



BMA PRESENTS EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY SONDHEIM ARTSCAPE PRIZE FINALISTS 2018

BALTIMORE, MD (June 5, 2018)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA) present one of the summer's most highly anticipated exhibitions. On view June 20 through August 5, 2018, the *Sondheim Artscape Prize Finalists 2018* exhibition showcases artwork by the six finalists competing for the 13th annual Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize, a \$25,000 fellowship given each year to a visual artist or visual arts collaborators living and working in the Greater Baltimore region. The finalists this year are Erick Antonio Benitez, Nakeya Brown, Sutton Demlong, Nate Larson, Eunice Park, and Stephen Towns.

An award ceremony and reception to announce the winner will take place Saturday, July 14, 2018, at 7 p.m. at The Baltimore Museum of Art. The winner is selected from the exhibition after review of the installed art and an interview with each of the jurors. The remaining five finalists will each receive a \$2,500 M&T Bank Finalist Award. Jurors for 2018 are Lauren Cornell, Margot Norton, and Kameelah Janan Rasheed.

The Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize is produced by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts in partnership with The Baltimore Museum of Art and the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and is held in conjunction with the 37th annual Artscape, America's largest free arts festival, taking place July 20–22, 2018.

The *Sondheim Artscape Prize Finalists 2018* exhibition is organized by BMA Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art Cecilia Wichmann along with BOPA Public Art Specialist Kim Domanski. This exhibition is generously sponsored by Patricia and Mark Joseph/The Shelter Foundation.

The 2018 Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize is made possible through the generous support of presenting sponsor M&T Bank. Special thanks to those making contributions to the 2018 Sondheim Prize in honor of former BOPA CEO Bill Gilmore: Whiting-Turner Contracting Company, Dr. Frank Marino Foundation, Days Inn Inner Harbor, Lois and Irving Blum Foundation, Hopkinson Family Fund, James Adams, Martin & Lone Azola, Alexander Baer, Kathleen Basham, Linda Blume, Barbara Bozzuto, Edie Brown, Elizabeth Bruen, Laura Burrows, Clarissa Cochran, Suzanne Cohen, Barbara Dale, Gwen Davidson, H. Chace Davis, Charlotte Dewitt, John Driscoll, Elaine Freeman, Carmel Gambacorta, Stanford Gann, Nancy Hackerman, Rosalind Healy, Rebecca Hoffberger, E. Scott Johnson, Averil Kadis, Joyce Keating, Mark Klotzbach, Lesley Malin, Judith Mayer, Sarah McCafferty & Andrew Lapayowker, Courtney McKeldin, Alyce Myatt, Anne Perkins, Paula Rome, Jann Rosen-Queralt, Leslie Helen Shepard, Joseph Sheppard & Rita St. Clair, Kathy Sher, Janet Marie Smith, Betsy Stone, Parker Sutton & Paul Knott, and Andrea Vernet & Brent Burkhardt.

Additional support for the annual prize comes from an endowment made possible through the generosity of the Abell Foundation, Baltimore Community Foundation, Brightside Foundation, Brown Advisory Charitable Foundation, Caplan Family Foundation, Charlesmead Foundation, Ellen Sondheim Dankert, France-Merrick Foundation, Greater Baltimore Committee, Hecht-Levi Foundation, Legg Mason, Amy & Chuck Newhall, Rollins-Luetkemeyer Foundation, Henry & Ruth Blaustein Rosenberg Foundation, Rosemore, Inc., Rouse Company Foundation, M. Sigmund & Barbara Shapiro Philanthropic Fund, John Sondheim and William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund.

2018 JANET & WALTER SONDHEIM ARTSCAPE PRIZE FINALISTS

Erick Antonio Benitez (Baltimore, MD) is a multidisciplinary artist, musician, organizer, and curator. His work primarily consists of installation, video, performance, sound, and painting to explore concepts of identity, culture, mysticism, and the natural world. He received a BFA in painting with a video concentration from MICA in 2014. His work has been exhibited in several gallery exhibitions and publicly in Washington, DC; Baltimore, MD; Brooklyn, NY; Denver, CO; Barcelona, Spain; and Timisoara, Romania. His work has also been featured in the *Washington Post*, *Baltimore City Paper*, *BmoreArt*, *What Weekly*, *BmoreArt: A Journal of Art + Ideas*, *Let's Talk Live (WJLA)*, and *Hysteria Zine Vol. 2*. Benitez is a recent recipient of The Contemporary: Grit Fund 2 and the Ruby Artist Project Grant.

