

The background is a textured, abstract composition. It features a base of deep blue with lighter blue and white brushstrokes or splatters, particularly in the upper half. Scattered throughout are numerous small yellow dots and a few larger black dots, giving it a dynamic, artistic feel.

BURKE PRIZE 2025

The Burke Prize reinforces the Museum of Arts and Design's commitment to celebrating the next generation of artists working in and advancing the disciplines that shaped the American studio craft movement. Named for Marian and Russell Burke, two passionate collectors of craft and longtime supporters of MAD, the prize is an unrestricted award of \$50,000 given to a professional artist age forty-five or under working in glass, fiber, clay, metal, and/or wood. The winner was selected by a jury of professionals in the fields of art, craft, and design. The prize is accompanied by a display of the winner's work at MAD.

Winner

Hai-Wen Lin, Chicago, IL

Finalists

Sula Bermudez-Silverman, Los Angeles, CA

Chenlu Hou, Providence, RI

Raul De Lara, Queens, NY

Abigail Lucien, Queens, NY

Jury

Selva Aparicio

Burke Prize 2023 Winner

Andrew Gardner

Independent curator, writer, and design historian

Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy

Independent curator, writer, and art historian

Now in its fifth year, we extend our deepest gratitude to Marian and Russell Burke for founding the Burke Prize, an award that has been instrumental in advancing the mission of the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) to support artists working at the intersection of craft and contemporary art. Since its opening in 1956, MAD has been dedicated to championing work in materials historically marginalized in the fine art world, including clay, fiber, glass, and wood, as well as craft-based design in jewelry, textiles, and furniture. Guided from the start by the vision of philanthropist Aileen Osborn Webb to challenge conventional artistic boundaries, the Museum has remained committed to its founding, egalitarian mission of putting craft and handmaking at the center of its program.

At MAD, we embrace craft both as a concept and as a practice, offering a platform to explore its role in history, culture, and society. Our work continues to nurture both established and emerging artists who are reshaping what is possible through craft. The Burke Prize is central to sustaining this vision. Thanks to the generosity of the Burkes, we can continue fostering the next generation of artists pushing the field forward. This year's five remarkable finalists embody the bold, dynamic directions in which craft is evolving, and it is an honor to recognize their contributions to shaping the future. I am deeply grateful to the Burkes, to every artist who applied for consideration, to the distinguished jurors who selected the winner and finalists, and to the dedicated museum staff who brought the prize to life through their hard work and commitment.

Tim Rodgers

Nanette L. Laitman Director



2025
Winner



Hai-Wen Lin



Hai-Wen Lin is an artist living somewhere beneath the sky. Their work explores constructions of their body and the attunement of oneself to the environment, often moving through metaphor, etymology, sunlight, wind, and the way time passes perfectly when you are out walking on a beautiful day. Lin is an alumnus of the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and received a Master of Design in Fashion, Body and Garment from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. They are a 2025 Luminarts Visual Arts Fellow, a 2024 American Craft Council Emerging Artist, a 2023 CFDA Fashion Future Graduate, and a winner of the Hopper Prize. They have been an artist in residence at MacDowell, Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Lighthouse Works, Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Ox-Bow School of Art, and the Grand Canyon National Park, among others. Their work has been featured in publications such as Hyperallergic, American Craft, SZ Magazin, and the Chicago Reader. Recent solo exhibitions include the Centre for Cultural & Artistic Practices (2025), Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (2025), FACILITY (2024), and Prairie (2023). Lin has also exhibited at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, the Chinese American Museum of Chicago, the Wassaic Project, Hyde Park Art Center, the Pittsburgh Glass Center, the walls of their home, their friend's home, on a lake, on their body, and in the air. You can often find their work by looking up.



Previous spread:

7:05:51.20–7:05:51.21, 2023

Image 62 × 42 in. (157.5 × 10.2 cm)

Thanks to Ruby Que, Ndivhuho Rasengani, Charlie Thornton, and Ji Yang



October 8th 2:56–3:56pm Wicker Park; a picnic together // we probably shouldn't feed the sparrows, 2022

Tannic acid-toned cyanotype on muslin, acrylic, soda ash, bamboo, thread, gold chain, wind, green grass, time to kill, hungry sparrows, Sabritas® Turbos Flamas®, a loved one to keep company, and conversations that needn't arrive anywhere
63 × 63 × 5 in. (160 × 160 × 12.7 cm)

I'm trying to lean into the wind. My creative research is focused on the attunement of one's body to the environment through the lens of fashion and adornment. I'm interested in the position clothing holds as a threshold between oneself and the world around it. As one of humanity's basic needs, clothing has long existed as the body's most intimate architecture, a shelter from harsh weather. My practice asks what if our garments invited the wind rather than shielding our bodies from it?

