



Dearest MassLEAP Community,

It is with a great deal of love and respect that I announce my resignation as Artistic Director of [MassLEAP](http://MassLEAP.org).

In 2011, a group of community artists and educators - including co-founders, Alex Charalambides and myself - sat around Anna West's kitchen table and imagined a braver, more diverse and thriving youth arts community spanning the state of Massachusetts. In 2012, we held our first Louder Than A Bomb Massachusetts Youth Poetry Slam Festival with the many hands of an incredible group of organizers, poets and educators. From the success of that festival, we built a wealth of programming in response to the needs of our youth and adult communities. See a list of our programming by checking us out at [massleap.org](http://massleap.org)! Today, we are a certified non-profit with a small staff who are passionately committed to creating safer and more courageous spaces for young people to learn, lead and raise their voices as critically conscious artists in this society.

In addition to my resignation, I am so excited to announce that Porsha Olayiwola will be taking the position of MassLEAP's Artistic Director! Porsha has been a member of our community since very early in our beginnings. Much of what MassLEAP is and how we do what we do is due to her creativity, presence and heart. I am humbled and comforted to leave MassLEAP in Alex and Porsha's capable leadership. In addition to Alex and Porsha, I am incredibly grateful to the people of this city/state who opened their arms wide to me and to the work of developing a youth spoken word and social justice arts community in this state. Since its inception, MassLEAP has been a community effort. MassLEAP would not exist if it weren't for you and I know that, most importantly, this community will continue to love, support and hold MassLEAP and its leadership accountable.

Young people are our past, our present and our future. They have and will continue to shape the world that we live in. It is our call, our responsibility, to work alongside them in imagining more just worlds and ways of being. There is more work to do and I am excited to do it.

Warmly,  
Amanda Torres  
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