

CLEVELAND: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 8.02.18
Cleveland Arts Prize Announces 2018 Awardees

Contact: Alenka Banco
Executive Director
abanco@clevelandartsprize.org or 216-272-3357 (mobile)



The Cleveland Arts Prize Board of Trustees announced the 58th Annual Award Winners today in the following categories:

EMERGING ARTIST AWARD (2)

Darius Steward

Visual Arts

Darius Steward knows that visual communication can serve as an agent for change with the power to break racial barriers. His paintings offer a metaphor to express both the connection and disconnection of African Americans in our society.

In May, for the Inter-Urban Art Project and Midtown Cleveland, he unveiled his largest work to date: a 200-foot-long, 6-foot-high mural with a 40-foot long companion piece. Mounted on the Euclid Avenue bridge over the Inner Belt, the murals depict children and adults representing the diversity of the student body at CSU and the surrounding neighborhood and the idea of tearing down the barriers that disconnect people.

Scratching the Surface, a recent exhibition of ink drawings and prints at Zygote Press, presented a powerful collection of intimate portraits exclusively featuring Steward's four-year-old son.

"My portraits of my son Darius II are symbolic of my 'baggage' of life, western history and modern media," he says. "Through Darius II, I examine my place in the contemporary culture and the art world through the eyes of my son. It shows aspirations for a better life for him and all peoples."

Steward attained a Masters in Fine Arts in 2010 from the University of Delaware after completing his BFA at the Cleveland Institute of Art with concentrations in drawing and painting.

Steward has exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, Tregoning & Co., William Busta Gallery, FORUM Artspace, Kent State University, the University of Delaware, the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, The President's Council of Cleveland, and the Cleveland Clinic.

In 2016, Steward was a recipient of the Creative Workforce Fellowship. Currently, Steward teaches at Saint Ignatius High School in Cleveland, Ohio.

Mark Reigelman

Design

Reigelman is a New York-based artist with Cleveland roots whose practice is dedicated to questioning the expected uses and qualities of form and material and creating objects that defy the limits of art and design.

This past year, his commissions included *Inman Square*, Cambridge, MA; *St. James Park*, San Jose, CA; *Domino Park Playground* at the Domino Sugar Factory, Brooklyn, NY; and *Formation* at The San Diego International Airport.

His unique body of work stands poised between abstraction and literal representation, guided by a clear conceptual foundation and flawless synthesis within public space. He says the artistic energy that runs through the streets and people of Cleveland initially helped him pursue the “winding and unexpected path” of public art. He has created several artworks for the city, including *Cold Front*, an installation of bluebirds that perch along leafy paths in Edgewater Park, *The Reading Nest* for the Cleveland Public Library, and the *Rock Boxes* that line a path toward the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum.

He has also received acclaim for public art projects done in conjunction with the Cleveland Museum of Art. The 2009 Wood Pile was named one of the 40 top art projects in the United States by Americans for the Arts. He has worked with designers such as Dror, Ron Gilad, Isaac Mizrahi, Montana Knox and Rockwell Group. His work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *Frame* (Netherlands), *L'uomo Vogue* (Italy), *Public Design* (Korea) and *Télé Star* (France).

Reigelman received his BFA in sculpture and industrial design at the Cleveland Institute of Art in 2006 and an advanced product design certificate at Central St. Martin's College of Art and Design in London, UK.

MID-CAREER AWARD (2)

John “Derf” Backderf

Visual Arts

Backderf is an internationally known cartoonist and graphic novelist, loves to write and draw about Cleveland and small-town Ohio, and the people thereof. He's earned greatest success from his graphic novels, which have been translated into 12 languages: *Punk Rock and Trailer Parks*, *Trashed*, and *My Friend Dahmer*, which details Backderf's junior high and high school friendship with future serial killer, Jeffrey Dahmer. Two of his three full-length novels – including the latter – have been, or are currently being adapted into films.

Backderf's comic strip *The City* debuted in the Cleveland Edition in 1990, and a year later he began selling it to other alternative papers. During its 20-plus years, the strip appeared in more than 140 publications, including *The Village Voice*, *Chicago Reader* and *The Los Angeles Reader*. He retired *The City* in 2013 so that he could concentrate on books.