I use fashion as a language to approach kitemaking. Through a series of closures, hooks, knots, and pockets, my sculptural kitemaking is engineered in such a way that they are able to cycle through both worn and flown forms. Here, notions necessary for a garment become formal restraints for a kite, and parts necessary for a kite become embellishments for a garment. Jewelry chains become kite bridles and necklaces become kite reels. Everything necessary to fly is carried on the body.

I look to the sun as a collaborator, often dyeing my fabrics in cyanotype or fugitive dyes. This photosensitive process allows each kite to hold a recording of my body as they exist upon me in their garment forms. Typically passive acts of wearing, walking, meditating, eating, and living become methods of image-making. I reimagine a world where our lives are not so governed by chronic time, but a kairotic sense wherein sunny days and windy weather become calls for gathering with which we orient our lives. I think of this practice as sewing couture for the wind, measuring the spirit, and caring for the sun and sky in the same way we might dress a friend.

This sense of attention looks simultaneously at the vastness and minutiae of the world. Small surface treatments—bias tape made of old paintings, bird feathers, rust-dyes, braided lines, couched hand-made ceramic beads, hand-dyed rope, hand-carved wooden connectors, enameled copper forms—all require close and careful looking, yet become entirely illegible as seemingly large 8-foot kites quickly diminish in the great expanse of the sky. This is what my practice attempts to do: it is a recording of time spent slowly, of longing, wishing, yearning, of tending to all the small moments and details that make up the big picture of life.

— Hai-Wen Lin



***Two Can Share Heaven*, 2024**

Turmeric- and indigo-dyed cotton, donated fabrics, discarded paintings, faux fur, silk, velvet, polyester, jewelry chain, split rings, thread, cord, and wood
80 × 110 in. (203.2 x 279.4 cm)



Images of *Send Them Their Flowers*, 2024

Kites: Silk, bamboo, hand-woven tassels, and jewelry chain

Each kite approx. 53 x 40 in. (134.6 x 101.6 cm)

Thanks to Acassia, Alex, Bonnie, Bre, Cassidy, Colleen, Havi, John, Jonas, Josué, Mack, Maria, Mariana, Matthew, Nani, Natasha, Nora, Palak, Peixuan, Ruth, Ruth, Sam, Savanna, Shu, Steven, and Yeeseon





October 18th 2:30-3:01 Butler Park; sitting with seeds in my lap // remember when we went to eat breakfast at Kasama in autumn and collected these tulip poplar seeds along the way // we spent the morning speaking in bad Chinese, 2022

Green tea-toned cyanotype on muslin, polyester, bamboo, PLA, thread, gold chain, wind, tulip poplar seeds, autumn leaves, broken sticks, a chill in the air, and a sun behind the clouds peeking past the branches

72 × 80 × 10 in. (182.9 x 203.2 x 25.4 cm)

It was a humbling and overwhelming experience to review the hundreds of applications for the Burke Prize. The depth of thought, craft, and experimentation across so many submissions was staggering. Selecting just one artist from such a field was no easy task.

It was also a personally challenging process, as two of the finalists are dear friends and artists whose work I deeply admire. That made the decision all the more difficult—and a testament to the extraordinary caliber of all the artists under consideration.

Yet, when I encountered the work of Hai-Wen Lin, something shifted. Their practice stood out—not only for its conceptual strength and material intelligence, but for the way it functions as a psychological threshold, inviting the viewer into a liminal space between perception and possibility.

Lin's work calls to mind the wallpaper in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper*, where the pattern begins to dissolve, revealing a world behind the surface. In much the same way, Lin constructs portals—both literal and symbolic—that ask us to look past the decorative or familiar and consider what lies just beyond the edges of our constructed identities. These identities—gendered, cultural, geographic—are gently unsettled in Lin's practice, which embraces mutability, flux, and illegibility.

One work in particular, *Two Can Share Heaven*, resonates with poetic clarity. A kite for two—a seemingly simple gesture—transforms into a wearable structure. Traditionally, a kite is something we gaze at from the ground, watching it rise into the sky, suspended by air and intention. But Lin reverses this relationship. Their kites don't just fly—they carry. They become garments of ascent, vessels of shared transcendence.

