



museum of arts and design

## **MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN NAMES BENJAMIN STRAUSS AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR, INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT AND APPOINTS NEW DEPUTY DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION AND OPERATIONS**



Benjamin Strauss, Deputy Director, Institutional Advancement. Lydia Brawner, PhD, Maude and Rodney Starkey Deputy Director, Education. Ryan Collins, Deputy Director, Operations. Photos: David Lewis Taylor.

NEW YORK, NY (APRIL 6, 2022) – The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) announces the appointment of Benjamin Strauss as Deputy Director, Institutional Advancement, effective April 5, and the recent promotions of Lydia Brawner and Ryan Collins to leadership roles. Brawner was named the Maude and Rodney Starkey Deputy Director, Education last December and Collins became the Deputy Director, Operations in January.

“Accomplished, creative, and collaborative leaders, Ben, Lydia, and Ryan will strengthen MAD’s leadership team and help the Museum to evolve in strategic and thoughtful ways,” said Tim Rodgers, Nanette L. Laitman Director.

Strauss brings more than a decade of fundraising experience within the New York City cultural landscape to the role of Deputy Director, Institutional Advancement. In this role, Strauss will plan, implement, and supervise all aspects of the Museum’s fundraising effort, including annual giving, membership, corporate and foundation relations, program and exhibition sponsorships, special events, major gifts, planned giving and grants, and endowment and capital giving. Prior to joining MAD, Strauss served as the Director of External Affairs at the Queens Museum, where he managed development and communications strategies across all channels of the institution’s programming. An impressive fundraiser, Strauss secured several six- and seven-figure gifts in support of capacity building and digital initiatives, large-scale exhibitions, and professional development programs for emerging artists. Previously, Strauss held positions at both Public Art Fund and Creative Time, where he secured funding for new commissions by artists including Kara Walker, Isa Genzken, Martin Creed, and Ai Weiwei, among others; as well as at ArtPlace America,

where he worked in support of creative placemaking projects nationwide. He holds a BA in art history from Tulane University.

Joining MAD in 2018, Brawner served as the Associate Curator of Public Programs, organizing and managing a broad range of creative workshops, as well as discursive, cinema, and performance programs, expanding MAD's reach into new communities and constituencies. In her new role, Brawner leads MAD's Education department, which serves audiences of all ages and includes the Museum's Artist Studios program, teen Artslife program, professional and classroom development programs, and family programs. She also will continue to curate MAD's public programs. Brawner holds a PhD and an MA in Performance Studies from New York University (NYU). Prior to joining MAD, she was the Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Curatorial Fellow at New York's Performa. She has taught at City University of New York, NYU, and the San Francisco Art Institute.

Collins joined MAD in 2019 as the Director of Operations, overseeing daily operations and capital planning for the Museum. His new role extends his areas of responsibility to include oversight of MAD's visitor experience, retail services, and information technologies. Previously, Collins served as the Associate Director of Operations at MoMA PS1 and as the Operations Manager for Portland Center Stage in Oregon. Collins holds an MA in Popular Music Studies from the University of Glasgow in Scotland, and a BA in Music Technology from the University of Oklahoma. Additionally, the New York Foundation of the Arts awarded Collins an Emerging Leader Fellowship in 2019–2020.

#### **ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN**

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields and presents the work of artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill. Since the Museum's founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum's curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design, and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving twenty-first-century innovation, and fosters a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design. For more information, visit [madmuseum.org](http://madmuseum.org).

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#### **PRESS CONTACTS**

##### **Museum of Arts and Design**

Wendi Parson  
+1 212 299 7749  
[wendi.parson@madmuseum.org](mailto:wendi.parson@madmuseum.org)

##### **Museum of Arts and Design**

Iman Nelson  
+1 212 299 7733  
[press@madmuseum.org](mailto:press@madmuseum.org)