



museum of arts and design

## Museum of Arts and Design Announces Fall 2015 and Early 2016 Exhibition Program

### Highlights include Wendell Castle, Studio Job, Japanese Kōgei, Perfect Timing, and Ebony G. Patterson

New York, NY, June 25, 2015 – Today Glenn Adamson, the Nanette L. Laitman Director of the Museum of Arts and Design, announced the Museum’s upcoming program for Fall 2015 and Winter 2016, featuring a diverse set of exhibitions that includes:

- **Wendell Castle Remastered**  
October 20, 2015 – February 28, 2016
- **Japanese Kōgei | Future Forward**  
October 20, 2015 – February 7, 2016
- **Ebony G. Patterson: Dead Treez**  
November 10, 2015 – April 3, 2016
- **Studio Job**  
March 22, 2016 – August 21, 2016
- **Perfect Timing: 21st-Century Fine Watchmaking**  
May 3, 2016 – September 25, 2016

Each exhibition will be accompanied by a robust set of public programs. The exhibition schedule includes new Chief Curator Shannon Stratton’s debut presentation at the Museum. The exhibitions are global in scope and demonstrate MAD’s mission of taking its visitors behind the scenes of creative practice, across the fields of art, craft, and design.

“Here at MAD we believe in the importance of creativity backed by consummate skill. We are a platform for master makers of all kinds, working in any medium, and that breadth is reflected in our forthcoming exhibitions,” said Adamson. “With these projects, we also continue to uphold our commitment to revealing creative practice. Not only do we show great works of art and design, but also the processes and personalities that lie behind them.”

#### **Wendell Castle Remastered**

October 20, 2015 – February 28, 2016

*Wendell Castle Remastered* will be the first museum exhibition to examine the digitally crafted works of Wendell Castle, acclaimed figure of the American art furniture movement. A master furniture maker, designer, sculptor, and educator, Castle is now in the sixth decade of a prolific career that began in 1958—one that parallels the emergence and growth of the American studio craft movement.

In this solo exhibition, Castle takes inspiration from the first decade of his own artistic production by creating a new body of work that revisits his groundbreaking achievements of the 1960s through a contemporary lens. In both series of work, Castle crafts furniture using stack

lamination, a technique in which he builds up forms out of thick boards and then freely carves them into dynamic shapes. In the early period, this sculptural approach to furniture making was unprecedented, and it came to define his pivotal role as a leader in the field.

Alongside a selection of historically significant works, chosen by MAD curator Ronald T. Labaco, *Wendell Castle Remastered* presents new works realized through Castle's latest practice of combining handcraftsmanship—such as carving, rasping, and finishing—with digital technologies—including 3D scanning, 3D modeling, and computer-controlled milling. These new works will be installed in dialogue with the earlier pieces that inspired them.

Even though Castle's approach to furniture making has evolved through his use of 21st-century digital tools, it remains rooted in handcraftsmanship, and the same imagination that liberated him from the language of traditional joinery. The exhibition highlights Castle's mastery of volumetric forms with a sculptural presence in the round, his vocabulary of softly organic shapes, and his invention of new furniture hybrids. *Wendell Castle Remastered* will explore Castle's increased capacity to address these themes in ways that are now made possible through computer-mediated technologies. Gallery text, photography, and films will further illustrate how this new technology is changing the way he realizes his work.

*Wendell Castle Remastered* is organized by MAD's Marcia Docter Senior Curator Ronald T. Labaco and Samantha De Tillio, Curatorial Assistant and Project Manager. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated, full-color catalogue.

Support for *Wendell Castle Remastered* is provided by Friedman Benda, the Anne and Ronald Abramson Family Foundation, Ann F. Kaplan and Robert Fippinger, Susan Steinhauer and Dan Greenberg, Jane and Leonard Korman, Fleur Bresler, Anita and Ronald Wornick, Diane and Marc A. Grainer, and the University of Rochester – Memorial Art Gallery.

## **Japanese Kōgei | Future Forward**

October 20, 2015 – February 7, 2016

*Japanese Kōgei | Future Forward* showcases the work of 12 established and emergent *kōgei* artists, working principally in ceramics and lacquer, and examines the changing role of the discipline within Japanese culture today. *Kōgei*—a genre of traditional art that roughly translates as “artisan crafts”—is a means of highly skilled expression, both in form and decoration, that is associated with specific regions in Japan. The subject is steeped in tradition and rooted in long-established cultural ideals and aesthetics expressed through the mastery of specialized techniques and materials.

