

PRESS RELEASE

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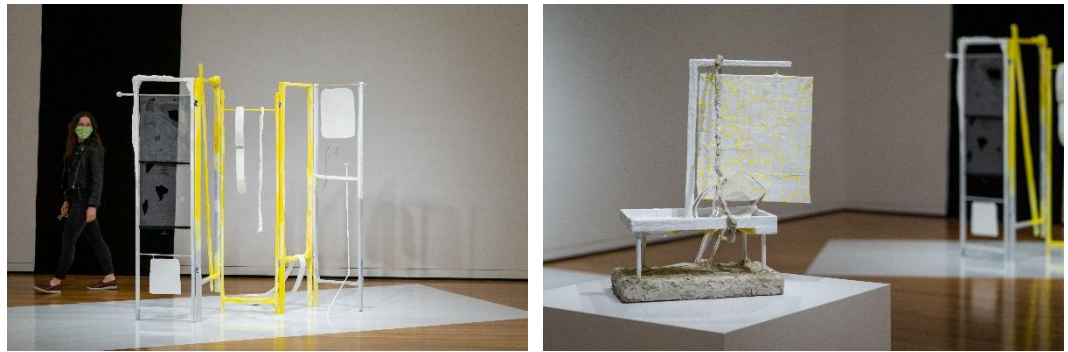
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SEATTLE ART MUSEUM PRESENTS AWARD-WINNER DAWN CERNY'S SOLO EXHIBITION

Intimate sculptures now on view by winner of the 2020 Betty Bowen Award



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SEATTLE, WA - The Seattle Art Museum (SAM) presents *Dawn Cerny: Les Choses* (April 9–September 26, 2021), the solo exhibition of the winner of the 2020 Betty Bowen Award. Cerny's sculptures explore what she refers to as “the theater of Home,” often using inexpensive and readily available materials such as wood, wire, and cardboard to evoke the intimacy of the domestic sphere.

For *Les Choses*, her solo show at SAM, Cerny was inspired by the 1965 Georges Perec novel of the same name, which follows a young Parisian couple dreaming of the good life in their overstuffed apartment. Cerny's sculptures, as with the couple in the novel, suggest different psychological and emotional states. Sagging, slumping, and leaning, these works convey the constant negotiation between our ideal spaces and the lived reality of our actual homes.

“Dawn Cerny's work has long explored the differences between utilitarian objects at home and their aesthetic function at museums or galleries,” says Catharina Manchanda, Jon & Mary Shirley Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art. “At SAM, visitors effectively enter a stage where the sculptures become a cast of characters, each burdened by their imperfections, hopes, and desires. Tender and moving, they also allow us to reflect on this moment in time.”

On Thursday, April 29, the museum will present a [free virtual event](#) with Cerny, including a conversation with the artist followed by a Q&A.

The downtown Seattle Art Museum is currently open Fridays through Sundays at a limited capacity, with timed tickets purchased online in advance required. [Visit this page](#) for more information and to plan a visit.

ABOUT DAWN CERNY

Dawn Cerny (b. 1979) is a Seattle-based multidisciplinary artist. Recent solo shows include *Oxbow*, Seattle (2020), the Portland Art Museum (2017), and the Henry Art Gallery (2017). In 2016, she was the recipient of a Betty Bowen Special Recognition Award, and in 2019 was an Artist in Residence at Pilchuck Glass School in Stanwood, WA.



ABOUT THE BETTY BOWEN AWARD

Betty Bowen (1918–1977) was a Washington native and enthusiastic supporter of Northwest artists. Her friends established the annual Betty Bowen Award as a celebration of her life and to honor and continue her efforts to provide financial support to the artists of the region. Since 1977, SAM has hosted the yearly grant application process by which the selection committee chooses one artist from the Northwest to receive an unrestricted cash award, eligible to visual artists living and working in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

Photo credits: Installation view of *Dawn Cerny: Les Choses* at the Seattle Art Museum, 2021, photo: Nina Dubinsky.

ABOUT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

As the leading visual art institution in the Pacific Northwest, SAM draws on its global collections, powerful exhibitions, and dynamic programs to provide unique educational resources benefiting the Seattle region, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. SAM was founded in 1933 with a focus on Asian art. By the late 1980s the museum had outgrown its original home, and in 1991 a new 155,000-square-foot downtown building, designed by Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates, opened to the public. The 1933 building was renovated and rededicated as the Asian Art Museum in 1994, and it reopened on February 8, 2020, following an extensive renovation and expansion. SAM's desire to further serve its community was realized in 2007 with the opening of two stunning new facilities: the nine-acre Olympic Sculpture Park (designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architects)—a “museum without walls,” free and open to all—and the Allied Works Architecture designed 118,000-square-foot expansion of its main, downtown location, including 232,000 square feet of additional space built for future expansion. The Olympic Sculpture Park and SAM's downtown expansion celebrated their tenth anniversary in 2017.

From a strong foundation of Asian art to noteworthy collections of African and Oceanic art, Northwest Coast Native American art, European and American art, and modern and contemporary art, the strength of SAM's collection of approximately 25,000 objects lies in its diversity of media, cultures, and time periods.