There is a generosity in Lin's work: a desire to share flight, space, and mythologies. Rather than asserting a singular narrative, Lin's work moves through a logic of accompaniment—of being with rather than above. There is always company, even after life as we know it. Their gestures extend care beyond the individual, toward ancestry, queerness, diaspora, and chosen kinship.

Lin's practice moves like a shedding—of assumptions, identities, even material boundaries. There is something serpentine in the way their forms slough off fixed meaning, allowing the viewer to inhabit a moment of becoming. Their materials—at once delicate and sturdy, ephemeral and grounded—mirror their themes: individual and collective, past and possible. Wind, sunlight, and impermanence are collaborators, not obstacles. In Lin's hands, craft becomes a mode of resistance and tenderness. Even the land is not untouched. In reworking inherited forms—folk technologies like kites, the decorative logic of textiles—Lin subtly alters the patterns we walk upon, both literally and symbolically. Their gestures reshape the terrain of memory and belonging, asking: What if transformation begins with re-patterning the ground beneath our feet?

The Burke Prize honors artists redefining material traditions for the twenty-first century. Hai-Wen Lin does precisely that. They offer a language of resilience and intimacy, rooted in material play and conceptual clarity. Their work reminds us that craft can be more than form—it can be a bridge.

— Selva Aparicio
Burke Prize 2023 Winner

The Burke Prize asks us, as jurors, to enter the business of future forecasting, to select artists whose ideas or processes are meant to shape or reorient our thinking of the present, and also transform our understanding of what may come. This task feels especially fraught in a moment of widespread disjuncture, where the past is being rewritten before our eyes, where the present world order is increasingly hegemonic and authoritarian, and the future that lies ahead feels startlingly hard to see. In thinking about this year's cohort, I am reminded of José Esteban Muñoz's landmark 2009 text *Cruising Utopia*, in which he argues that queerness provides a framework for thinking expansively about future potentialities in the daunting face of a stultifying present: "Some will say that all we have are the pleasures of this moment, but we must never settle for that minimal transport; we must dream and enact new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds. Queerness is a longing that propels us onward, beyond romances of the negative and toiling in the present. Queerness is that thing that lets us feel this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing" (Muñoz 1).

Queerness and art are intrinsically bound to one another; indeed, the very act of making, of expressing one's artistic individuality, is a radical act, a defiant (queer) response to a dogmatic social, economic, and political order that runs on fear and conformity. Taking Muñoz's thinking to its logical ends, the Burke Prize, then, asks us to consider artists whose notion of futurity engages with subversive possibility, where new ideas about beauty and pleasure retrain our focus on what may come in an as-yet-to-be-realized future. Employing media such as wood, metal, clay, and cloth, the group of Burke Prize 2025 finalists call upon materials of the past to transform our understanding of what lies ahead, skillfully negotiating imaginative narratives that are both personal and universal. For some, familial and cultural lineages form the basis of their artistic (self) inquiry, while others utilize imaginative material combinations to perform an act of cybernetic worldbuilding. For each, craft is a device and a language; making with one's hands in a world so often mediated through the digital feels profoundly radical, an answer to our collective derangement and alienation. Craft, that timeless human need to build with one's hand, may be just about the most future-forward thing we have right now.

It is in this spirit that Hai-Wen Lin was selected for the Burke Prize 2025. Their hand-sewn and dyed kites-cum-garments are inherently transformative, objects that exist between the body and the sky, between human and nature, between the present and the future. Lin's work plays with nonlinear notions of time, an homage to the careful act of making, the essence of craft itself. Rendered in cloth dyed with natural substances and fugitive materials, Lin considers the endlessly transformative possibilities that sun and air invite upon human-made objects and how an object can transform on the wings of the ever-shifting whims (and winds) of Mother Nature. Lin's slow, meditative works of care are a remarkable response to this fractious time, inherently queer objects that draw two (or more) bodies together, either with one another, or with the wind itself. It is this transmutability, this endlessly evolving object that both adorns the wearer and the sky, that demands we not reside in the permanent present and to see art and craft as a salvation from that which divides us. It is this merging of personal and collective that Lin charts so successfully, realizing a poetically resonant body of work that speaks to both present preoccupations and the capacious future possibilities of craft in the 21st century.

