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MAD ANNOUNCES BURKE PRIZE 2018 FINALISTS AND EXHIBITION

The Museum's New \$50,000 Prize to Be Given Annually to an Artist Advancing the Disciplines That Shaped the American Studio Craft Movement

Sixteen Finalists Will Be Highlighted in the Exhibition
The Burke Prize 2018: The Future of Craft Part 2
October 3, 2018 – March 17, 2019

THE BURKE PRIZE 2018

THE FUTURE OF CRAFT ^p_t ^a_r ^t_w ^o

NEW YORK, NY (August 16, 2018) – The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) is proud to announce the finalists for the inaugural Burke Prize for contemporary craft. The prize, named for craft collectors Marian and Russell Burke, drew an outstandingly diverse and highly competitive pool of five hundred artists working to expand the field of craft. Open to professional artists under the age of forty-five working in glass, fiber, clay, metal, or wood, the Burke Prize was determined by a jury of professionals in the fields of art, craft, and design.

The sixteen finalists were chosen for their accomplished work, strong use of materials, innovative processes, and conceptual rigor and relevance. The finalists are:

Tanya Aguiñiga, Los Angeles, CA
Leonardo Benzant, Richmond Hill, NY
Brittany Cox, Seattle, WA
Annie Evelyn, Louisville, KY
Josh Faught, San Francisco, CA
Holland Houdek, Rochester, NY
Merritt Johnson, Sitka, AK
Heidi Lau, New York, NY

Ted Lott, Cooperstown, NY
Cannupa Hanska Luger, Glorieta, NM
Roberto Lugo, Elkins Park, PA
Anna Mlasowsky, Seattle, WA
Jordan Nassar, Brooklyn, NY
William J. O'Brien, Chicago, IL
Ibrahim Said, Greensboro, NC
Olivia Valentine, Des Moines, IA



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Speaking to the jury's selection, MAD Trustee Marian Burke, who endowed the prize together with her husband, Russell, said: "We are thrilled to support MAD in championing the next generation of artists. The finalists exemplify the possibilities inherent in craft, and point to an exciting future."

The first winner of the Burke Prize, who will receive an unrestricted award in the amount of \$50,000, will be announced this fall during the MAD Ball, the Museum's annual gala.

"Conceived in the tradition of other major prizes like the Turner Prize and the Loewe Craft Prize, the Burke Prize seeks to encourage growth and experimentation among the next generation of artists," said Christopher Scoates, MAD's Nanette L. Laitman Director. "The inaugural finalists are pushing the boundaries of craft through the use of unexpected materials and methods. By showcasing their innovation and talent to international audiences, the prize illuminates the role craft plays in today's world while looking toward the future of the field."

"Craft—as a term and as a field—is very complex, and predicting what its future holds is an ambitious endeavor, yet it is clear that craft is alive and well," said MAD Chief Curator Shannon R. Stratton. "Those of us close to the craft world know its historical connection to activism and politics, but in the current political climate, a new generation is reclaiming it. The power of craft as a tool of protest, storytelling, and connection will only continue to grow."

The finalists will be featured in the exhibition *The Burke Prize 2018: The Future of Craft Part 2*, on view at MAD from October 3, 2018, until March 17, 2019. The exhibition will include thirty-six works, from jewelry to installation, furniture, and digital media. Representing ten states and thirteen cities across the United States, the sixteen finalists comprise an ethnically and racially diverse group with an equitable gender breakdown. The Burke Prize and exhibition continue the Museum's founding mission of championing artists working in craft media and methodologies, bringing attention to the breadth and variety of work being made by young artists nationwide.

About the Finalists:

- **Tanya Aguiñiga** uses craft, community projects, and performance to explore binational identity along the United States–Mexico border with the aim of uniting diverse communities, especially in adverse political environments.
- **Leonardo Benzant** creates hanging beaded sculptures inspired by Yoruba ceremonies to connect with his ancestors of the African diaspora, uniting more traditional spirituality and culture with a highly urbanized modern experience.
- A self-described antiquarian horologist, **Brittany Cox** uses specialized metalworking and engineering techniques to create mechanized musical objects and automata, including recent works inspired by medieval bestiary and marginalia.
- Using a complex engineering process to make hard materials malleable, **Annie Evelyn** creates alternatively upholstered seating infused with humor to draw new relationships between furniture and the body.
- **Josh Faught** combines textiles and fiber with found cultural objects to create highly ornamented works that weave together personal and social narratives exploring the history of the queer body.