While contemporary *kōgei* is still ingrained with centuries of tradition, the work of the artists in this exhibition reflects a decisive and somewhat controversial shift from that of their peers. Most *kōgei* artists see their role as upholding traditional Japanese culture of the past, particularly as it was established in the late 19th-century Meiji period. This approach precludes the opportunity for personal expression or for addressing more topical, global issues. The artists in *Japanese Kōgei | Future Forward* transcend this dedication to convention, by incorporating a high degree of individual expression into their work and addressing ideas about the “future.” Drawing inspiration from current trends in animation, manga, design, and contemporary art, the individualism found in these works links them equally to contemporary art and to traditional craft, extending the vitality of *kōgei* into the 21st century.

The artists in *Japanese Kōgei | Future Forward* are organized into five general *kōgei* techniques or practices: two-dimensional/ceramic painting, surface treatment/lacquer techniques, three-dimensional/figurative expression, *chawan* (tea bowls) and other cultural utensils/vessels, and, finally, transcending decoration. Three artists will be profiled in short films, which reveal the techniques that inform their work.

*Japanese Kōgei | Future Forward* is curated by Yūji Akimoto, Director of the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, and coordinated at the Museum of Arts and Design by Marcia Docter Senior Curator Ronald T. Labaco and Samantha De Tillio, Curatorial Assistant and Project Manager. A translated edition of the catalogue *Art*

*Crafting Towards the Future*—the original 2012 exhibition at the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, from which the MAD show is reconstituted—will accompany *Japanese Kōgei | Future Forward*.

*Japanese Kōgei | Future Forward* is organized by the Museum of Arts and Design and co-organized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs and 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (Kanazawa Art Promotion and Development Foundation).

*Japanese Kōgei | Future Forward* is made possible by the generous support of Tokuda Yasokichi IV, Nana Onishi and Onishi Gallery, Errol Rudman, Shinichi Doi, the Japanese Agency of Cultural Affairs, Marcia and Alan Docter, the Mary and James G. Wallach Foundation, the Consulate-General of Japan in New York, and Deborah J. Buck.

### **Ebony G. Patterson: Dead Treez**

November 10, 2015 – April 3, 2016

*Dead Treez* is a monographic show by Kentucky-based, Jamaica-born artist Ebony Patterson. Incorporating a wide variety of media, Patterson embellishes tapestries, sculptures, and paintings to talk about visibility in terms of class, gender, race, and the media. Her highly embellished, almost illuminated images and objects are intended to attract and seduce the viewer, challenging them not just to look, but to see.

For *Dead Treez*, Patterson assembled six eye-popping tapestries adorned with glitter, silk flowers, and rhinestones, plus a life-size figural tableau of 10 male mannequins, dressed in a kaleidoscopic mix of floral fabrics. Meant to present a complex vision of what it means to be male in contemporary Jamaican culture, the mannequins are a meditation on dance hall fashion and culture, regarded as a celebration of the disenfranchised in postcolonial Jamaica. Placing in stark contrast what masculinity is, Patterson's mannequins exhibit an effeminate style that operates to challenge traditional Jamaican expectations for manhood, while her tapestries depict murder victims (as sourced through social media) embellished to seduce viewers into witnessing the underreported brutality experienced by those on the lower rungs of the socioeconomic ladder.

Organized by the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and curated by Karen Patterson, the project was secured for MAD by new Chief Curator Shannon Stratton.

### **Studio Job**

March 22, 2016 – August 21, 2016

*Studio Job* will be the first solo exhibition at an American museum on the work of collaborators Job Smeets (Belgian, b. 1970) and Nynke Tynagel (Dutch, b. 1977). Established in Antwerp in 2000, for over 15 years the atelier has developed a distinctive body of highly expressive and opulent work characterized by narrative, pattern, ornament, and historical, sociocultural, political, and personal reference.

Studio Job's commitment to upholding traditional techniques of skilled craftsmanship reflects an ongoing interest in the revival of historical applied arts practices, such as bronze casting, gilding, marquetry, and stained glass, but with a contemporary twist. Melding art, craft, and design, they operate in the manner of an Old Master artist studio, as established by the guild system of Europe in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance. Because of the high fabrication value associated with their creative process, in which they engage the most talented artisans and studios to assist them, the majority of their work is limited edition or unique. They also work with design companies to develop more widely available products.