— **Andrew Gardner**

Independent curator, writer, and design historian

As a child, I would fly kites at El Morro in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. It was a nostalgic endeavor that I revisited as a high schooler, returning home in the summers after moving away. Salt air whipped my hair while I ran, laughing with my friends, tethered to some string and plastic high above me. Such a rudimentary mechanism could make me feel like I, too, could fly, while grounding me to my homeland. For artist Hai-Wen Lin, kites evoke similar childhood memories of sending wishes up to the sky, a Chinese tradition passed down from their mother. Beyond their sentimental value, in Lin's interdisciplinary practice, kites serve as sites for transformation, archives of the beauty of everyday life, and extensions of the body. "Living somewhere underneath the sky," the artist stretches our understanding of what can be art and where it can exist by asking us to reorient ourselves by "looking back, looking forward, looking in, looking up."

Change is an essential part of Lin's layered work. From repurposing textile materials into wearable art to having the pattern on the garment reveal itself through the cyanotype process, the garment is worn, in collaboration with time and light. They then reconfigure the garments into kites, or rather, floating sculptures which, after flight, can also live within the context of a gallery or museum. Lin commemorates the many steps in the evolution of animating their works and poetically credits the ephemeral phenomena that make each work unique, such as "the first light of day," "a breath expanding the solar plexus," and "conversations that needn't arrive anywhere." Their practice encourages us to pay attention to nuances and fleeting moments, not only the big picture. As the garment-kite hybrids fly, the wind becomes a proxy body dancing among the clouds, an extension of the people who wore them or are holding on to them. Lin further explains that they "make kites that speak the language of clothing as a means of understanding how to free, fly, and extend errant bodies."

In their many iterations, Lin's kites are wishes for freedom, connection, and appreciation. It is an intentional practice "of being present, of attention and gratitude, of being tethered to one another, to my ancestors, to the sky, to nature, to you. Thank you for finding me here. Thank you for noticing," says the artist. We did, in fact, notice their innovative practice, combining a whimsical format with a rich, conceptual narrative that incorporates spiritual and heartfelt elements. The work is compelling, whether on land or in the air, within a room or in the great outdoors. It is truly like no other work in the field. Since its inception, the Burke Prize has been instrumental in supporting emerging artists as they take their careers to new heights. This time, it might be more literal than ever. I am thrilled to be acquainted with Hai-Wen Lin's work, which is not only visually captivating but also deeply resonates with my heart. Thank you for sharing your practice with us.

— Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy

Independent curator, writer, and art historian

Selva Aparicio (b. 1987, Barcelona; based in Alfred, NY) is an interdisciplinary artist working across sculpture and installation. Her work explores memory, loss, and impermanence through overlooked materials—either from nature or the byproducts of human consumption—such as cemetery flowers, cicada wings, human hair, and even human cadavers. These elements are transformed into immersive installations that honor what society discards. Raised in a boat-shaped house on the edge of Collserola Natural Park in Barcelona, Aparicio developed an early reverence for the natural world and the ephemeral.

Andrew Gardner is a curator, writer, historian, and arts leader based in New York City. His work calls upon global sociopolitical histories to consider myriad dimensions of the material world, where art, craft, technology, and design converge. He has published extensively, and organized exhibitions focused on the history of the global fiber art movement, textiles, women's and queer people's creative labor, and the artistic legacies of liberation movements globally. He has held positions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Smithsonian, Meta Open Arts, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Arts & Design team. He currently serves as Director of Creative Partnerships at Public Art Fund, where he oversees a program of large-scale permanent artwork commissions for a variety of civic spaces in New York and beyond.

Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy is a curator and writer of contemporary art and craft advocating for underrepresented communities, stories, materials, and approaches. She has curated and juried exhibitions across the United States and has written for many publications. Recent projects include curating R & Company's second triennial, *Objects: USA 2024*, and the critically acclaimed *Funk You Too!* at the Museum of Arts and Design. Her book, *New Women's Work*, highlighting contemporary artists continuing the legacy of women's work, was published in 2024. She holds a BA in art history from the University of Florida and an MA in decorative arts, design history, and material culture from the Bard Graduate Center, New York.

Finalists

Sula Bermudez-Silverman



Sula Bermudez-Silverman's sculptural practice is guided by the contextual origins and contemporary trajectories of her materials. With intensive research, she delves into mythological and historical narratives to examine their imprint. Materials such as sugar, salt, glass, and resin often serve as physical homonyms, altering motifs such as the "ball and claw" through color, scale, and translucency. Throughout Bermudez-Silverman's catalog, objects that operate as a physical threshold — windows, saddles, staircases — are reintroduced to connect disparate epistemologies and question how history is camouflaged into the subconscious.