Nakeya Brown (Laurel, MD), a 2017 Snider Prize award winner, has generated a vast body of work that uses photography to explore the complexities of race, beauty, politics, and gender. She has a BA from Rutgers University and an MFA from The George Washington University. Her work has been featured in solo exhibitions at the Catherine Eldman Gallery (Chicago, IL, 2017); the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art (Grand Rapids, MI, 2017); the Hamiltonian Gallery (Washington, DC, 2017); The McKenna Museum of African American Art (New Orleans, LA, 2012); and in group exhibitions at the Eubie Blake Culture Center (Baltimore, MD, 2018); the Prince George's African American Museum & Cultural Center (North Brentwood, MD, 2017); and the Woman Made Gallery (Chicago, IL 2016 & 2013), among others. She has presented her work internationally at the Museum der bildenden Künste (Leipzig, Germany, 2018) and NOW Gallery (London, U.K., 2017). Brown's work has been featured in *New York* magazine, *Dazed & Confused*, *The Fader*, *TIME*, and *Vice*. Her work has been included in photography books *Babe* and *Girl on Girl: Art and Photography in the Age of the Female Gaze*.

Sutton Demlong (Baltimore, MD) is a sculptor who utilizes traditional woodworking techniques to explore the possibilities of imbuing personality and presence in abstract sculpture. Demlong received an MFA from MICA's Rinehart School of Sculpture in 2016. In 2013, he was awarded a BA from Arizona State University with a dual concentration in Art Education and Sculpture. His work was featured in exhibitions at Little Berlin (Philadelphia, PA, 2018); Platform Gallery (Baltimore, MD, 2017); Current Space (Baltimore, MD, 2017); New City Studio (Phoenix, AZ, 2017); CONNERSMITH. (Washington, DC, 2016) and Franconia Sculpture Park (Shafer, MN, 2014). In 2017, Demlong was a Trawick Prize semifinalist and in 2015 he was the recipient of the Markell Brooks Scholarship to attend Anderson Ranch Arts Center artist residency.

Nate Larson (Baltimore, MD) is a contemporary artist and a professor at MICA. His projects have been widely shown across the U.S. and internationally, including an upcoming commissioned solo exhibition for the George Eastman Museum (Rochester, NY, opening January 2019). Previous solo exhibitions have been shown at Filter Space Chicago (Chicago, IL, 2016); the Orlando Museum of Art (Orlando, FL, 2013); Blue Sky Center for Photographic Arts (Portland, OR, 2014, 2012); and Contemporary Arts Center, Las Vegas (Las Vegas, NV, 2011). Recent group exhibitions include *State of the Art*, which originated at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art (Bentonville, AR, 2014) and traveled throughout the U.S.; and shows at the Denver Art Museum (Denver, CO, 2018); the Zuckerman Museum of Art (Kennesaw, GA, 2017); Portland Art Museum (Portland, OR, 2016); and Center for Photography at Woodstock (Woodstock, NY, 2016). Larson has participated in artist residencies at Paul Artspace in Missouri (2017), CEC Artslink in Russia (2016), and the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation in Florida (2013). His works are included in the collections of the High Museum Atlanta, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Orlando Museum of Art, Portland Art Museum, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, and Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago. His first monograph, *Geolocation*, was published by Flash Powder Projects in 2016. Larson was the recipient of the 2017 Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City Artist Travel Prize, and was a Sondheim Prize Finalist in 2010 and 2013.

Eunice Park (Parkville, MD) studied Fine Arts at Montgomery College (Rockville, MD) and attended the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, PA, where she was granted a full scholarship for Independent Studio Painting. Eunice took a hiatus from painting for a number of years and returned to the Baltimore area to raise her three children as a single mom, working as a seamstress during most of that time to support her family. A few years ago, Eunice's passion for painting was rekindled when her daughter bought her art supplies for a Mother's Day gift. She has been creating new works ever since. Much of her inspiration comes from the great teachers she has had in her life, or from music. She draws strength from her children and her faith and creates images from memories, which when infused with emotion, become fantasies paralleled with reality.