The controversial cartoonist has won more than 50 awards for his newspaper work, including a prestigious Bronze Medal from the Society of Newspaper Design. He was a member of the newsroom team for the *Akron Beacon Journal* that was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1995. His work has been displayed in

museums and galleries worldwide. He has been nominated for two Eisner Awards (the Oscars of commix), as well as Harvey, Ignatz and Reuben Awards. In 2006, he received a prestigious Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award for political cartoons and an Angoulême Prize for *My Friend Dahmer* in 2014.

Established in 2011, the Derf Collection, comprising three decades of original art and papers, is part of the Billy Ireland Cartoon Museum at The Ohio State University, where he earned his BA in Journalism in 1978.

John Williams

Design

Williams has no desire to be pigeonholed as an architect and designer. That's why the founder of Process Creative Studios, an award-winning architectural firm, has guided his business to acclaim for its far-reaching array of projects in Cleveland, featuring Dobama Theatre, the Heinen's grocery store in the former Ameritrust Rotunda, Transformer Station in Ohio City's Hingetown district, and Terminal Tower's observation deck.

"For my entire career, I've resisted being pigeonholed," Williams declared in a 2014 *Scene* article. "I don't want to be focused in any one area. I would get bored."

A member of the American Institute of Architects and the International Interior Design Association, he has won awards from both organizations, including for the Palindrome Home, Heinen's Ameritrust Rotunda, Transformer Station and Century restaurant at the Ritz Carlton. SPACES Gallery honored him at its 2013 annual benefit. Additionally, his work has received media attention in *The New York Times*, *The Plain Dealer*, *Crain's Cleveland Business* and *Cleveland Magazine*.

Williams graduated in the 2005 class of Leadership Cleveland. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture at Kent State University in 1986, having completed an Architecture program in Florence, Italy, through KSU in 1985.

Williams founded Process Creative Studios Inc. in 1994. A year later Williams became a Principal/Founder for Cleveland Urban Properties Ltd., a commercial real estate development group with key properties in the West Side Market area, focusing on the successful redevelopment of this vital historic neighborhood.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Rita Dove

Literature

Dove is a poet, playwright and author, and has had a profound impact on American letters, not only through the scope of her poetry, but also through her work as an advocate. Dove was named Poet Laureate of the United States in 1993, becoming the youngest poet ever (40) and the first African-American elected to the position.

The Akron native's poems are known for their lyricism and beauty combined with a sense of history and political scope. "Poetry – that sublimely human enterprise – challenges us to pay serious and tender attention both to the things of this world and to the journeys of the spirit," she says. "The poet's challenge is

to articulate what seems unspeakable.”

Her book of poems *On the Bus with Rosa Parks* (1999) was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. In addition to poetry, Dove has published works of fiction, including the short story collection *Fifth Sunday* (1990) and the novel *Through the Ivory Gate* (1992). Her play *The Darker Face of the Earth* (1996) was produced at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

She is also an acclaimed lyricist, and has written lyrics for composers ranging from Tania León to John Williams. Her own work, the popular verse novel *Thomas and Beulah*, which won a Pulitzer Prize in 1986, was staged as an opera by Museum for Contemporary Art in Chicago in 2001.

She earned her Bachelor of Arts (summa cum laude) at Miami University in 1973. After graduating, Dove received a Fulbright Scholarship to study at the University of Tübingen in West Germany, and later earned an MFA at the University of Iowa. She holds honorary Doctor of Letters degrees from numerous universities throughout the US and two from Chinese universities.

<https://news.virginia.edu/content/rita-dove-become-new-york-times-magazines-poetry-editor>

SPECIAL PRIZES

On June 13, 2018 the Cleveland Arts Prize introduced a third Special Prize to its yearly awards program, expanding the organization’s ability to recognize and encourage longstanding examples of arts advocacy and achievements of great merit. Together with CAP’s other Special Prizes named for Martha Joseph and Robert Bergman, the new honor gives CAP’s panelists a sharp tool to recognize many different types and levels of service to the arts, across both public and private sectors.

The Barbara S. Robinson Prize – now in its inaugural year – will be awarded annually to an individual or organization for extraordinary commitment to advancement of the arts through leadership in public policy, legislation, arts education and community development.

William Griswold, PhD was appointed director of the Cleveland Museum of Art in 2014. The institution’s ninth director, he leads the 450-member team responsible for the museum’s collection, deepening its long-standing engagement with the local community, and elevating its profile both nationally and internationally.

Since his arrival in Cleveland, he has overseen the 2016 celebration of the museum’s centennial, the conclusion of the \$320 million campaign that made possible its recent renovation and expansion, and a strategic planning initiative to guide the museum into its second century of growth and public service.

