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Contact:

Jackie Zils 253-307-7550 | [jzils@jayray.com](mailto:jzils@jayray.com)

Jen Willey 206-579-9886 | [jwilley@jayray.com](mailto:jwilley@jayray.com)

*On behalf of Tacoma Art Museum*

## **Tacoma's Darrel McKinney Named Inaugural Winner of *The Current, An Artist Award***

TACOMA, WA (November 8, 2022) – Darrell McKinney has been announced as the inaugural 2022 winner of *The Current, An Artist Award*, at Tacoma Art Museum. *The Current, An Artist Award* is an annual, unrestricted honor providing financial and institutional support to a Black artist living and working in the Tacoma area.

McKinney will receive a \$15,000 unrestricted gift. Additionally, he has the option of receiving various forms of support from TAM. Whether career and artistry support or designing a program, all would include the full support of the museum's facilities, staff expertise, and labor. This dual investment champions McKinney directly and proliferates resources for the artist's community, providing resources and strengthening networks that make creating art easier for Black artists.

The selection was made by Final Juror Cristina Martinez, a contemporary visual artist from Tacoma, Washington, who is based in Seattle. "The comprehension of the African American experience could hardly be characterized through the stewardship of composite material, Martinez shared. "Yet, Darrell McKinney has represented storytelling in an immersive experience; composing his cement paste into forms that cure to a complete. His artistry lies in his ability to mold fine vessels into pieces that are deliberate and careful. McKinney pushes the boundaries of what concrete is historically associated with in the African American community. It is an encounter with nostalgia; with emotions that permeate long after McKinney has finished creating. His idiomatic approach to finding harmony with his medium is conveyed in the object permanence of his work. McKinney has mastered the feeling of craftsmanship and pride in one's art. Representing emotional qualities under the practice of molding is a reminder that art is a gift to those who accept its call. McKinney has received this pursuit with the intention of spreading this proverb to those who walk without. He has mastered and cradled this key attribute to disseminate to his peers. Undeniably, his composition is an extension of sculpture and architecture; and in that, it presents as an extension of himself."

McKinney was one of two finalists for *The Current, An Artist Award*. He and Kenya Shakoor, the other finalist, were selected by three regional nominators: Jamika Scott, Kemi Adeyemi, and Maikooyo Alley-Barnes. All three are Black artists and art administrators with expertise in the visual arts from across Washington state. Each nominator was asked to propose the name of a Black Tacoma artist whose work demonstrates excellence in execution. As runner-up, Shakoor received \$1,000 in unrestricted funds.

## Meet the Winner



**Darrell McKinney** is a Tacoma-based interdisciplinary artist. His practice explores the intersections across design, art, and architecture. The work speaks to how design can be utilized to explore the complexities of politics, race, and social infrastructure through the interconnectedness of history, people, and places.

He received a Master of Design from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His work has been featured in exhibitions at EXPO (Chicago) and internationally at Salone Del Mobile (Milan), Spazio Rossana Orlandi (Milan), and the Venice Architecture Biennale. He was the recipient of fellowships and awards such as the Greg Kucera & Larry Yocom Fellowship Award (2022), A Tale of Today Emerging Artist Fellowship for the Richard H. Driehaus Museum (2019), Hilltop Lasting Legacy Fellowship (2020), and the Design Council Award (2018).

Currently, McKinney's work spans spatial design, object design, and social practice. He continues to explore the built environment and the objects that populate it, exploring issues varying in scale: a community, a building, housewares, and people.

"McKinney's multidisciplinary and conceptual practice stands out in the city's largely 2D and figurative field," Adeyemi noted in her artist nomination.

"McKinney has a body of work that I am confident in and deserves to have his undertakings underwritten further," nominator Alley-Barnes said.

[darrellmckinney.com](http://darrellmckinney.com)



Darrell McKinney,  
*Black Space Design Show*, 2018, clay  
bricks and soap, courtesy of the artist

## Meet the Final Juror



**Cristina Martinez** is a contemporary visual artist based in Seattle, WA. Her career started in fashion school before she explored self-expression through painting. Cristina's work is rooted in telling the often-overlooked stories of Black and Brown people, encouraging them to water themselves to bloom and grow.

Cristina's work has been part of numerous solo and group exhibitions in Seattle and Los Angeles such as Flowstate, Mothership Gallery (Seattle, 2018), Two Sides to Every Story (Los Angeles, 2020), Band of Vices Mescaline (Los Angeles, 2021), BOTHO Art Collective (Los Angeles, 2022), Diptych (Seattle, 2022), Forest for The Trees (Seattle, 2022). Cristina has created original works of art for global companies and brands including the World Trade Center, Nordstrom, Netflix, Disney, BET and many more.

[juneandmars.com](http://juneandmars.com)

## What's Next

There will be a public reception at Tacoma Art Museum on December 8, from 6:30-8:00 p.m., to celebrate *The Current, An Artist Award* and this year's winner, Darrell McKinney.

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## About Tacoma Art Museum

Celebrating over 85 years, Tacoma Art Museum is the leading resource for art of the Pacific Northwest and greater western region. TAM's mission is to transform our communities by sharing art that inspires broader perspectives and cultivates a compassionate future. TAM's collection contains more than 5,300 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. TAM is in the heart of Tacoma's vibrant Museum District, which consists of six museums, including the Museum of Glass, a leader and frequent partner.

**Hours:** Wednesday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thursday 10 a.m.-8 p.m. FREE Neighborhood Nights every Thursday 5-8 p.m.; Friday-Sunday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Admission:** \$18 Adult, \$15 Senior (65+); free for TAM Members, children 18 and under, and active duty military, reservists, veterans and their families.

**Contact:** 253-272-4258 / [www.tacomaartmuseum.org](http://www.tacomaartmuseum.org)