

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **FINALISTS SELECTED FOR THE 2020 BETTY BOWEN AWARD**

Six Northwest artists being considered for award administered by SAM that includes \$15,000 and a solo exhibition

SEATTLE, WA - The Seattle Art Museum (SAM) and the Betty Bowen Committee, chaired by Gary Glant, announced the six artists selected as finalists for this year's Betty Bowen Award: Dawn Cerny, Roland Dahwen, Elijah Hasan, Marilyn Montufar, Christian Alborz Oldham, and Tariqa Waters. The juried award honors a Northwest artist for their original, exceptional, and compelling work. The award was founded in 1977 to honor the legacy of Betty Bowen (1918–1977), who was an avid champion of artists in the Pacific Northwest. Founded by Bowen's friends, the award is administered by SAM.

The Betty Bowen Committee—comprising Northwest curators, collectors, and artists—reviewed 615 applications from visual artists residing in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. One of this year's finalists will receive an unrestricted cash award in the amount of \$15,000 and will have their work displayed at SAM. Two Special Recognition Awards of \$2,500 will also be granted. Due to the financial hardships many creatives are facing this year due to COVID-19, the Committee is extending the awards for 2020 to include three more opportunities at \$1,250.

Last year's winner was Lynne Siefert, the first filmmaker to win the award. She creates experimental non-fiction films that address the climate crisis in seductive yet unsettling ways. Her work will be featured at the Seattle Art Museum in a solo exhibition opening October 15, 2020.

The winner of the 43rd Betty Bowen Award will be announced in September. Their solo exhibition will be at SAM in 2021, with dates to be announced.

### **FINALISTS**



SEATTLE  
ART  
MUSEUM

ASIAN  
ART  
MUSEUM

OLYMPIC  
SCULPTURE  
PARK

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SAM

**Dawn Cerny** - Seattle, WA

Cerny's sculptures explore the idea of "home" as both a concept and a place, and as an arena rich for investigation. Her recent body of work examines ideas of furniture and mothers as metaphors: figures that secure value for their potential to hold, display, or be absentmindedly left with things. This pattern of holding as the creation of intimacy and belonging, pleasure, and self-preservation plays out repeatedly in her work.



**Roland Dahwen** - Portland, OR

Dahwen's work explores memory, race, and migration through film, video, and performance. He often collaborates with poets, dancers, and nonprofessional actors. He intentionally creates work that exists in the space between fiction and nonfiction, using elusiveness to purposefully distance the audience from his work.



**Elijah Hasan** - Portland, OR

Hasan is a writer, filmmaker, and director. His projects lay bare the realities of systemic racism, social justice, and activism, exploring subjects such as the experiences of Black police officers in the Portland police department and the parallels between Americans who fought in the Spanish Civil War and contemporary members of Antifa. He centers the stories of Black communities as they navigate these realities, all while on a personal journey of artistic and spiritual growth.



**Marilyn Montufar** - Seattle, WA

Montufar is a Xicana artist, activist, and educator. Her photography explores the identity of the underrepresented—women, immigrants, youth, and LGBTQ communities using portraiture and the ever-evolving urban and natural landscape. Through her work, Montufar aims to create a pathway for conversation, compassion and understanding to connect diverse communities.



**Christian Alborz Oldham** - Seattle, WA

Oldham draws their inspiration largely from the Japanese art form of ikebana, which they have studied extensively. Their work encompasses multiple modes including lecture, essay, physical and digital publishing, installation, and performance. They often show their work under pseudonyms, or anonymously, attempting to subvert standard growth economics and encourage audience members to participate in the work.



**Tariqa Waters** - Seattle, WA

Waters' whimsical, Pop-inspired work references childhood memories where vanity and self-preservation collide to mask systemic and generational pain. Her work examines ideas of femininity, beauty, race, sexuality, and inclusion. Using photography, videography, and sculptural fabrication, Waters attempts to create innovative ways to distort reality to the point where marginalization is impossible.

**2020 BETTY BOWEN COMMITTEE**

Gary Glant (Chair), Mark Calderon, Mike Hess, Sonal Khullar, Isaac Layman, Catharina Manchanda, Llewelyn Pritchard, Greg Robinson, Dan Webb, Norie Sato, Maggie Walker, Merrill Wright

**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.

**Image credits:** *YOHJI YAMAMOTO POUR HOMME PRINTEMPS-ETE 2000 DIMANCHE 4 JUILLET 1999 A 17:30 HEURES 155 RUE SAINT MARTIN 75003 PARIS PRESSE: TEL 01 42 78 94 12 FAX: 01 40 29 94 04*, 2018, mixed media, variable dimensions, Courtesy of artist, © Jueqian Fang. *Screen from Leisure Activity Area at Eden Lake*, Dawn Cerny, 2020, wood, hand-blown glass, plaster tape, epoxy clay, yarn, wire, 77 x 42 x 21 in., Courtesy of artist, © Dawn Cerny. *Borrufa - still*, Roland Dahwen, 2020, 16mm film, 0 x 0 x 0 in., Courtesy of artist, © Roland Dahwen. *Where the Heart is\_130 production still*, Elijah Hasan, 2019, digital video, 1920 x 1080 x 0 cm., Courtesy of artist, © Elijah Hasan. *Dani, Mexico City*, Marilyn Montufar, 2013, color photograph, 16 x 20 x 0 in., Courtesy of artist, © Marilyn Montufar. *NO*, Tariqa Waters, 2020, archival matte print, 48 x 48 x 0.5 in., Courtesy of artist, © Tariqa Waters.

**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.