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- **Holland Houdek** combines traditional metalworking techniques with the new technology of medical implants to create contemporary memento mori that encourage contemplation of the fragility and mortality of the human body.
- **Merritt Johnson** rewrites indigenous and colonial histories through sculptural baskets that resemble artifacts on view in natural history and ethnographic museums, highlighting the complicated relationship between indigenous craft and its collection and display.
- **Heidi Lau** explores remembrance, nostalgia, and loss of home through post-apocalyptic ceramics inspired by Taoist mythology and the ruins of Macau, where she grew up under Portuguese colonial and later Chinese rule.
- **Ted Lott** explores the intersection between the body and architecture through his conflation of furniture and architectural models, celebrating traditional cabinetry while encouraging viewers to contemplate how the objects around them influence and narrate our personal and collective histories.
- **Cannupa Hanska Luger's** work includes community-based projects that focus on issues facing indigenous peoples in the United States and Canada—from shields that serve as protection for protestors fighting for environmental justice to ceramic beads bringing attention to cases of violence against indigenous community members.
- **Roberto Lugo** incorporates graffiti and portraits of important people of color into conventional pottery forms and ornamentation, subverting the traditional archetypes of ceramics and bringing attention to erased or obscured histories outside the Eurocentric cultural canon.
- **Anna Mlasowsky** visually records the vibrations of singular frequencies in glass plates to create an immersive installation that makes the ephemeral tangible.
- **Jordan Nassar** uses his Palestinian-American heritage as a framework to create embroidery through which to examine the intricacies of cultural heritage, ownership and exchange, and emigrant nostalgia for the “homeland.”
- **William J. O'Brien** incorporates works in felt and expressive, colorful ceramics into installations that explore personal histories, including the tension between religion and spirituality and the experience of navigating queerness while growing up Catholic.
- **Ibrahim Said's** virtuosic ceramics take direct influence from the history, forms, and principles of Egyptian pottery and Islamic art, including ideas about ritual and culture; the dominant use of geometric forms, flora, and fauna; and certain glaze chemistries and techniques.
- **Olivia Valentine** uses the historical medium of lace to produce large-scale, site-specific installations that investigate the threshold between interior and exterior space in relation to architecture and the body.

The Burke Prize 2018: The Future of Craft Part 2 is curated by MAD's Assistant Curator Samantha De Tillio and Assistant Manager of Curatorial Affairs Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy with support from Curatorial Assistant Alida Jakobson.



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ARTIST BIOS

Tanya Aguiñiga

Mexico, born 1978; lives in Los Angeles, California

An artist, designer, and craftsperson raised in Tijuana, Mexico, Tanya Aguiñiga holds an MFA in Furniture Design from Rhode Island School of Design and a BA from San Diego State University. In her formative years she created various collaborative installations with the Border Art Workshop, an artist collective that engages the languages of activism and community-based public art. In her current practice, she uses craft as a performative medium to generate dialogues about identity, culture, and gender while creating community. Aguiñiga is the founder and Director of AMBOS (Art Made Between Opposite Sides), an ongoing series of artist interventions and commuter collaborations that address binational transition and identity in the US/Mexico border regions.

Leonardo Benzant

United States, born 1972; lives in Richmond Hill, New York

Born in New York City to Dominican parents, with Haitian heritage on his mother's side, Leonardo Benzant attended Pratt Institute. His work is included in several important private collections and was recently acquired by the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, Charlotte, North Carolina. He has exhibited at Aljira: A Center for Contemporary Art, Newark, and the Third Line, Dubai. A recent artist-in-residence at Galveston Artist Residency, Benzant is a 2017 recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant.

Brittany Cox

United States, born 1985; lives in Seattle, Washington

Brittany Cox is an antiquarian horologist, *guillocheur*, ornamental turner, and scholar. The recipient of a Master's in the Conservation of Clocks and Related Dynamic Objects from West Dean College, she also holds WOSTEP, CW21, and SAWTA watchmaking certifications and two clock-making certifications. In 2015 she opened Memoria Technica, an independent workshop where she teaches, practices guilloche, creates new works, and specializes in the conservation of automata, mechanical magic, mechanical music, and complicated clocks and watches. She is currently at work on a manuscript for Penguin Press.

Annie Evelyn

United States, born 1976; lives in Louisville, Kentucky

Annie Evelyn received both her BFA and MFA from Rhode Island School of Design. Joy, laughter, and the unexpected are at the heart of her work. Using furniture's inherent interactive qualities and relationships to the human body, she sets out to invent new and surprising tactile experiences with a wide range of materials, from handmade paper flowers to Swarovski crystals. The 2016 recipient of the John D. Mineck Furniture Fellowship, Evelyn has been a resident artist at the Penland School of Crafts, the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Wood Center.

