



Media contacts:

Anne Mannix, 443-573-1870

Tracy Baskerville, 410-752-8632

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE BMA PRESENTS THE JANET & WALTER SONDHEIM ARTSCAPE PRIZE: 2010 FINALISTS EXHIBITION

BALTIMORE, MD (April 19, 2010) —*And the winner is...* The **Sondheim Artscape Prize: 2010 Finalists** exhibition at The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) showcases the seven finalists for the \$25,000 Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize. On view from **June 19–August 1, 2010**, the exhibition features a range of sculpture, film, animation, and multimedia works by Leah Cooper, Ryan Hackett, Matthew Janson, Nate Larson, Christopher LaVoie, Matt Porterfield, and Karen Yasinsky. Admission to the exhibition is free.

This is the fifth year of the prestigious annual award, organized by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts. The Sondheim Prize is designed to assist visual artists or visual artist collaborators in furthering their careers by awarding a \$25,000 fellowship. The winner of the competition will be announced during an award ceremony on Saturday, July 10 at 7pm at the BMA. The Sondheim Artscape Prize winner is selected after the jurors review the art installed at the BMA and interview each finalist. The jurors for this year's competition are Robert Nickas, an independent New York-based curator, writer and art critic; Magdalena Sawon, owner and director of New York's Postmasters Gallery; and Hamza Walker, director of education and associate curator of the Renaissance Society at The University of Chicago.

The Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize is held in conjunction with the annual Artscape juried exhibition and is produced by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts. The finalists and semifinalists exhibitions are presented in partnership with The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). During the weekend of Artscape, an exhibition featuring the semifinalists' work will be displayed at the Decker and Meyerhoff galleries of MICA, located at 1303 West Mount Royal Avenue. Artscape, America's largest free celebration of the arts takes place Friday, July 16 and Saturday, July 17 from noon-10pm and Sunday, July 18 from noon-8pm on Mount Royal Avenue and North Charles Street.

JANET & WALTER SONDHEIM ARTSCAPE PRIZE FINALISTS

Leah Cooper (Baltimore, MD)

Leah Cooper is an artist who is fascinated by the extraordinary world that exists within the smallest detail of the ordinary. Her installation-based works often derive inspiration from those interior elements often overlooked – where the shadow of a railing becomes a canvas for her work. She received a Master of Fine Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2009, and a Bachelor of Arts in studio art from the University of Maryland, College Park in 1989. Since 1989 she has lived and worked in Baltimore. She has exhibited her work at the Creative Alliance, Maryland Art Place and the Frieda O. Weis Gallery in Baltimore, the Montpellier Arts Center in Laurel, MD and Blue Elephant Art Center in Frederick, MD.

—more—

Ryan Hackett (Kensington, MD)

Ryan Hackett received his Bachelor of Arts in 1999 in studio art from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a Master of Fine Arts from San Francisco Art Institute in 2007. In between his academic pursuits, he co-founded Decatur Blue, a Washington, D.C.-based artist collective that looked to challenge the commercial constructs of the art world by serving simultaneously as curator, artist, and gallery. Hackett's work has been seen in the solo exhibition *Interspecies Transmission* at G Fine Art in Washington, D.C., in the group show *Freaks Of Nature* at the Bronx River Art Center in Bronx, NY, and the 2009 Sondheim Prize Artscape Prize Finalists exhibition at The Baltimore Museum of Art.

Matthew Janson (Baltimore, MD)

Matthew Janson finds interest in looking at animals and people to describe sculpturally the animals he finds in people. His "Perfect Human would be a Chimera with one wing, one arm, a mirror for a face and the rest would be confectionary." Janson's exhibition history includes shows at the Delaware Center for Contemporary Art, Baltimore's Theater Project and Soo-Vac in Minneapolis. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the College of Visual Arts in St. Paul, MN in 2005, where he later held positions as assistant gallery director and sculpture technician. In 2009, he received a Master of Fine Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art, where he was a student in the Mount Royal Studio Program.