She received her BA in Studio Art from Bard College and her MFA in Sculpture from the Yale School of Art in 2018. Solo exhibitions include *mole, mold, molt*, Hannah Hoffman (Los Angeles, 2025); *Bad Luck Rock*, Josh Lilley (London, 2023); *Ichthyocentaur*, Matthew Brown (Los Angeles, 2023); *Here Be Dragons*, Micki Meng (San Francisco, 2022); *Sighs and Leers, and Crocodile Tears*, Murmurs (Los Angeles, 2021); *Neither Fish, Flesh, nor Fowl*, California African American Museum (Los Angeles, 2020); *Sutures*, University of Texas at Austin (Austin, 2018); and *Reconstruction*, Project Row Houses (Houston, 2015). She has also exhibited at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Jewish Museum, New York; UC Irvine Contemporary Arts Center Gallery, Irvine; and Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven. Bermudez-Silverman lives and works in Los Angeles.



Vestige, 2025

MDF, wood, and paint

45 x 120 x 49 in. (114.3 x 304.8 x 124.5 cm)



Sula Bermudez-Silverman's practice uncovers hidden narratives shaping everyday life, reinterpreting familiar objects to examine how power structures influence our surroundings. Through diverse disciplines, she creates works like a ceramic-and-earth sculpture of worm poop, a dollhouse made out of sugar, or a conceptual fragrance evoking cross-cultural encounters.

Materials play a critical role in exposing underlying hierarchies, with research tracing mythological and historical narratives, trade routes, and commodity legacies—chili flakes, pearls, honeybees, and chewing gum—linking past and present.

Moldmaking serves as both preservation and transformation, reflecting history's cycles of reproduction, distortion, and reinterpretation. Translucent materials like sugar, salt, glass, and resin blur authenticity and mimicry, revealing the unseen forces that shape our world.

By working with materials steeped in cultural exchange and adaptation, Sula explores how objects carry history, inviting viewers to reconsider their relationship with the material world.



***Paso Largo*, 2023**

Cast glass, wood casket stand, glass bottle, and New World Scent (notes: tobacco, galbanum, ylang ylang, seaweed, Ambroxan, chocolate, and pineapple)
26 x 18 x 14 in. (66 x 45.7 x 35.6 cm)

Chenlu Hou



Chenlu Hou is a ceramic artist whose imaginative sculptures draw from Chinese folk art, ceremonial objects, and moments from daily life. Blending personal memory with reinterpretations of traditional storytelling, she has developed a unique visual language that combines intricate surface detail with layered narrative suggestion. Her hand-built ceramic works explore the complex relationships between human, animal, and plant forms, creating spaces where myth, memory, and lived experience merge.

Hou's practice is grounded in a deep engagement with material and form. Drawing from her background as a new immigrant and her connection to Chinese culture, she often works with symbolic objects and motifs that carry emotional resonance. Her surfaces—rich with airbrushed underglazes and vibrant colors—offer both ornament and meaning, revealing subtle shifts in tone and texture that encourage close, sustained looking.

Her sculptures frequently suggest theatricality, using arrangements that feel both familiar and surreal. These compositions leave room for ambiguity, allowing viewers to bring their own associations into the work. Rather than offering fixed narratives, Hou's installations open up possibilities—about cultural identity, adaptation, and the ways objects can hold and transmit memory.

She earned her MFA in Ceramics from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2019. Since then, she has completed residencies at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, the Penland School of Craft, the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, and the Archie Bray Foundation. Hou is currently a resident artist at Harvard Ceramics and a Visiting Critic in Ceramics at the Rhode Island School of Design.

Male cicadas emit a shrill cry that has been brewing underground for years in the scorching summer, 2025

Terracotta, underglaze, zip ties, high-temp wire hooks, rope, and gold ink; slab hand-built and air-brushed surface with underglaze
29 x 22 x 7 in. (73.7 x 55.9 x 17.8 cm) †



My work explores the fluid intersections of storytelling, materiality, and cultural memory, featuring imaginative depictions of women, animals, and plants rendered onto hand-built ceramic objects. Taking storytelling as a meeting point of concurrent and past experiences, I investigate themes of adaptation, displacement, and transformation. Since moving to the United States in 2017, my practice has evolved into a negotiation between the culture I inherited from China and the realities of my immigrant experience. Building with clay becomes a metaphoric process—one that mirrors the emotional spectrum of adaptation, from intimidation and distortion to excitement, confusion, and, ultimately, celebration.