Josh Faught

United States, born 1979; lives in San Francisco, California

Josh Faught's studio practice has triangulated spaces between personal history, sociopolitical history, and the history of textiles. This ongoing project operates from the premise that if political



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rhetoric is, at its core, a desire to communicate, the ability to speak through textiles allows us to embrace a personal/political continuum that is at once fragmentary, experiential, and physical. Faught has had solo exhibitions at venues including the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis; Kendall Koppe, Glasgow; Lisa Cooley, New York; and the Neptune Society Columbarium, San Francisco, where he created a site-specific installation as part of the SFMOMA 2013 SECA Art Award exhibition. His work has appeared in numerous group exhibitions, including at the New Museum, New York; Casas Riegner, Bogotá; Sadie Coles HQ, London; Saatchi Gallery, London; and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. He is an associate professor and the Chair of Textiles at California College of the Arts in San Francisco and Oakland.

Holland Houdek

United States, born 1985; lives in Rochester, New York

Holland Houdek holds an MFA from Syracuse University and a BFA from the University of Wisconsin–Stout. Her work focuses on medical implants, the body, and embodied experience. She has exhibited in museums and galleries throughout the world and is widely published. The recipient of numerous awards, Houdek is a former resident of the John Michael Kohler Arts/Industry program, among others. Working closely with the medical industry through her five “Implants Series,” she has formed partnerships with organizations including the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, MedWish International, and Cleveland Clinic. She is an assistant professor at Nazareth College.

Merritt Johnson

United States, born 1977; lives in Sitka, Alaska

Merritt Johnson earned her BFA from Carnegie Mellon University and her MFA from MassArt. Her work navigates spaces between bodies and the body politic, between land and culture rooted in and dependent on Anowarakowa Kawennote (Turtle Island). She has seen and felt the effects of the tongues, knives, and pens that cut apart land, culture, sex, and communities; she responds by creating works that build connection and vision. Her work casts light and shadow on how and who we are, and on how and who we could be.

Heidi Lau

United States, born 1987; lives in New York, New York

Heidi Lau grew up in Macau, China, and currently works in Queens. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, in venues including the Macau Museum of Art; AIKE, Shanghai; the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York; the Museum of Chinese in America, New York; Asya Geisberg Gallery, New York; Geary, New York; and The Hole, New York. Lau’s practice has been supported by numerous residencies and awards, including the Emerging Artist Fellowship at Socrates Sculpture Park, the Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Process Space, the Martin Wong Foundation Scholarship, and the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant.

Ted Lott

United States, born 1979; lives in Cooperstown, New York

A craftsman, designer, and artist whose work engages the history of wood in material culture and architecture, Ted Lott received his MFA from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Solo exhibitions include shows at the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Deer Isle, Maine; Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania; and the University of North Carolina at



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Charlotte College of Arts + Architecture. He has been an artist-in-residence at Anderson Ranch Arts Center, the John Michael Kohler Arts/Industry program, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, the Center for Turning and Furniture Design, and Vermont Studio Center. Lott has taught at numerous colleges and universities and instructs workshops at craft schools throughout the country.

Cannupa Hanska Luger

United States, born 1979; lives in Glorieta, New Mexico

Cannupa Hanska Luger is a multidisciplinary artist of Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Lakota, Austrian, and Norwegian descent. Through monumental installations that incorporate ceramics, video, sound, fiber, steel, and cut paper, he interweaves performance and political action to communicate stories about twenty-first-century indigeneity. Using social collaboration and in response to timely and site-specific issues, Luger produces multipronged projects that often present a call to action, provoking diverse publics to engage with indigenous peoples and values outside the lens of colonial social structuring. He lectures and participates in residencies around the globe, and his work is collected internationally.

Roberto Lugo

United States, born 1981; lives in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania

Roberto Lugo is an American artist, ceramist, social activist, spoken-word poet, and educator. He uses porcelain as his medium of choice, illuminating its aristocratic surface with imagery of poverty, inequality, and social and racial injustice. Lugo's works are multicultural mash-ups, traditional European and Asian porcelain forms and techniques reimagined with a twenty-first-century street sensibility. His work is in the permanent collections of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the High Museum of Art, the Columbus Museum of Art, and the Chipstone Foundation, among others. In 2018, the Ceramic Arts Network named him Ceramic Artist of the Year.

Anna Mlasowsky

Germany, born 1984; lives in Seattle, Washington

Anna Mlasowsky holds a BA in Glass from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts and an MFA in Sculpture from the University of Washington. In 2017 she received an Artist Trust Fellowship, a Centrum Emerging Artist Residency, and the Irvin Borowsky International Prize in Glass Arts Juror's Award, and she was a shortlist artist for the American Craft Council's Emerging Voices Award. Her work is included in the collections of the Corning Museum of Glass, the European Museum of Modern Glass, and the Glasmuseum Ebeltoft, Denmark. Mlasowsky recently completed the Specialty Glass Residency and a residency at Sculpture Space.

