

MASS MoCA

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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FreshGrass sets 2014 Workshop Schedule: Banjo MegaJam, Fiddle Summit, Improvising, Listening, and more

Berklee College of Music leads participatory series that includes The Fretboard Journal, Sauv  Guitars, Alison Brown, and No Depression

North Adams, Massachusetts – **FreshGrass**, MASS MoCA’s three-day festival of bluegrass and roots music, offers a comprehensive series of workshops by performers, educators, and industry-insiders. The festival offers a multitude of opportunities to learn the tricks of the picking trade from the best in bluegrass music. FreshGrass takes place **September 19-21, 2014**, on MASS MoCA’s campus. In addition to its killer lineup of top-of-their-game performers and a full slate of stimulating workshops, the festival features a contest with over \$15,000 in prizes, its own locally brewed beer, luthier demonstrations, children’s programming, downtown camping – and an unrivaled experience for fans – the best bluegrass and roots music in the country bouncing off the bricks in every corner of the historic museum campus.

Berklee College of Music’s American Roots Music Program leads the 2014 workshops. Festival veterans **Darol Anger**, **Matt Glaser**, and **Joe Walsh** help you fine-tune fiddling skills, better grasp bluegrass techniques, and understand the inner workings of songwriting, producing, and marketing music.

The banjo workshop jam session is always a fan-favorite. Led by Grammy Award-winning picker and player (and four-time FreshGrass featured artist) **Alison Brown**, space reservations for the banjo jam are historically snapped up as quickly as a sign-up sheet is posted.

No Depression, the leading online community for indie-alt-country-roots-rock-Americana music, presents a workshop hosted by editor Kim Ruehl and regional members on writing and contributing to the site.

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The Fretboard Journal, the boutique magazine for guitar, mandolin, and stringed instrument players, returns with North Adams-based **Sauvé Guitars** and an all-star cast of artisans for demonstrations and discussions in the luthier tent.

“MASS MoCA has been hosting a weekly bluegrass jam every weekend for more than a decade,” says festival producer Chris Wadsworth. “Our workshops grew out of that idea – expanding exponentially when Berklee signed on to lead the efforts. We love to hear local musicians, festival fans, and our phenomenal FreshGrass talent come together to talk – and make – music.”

About FreshGrass 2014 Workshops

Banjo MegaJam

Banjo virtuoso Alison Brown leads this year’s workshop. With a deep lineup of FreshGrass artists on campus, you never know who will show up to share secrets of bluegrass’ most storied instrument. Last year’s event was an epic collaboration of festival favorites from bands such as [The Infamous Stringdusters](#) and [The Jaybirds](#).

FreshGrass Fiddle Summit

Matt Glaser, Artistic Director of the American Roots Music Program at Berklee College of Music, and Associate Professor Darol Anger bring together some of the best fiddlers from FreshGrass, as well as extremely talented Berklee students, to discuss style, technique, and improvisation. The workshop will end with a wild jam session.

Berklee Mandolin Workshop

Joe Walsh, Mandolin Principal of the American Roots Music Program at Berklee College of Music, leads players in exploring technique while fielding questions from the audience.

Improvisation in Bluegrass

Matt Glaser and Joe Walsh use a common bluegrass song to demonstrate improvising from a melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic standpoint.

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Roots Music Listening Session

Knowing the rich history of bluegrass, roots, and Americana music helps you become a better musician, as well as an educated listener. Matt Glaser will play recordings demonstrating that the blues are the great aquifer that runs underneath all American music.

Berklee Working Band

Every upstart band needs a beat on the business side of bluegrass. Walsh leads a panel of young working band members in a discussion of the lessons learned on the road.

No Depression

[No Depression](#) is the online authority on roots music, providing exclusive videos, tour dates, and up-to-date commentary on the entire genre. Learn how you can become a regular contributor to the site.

Luthier Activities

Sauvé Guitars founder Steve Suave joins *The Fretboard Journal* and a stellar group of artisans for demonstrations and discussions of fiddle, mandolin, banjo, open-back banjo, and guitar.

