have put all four at serious risk. Through Jan. 17, 2021. Norman Rockwell Museum, 9 Glendale Road, Stockbridge. 413-298-4100, [www.nrm.org](http://www.nrm.org)

**KISSING THROUGH A CURTAIN** This show was conceived well before the pandemic shutdowns — it missed its scheduled springtime opening by many months — though it feels made for the moment. Featuring communication across divides — cultural, social, political, technological — "Kissing Through a Curtain" is about how much can get lost in translation. Through October 2021. Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, 1040 Mass MoCA Way, North Adams. 413-662-2111, [www.massmoca.org](http://www.massmoca.org)  
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**IN AND OUT OF LOVE (BUTTERFLY PAINTINGS AND ASHTRAYS)** The Yale Center for British Art re-opened this fall with an unsettling exhibition: Damien Hirst's first solo exhibition, "In and Out of Love," originally shown in London in 1991 with live butterflies flitting about the gallery while patrons

perused Hirst's monochrome canvases (and they were smoking, one might assume, given the ashtrays). On the lower level, dead butterflies were pressed into similar canvases, making the fragile beauty of life upstairs a spectacle. At Yale, they're marking the work's 30th anniversary by putting it alongside famous meditations on life and death, including Henry Fuseli's tragic "Dido," from 1781, and Anthony Vandyke Copley Fielding's celebration of nature in "A Scene on the Coast, Merionethshire — Storm Passing Off," from 1818. Through Feb. 28, 2021. Yale Center for British Art, 1080 Chapel St., New Haven. 203-432-2858, britishart.yale.edu



Angela Dufresne's "To Learn is to Forget," from 2015, is part of the Visionary New England exhibition. SUSAN ALZNER/COLLECTION OF ANGELA DUFRESNE

**TRANSCENDENTAL MODERNISM and VISIONARY NEW ENGLAND** Utopian communities and idealist schemes are entwined with the dominant strains of polite, upright New England history. A pair of exhibitions at the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, distinct but related, foreground the blue-sky dreaming of new world orders, while expanding the slim idealism of Modernism to include those typically excluded, including communities of color. Through March 14, 2021. 51 Sandy Pond Road, Lincoln. 781-259-8355, thetrustees.org/place/decordova

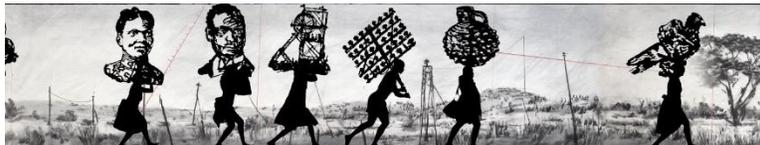
**ROBERT FRANK: THE AMERICANS** In 1954, Frank, a recently-arrived Swiss making his way in New York fashion photography, landed a grant from the Guggenheim Foundation for a project: He would drive to every corner of his adopted homeland, photographing it as he saw it. The result was "The Americans," an unvarnished, often bleak view of the country from coast to coast at a time when the prevailing rhetoric of sunny postwar boosterism reigned. Through April 11, 2021. Addison Gallery of American Art, 180 Main St., Andover. 978-749-4000, addison.andover.edu

**MYTHMAKERS: THE ART OF WINSLOW HOMER AND FREDERIC REMINGTON** This show promises to cast a critical eye on what we might call, in our more enlightened era, the toxic masculinity of frontier America, more present in Remington's clichéd portrayals of cowboys and Native Americans than in Homer's rough and weary images of ragtag Civil War soldiers and the dark and churning sea. Each in their own way, both artists perpetuated versions of America that elided its deep complexities — something the exhibition vows to call out. Through Nov. 29. Portland Museum of Art, 7 Congress Square, Portland, Maine. 207-775-6148, www.portlandmuseum.org



The MFA's Monet collection includes "Grand Canal, Venice," painted in 1908. MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON (CUSTOM CREDIT)/MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

**MONET AND BOSTON: LASTING IMPRESSION** The Museum of Fine Arts was ahead of the curve with Claude Monet, collecting the French Impressionist master early and often, acquiring many works in Monet's own lifetime through the early part of the 19th century. This exhibition, one of the cornerstones of the museum's sesquicentennial — long-delayed because of the pandemic shutdowns — opens this fall, finally, with the museum's entire complement of 35 Monet paintings in its collection. Nov. 15 - Feb. 28, 2021. 465 Huntington Avenue. 617-267-9300, [www.mfa.org](http://www.mfa.org)



William Kentridge's "KABOOM!" (still), from 2018. COURTESY THE ARTIST AND MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY, NEW YORK

**WILLIAM KENTRIDGE: KABOOM!** The renowned South African polymath has been staging for some years complex set pieces that incorporate live performance, shadow projection, and his distinctive gestural charcoal drawings. "KABOOM!," recently acquired by the Institute of Contemporary Art Boston, draws on Kentridge's production of "The Head and the Load," a vast, complex stage production made for Tate Modern's turbine hall in 2018. (At the ICA, scenes will be projected onto a tabletop scale model of the stage.) The piece tells the largely ignored role African porters and carriers played in the Allied victory in World War I. Nov. 18-May 23, 2021. 25 Harbor Shore Drive. 617-478-3100, [www.icaboston.org](http://www.icaboston.org)



An afternoon dress by Jeanne Lanvin, 1938–40. ALICE DE GROOT/COURTESY KUNSTMUSEUM DEN HAAG

**MADE IT: THE WOMEN WHO REVOLUTIONIZED FASHION** Spanning 250 years and everything from haute couture to historical costuming to ready-to-wear, this show, made in partnership with Kunstmuseum den Haag in the Netherlands, highlights contributions made by women to the fashion world and, by default, the broader culture. Nov. 21-March 14, 2021. Peabody Essex Museum, 161 Essex St., Salem. 978-945-7500, [www.pem.org](http://www.pem.org)  
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**SHEN WEI: PAINTING IN MOTION** The Chinese-American choreographer/director/painter executes a full takeover of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum this December, including screenings of his films in both the museum's original palazzo and its contemporary wing, plus a new commission for its façade. The main event, though, will be an exhibition of his gutsy, often-monumental paintings, two of which he made on site as the museum's artist-in-residence in 2018 and 2019. Dec. 3-June 20, 2021. 25 Evans Way. 617-566-1401, [isgm.org](http://isgm.org)