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SMITHSONIAN CURATOR NAMED THE FIRST CHIEF CURATOR AND DIRECTOR OF COLLECTIONS AT THE MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY BOSTON | NANTUCKET

*Historian Angela Tate Joins MAAH Following a Decade of Work at Cultural
Institutions, Academic Centers, and Universities.*

Boston — The Curator of Women’s History at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture has been named Chief Curator and Director of Collections at the Museum of African American History Boston | Nantucket (MAAH).

Historian Angela Tate— whose career focuses on telling inclusive and expansive stories of America’s past— brings a wealth of experience to her new role. Most recently she was a key member of the team that created the new exhibit, “Forces for Change: Mary McLeod Bethune and Black Women’s Activism” at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Working in a dual role, Tate also served as co-chair for the curatorial committee of the Smithsonian’s American Women’s History Initiative (now the Smithsonian American Women’s History Museum).

As a Smithsonian curator she supported the US Mint’s American Women Quarters Program, acquired and stewarded collections related to Black Women’s history— including the largest collection of Phillis Wheatley Peters materials in a public institution—moderated panels including programs focused on the women of the Black Panther Party and the 50th anniversary of Shirley Chisholm’s presidential run, founded an African American quilt history task force, and organized initiatives around Black maternal health.

“Angela Tate is widely recognized for her creativity, her leadership, and her commitment to education and community engagement,” said Dr. Noelle Trent, President & CEO, MAAH. “In addition to curating thought-provoking exhibits, Angela has developed timely programming, symposia, conferences and events that have

attracted broad audiences. As we continue to transform Massachusetts' own Museum of African American History, Angela will play an essential role in bringing our vision to life.”

A PhD candidate in history at Northwestern University, Tate's dissertation follows the history of Black Women in radio and their influence on the global civil rights movement, with an emphasis on cultural diplomacy and the African Diaspora. Her research has been supported by the Mellon Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the New York Public Library, and Radcliffe's Schlesinger Library.

According to Tate, her priorities include highlighting the unique role of Black history in Massachusetts by activating spaces that have long been used for community building, education, and engagement.

“Through programs, events and exhibits, I hope to showcase America's founding through the lens of African American history and the African Diaspora with a special emphasis on the diverse experiences and significant contributions of Black women,” said Tate.

Earlier in her career, Tate, a published author and in-demand public speaker, worked at a diverse group of institutions from academic libraries and museums to universities, and cultural heritage centers including the Field Foundation in Chicago, IL, the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, MA, the Ora Mobley Sweeting Civil Rights Archive in Los Angeles, CA, and the NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, CA.

She was the 2023-2024 Propel Program Fellow at the Association of Art Museum Curators and has served on the advisory boards of the Black Professionals in International Affairs and Cultural DC's Black Futures initiative.

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About the Museum of African American History

A not-for-profit institution designated a Boston African American Historic Site by the National Park Service, the Museum of African American History (MAAH) began holding exhibitions and public gatherings in 1963. It is nationally and internationally known for its collection of historic sites on Joy Street in Boston and York Street on Nantucket. These locations anchor the Museum to Black Heritage Trails® in Boston and Nantucket and span the Colonial Period through Reconstruction. MAAH and its portfolio of properties are closely linked to historical leaders, institutions, campaigns and events during the 18th and 19th centuries, such as the Massachusetts General Colored Association which was established in 1826 to combat slavery and racism, the New England Antislavery Society founded in 1832 and led by William Lloyd Garrison, and the voyages of the African American whaling captain, Absalom Boston. Home to four original African American buildings constructed between 1774 and 1835, MAAH sites include two African Meeting Houses, the Abiel Smith School, and the Seneca Boston-Florence Higginbotham House. Through programs, curricula, tours, and exhibits the museum illuminates, interprets, and preserves the birthplace of the abolitionist movement and the continuing struggle for human rights.