music and dance concerts, comedy acts, and films. Events take place throughout 26 old mill buildings, including an iconic clocktower, in downtown North Adams (at right), and curators make the most of courtyards, passageways, and lawns (below). The annual Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival (July 12-28) features boundary-busting classical music and a family play-along session in a jeans-and-T-shirt setting. Blondie, the classic punk band, performs August 3, and Jaimeo Brown and his ensemble, Transcendence, offer a soul-enriching fusion of jazz, blues, and hip-hop on August 18. Also on tap are more than 50 bluegrass and roots bands, all set to play at The FreshGrass Festival (September 14-16).

Art exhibitions range from enormous installations and digital-media displays to sculptures and oil paintings. Etel Adnan, author of The Arab Apocalypse, creates poetry and lyrical images through leporellos—paper works that unfold like an accordion—and on canvas. Her small landscapes of scenes from Lebanon and northern California sing with harmonious hues, as in Untitled (2017), at right.

Also evocative are the wild and wily works in “The Lure of the Dark: Contemporary Painters Conjure the Night.” Among those artists is Sam McKiniss, who mines the primal experiences of freedom, fear, and awe in his luminous Northern Lights (2017), at left.

More concrete are the shipping containers and shelters constructed out of stacked wooden pallets in “The Archaeology of Another Possible Future,” by Los Angeles-based artist Liz Glynn ’03. It commands an entire building. The museum’s notes suggest, though, that all these massive materials, along with catwalks, digital printers, and displays of antique tools (below), speak to a critical abstraction: “the shift from a material-based economy to one in which technology companies seem to generate billion-dollar valuations out of thin air, nanotechnology continues to operate beyond the field of the visually apprehensible, and capital is accumulated as a pure concept.”

Add to these shows Laurie Anderson’s virtual-reality experiences, Chalkroom and Aloft, and James Turrell’s otherworldly light sculptures, Perfectly Clear and Hind Sight (which all require advanced reservations), and it’s easy for anyone to spend hours wandering the grounds and galleries. Even what’s not officially on display—architectural and industrial artifacts—are worth attention.

Make MASS MoCA a day trip, or, because it’s summertime, treat yourself to a longer Western Massachusetts arts-injected excursion and take in the neighboring Williamstown Theater Festival, The Clark Art Institute, the Williams College Museum of Art, and Bennington Museum as well.