Stephen Towns (Baltimore, MD) is a painter and fiber artist whose work explores how American history influences contemporary society. Towns received a BFA in painting from the University of South Carolina. His work has been exhibited locally and nationally, including solo exhibitions at The Baltimore Museum of Art (Baltimore, MD, 2018); Goucher College (Baltimore, MD, 2017); Galerie Myrtis (Baltimore, MD, 2017); Gallery CA (Baltimore, MD, 2014); City Gallery at the Dock Street Theatre (Charleston, SC, 2005), as well as group exhibitions at Arlington Art Center (Arlington, VA, 2017); The Art Barn (Gaithersburg, MD, 2018); Montpelier Arts Center (Laurel, MD, 2016) and the Star-Spangled Banner Flag House and Museum (Baltimore, MD, 2014). His work has also been featured in publications such as the *New York Times*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Baltimore Style*, *Northern Virginia* magazine, *BmoreArt* magazine, *Urbanite* magazine, and *Baltimore City Paper*. Towns was honored as the inaugural recipient of the 2016 Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City Artist Travel Prize and received the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance Rubys Artist Grant in 2015. In 2018, he was awarded a Maryland State Arts Council's Individual Artist Award in craft.

JANET & WALTER SONDHEIM ARTSCAPE PRIZE

The Artscape prize is named in honor of Janet and Walter Sondheim who were instrumental in creating the Baltimore City that exists today. Walter Sondheim, Jr. was one of Baltimore's most important civic leaders. His accomplishments include oversight of the desegregation of the Baltimore City Public Schools in 1954, when he was president of the Board of School Commissioners. He was also deeply involved in the development of Charles Center and the Inner Harbor. He continued to be active in city and state civic and educational activities and served as the senior advisor to the Greater Baltimore Committee until his death in 2007. Janet Sondheim danced with the pioneering Denishawn Dancers, a legendary dance troupe founded by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn. Later, she spent 15 years at the Children's Guild working with severely emotionally disturbed children. After retirement, she was a volunteer tutor at Highlandtown Elementary School. She married Walter in 1934, and they were together until her death in 1992.

ARTSCAPE

America's largest free arts festival, attracting more than 350,000 attendees, offers concerts on multiple outdoor stages, art exhibitions, an artists' market, a full schedule of dance, theater and opera, jazz, classical, folk and experimental music, children's activities, exhibitors, and an extensive variety of local food and beverage vendors on Mount Royal Avenue and North Charles Street. Artscape is produced by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts, a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization which serves as Baltimore City's arts council, events agency, and film office. By producing large-scale events such as Light City, Artscape and the Baltimore Book Festival, and providing funding and support to artists, arts programs and organizations across the city, BOPA's goal is to make Baltimore a more vibrant and creative city. For festival information, visit www.artscape.org and follow at @Artscape BMore on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ArtscapeBMore), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/ArtscapeBMore) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/ArtscapeBMore).

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

Founded in 1914, The Baltimore Museum of Art is a major cultural destination recognized for engaging diverse audiences through dynamic exhibitions and innovative educational and community outreach programs. The BMA's internationally renowned collection of 95,000 objects encompasses more than 1,000 works by Henri Matisse anchored by the famed Cone Collection of modern art, as well as one of the nation's finest holdings of prints, drawings, and photographs. The galleries showcase an exceptional collection of art from Africa; important works by established and emerging contemporary artists; outstanding European and American paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts; significant artworks from China; ancient Antioch mosaics; and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000- square-foot museum is also distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped gardens featuring an array of 20th-century sculpture. The BMA is located in Charles Village, three miles north of the Inner Harbor, and is adjacent to the main campus of Johns Hopkins University. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

VISITOR INFORMATION

General admission to the BMA is free. Special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. The museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The BMA is located at 10 Art Museum Drive, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit artbma.org.

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