At the heart of my practice is an engagement with ceramics, found objects, and moving images. I employ folk art as a core visual vocabulary, drawing from its intuitive forms and layered symbolism to construct narrative objects that reexamine notions of value, labor, and storytelling. Through the juxtaposition of craft and video, I stage unconventional and absurd relationships between materials, challenging their conventional functions and expanding their roles as storytelling props within an uneasy present.

Central to my process is the use of airbrush techniques with vibrant underglazes, allowing me to build intricate layers of color, depth, and fluidity. This method not only departs from traditional ceramic surface treatments but also introduces an ethereal, almost cinematic quality to my work—where images seem to shift, dissolve, or emerge from the clay. By airbrushing, I blur the boundaries between surface and form, drawing attention to the interplay of control and spontaneity, opacity and translucency. The result is a tension between the permanence of fired clay and the ephemeral, shifting nature of personal and cultural narratives.

As my practice continues to evolve, I seek to push the boundaries of craft by reimagining traditional forms through contemporary lenses. My work questions how ceramics—often associated with stability and domesticity—can instead become transient, speculative, and cinematic. Through this approach, I aim to document, commemorate, and reshape narratives of migration, belonging, and adaptation, using craft as a space for storytelling, translation, and transformation.

— **Chenlu Hou**



In memory of the auntie with a gold tooth who butchered a carp right in front of you, 2023

Terracotta, underglaze, zip-ties, high-temp wire hooks, and hand-cut polypropylene; slab hand-built and air-brushed surface with underglaze
29 x 20 x 4 in. (73.7 x 50.8 x 10.2 cm)



Birds don't eat cicadas that are shedding, 2023

Terracotta, underglaze, zip-ties, high-temp wire hooks, and hand-cut polypropylene; slab hand-built and air-brushed surface with underglaze
28 x 13 ½ x 3 ½ in. (71.1 x 34.3 x 8.9 cm)

Raul De Lara



Raul De Lara (born in Culiacán, Sinaloa, México, 1991) is a sculptor who explores the emotive and storytelling qualities of materials. His research preserves, honors, and propels forward traditional uses of wood in Mexican and American culture while combining them with new developments in the global industry of woodworking. Fond of humor, magical realism, and the uncanny, De Lara's work references the visual language found in nature, furniture design, and cultural artifacts. De Lara immigrated from Mexico to the United States at the age of 12, and has been a DACA recipient since 2012. After eight years of undocumented status, and currently still unable to freely travel outside the United States, his work reflects on transnational belonging, queer identity, and the immigrant experience. He is currently living and working in Queens, NY. De Lara received his MFA in Sculpture + Extended Media from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2019 and a BFA in Studio Art from the University of Texas at Austin in 2015. In 2025, he is presenting two solo museum exhibitions at The Contemporary Austin and SCAD Museum of Art. His work has been included in exhibitions nationally and internationally at the Tucson Museum of Art, Wharton Esherick Museum, The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture, The Armory Show, Hermès Paris, Alexander Berggruen Gallery, The Hole, Honor Fraser Gallery, and Reynolds Gallery, among others. De Lara's selected awards include the Maxwell/Hanrahan Award in Craft, the NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship in Craft/Sculpture, and Art in America Magazine's Top 20 Global New Talent, as well as residencies at Silver Art Projects, LMCC Governor's Island, the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Haystack Mountain School of Craft, Ox-Bow School of Art, Penland School of Craft, and Chicago Artists Coalition, among others.

Damianita, 2025

Mesquite, ash, walnut, and Polyx oil
91 x 44 x 27 in. (231.1 x 111.8 x 68.6 cm)
Commissioned by The Contemporary Austin



I view the field of craft as the intimate relationship one can have with the world without saying a word. It's a place where material gymnastics reign.

I come from a family that believes in luck, ghosts, and bingo. From a young age, they taught me that materials, objects, and spaces hold energy, and how this energy can be utilized to create beautiful things if one is patient enough. Growing up in my parents' woodshop in Mexico introduced me to the world of woodworking. A world where each tool has its own language, each piece of wood shows the passing of time on its skin, and where one is able to communicate through their hands. Back in Mexico, I would watch local woodcarvers turn branches into objects where saints would live inside. "At what point does the ghost enter the piece of wood?" I wondered. I saw wood as a material that could take on infinite shapes and functions. I knew that wood would be my way of communicating with this world.