Dr. Griswold has earned recognition for his proactive commitment to returning undocumented antiquities to their countries of origin. Most notably, he oversaw the return of the ancient Italian bust of Drusus Minor – once celebrated as one of CMA’s most prized artifacts that was acquired in 2012 – to its home in Naples, Italy, when it was confirmed that it had been looted from an Italian archeological museum in 1944.

“When we became aware of facts that were inconsistent with our understanding of the provenance of the sculpture, contacting the Ministry [of Cultural Heritage and Tourism] directly was an easy decision in light of

our many years of working with our Italian colleagues,” Dr. Griswold said in a statement.

He has also earned recognition for his leadership in making education a priority, reorganizing and expanding the museum’s division of public and academic engagement, putting audience at the center of the museum’s new strategic plan, and launching a new Teen Co Op program to provide high school juniors and seniors a chance to express their creativity and enhance their experience at CMA. Recently, as part of a national cohort of museums, CMA launched a major initiative to address the longstanding lack of diversity in museum professions.

Prior to CMA, Dr. Griswold held executive positions with The Morgan Library & Museum, the Minneapolis Institute of Art, J. Paul Getty Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 2008, he received the insignia of Chevalier of the French Order of Arts and Letters, and in 2015, he was awarded the medal of Cambodia’s Royal Order of Sahametrei. He earned his Bachelor’s degree at Trinity College, Hartford, CT, and his PhD at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London.

The Robert Bergman Prize is awarded to an individual whose life and work are illuminated by an energetic and inspiring dedication to a democratic vision of art. The Bergman Prize recognizes the highest possible expression of art stewardship through long term commitment.

Louise and Thomas (deceased) Boddie founded The Boddie Recording Co. in 1959. It became Cleveland’s first African American owned and operated recording studio and one of the first in the US. The Boddies served a clientele ranging from gospel, soul and rhythm and blues groups to rock, bluegrass and country musicians from as far away as Detroit and West Virginia. At that time, it was the only black-owned studio anywhere that manufactured its own records; not even famed Motown did that.

Louise, a 1953 graduate of Glenville High School, pressed many of the records herself for the vast variety of acts that recorded there: Lou Ragland, Hot Chocolate, the Gospel Mountaineers, Harvey and the Phenomenals, Ben Dover and the Screamers, and a wide variety of gospel singers.

"There's hardly a group that came through Cleveland, or a group that lived in Cleveland, that we didn't record," she recalls today. "Amazingly, people still call us up." When Thomas died in 2006, The Boddie Recording Co. closed.

The company’s low rates attracted hundreds of musicians seeking to make demonstration records to send to labels such as Motown. They earned the nickname “Little Nashville” due to the volume of bluegrass, country and traveling gospel singers – black and white – that they recorded. Because they also had a portable set up, the Boddies did on-site recording, ranging from funerals and bar mitzvahs, to a performance by popular soul group The O’Jays at Leo’s Casino – the first to do so – in the mid ‘60s. In the mid ‘70s, they cut records for Devo and the Kinks.

Today, music historians from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame are interested in the Boddies’ legacy, and archivists from Chicago are digging into the extensive recording collection and planning to release a compilation of the Boddies’ work.

The Martha Joseph Prize is awarded annually to an individual or an organization that have made a significant contribution to the vitality and stature of the arts in northeast Ohio through exceptional commitment, vision leadership, and/or philanthropy.

Suzanne DeGaetano is a co-owner of Mac's Backs-Books on Coventry, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. She has managed the store for the past 30 years, since it opened on Coventry in 1982 after short stints in Chagrin Falls and Kent.

She has been an avid reader since she was a small child; she credits her parents with fostering that love of literature by making sure their daughter enjoyed frequent visits to the library. Working in a bookstore and sharing daily conversations about books and life with her bibliophile staff and customers is a pure delight for DeGaetano.

"Independent book-selling has a good future, and in ten years I expect Mac's Backs to be thriving with a committed and energetic staff inspired as we always have been by good books and engaging customers," she said in a *Crain's Cleveland Business* article earlier this year. "We are living in a golden age for literature, and the bonds between writers, publishers, bookstores and readers are stronger than ever."

Mac's hosts readings, author events, book clubs, and writing groups, and provides a free community meeting space for groups and organizations. The monthly poetry reading, ongoing since 1984, is one of the region's longest established series. Mac's also keeps a busy offsite events schedule, selling books for library and community author events.

