

PRESS RELEASE

APRIL 25, 2018

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SEATTLE ART MUSEUM PRESENTS AWARD-WINNER JONO VAUGHAN'S SOLO EXHIBITION

Sculptural garments memorializing transgender individuals now on view by winner of the 2017 Betty Bowen Award



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SEATTLE, WA - The Seattle Art Museum presents *Project 42: Jono Vaughan* (April 21-August 5, 2018), the solo exhibition of the winner of the 2017 Betty Bowen Award. Jono Vaughan's multidisciplinary work memorializes transgender individuals whose lives were cut short by violence; she creates handmade garments that are then used in collaborative public performances.

On view at SAM will be three new works from *Project 42*, Vaughan's ongoing series begun in 2012. Named for the short life expectancy of transgender individuals in the United States, the project calls attention to the persistent pattern of extreme violence against trans people. Each work in the series is a garment that commemorates an individual transgender person who was murdered. The three garments on view at SAM memorialize the life and death of Myra Ical, Deja Jones, and Lorena Escalera Xtravaganza.

Vaughan begins with a Google Earth image of a murder location and digitally manipulates it to create an abstract textile print. The style of the garments is inspired by the life and history of the individuals. Each garment is then worn by a collaborator in performance as a form of memorialization and celebration.

In SAM's exhibition, two of the garments hang on the wall, which is covered with wallpaper of the same pattern as the dress. The third—a monumental and much larger, more sculptural garment—is displayed in the center of the gallery, with a 34-foot train lifting off from the dress and draping down from the ceiling. Vaughan, along with studio assistants and volunteers, have created numerous fabric flowers that will be available in the gallery for visitors to personally tie onto the train to complete the memorial to the individual. This is the first time that Vaughan has opened up this act of commemoration to the public.

SAM will host a flower-making workshop, free and open to the public, at which participants can create additional flowers for use in the exhibition. *Drop-In Studio: Flower-Making with Jono Vaughan* will take place June 7 as part of First Thursday programming. It's one of a series of flower-making workshops the artist will lead with various community groups as part of her collaborative and awareness-raising approach to her work.



Finally, visitors to the exhibition may also witness one of four pop-up performances planned for the run of the exhibition. At each, a dancer or performer will enter the gallery unannounced to perform a memorialization of one of the three individuals commemorated in the exhibition.

ABOUT JONO VAUGHAN

Jono Vaughan holds a Bachelors of Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts in New York City and a Masters of Fine Arts from the University of South Florida in Tampa. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally in both solo and group exhibitions, including *MOTHA and Chris E. Vargas Present: Trans Hirstory in 99 Objects* at The Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington and *We the People* at the Minnesota Museum of American Art. Vaughan has received grants for a variety of visual art projects from The Arts Council of Hillsborough County, The National Performance Artist and Visual Artist Network, Art Matters Foundation, and the Pollination Project. She teaches Fine Art at Bellevue College and works in her studio in Seattle, WA.

Image credits: Installation view of *Project 42: Jono Vaughan* at the Seattle Art Museum. © Seattle Art Museum. Photo: Natali Wiseman.

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 reopened as the Asian Art Museum in 1994. 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.