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THE BMA PRESENTS EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY 2017 AND 2018 BAKER ARTIST AWARD WINNERS

Works by artists Abraham Burickson, Sara Dittrich, David Marion, and Amy Sherald are featured and a free opening event with performances by other artists will be held on Wednesday, September 12

BALTIMORE, MD (July 23, 2018)—The Baltimore Museum of Art celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Baker Artist Awards with an exhibition of visual art works by 2017 and 2018 awardees. ***Baker Artist Awards 2017 & 2018*** will be on view from September 12 – October 14, 2018, featuring Abraham Burickson (interdisciplinary, 2018), Sara Dittrich (interdisciplinary, 2017), David Marion (visual art, 2017), and Amy Sherald (visual art, 2018). This exhibition will present a small selection of sculpture, painting, video art, and mixed media works by these four recent award recipients, showcasing the breadth and exceptional talent of these artists.

“The Baltimore Museum of Art is proud to host this exhibition exemplifying the best of Baltimore’s creative community,” said BMA Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director Christopher Bedford. “We are extremely pleased to partner with Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance and the Baker Foundation, who are providing both recognition and financial reward for outstanding artists working in Baltimore.”

The exhibition includes Abraham Burickson’s *The Odyssey Works Box* (2017)—an archival box filled with books, photographs, and other ephemera—accompanied by a video tour that leads the viewer through the history of *Odyssey Works* and the collective’s renegade performances. Sara Dittrich’s two wall sculptures, *Variations on Listening #5* (2017) and *Variations on Listening #9* (2017), are arranged with hundreds of small, clay-molded ears in geometric patterns that give visual form to the labor of listening. They are accompanied by *A Chorus of Footsteps* (2018), a stop-motion animation video presenting a top-down view of clay-molded feet as they pitter-patter against a white background. Two large-scale sculptures by David Marion, *Extinction Event* (2018) and *Fracking* (2016), use clay, wood, steel, and other materials to show the effects of violence perpetrated on the natural environment. Two portraits by Amy Sherald, *Well Prepared and Maladjusted* (2008) and *The Rabbit in the Hat* (2009), showcase the artist’s signature style in which the skin tone of African American portrait subjects is rendered in a muted grayscale.



Amy Sherald, *The Rabbit in the Hat*, 2009, oil on canvas.

The Baker Artist Portfolios and associated awards were established and are funded by the William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund and are a program of the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance. The online portfolio website (available at [BakerArtist.org](#)) was created to promote and recognize the rich community of artists in the Baltimore region. Since its inception in 2008, the Baker Artist Awards have awarded over \$800,000 in prizes to more than 100 artists from the Baltimore region. Awardees are selected annually by an anonymous jury from more than 700 Baltimore-region artists who created a free, online portfolio at [www.bakerartist.org](#). Selected artists exemplify a mastery of craft, depth of artistic exploration, and a unique and compelling vision.

“As we celebrate 10 years of excellence, we are thrilled to be able to present these extraordinary artists at the BMA,” said Connie Imboden, President of the William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund. “Our 10-year partnership with the museum is a testament to our shared commitment to showcase the best of what Baltimore has to offer.”

Each year, one artist per discipline (visual, literary, film/video, performance, interdisciplinary, music) receives a \$10,000 Mary Sawyers Baker Prize. One of these six is then selected to receive the Mary Sawyers Imboden Prize, which includes an additional \$30,000. At \$40,000, this is the largest art prize in the region. This year's recipient of the Mary Sawyers Imboden Prize is Amy Sherald, who was also recently acclaimed for being commissioned to paint former First Lady Michelle Obama's official portrait.

Opening Event

A free public opening will be held on Wednesday, September 12, from 6 p.m.–9 p.m., featuring performances, a literary reading, and a film screening from the 2018 awardees in the four other disciplines: Lafayette Gilchrist (music), Dora Malech (literary), Margaret Rorison (film/video), and Lisi Steossil (performance).

[Abraham Burickson](#) (American, b. 1975) is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Odyssey Works, a cross-genre collaborative of artists which continually strives to challenge and re-conceptualize traditional notions of experience design, performance, and the artist-audience relationship. His work spans writing, design, performance, and sound art. Burickson was trained in Architecture at Cornell University, and received his MFA in Poetry and Playwriting from the UT Michener Center for Writers.

[Sara Dittrich](#) (American, b. 1991) creates objects, installations, and performances using musical instruments and interactive electronic technologies to investigate the dynamic acts of listening, communicating, and moving. Dittrich received her BFA in Interdisciplinary Sculpture from the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). She has exhibited her work nationally and internationally, and has been awarded residencies at Sculpture Space, Vermont Studio Center, and the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts.



Sara Dittrich, *A Chorus of Footsteps*, 2018.

[David Marion](#) (American, b. 1963) creates sculptures that illustrate a symbiotic relationship between man-made form and the natural world, influenced by his years living in industrial cities. His work combines large ceramic pieces, metal, rope, and found organic objects, highlighting the human impact on the environment and technology's impact on humans. Marion received his BFA in Sculpture from the College for Creative Studies, Detroit, MI.

[Amy Sherald](#) (American, b. 1973) received her MFA in Painting from the MICA. In addition to her acclaimed portrait of Michelle Obama, her recent achievements include a solo exhibition at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis in 2018 and the 2016 Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition grand prize from the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. Her work is in notable public collections, including The Baltimore Museum of Art, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

The exhibition is organized by Assistant Curator for Media Arts and Live Events Claudia Mattos. This exhibition is generously funded by The William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund.

GREATER BALTIMORE CULTURAL ALLIANCE

The Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance nurtures and promotes a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable arts and cultural community embraced by all as accessible, relevant, and essential to the region's quality of life. GBCA connects artists and groups to one another and to vital resources and advocates for the strategic issues facing the cultural community and the continued visibility and financial strength of the sector.

WILLIAM G. BAKER, JR. MEMORIAL FUND

The William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund believes that arts and culture play a central role in the development and growth of healthy individuals and thriving communities and commits its resources to promote and sustain a vibrant arts and culture sector in metropolitan Baltimore. Its grants support organizational effectiveness and provide cultural experiences that welcome people of all backgrounds, enrich residents' lives, strengthen the region's sense of cohesion and identity, promote local artists and their work, and make the metropolitan area a desirable place to live.

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

Founded in 1914, The Baltimore Museum of Art is a major cultural destination recognized for engaging diverse audiences through dynamic exhibitions and innovative educational and community outreach programs. The BMA's internationally renowned collection of 95,000 objects encompasses more than 1,000 works by Henri Matisse anchored by the famed Cone Collection of modern art, as well as one of the nation's finest holdings of prints, drawings, and photographs. The galleries showcase an exceptional collection of art from Africa; important works by established and emerging contemporary artists; outstanding European and American paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts; significant artworks from China; ancient Antioch mosaics; and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000-square-foot museum is also distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped gardens featuring an array of 20th-century sculpture. The BMA is located in Charles Village, three miles north of the Inner Harbor, and is adjacent to the main campus of Johns Hopkins University. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

VISITOR INFORMATION

General admission to the BMA is free. Special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The BMA is located at 10 Art Museum Drive, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit artbma.org.

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