One of my earliest memories is discovering how glue worked. Over the years, my artistic voice has unfolded through the field of woodcraft as I strive to honor, preserve, and propel forward traditional Mexican and American woodworking techniques while combining them with new developments in the global industry of woodworking. I am particularly inspired by the way carving can imbue social, cultural, and spiritual qualities into wood—as I see it, storytelling via woodworking. Dedicating yourself to a craft is a superpower that lives within you. It's not tied to location, politics, or laws. You can carry it with you and practice anywhere, with anyone, and often, it disarms differences amongst us. My years of mastering woodworking can't be taken away, even if I am deported.

I see craft as an act of self-empowerment and liberation—being able to look at the built world and feel a sense of understanding, a sense of agency within it. Knowing how to tend to a non-human living thing is necessary in this day and age. We live in an era of overconsumption, digital speed, and "YOLO" mentality. How can we instill in others a curiosity for care, an itch for fixing, a desire to materially intervene with the world? I believe the field of craft has the power to teach us how to notice the subtle ways everything around us is held together. The more we notice, the more we can participate in the grand scheme of this planet as makers.

So much has been said through handmade objects for so long, but what's next? I see the trajectory of craft moving beyond technical mastery and towards objects as love letters to the future. Makers are moving towards a place where their material choices and technique allow for generational knowledge, contemporary wisdom, and hopes for a better future to be concealed within the objects we make—we want the things we create to speak to future generations for us. My dad is no longer with me, but each piece I make feels like a hug from him. The care for woodcraft he instilled in me is a reminder that someone once cared for me and this material. As I teach woodworking to others across the country, I feel the same way. Teaching and learning technique is the way to gather everyone around the table, but what we say in it is the best part. I believe we can create bridges between space and time through craft.

— Raul De Lara



Familia, 2024
Walnut, Polyx wax, and polyurethane
40 x 41 x 26 in. (101.6 x 104.1 x 66 cm)

For Being Left-Handed (Self-Portrait), 2020
Pine, Chiclets gum, steel, brass, particle board, and acrylic
24 x 13 x 13 in. (61 x 33 x 33 cm)

Abigail Lucien



Abigail Lucien is a Haitian-American interdisciplinary artist. Working across sculpture, literature, and time-based media, their practice addresses themes of (be)longing, futurity, myth, and place by considering our relationship to inherited colonial structures and systems of belief/care. Implicating our relationship to material and place through an architectural vernacular, Lucien uses formal poetics to ponder concepts such as loss, love, and grief as fluid processes rather than states to reach or become. Lucien received the 2023 Sondheim Award, a 2023 Ruby's Artist Grant, a 2021 VMFA Fellowship, was named to the 2021 Forbes Art & Style list, and the 2020 Harpo Emerging Artist Fellowship. Lucien's work has been featured in publications such as *The New York Times*, *Hyperallergic*, *Artforum*, *Frieze Magazine*, and *Art in America*. National and international exhibitions include Palais de Tokyo (Paris, France), MoMA PS1 (Queens, NY), Baltimore Museum of Art (Baltimore, MD), SculptureCenter (Queens, NY), California African American Museum (Los Angeles, CA), MAC Panamá (Panama City, Panama), Tiwani Contemporary (London, England), Atlanta Contemporary (Atlanta, GA) and the Institute of Contemporary Art VCU (Richmond, VA). Residencies including Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (Madison, ME), Amant Studio & Research Residency (Brooklyn, NY), The Fabric Workshop and Museum (Philadelphia, PA), the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Fine Arts (Wrocław, Poland), The Luminary (St. Louis, MO), Santa Fe Art Institute (Santa Fe, NM), ACRE (Steuben, WI), and Ox-Bow School of Art & Artist Residency (Saugatuck, MI). Lucien is currently based in Queens, NY. They are Assistant Professor and Area Head of Sculpture at Hunter College in NYC.

***Fire on the Mountain*, 2025**

Urethane and enamel on steel

53 × 27 × 15 in. (134.6 × 68.6 × 38.1 cm)

Collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art



In longing for a place, a third space emerges. A space where truth and myth hold equal weight, where recorded histories lap at the shores of speculative futures. Born in Texas to a Haitian father and American mother, I associate such shifting experience with familial comfort. Foregrounding my Haitian-American heritage, my practice addresses themes of (be)longing, myth, and futurity by considering our relationship to inherited colonial structures and systems of care. My work's architectural vernacular implicates our relationship to material and place, using formal poetics to ponder concepts such as loss, love, and grief as fluid processes rather than states to reach or become. A threshold, a partition, a cage, a gate—my works render in steel the poetic, in-between spaces of architecture to conjure the complexities of existing in a third space. Made from iron mixed with carbon and other trace elements, steel is strong and malleable. Coaxed with heat, it can be cut or fused, melted or softened into a tender curve. Born from the explosion of stars, iron has shaped our geological and biological existence. Over 4.5 billion years ago, giant iron-rich asteroids and meteorites made countless collisions with the young Earth, creating our moon, and forming our planet. Iron, as a geographical and industrial way of tracing time and tradition, grounds itself in my practice through both processes and motifs within metalworking. Its transformative potential, fixed in a solid state offers a parallel to transitory experience. Sculpture is not just my discipline but my means of understanding the world and communing with history, ritual, and tradition. My practice finds a home within approaches that balance material and process at their core. Process-based practices have the power to teach us to see and move through the world at a new pace, resonating with the poetic, metamorphic nature of mold making and casting. To render anew, to move through transformative space, moving from solid to liquid to solid again, is close to alchemy. Working with molten metal is akin to a choreographed dance scored to a rhythm of built respect, time, integrity, and care. Forwarding my hand in my work remains important, not only as a tool to animate agency as a craftsperson and as a queer Black artist, but to honor the lives and work of artists and craftspersons, known and unknown, who have come before.

— Abigail Lucien

Zouzou's Ballad, 2025

Powder-coated steel

132 × 48 × 96 in. (335.3 × 121.9 × 243.8 cm)



4–12

Hai-Wen Lin

Portrait: Wassaic Project by Jeff Barnett-Winsby, courtesy the artist

7:05:51.20–7:05:51.21: Courtesy the artist

October 8th 2:56–3:56pm Wicker Park; a picnic together // we probably shouldn't feed the sparrows: Courtesy the artist

Two Can Share Heaven: Courtesy the artist

Send Them Their Flowers (performance) and Send Them Their Flowers (kites): Photo by Jonas Müller-Ahlheim, courtesy the artist

October 18th 2:30-3:01 Butler Park; sitting with seeds in my lap // remember when we went to eat breakfast at Kasama in autumn and collected these tulip poplar seeds along the way // we spent the morning speaking in bad Chinese: Courtesy the artist

18–21

Sula Bermudez-Silverman

Portrait: Courtesy the artist

Vestige: Photo by Paul Salvesson, courtesy the artist and Hannah Hoffman Gallery

Paso Largo: Photo by Paul Salvesson, courtesy the artist and Matthew Brown Gallery

22–25

Chenlu Hou

Portrait: Courtesy the artist

Male cicadas emit a shrill cry that has been brewing underground for years in the scorching summer: Photo by Chenlu Hou, courtesy the artist

In memory of the auntie with a gold tooth who butchered a carp right in front of you: Photo by Charles Benton, courtesy the artist

Birds don't eat cicadas that are shedding: Photo by Charles Benton, courtesy the artist

26–29

Raul De Lara

Portrait: Photo by Hannah Edelman, courtesy the artist

Artworks: Courtesy the artist

30–33

Abigail Lucien

Portrait: Photo by Grace Roselli, courtesy the artist

Artworks: Courtesy the artist

As always, it was an honor to preside over the Burke Prize, and there are many people to thank for the success of the 2025 cycle. My deepest gratitude goes to Marian and Russell Burke, whose generosity makes this award possible. Over the years, I've seen how the Burke Prize has elevated the visibility of young artists working at the intersection of craft and contemporary art, advancing the Museum of Arts and Design's mission to challenge art world preconceptions about the expressive capacity of materials historically marginalized as merely utilitarian or too quotidian. Thank you, Marian and Russell, for so wholeheartedly supporting these goals.

To every artist who submitted work for consideration, and to this year's jurors—Selva Aparicio, Andrew Gardner, and Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy—I am grateful for your time, insight, and commitment to the spirit of the Burke Prize. I also wish to acknowledge the dedicated team behind the organization, execution, and promotion of the Burke Prize: Liisa Hambazaza, Willow Holdorf, Wendi Parson, Alix Finkelstein, Iman Nelson, Jenny Miao, Lydia Brawner, Nirvana Santos-Kulian, and Darci Spasojevich. From guiding the application process and facilitating the jury, to producing the prize publication, designing the winner's exhibition, and celebrating the finalists through programming and promotion—your efforts were indispensable. Additional thanks go to our visitor services, security, facilities, and exhibitions teams, whose support is essential to every project at MAD. You all have my sincere appreciation.

Elissa Auther, PhD
Deputy Director of Curatorial Affairs
William and Mildred Lasdon Chief Curator

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All measurements:
height × width × depth, unless otherwise noted

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