

Root Division Welcomes Demetri Broxton as New Executive Director

Visionary Artist, Educator, and Community Leader joins visual arts non-profit to succeed longtime Director Michelle Mansour



Demetri Broxton; Photo credit: Tinashe Chidarikire

SAN FRANCISCO, August 21, 2024 – Root Division today announced Demetri Broxton as its first new Executive Director in nearly two decades, succeeding longtime Director Michelle Mansour. Broxton, a Bay Area non-profit leader with a strong commitment to DEI, is excited to bring his expertise in education and fundraising from the Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD), where he was the Senior Director of Education. He looks forward to building on the programs and expanding Root Division's current studio fellowships, such as the Bay Area Black Studio Artist Fellowship, Latinx Teaching Artist Fellowship, and more.

“We are thrilled that Demetri is joining Root Division as our next Director,” said John-Mark Ikeda, Chair of the Board. “Demetri’s background as a working artist and experience in non-profit management, fundraising, and arts education are the perfect fit for the organization. We look forward to the possibilities of what’s to come for Root Division’s next chapter.”

In his new role, beginning August 19, Broxton will oversee Root Division's subsidized studios for emerging artists, education programs for marginalized youth, and its lauded exhibitions featuring emerging and mid-career artists. He will hit the ground running by working hand-in-hand with



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longtime Director Michelle Mansour to plan the organization's largest annual fundraising art auction taking place on Thursday, October 24.

"I'm thrilled to join Root Division as the next Executive Director; the organization aligns perfectly with my passions," said Broxton. "Root Division serves as an incubator for emerging artists, a presenter of cutting-edge exhibitions, and a provider of arts education for everyone. With its impressive 22-year history, I look forward to contributing to Root Division's growth, visibility, and influence as we approach our 25th anniversary. Most importantly, I'm excited to work with such a talented and dedicated team and to build deeper connections with local artists."

Demetri Broxton succeeds Michelle Mansour following her 20-year tenure at the organization, serving as Executive Director for more than 17 years. In 2002, three MFA graduates from San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI) founded Root Division to constructively address the primary needs facing Bay Area emerging artists. During Mansour's tenure, Root Division experienced significant growth and change, including moving to a new building and doubling the number of artists served; launching various fellowship opportunities for emerging BIPOC artists; supporting hundreds of artists and youth each year; and being an anchor for the Bay Area arts community.

"I'm very thankful for the privilege to help Root Division flourish and thrive over the last two decades and to see the impact that the organization has had on both local artists and the arts community," said Mansour. "I'm excited about the possibilities for the organization to grow and evolve, and I have faith that this unique incubator model will thrive under Demetri's charismatic and visionary leadership. As for my involvement, I intend to continue supporting artists, Root Division, and the arts ecosystem for years to come."

Ikeda added "The Board, staff, and artists of Root Division are extremely grateful to Michelle for her amazing leadership."

Root Division's comprehensive programs are a launching pad for artists, an incubator for arts educators, a door to creativity for youth, and a bridge for the public to become involved in the arts. Giving back to the community is essential to Root Division's unique model, where artists receive



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subsidized studio space in exchange for volunteering their time to teach art classes to adults and low-income youth and produce public programming.

Demetri Broxton is a Bay Area artist and formerly the Education Director of the Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) in San Francisco. Born and raised in Oakland, CA, he earned a BFA at UC Berkeley with an emphasis in painting and an MA in Museum Studies from San Francisco State University. His artwork has been exhibited internationally and most recently at the Chinese Historical Society of America, Art Gallery of Alberta, de Young Museum, Crocker Art Museum, and Kala Art Institute. Broxton's artwork is held in several private and public collections including the Monterey Art Museum, de Young Museum, and Crocker Art Museum. He is represented by Patricia Sweetow Gallery in Los Angeles, CA.

ABOUT ROOT DIVISION

Root Division is a visual arts non-profit in San Francisco that connects creativity and community through a dynamic ecosystem of arts education, exhibitions, and studios. Root Division's mission is to empower artists, foster community service, inspire youth, and enrich the Bay Area through engagement in the visual arts.

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