All workshops are free with FreshGrass admission. Space is limited and available on a first come, first served basis. Registration happens the day of the workshop. Select workshops encourage attendees to bring instruments.

FreshGrass, to be held on **September 19-21, 2014**, at MASS MoCA, continues to be one of the best values on the festival circuit. Limited-time, early-bird, three-day festival passes are available for \$87 adults, \$77 students, and \$43 children 7 to 16. Children 6 and under are admitted free. Single-day tickets may be offered closer to the event, on a space-available basis. Museum members receive a 10% discount on the regular ticket prices, but membership discounts do not apply to the early-worm and early-bird discounted ticket prices. The festival will be held rain or shine.

The FreshGrass 2014 Lineup

Emmylou Harris, the Carolina Chocolate Drops, Railroad Earth, Béla Fleck & Abigail Washburn, Sam Bush, The Infamous Stringdusters, David Grisman Sextet, The Gibson Brothers, Alison Brown, Valerie

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June, Aoife O'Donovan, Rodney Crowell, Sam Amidon, Liam Ó Maonlaí, Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper, Claire Lynch, Darol Anger, Martha Redbone Roots Project, Cricket Tell the Weather

Related Programming

Former Drive-by Truckers member Jason Isbell performs in concert at MASS MoCA on Friday, August 15, at 8pm. Isbell's album, *Southeastern*, released earlier this year, is receiving critical and audience praise. The concert is sponsored by *No Depression*.

About FreshGrass

An opportunity for enthusiasts to both appreciate and participate, FreshGrass is a family-friendly festival, brimming with bright talent on our four stages, and also in our galleries, brick-lined courtyards and grassy field. FreshGrass is more than a festival – the event and its website are a hub for the bluegrass community.

Music starts early in the museum courtyards, moves to a spacious (and grassy!) urban concert meadow, and continues well after dark with wild and wooly late-night barn dances in MASS MoCA's Hunter Center on Friday and Saturday nights. Instrument-specific workshops and industry seminars are offered in conjunction with Berklee College of Music and its American Roots Program, and often feature guest musicians from the festival. The FreshGrass Award gives \$15,000 in cash and prizes, rewarding fresh takes on bluegrass.

About Berklee School of Music American Roots Music Program

The American Roots Music Program produces concerts, hosts visiting artists, designs and implements curriculum, creates and hosts faculty development sessions, and designs and implements symposiums and seminars. Also, using a broader definition of the term "roots," the program examines the core of what it means to be a musician in all idioms, and contemplates the roots of our western musical traditions, ranging from Bach to traditional African music.

Sponsorship and Partners

FreshGrass is sponsored by Compass Records, American Roots Music Program at Berklee College of Music, the Porches Inn, Chronogram, and *The Fretboard Journal*. FreshGrass is a coproduction of MASS MoCA and FreshGrass, LLC.

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About MASS MoCA

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest (and largest) centers for making and enjoying today's most important art, music, dance, theater, film, and video. Hundreds of works of visual and performing art have been created on its 19th-century factory campus during fabrication and rehearsal residencies, making MASS MoCA among the most productive sites in the country for the creation and presentation of new art. More platform than box, MASS MoCA strives to bring to its audiences art experiences that are fresh, engaging, and transformative.

From June 21 through September 1, 2014, MASS MoCA's galleries are open 10am to 6pm every day, Sundays through Wednesdays, with extended evening hours to 7pm on Thursdays through Saturdays, when performing arts events are often featured. In non-summer months, MASS MoCA's galleries are open 11am to 5pm every day except Tuesdays. The Hall Art Foundation's Anselm Kiefer exhibition is open seasonally, spring – fall. As of June 21, 2014, gallery admission is \$18 for adults, \$16 for veterans and seniors, \$12 for students, \$6 for children 6 to 16, and free for children 5 and under. Members are admitted free year-round. For additional information, call [413.662.2111 x1](tel:413.662.2111) or visit massmoca.org.

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