

July 6, 2020

Dear MoMA colleagues; Dear Glenn,

We are writing to support the transparency, accountability, and open communication advocated for in the Education Department's open letter (available [here](#)), which was sent on June 11, 2020 to the Museum's senior leadership and the president of the Board of Trustees. In the spirit of transparency, the Education Department invited Glenn to make the letter available to all Museum staff for our support and critique. As of July 6, 2020, the Museum has not done so.

Furthermore, the Museum has not met the demand for *fully* cross-departmental, cross-level communication and decision-making, as outlined in the Education letter and in the many individual requests for accountability communicated to Glenn and other members of management. Therefore, we see the steps that senior leadership has taken so far "to confront and take action against racism" as insufficient.

We trust that the members of the newly formed steering committee will do their best to address the urgent problems at the Museum, despite the fact that this work falls outside the expertise and roles for which they were hired. We sincerely hope that they are given the resources to effect real institutional change. That said, the selection process for the committee was not transparent, and it is unclear if its members will have the power to hold Museum leadership accountable. As such, we cannot allow the steering committee to be utilized as simply a mediating barrier between Museum staff and Museum leadership. More importantly, it is an unfair burden to expect these individuals alone to speak for or represent the entire Museum, or even the Museum's entire Black staff.

The task of structural and cultural change at MoMA cannot fall solely to the steering committee, Human Resources, or senior staff—we all, as MoMA colleagues, must be embedded in this process together. To allow anything less would reinforce a key practice in our culture of white supremacy: a few people being given the power to make decisions behind closed doors. We believe an effective, substantive process for institutional change is one that confronts existing hierarchies, distributes power and access more equitably, and addresses how anti-Blackness and white supremacy are inherent in all the Museum's operations.

The Museum's response to COVID-19 indicates that there is still much work to be done in this regard. Black frontline, non-management staff members have not been meaningfully involved in MoMA's decision-making around the pandemic, despite the fact that many of these staff members have continued to physically work at the Museum since March. Though we acknowledge that re-opening the Museum is a matter of financial stability, frontline, non-management staff require protective measures and should have direct influence on deciding what these are. The current plan, though framed in the name of equity, does not adequately consider the disproportionate impact that COVID-19 has on the health, safety, and well-being of Black frontline staff and communities of color living in an already inequitable

system of white supremacy. Even before the pandemic, Black frontline staff, especially security officers, were structurally isolated from the support, resources, and information routinely available to the rest of the Museum staff. The move to virtual communications during closure has thrown this discrepancy into high relief. This lack of access to information, support, and decision-making is exacerbated by both a fear of retaliation for speaking out and by the limited options for recourse after decisions have been made.

This reality highlights that the current discussions around institutional racism, in our departments and among our colleagues more broadly, while powerful, are limited. We need institutional support to make this conversation truly Museum-wide. Thus, in solidarity with colleagues across the Museum who are working to repair MoMA's history of racism, anti-Blackness, and institutionalized white supremacy, **we call for a new equitable, non-hierarchical, and transparent process of decision-making at the Museum.**

To begin, **the senior leadership must immediately make this statement and the preceding Education Department letter available to all MoMA trustees and all staff, including staff without access to MoMA email.**

Second, **the senior leadership must provide resources to support our creation of a safe forum in which all staff may openly discuss institutional racism and white supremacy at MoMA.** These all-staff discussions must center the perspectives of Black frontline, non-management staff, as well as other concerned Black staff, and must tackle the practices that have made it so difficult for these groups to be heard. We expect senior leadership to commit to developing a transparent and accountable process of responding to these conversations.

These actions are only the first steps in a much longer process towards building consensus-based, community leadership and true equity at the Museum of Modern Art.

We are signing this statement as 229 MoMA staff members from the following departments,

Affiliate Programs; Architecture & Design; Archives, Library, and Research Services; Audio Visual; Collection & Exhibition Information; Collection Management & Exhibition Registration; Conservation; Creative Team; Development; Digital Media; Drawings & Prints; Education; Exhibition Design & Production; Exhibition Planning & Administration; External Affairs; Film; Groups & Tours; Imaging and Visual Resources; Institutional Giving, International Program; Media & Performance; Membership; Painting & Sculpture; Photography; Publications; Retail; Security; Special Programming and Events; Visitor Engagement

who want to address these issues in collaboration with each other.

Signed,

[Signatures redacted to protect Museum employees' confidentiality]