Jordan Nassar

United States, born 1985; lives in Brooklyn, New York

Jordan Nassar's hand-embroidered textile works address an intersecting field of language, ethnicity, and the embedded notions of heritage and homeland. Treating craft within its capacity as a communicative form, Nassar examines conflicting issues of identity and cultural participation using geometric patterning adapted from Islamic symbols present in traditional Palestinian hand embroidery. He has had solo exhibitions at venues including Frieze New York, with Anat Ebgi; Anat Ebgi, Los Angeles; Artport Tel Aviv; and Evelyn Yard, London. Recent group exhibitions include shows at the Katonah Museum of Art, New York; Abrons Art Center,



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New York; and Supportico Lopez, Berlin. Upcoming solo exhibitions include shows at the Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, and the Third Line, Dubai.

William J. O'Brien

United States, born 1975; lives in Chicago, Illinois

William J. O'Brien's art is born out of an improvised and intuitive studio practice, rich in material experimentation. Through drawing, painting, sculpture, and ceramics, O'Brien explores the traditional and historical application of materials, but also employs play to refute such definitive uses. He has exhibited internationally; major exhibitions include shows at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft, Louisville; the Renaissance Society, Chicago; and the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Wisconsin. He is an Associate Professor of Ceramics at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Ibrahim Said

Egypt, born 1976; lives in Greensboro, North Carolina

Ibrahim Said grew up among the narrow streets, pottery ovens, and noisy workshops of Fustat, an area in Cairo that has etched its name in the history of the pottery industry since the Islamic conquest. His father, a potter, became his first teacher, and the rich cultural heritage of Egypt became his second. Said's work is included in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, the National Museum of Oman, the Museum of Modern Egyptian Art, Cairo, and the Kuwait Islamic Arts Center.

Olivia Valentine

United States, born 1979; lives in Des Moines, Iowa

Olivia Valentine is an interdisciplinary visual artist working primarily in textile construction, creating architectural-scale textile installations and collaborative projects that span a variety of media and disciplines. She received her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and her BFA from Rhode Island School of Design. The recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship for Installation Art and a Brandford/Elliott Award for Excellence in Fiber Art, she has exhibited her work internationally. Valentine is an Assistant Professor of Art and Visual Culture at Iowa State University.

2018 JUROR BIOS

Michael Radyk is the Director of Education for the American Craft Council and Editor in Chief of the journal *American Craft Inquiry*, as well as an artist who has focused his practice on both industrial and hand weaving. Radyk received his MFA from Rhode Island School of Design and developed his interest in education while studying at RISD and Brown University's Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning. He has spent the last ten years exhibiting his work, producing both handwoven and jacquard textiles and sculptures, and teaching at various institutions. His approach incorporates and reflects multilayered sources of inspiration, meaning, metaphor, and research. Radyk's work is included in the textile collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art, and he has exhibited throughout the United States and internationally. Upcoming shows include the 2019 invitational biennial exhibition at the International Fiber Art Fair, Seoul Arts Center, South Korea.



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Jenni Sorkin is an Associate Professor of Contemporary Art History at the University of California, Santa Barbara, who writes on the intersection between gender, craft, material culture, and contemporary art. The recipient of a PhD in the History of Art from Yale University, she has been awarded fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the Henry Luce Foundation, and the Getty Research Institute. In 2016 she co-curated, with Paul Schimmel, *Revolution in the Making: Abstract Sculpture by Women, 1947–2016*, the inaugural exhibition at Hauser & Wirth in Los Angeles. Sorkin is the author of *Live Form: Women, Ceramics, and Community* (University of Chicago Press, 2016), which examines American post-war ceramics practices through the lens of gender. She sits on the editorial board of the *Journal of Modern Craft*, and publishes and lectures widely.

Namita Gupta Wiggers is the Director of the newly launched Master of Arts in Critical and Historical Craft Studies at Warren Wilson College, North Carolina, as well as co-founder and Director of the Critical Craft Forum, an online and on-site platform for dialogue and exchange. Wiggers has taught courses on contemporary craft and theory, the history of graphic design, curating through craft, and theory of objects. As Curator and Director of the Museum of Contemporary Craft between 2004 and 2014, she curated and organized more than sixty-five exhibitions and hundreds of programs, and commissioned critical writing for online and print projects. A member of the Board of Directors of Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Wiggers is the Exhibition Reviews Editor for the *Journal of Modern Craft* and serves on the editorial boards of *Garland* and *Norwegian Crafts*. She edited *A Companion to Contemporary Craft* (Wiley-Blackwell, forthcoming) and is collaborating with Benjamin Lignel on a research project on gender and adornment.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields and presents the work of artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill. 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 twenty-first-century innovation, and fosters a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design.

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