

Tacoma Art Museum Announces Annual Award For Regional Black Artists To Begin In 2022

February 23, 2021 (Tacoma, Wa)—Tacoma Art Museum (TAM) has begun the development of an annual unrestricted monetary award for Black artists working in the Puget Sound region. The first cycle of the award will begin in late 2021, with an inaugural recipient to be announced in February 2022. The as-yet-unnamed award is an acknowledgment of the institutional erasure of Black artists and stories from the art historical narrative.

Regarding the need for the award, award program manager Victoria Miles stated: “We cannot deny that institutionally, systemically, and structurally Black artists in this region have been ignored by museums and art institutions or used for diversity initiatives. With this grant we begin to consider: how do we as an institution move forward and towards forming lasting relationships? Transparency is a necessary, but minor step. The acknowledgement of harm does not articulate the bonds of exploitation that produce the institutional advantages and benefits received from harming Black artists. Recognition alone is not the sole remedy for harm and inequity. This work cannot end at institutional transparency. Museums occupy material and immaterial space in the community—to build connections with Black artists TAM must welcome them into the institutional space and truly support their work. Along with resources, visibility and community support are critical for the creative progression and establishment of Black artists. To me, this grant isn’t restorative but a generative step towards necessary connectivity and transparency.”

Miles’ process of creating the tenets of the award will be informed by input from Black artists and other community members.

“TAM is incredibly excited to announce this long overdue investment in Black artists in the Puget Sound,” said Executive Director David F. Setford. “We must ensure our resources and actions are meaningfully supporting our commitments to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility, both internally and externally, in every aspect of the museum’s work. Supporting Black artists is simply the right thing to do.”

Please contact publicrelations@TacomaArtMuseum.org for more information.

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Tacoma Art Museum remains closed to the public.

About Tacoma Art Museum

Celebrating over 80 years, Tacoma Art Museum is an anchor in Tacoma’s downtown with a mission of connecting people through art. TAM’s collection contains more than 5,000 works, with an emphasis on the art and artists of the Northwest and broader Western region, 25% of which consists of studio glass. The collection includes the largest retrospective museum collection of glass art by Tacoma native Dale Chihuly on permanent view; the most significant collection of studio art jewelry by Northwest artists; key holdings in 19th century European and 20th century American art; and one of the finest collections of Japanese woodblock prints on the West Coast. In 2012, TAM received a gift of more than 300 works of western American art from the Haub Family Collection, one of the premier such collections in the nation and the first major western American art museum collection in the Northwest. The Haub family also contributed \$20 million for an endowment and expansion completed in 2014. In January 2019, TAM inaugurated the Rebecca and Jack Benaroya Wing which features the extensive Benaroya collection of studio glass as well as TAM’s own collection of studio glass, which was started in 1971. TAM is located in the heart of Tacoma’s vibrant Museum District which consists of six museums including the Museum of Glass, a frequent collaborator.

CURRENTLY CLOSED

ADMISSION – \$18 Adult, \$15 Student/Senior (65+), \$40 Family (2 adults and up to four children age 6-18), Children 5 and under free every day. Children 18 and under free every Saturday. TAM Members; active duty military, reservists, veterans, and their families always free.

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