Within the Cleveland arts community, she has established herself as a patron saint among emerging and seasoned poets, writers and artists. She knows most by name. Her generosity and commitment to Northeast Ohio's literary community knows no bounds

Suzanne has twice served on the board of the Great Lakes Independent Booksellers Association and is currently on the board of Literary Cleveland.

2018 SPECIAL HONOREE

Each year at the annual awards event, the trustees of Cleveland Arts Prize select and honor a past CAP recipient. Now in his 90's, Robert P. Madison continues his life's mission in Cleveland's rising neighborhoods.

Robert P. Madison, FAIA

2000 Special Citation for Distinguished Service in the Arts & CAP Emeritus Trustee

Robert P. Madison's long career as an architect has been distinguished not only by the important buildings he has designed here and abroad, but by the role he has played as a mentor and nurturer of talent and as a creator of opportunities for others. Since Robert P. Madison International was founded in the mid-1950s, it has trained some 190 African-American architects and engineers, many of whom have gone on to do distinguished work, and spawned at least five other black architectural firms.

The first African-American graduate in architecture in Ohio, Madison himself embarked on the profession at a time when far fewer opportunities existed. Indeed, the World War II veteran, who earned a Purple Heart in the service of his country, was told, on applying to Western Reserve University School of Architecture in 1946, that "no colored person had ever graduated from that school." He was finally admitted, on the strength of his work, and later earned a graduate degree from Harvard University, won an honorable mention in the prestigious Prix de Rome Architecture Competition and went to Paris as a Fulbright Scholar.

Known for its expertise in urban design, Robert P. Madison International had a hand in practically every major downtown building project in the 1990s, including Cleveland Browns Stadium, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, the Louis Stokes Wing of the Cleveland Public Library, Quicken Loans Arena, Great Lakes Science Center, and the stations of RTA's Waterfront Line.

Mr. Madison has served as a trustee of the Cleveland Orchestra and Cleveland Opera, of which he is a major benefactor. He is a former trustee of Case Western Reserve University, which has bestowed upon him its distinguished alumnus award. He also served as Board Chair of the Cleveland Arts Prize.

VERGE FELLOWSHIP

Presented by the Cleveland Foundation

This year's awards program will include the first VERGE FELLOWSHIP winners.

In early 2017, the Cleveland Arts Prize and the Cleveland Foundation recognized a regional void to nurture and support the next generation of artistic excellence. These unheralded artists are forging bold paths into Cleveland's art scene. The Verge Fellowship provides a \$2,000 stipend to five artists across multiple disciplines, who represent Cleveland's diversity in the arts: the Literary Arts, Visual Arts, Dance & Theatre, Music, and Design. Applicants must be 18 and older, live in greater Cleveland, and create work in one or more of the five disciplines.

"Support for young, diverse artists is a critical gap in Cleveland's creative infrastructure," said Lillian Kuri, Cleveland Foundation's, Vice President, Strategic Grantmaking, Arts & Urban Design Initiatives. "We are proud to partner with Cleveland Arts Prize to develop the Verge Fellowship so that more creative professionals have the ability to stay and build an artistic practice right here in Cleveland."

The 2018 inaugural Fellowship winners are; **Stephen Bivens (Visual Arts), Stephanie Fields (Literature), Amanda King (Visual Arts), Damien McClendon (Literature), and Kayla Thomas (Dance).**

Established in 1914, the Cleveland Foundation is the world's first community foundation and one of the largest today, with assets of \$2.45 billion and 2017 grants of more than \$101 million. Through the generosity of donors, the foundation improves the lives of residents of Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga counties by building community endowment, addressing needs through grantmaking and providing leadership on vital issues. The foundation tackles the community's priority areas – education and youth development, neighborhoods, health and human services, arts and culture, and economic development – and responds to the community's needs. For more information, visit www.ClevelandFoundation.org.

58TH ANNUAL AWARDS EVENT INFORMATION

The Cleveland Arts Prize will host its 58th Annual Awards event on **Sunday, October 21, 2018**. Winners of the 2018 Cleveland Arts Prize will be honored in the Gartner Auditorium at the Cleveland Museum of Art. This year's event will be hosted by Dan Moulthrop, City Club of Cleveland. Ticket prices range from the \$75-\$250.

A portion of each will be tax deductible. Tickets go on sale September 1, 2018. Visit clevelandartsprize.org to purchase online.

For sponsorship and ad information please contact us at: info@clevelandartsprize.org