Operating at the intersection of art and design, the interdisciplinary nature of Studio Job's oeuvre makes it difficult to categorize. Aesthetically the work is rich in pattern and ornament, eclectic, layered with historical reference and social and cultural critique, continuing a meta-postmodern dialogue. This exhibition will feature their work in a variety of media and various

forms, including art objects, furniture, sculpture, lighting, interiors, and wall and floor coverings in an immersive installation designed by the artists.

Smeets and Tynagel, both graduates of the prestigious Design Academy Eindhoven, where they met, draw inspiration from their itinerant education traveling throughout Europe to visit important historical collections of art and decorative arts. One early influence was the collections and the stories surrounding Augustus II the Strong (1670–1733), King of Poland, military leader, and patron of the arts, who established Dresden as a major cultural center to advertise his wealth and power. This complex relationship between patronage, power, and privilege is referenced in their *Robber Baron* series (2007) of highly polished and patinated cast-bronze furnishings comprised of a cabinet, mantel clock, table, standing lamp, and jewel safe. The series, replete with elements of golden oil barrels and plumes of factory smoke, is subtitled *Tales of Power, Corruption, Art and Industry*, in reference to the conspicuous consumption of America's 19th-century business tycoons as well as today's Russian oligarchs and Middle Eastern sheikhs. Cast bronze, a recurring medium in Studio Job's body of work, is one theme that will be explored in the exhibition to chart their evolution from the early *Craft* series (2001) to the most recent, monumental *Landmarks* (2009–2015), in addition to their investigations in marquetry, faience, and glass.

Studio Job is organized by MAD's Marcia Docter Senior Curator Ronald T. Labaco and Riva Arnold, Curatorial Assistant and Project Manager.

### **Perfect Timing: 21st-Century Fine Watchmaking**

May 3, 2016 – September 25, 2016

*Perfect Timing* will be the first major museum exhibition on 21st-century watchmaking, featuring approximately 45 of the most skillfully crafted and innovative mechanical wristwatches made by leading manufacturers and independent watchmakers. In today's digital age, the art of luxury watchmaking is experiencing a timely renaissance, with watchmakers creating miniature masterpieces designed and executed to the highest possible standards. These timepieces demonstrate the art of watchmaking as an enduring tradition that builds upon the virtuoso craftsmanship of the past. Combining inventive designs and newly devised mechanisms, these watches reflect the latest technical advancements in the creation of kinetic, sculptural works that unite art, engineering, and design.

Today's master watchmakers maintain a time-honored custom of designing, making, and assembling all the components of a watch, using simple tools including lathes and files in combination with digital technologies such as CNC (computer-numerical-controlled) milling. It may take days or weeks to create an individual part, from engine-turning the dial to cutting out, filing, and polishing the hands. A single watch may have over 300 parts, each painstakingly and precisely hand-finished. Such timepieces are unique or made in small batches, with some independent studios making as few as five or six watches a year.

Recognizing both the master watchmakers who work in the ateliers of prestigious watch companies and the independent watchmakers, *Perfect Timing* will include well-known brands such as A. Lange & Söhne, Audemars Piguet, Breguet, Ulysse Nardin, Patek Philippe, Jaeger LeCoultre, and Vacheron Constantin, as well as newer independents such as Christophe Claret, Greubel Forsey, HYT, Itay Noy, Jacob & Co., MB&F, Philippe Dufour, Roger W. Smith, and Vianney Halter, among others.

An installation of drawings, photographs, tools, and watch components from the *Le Garde Temps: Naissance d'une Montre* (The Timepiece: Birth of a Watch) project will illustrate the process of conceiving and creating a watch using traditional methods without computers or mass-production techniques.

*Perfect Timing: 21st-Century Fine Watchmaking* is organized by MAD's Marcia Docter Senior Curator Ronald T. Labaco, guest curator Michael Clerizo, and Sophia Merkin, Curatorial Assistant and Project Manager.

## **ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN**

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields, presenting artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill to their work. Since the Museum's founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum's curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design, and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving 21st-century innovation, fostering a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design.

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