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The MAX Announces Mural Project at Statewide Convening

Public Art Pioneer Sandra Bloodworth Keynotes Event Highlighting Opportunities for
Mississippi Artists

MERIDIAN, Miss. (November 4, 2025) – This weekend, artists from around the state gathered with community leaders and policymakers at the Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience (The MAX) for the Mississippi Public Art Convening, presented in partnership with the Mississippi Arts Commission (MAC).

The first of its kind, the gathering began with the launch of a call to artists for site-specific work inside The MAX. The MAX requests qualifications to design and produce original, visually striking installations that provide wayfinding for the entrance and exit of the permanent exhibition. The new mural project creates a cohesive experience for guests by bookending the entrance to the Castle introductory theater and the exit from the Mitchell Companies global community gallery. The completed installation must incorporate the words “enter here” for the primary entrance; the exit mural(s) should reflect themes within the museum.

Mississippi creatives with strong skills in graphic design, folk art, visual art, and/or installation work are encouraged to submit their qualifications at msarts.org/call-to-artists. “Mississippi creatives” are those with deep ties to the state who have spent a substantial part of their life and/or career in Mississippi. Applicants need not currently reside in the state.

“As we continue to explore ways to elevate our visitor experience, we’re excited to provide a canvas for homegrown talent to share what this state and the arts mean to them,” said Penny Kemp, president + CEO of The MAX.

Saturday's event was presented in partnership with the MAC, which recently launched the Public Art in Community Grant. MAC Executive Director, David Lewis, introduced featured guest Sandra Bloodworth. A former employee of MAC herself, Bloodworth was recognized as the Mississippi College Alumni of the Year for the Department of Art earlier this month. “I could not be happier to be part of welcoming Sandra home to Mississippi,” said Lewis. “She is a giant in the field, and the alignment with these new funding opportunities, The MAX’s current exhibition, and statewide growing interest in public art are excellent and inspirational.”

Bloodworth provided a keynote address highlighting the importance of place in public art and lessons she carried with her from her hometown of Charleston, Mississippi throughout her career, including 28 years as director of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s Arts & Design program in New York City—one of the largest public art programs in the world. “The MAX is extraordinary,” Bloodworth said. “Its design and vision reflect a world-class standard. It honors Mississippi’s most legendary artists while creating space for new voices to emerge. It’s a testament to the depth of Mississippi’s cultural legacy and its enduring capacity to inspire new generations.”

Following Bloodworth’s presentation, she joined a conversation led by Melody Thortis Moody from the Community Foundation for Mississippi; with Lawson King, a sculptor from the Delta; Reshonda Perryman, an independent artist from Jackson; and Carlton Turner, founder of the Mississippi Center for Cultural Production in Utica about how Mississippi communities can leverage public art to catalyze creativity, connection, and opportunity.

This event was in conjunction with The MAX’s current temporary exhibition, *Cecelia Moseley: Remnants of Language*, which features oversize metal sculptures, prints, and a vivid acrylic installation. Moseley, a Mississippi native, has public art on display at the Mississippi Children’s Museums in Meridian and Jackson, the Mathews-Sanders Sculpture Garden in Cleveland, MS, in Oxford, MS, and Rosemary Beach, FL.

The deadline to submit qualifications for The MAX's mural project is Monday, January 12, 2026.

About The MAX:

The Mississippi Arts + Entertainment Experience (The MAX) is an arts and cultural center in the heart of downtown Meridian that celebrates Mississippi's creative legacy through interactive exhibits, workshops, and live performances. The multipurpose facility contains a two-story Hall of Fame celebrating the state's groundbreaking artists like Walter Anderson, William Faulkner, Morgan Freeman, Jim Henson, B.B. King, Elvis Presley, and Leontyne Price to name a few, along with over 20,000 square feet of interactive exhibits, art studios, a recording studio, and performance spaces. Every visit to The MAX is a unique experience that leaves visitors feeling inspired and in awe of Mississippi's global impact on music, literature, art, and entertainment. Visit www.msarts.org to learn more.

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