Nate Larson (Baltimore, MD)

Nate Larson is a full-time faculty member at the Maryland Institute College of Art. His work with photographic media, artist books and narrative video has been widely exhibited across the US and internationally. Numerous publications have reviewed and published his projects, including *Exposure*, *Art Papers*, *The New York Times* and *Afterimage*. He has received grants from the Ultimate Eye Foundation in California; Visual Studies Workshop in New York; the Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta, Canada; the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and the Illinois Arts Council. Larson earned a Master of Fine Arts from the Ohio State University in 2002, and a Bachelor of Arts from Purdue University in 2000. He was also recently elected to the Board of Directors for the Society for Photographic Education.

Christopher LaVoie (Baltimore, MD)

Christopher LaVoie is a sculptor and multimedia artist originally from Tucson, AZ, now living and working in Baltimore, MD. His artwork is about domestication and he prefers to use nontraditional materials and processes. Recently, his work has been featured in exhibitions at the Arlington Art Center in Virginia; Irvine Contemporary in Washington, D.C.; Goucher College's Rosenberg Gallery; Dinnerware Contemporary Arts in Tuscon, AZ, and Whole Gallery, Pinkard Gallery and Sub-Basements Gallery in Baltimore. He also works at New Arts Foundry and occasionally teaches classes at the Maryland Institute College of Art, where he received a Master of Fine Arts in 2008. He is also a 2004 Bachelor of Fine Arts graduate from the University of Arizona.

Matt Porterfield (Baltimore, MD)

Matt Porterfield was born in Baltimore, MD. He studied film at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and currently teaches screenwriting, film theory, and production at The Johns Hopkins University. His first feature

film, *Hamilton*, which he wrote, directed, and edited on 16mm film was released in 2006. *Metal Gods*, his second feature script, won the Panasonic Digital Filmmaking Grand Prize at the 30th Annual Independent Film Week in 2008. In 2010, his latest film, *Putty Hill*, premiered at the Berlinale International Forum of New Cinema. Locally, Porterfield's photographs have been shown at Baltimore's Current Gallery and Gallery 229, he was featured in the fall 2008 issue of *Locus Magazine*, and has been awarded a media grant from the Maryland State Arts Council.

Karen Yasinsky (Baltimore, MD)

Karen Yasinsky is an artist working primarily with animation and drawing. She is a lecturer in The Johns Hopkins University's Film and Media Studies program and an animation faculty member at the Maryland Institute College of Art. Her video installations and drawings have been shown at Kunst-Werke, Berlin; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York; Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles; and Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH. A recipient of a 2002 Guggenheim Foundation grant, her animations have been screened at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, New York Underground Film Festival, and other venues worldwide. She is represented by Mireille Mosler, Ltd., NY and Tanja Pol Galerie, Munich. She has a master's degree in fine arts/painting from Yale University and a Bachelor of Arts in mathematics and art history from Duke University.

The 2010 Janet & Walter Sondheim Prize is supported by The Abell Foundation, Alex. Brown Charitable Foundation, The Henry and Ruth Blaustein Rosenberg Foundation, Charlesmead Foundation, Ellen Dankert, France-Merrick Foundation, Willard Hackerman, Legg Mason and an Anonymous Donor.

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

The Baltimore Museum of Art is home to an internationally renowned collection of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Founded in 1914, the BMA's outstanding collection encompasses 90,000 works of art, including the largest and most significant holding of works by Henri Matisse in the world, as well as masterpieces by Pablo Picasso, Paul Cézanne, and Vincent van Gogh. An expanding collection of contemporary art features iconic post-1960 works by Andy Warhol and Sol LeWitt, as well as exciting acquisitions by artists such as Kara Walker and Olafur Eliasson. The BMA is also recognized for an internationally acclaimed collection of prints, drawings, and photographs from the 15th-century to the present; grand European painting and sculpture from Old Masters to the 19th-century; distinguished American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts and Maryland period rooms; one of the most important African collections in the country, and notable examples of Asian, ancient American, and Pacific Islands art.

VISITOR INFORMATION

General admission to the BMA is free; special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m. (except major holidays). The Museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The BMA is located on Art Museum Drive at North Charles and 31st Streets, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general Museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit artbma.org.