



Smithsonian
***Donald W. Reynolds Center for
American Art and Portraiture***

Smithsonian American Art Museum

News

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Jessica Stockholder Is the 2007 Winner of the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Annual Contemporary Artist Award

The Smithsonian American Art Museum announced today that Jessica Stockholder is the 2007 winner of the museum's Lucelia Artist Award. Stockholder is the seventh annual winner of the \$25,000 award, which is intended to encourage the artist's future development and experimentation. The Lucelia Artist Award is part of the museum's ongoing commitment to contemporary art and artists through annual exhibitions, acquisitions and public programs.

"The Lucelia Artist Award acknowledges Stockholder's extensive and ongoing achievement as an artist and celebrates her profound impact on generations of artists worldwide," declared an independent panel of jurors who selected Stockholder from a group of 13 nominees.

"Jessica Stockholder's exuberant and complex sculptures and installations embody the spirit of innovation and creativity that the museum's Lucelia Artist Award hopes to foster," said Elizabeth Broun, The Margaret and Terry Stent Director of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

The five jurors who selected the winner are David Joselit, professor and chair of art history at Yale University; Helen Molesworth, curator of contemporary art at the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University; artist David Reed; Paul Schimmel, chief curator at The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles; and Rochelle Steiner, director of the Public Art Fund in New York City.

"Drawing on the ready-made stuff of material culture, Stockholder transforms simple utilitarian objects into discrete sculptures and immersive environments that blur the boundaries between painting, sculpture and installation," the jurors wrote in their decision. "Her rigorously formal abstract sculptures engage the viewer in a physical and perceptual encounter, which is at once highly evocative, yet resolutely unsentimental. Stockholder's careful calibration of color is also crucial and

distinctive element of her work. Not only does it call attention to the vivid palette of commonplace things, but also reflects and enlivens our experience of the world.”

Since the 1980s, Stockholder has created abstract and complex works that combine aspects of painting and sculpture. She assembles everyday objects—couch cushions, plastic container lids, shoe laces, construction materials, fake fur, lamps, electrical cord, plastic stacking crates, pillows, papier-mâché, balls—adding brightly colored areas of paint that blend with the vivid plastics used in many mass-produced consumer products. Stockholder maintains control of the formal elements of her work, which keeps the incredible variety of materials from overwhelming the viewer. Both Stockholder’s studio works, which refer to her permanent free-standing sculptures, and her site-specific temporary installations engage with and transform the spaces they occupy.

Stockholder’s sculptures and installations have been shown widely at museums and galleries in the United States and in Europe. Her work was included in the 1991 Whitney Biennial and in the 1997 Venice Biennale. In 2005, Terrie Sultan and Nancy Doll organized a traveling exhibition that surveyed Stockholder’s career for the Blaffer Art Gallery at the University of Houston in Texas. An exhibition of her work recently closed at the Galerie Thomas Schulte in Berlin, and her work is on view currently at 1301PE in Los Angeles. Stockholder has an upcoming exhibition at the Galerie nächst St. Stephan in Vienna, Austria. Stockholder is represented by Mitchell-Innes & Nash in New York City.

Stockholder was born in Seattle in 1959 and was raised in Vancouver, Canada; she holds dual citizenship in the United States and in Canada. She earned a bachelor’s degree in fine arts in 1982 from the University of Victoria in British Columbia and a master’s in fine arts from Yale University in 1985. She was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts grant in sculpture in 1988 and a John Solomon Guggenheim Fellowship Award in visual art in 1996, among other grants and awards she has received. Since 1999, Stockholder has been the director of graduate studies in sculpture at Yale University.

In addition to Stockholder, the 2007 nominees were Cory Arcangel, Bernadette Corporation, Tom Friedman, Gajin Fujita, Rachel Harrison, Glenn Ligon, Fabian Marcaccio, Josiah McElheny, Dave Muller, Laura Owens, Catherine Sullivan and Sarah Sze. Joanna Marsh, The James Dicke Curator of Contemporary Art at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, coordinated the jury panel selection and the nomination and jurying process for the award.

“I am thrilled that the jury has selected such a talented and deserving artist to receive the museum’s Lucelia Artist Award and hope that it allows Jessica the freedom to undertake ambitious new projects, which test the limits of painting and sculpture,” said Marsh.

The Lucelia Artist Award, established in 2001, annually recognizes an American artist younger than 50 who has produced a significant body of work and consistently demonstrates exceptional creativity. Each year, five distinguished jurors with an extensive knowledge of contemporary art nominate artists to be considered for the award; there is no application. Previous winners are Matthew Coolidge, director of the Center for Land Use Interpretation (2006); Andrea Zittel (2005); Kara Walker (2004); Rirkrit Tiravanija (2003); Liz Larner (2002); and Jorge Pardo (2001).

On Sept. 21, the museum opens the special exhibition “Celebrating the Lucelia Artist Award, 2001-2006,” which will be on view through June 22, 2008. Sidra Stich, who served as the Lucelia Artist Award executive director from 2000 to 2006, is the guest curator for the exhibition. She is the director of “art-SITES,” a series of contemporary art, architecture and design handbooks, and currently is in residence as the Coca-Cola Fellow, one of 10 Berlin Prize honorees at The American Academy in Berlin.

A performance on the steps of the museum by Rirkrit Taravanija is scheduled for April 17, 2008 followed by a major symposium April 18, 2008 that will feature past award winners and jurors. A full schedule of events, from talks with artists to performances to behind-the-scenes tours, is available at americanart.si.edu.

The New York-based Lucelia Foundation, which funds the award, supports the visual arts, specifically 19th-century American and contemporary art.

About the Smithsonian American Art Museum

The Smithsonian American Art Museum celebrates the vision and creativity of Americans with approximately 41,000 artworks in all media spanning more than three centuries. Its National Historic Landmark building, a dazzling showcase for American art and portraiture, is located at Eighth and F streets N.W. in the heart of a revitalized downtown arts district. Museum hours are 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, except Dec. 25. Admission is free. Metrorail station: Gallery Place/Chinatown (Red, Yellow and Green lines). Recorded museum information: (202) 633-7970. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 633-5285 (TTY). Web site: americanart.si.edu.

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