

DATE: April 23, 2021

TO: Glenn Lowry, David Rockefeller Director, Museum of Modern Art

FROM: Direct Action Working Group of the International Imagination of Anti-national Anti-imperialist Feelings (IIAAF)

RE: Notice of Intention and Expectations for *The Ruins of Modernity* Tour

Dear Glenn Lowry,

We are writing to notify you that on Friday, April 30, a group of students, scholars, artists, community organizers, and former MoMA workers intend to conduct a self-organized tour of Midtown, including the interior of MoMA. The tour is entitled *The Ruins of Modernity: From the City to the Museum*, and it enacts the ideas laid out in [Strike MoMA: Terms and Framework for Struggle](#). This is an educational and cultural event. It will begin by highlighting the connections between MoMA and ruling class power at the scales of the city and the globe. It will end with a direct inspection of the operational infrastructure of the museum building itself.

We understand that Free Fridays are currently suspended, and MoMA workers have informed us that since our gatherings began across the street under the banner of Post-MoMA Futures, tickets are now required to enter the lobby of the museum. For the tour this Friday, we do not intend to pay the \$25 entry fee. We believe that this fee should not exist at all for anyone. We expect to be able to enter the museum without incident. We do not want the MoMA staff to be put in the difficult position of being told by management to deny entry to the tour. We also expect that you will not invite NYPD officers inside or around the museum in response to the tour. Involving the police will create an unsafe environment for everyone. We will operate in a Covid-aware manner, including the wearing of masks.

We also would like to address a few points related to the letter you sent to all MoMA staff on April 15th. In that letter, you falsely attribute to us the motivation of “destroying the museum.” Your attempt to conflate striking MoMA with “destruction” amounts to fearmongering, as if it were us, rather than the oligarchs, who embody a threat to culture, art, and society. MoMA has been a mechanism of destruction since its inception with the Rockefellers. Its claims for enlightenment and progress have always been in ruins; we are heightening this condition and its related contradictions. You invoke “the museum” as if it were a homogenous community with a unified interest; but everyone knows it is a site of class struggle and riven with antagonisms, however many reassuring emails you send or conversations you have with staff. The MoMA regime is a system of power and wealth that harms people, that uses art as an instrument of accumulation, and that makes empty appeals to what you call “the public good” while covering for billionaires like Leon Black, Larry Fink, and Jerry Speyer, whose names have become synonymous with patriarchal violence, the carceral state, climate destruction, neo-feudal landlordism, and direct support for the [NYPD Foundation](#). Disassemble, dismantle, abolish. All

these verbs apply when we are talking about destroying an apparatus of violence so that something else can emerge, something controlled by workers, communities, and artists rather than oligarchs.

Finally, we take this opportunity to set the record straight: despite your denials, you did indeed fire many workers from MoMA last year. Some of them will be with us on the tour. The fact that they were uncontracted does not make them disposable or unworthy of being counted. The walls separating the museum from the city have always been an illusion. The Ruins of Modernity tour operationalizes this fact, and sees the museum on the same plane of violence as nearby places like Columbus Circle and Blackrock HQ, and, directly adjacent to the museum itself, the ultra-luxury 53W53 “MoMA Tower.”

Thank you, and we appreciate your cooperation,

Direct Action Working Group of IIAAF