

November 20, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Rachel Ervin 253-272-4258 x3047 | rervin@tacomaartmuseum.org

Christopher Paul Jordan announced as the 2025 The Current Awardee



Christopher Paul Jordan has been announced as the 2024-2025 awardee of The Current, An Artist Award, at Tacoma Art Museum. The Current, An Artist Award establishes an annual, unrestricted award providing financial and institutional support to a Black artist living, working or with connection to Tacoma in recognition of artistic excellence.

Jordan is a painter and public artist who interrogates the mutability and afterlife of memory and simulates conditions of loss to reexamine human relationships. As the awardee, Jordan will receive a \$15,000 unrestricted gift. Additionally, he has the option of receiving available institutional resources from TAM. This dual investment champions the awardee directly, providing resources and strengthening networks that make creating art easier for Black artists.

The Current, An Artist Award, is designed and produced by Victoria Miles, Rebecca and Jack Benaroya Curator at TAM. The museum will open an exhibition for The Current, An Artist Award 2025 on May 21st, with work from the awardee and nominees. This year's award selection was made by Final Juror Tariqa Waters, one of Seattle Magazine's most influential artists and curators.

"Art connects communities and articulates collective experiences," Waters said. "Hailing from Tacoma, WA, Christopher Paul Jordan exemplifies this through murals, paintings, and installations that reflect personal and communal histories. By harnessing the Black oral tradition as a means of seed banking, it allows for the cultivation of new possibilities. His work transcends traditional galleries, demonstrating that art belongs to everyone and serves as a vehicle for healing, particularly in communities facing loss." Waters noted.

"Jordan's selection of materials is intricately connected in honoring these spaces and resurrecting overlooked narratives. His innovative method of painting on delicate screens brings forth both challenges and opportunities, resulting in an unpredictable surface that requires adaptation. Each layer of paint symbolizes a negotiation with memory and grief, reflecting the resilience needed to confront personal and communal losses. Each piece acts as a living document of change, capturing movement and transformation. His focus on latency reveals hidden histories and interconnections found in the residue we leave behind. Through his artistic practice, Jordan explores themes of absence and longing, cultivating a deeper understanding of how shared experiences bind us together. It is with great honor that I select Christopher Paul Jordan as The Current, An Artist Award Awardee."

Jordan was one of three nominees for The Current, An Artist Award. Christopher Paul Jordan, Paige Pettibon, and Aisha Harrison were selected by three regional nominators: Alexis L. Silva, Hanako O'Leary, and Moses Sun. All three nominators are curators and artists with expertise in the visual arts from across Washington State. Each nominator was asked to propose the name of a Black artist with ties to Tacoma whose work demonstrates excellence in execution.

"I want to extend our most sincere and warmest gratitude to this year's final juror, Tariqa Waters and nominators Alexis Silva, Hanako O'Leary and Moses Sun for being part of this year's program and supporting the excellent work of artists in Tacoma's community." said Rebecca and Jack Benaroya Curator, Victoria Miles. Jordan, Pettibon, and Harrison are exceptionally talented artists, who are beyond deserving of recognition for their talent, dedication and artistic visions. We look forward to maintaining connections with you all as part of The Current, An Artist Award's community of artists."

The Current: an Artist Award is supported in part by Tacoma Creates, ArtsFund, the Windrose Fund of Common Council Foundation, and our wonderful Tacoma Art Museum Members

###

About Christopher Paul Jordan: Born in Tacoma WA (1990), Christopher Paul Jordan is a painter and public artist who investigates the afterlife of memory, simulating conditions of removal to reexamine human relationships. Lacing salvaged textiles such as window screens and debris netting with acrylic paint, Jordan separates his paintings from their original surfaces while generating new histories from the traces they leave behind. Through parallel practices in performance, installation, and sculpture, his inquiries are often enacted or permanently embedded in public space. Jordan's first museum exhibition: *In the Interim – Ritual Ground for a Future Black Archive*, buries African American predictions of the end of the world on the grounds of the Frye Art Museum until the year 2123. His 20ft bronze, aluminum, and steel sculpture *andimgonnamisseyverybody* (2021) is the centerpiece for *The AIDS Memorial Pathway* in Seattle. Jordan is a Leslie Lohman Museum Fellow, A Queer|Art Fellow, and holds an MFA in Painting and Printmaking from the Yale School of Art (2023).

About Tariqa Waters:

Founded in 2012 by one of Seattle Magazine's most influential artists and curators, Tariqa Waters, *Martyr Sauce* emerged as a groundbreaking conceptual brick-and mortar art installation in the renowned Pioneer Square arts district of downtown Seattle, Washington. Over the past decade, *Martyr Sauce* has evolved into a versatile cultural center, functioning as a gallery, performing arts venue, and beauty supply store, and further expanding with the establishment of its sister counterpart, *MS PAM* (*Martyr Sauce Pop Art Museum*), in 2020. As a Black-owned and women-run hub of artistic expression, *Martyr Sauce* not only became a neighborhood fixture with its very own crosswalk but also garnered nationwide recognition through collaborations with various institutions and organizations.

Building on the legacy of *Martyr Sauce*, Tariqa Waters launched a new project in 2022, transforming the art installation into an engaging television series titled "Thank You, *MS PAM*." Initially conceived as a short film that gained recognition at several film festivals, including the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Film Festival in 2023, "Thank You, *MS PAM*" has since been developed into an episodic series that is broadcast on The Seattle Channel KCTS 9. As a distinguished artist, Waters has showcased her work in numerous galleries and museums, receiving features in prominent publications such as *Rolling Stone France* and *Madame Figaro*. Her accolades include multiple awards and grants, such as the 2016 *Conductive Garboil Grant*, the *Artist Trust Fellowship Award* (2018), the *Kayla Skinner Special Recognition Award* (2020), the *Gary Glant Special Recognition Award* (2021), the *Neddy at Cornish Open Medium Award* (2020), the *Arts Innovative Award* (2023), and *The Seattle Art Museum's Bowen Award* (2023). Her forthcoming solo exhibition at the *Seattle Art Museum* is set to debut in May 2025.

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 5,400 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.

Visit Tacoma Art Museum

Wednesday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Thursday 10 a.m.–8 p.m., free admission 5 p.m.–8 p.m.

Friday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Sunday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Closed Monday and Tuesday

Contact: 253-272-4258 / www.tacomaartmuseum.org

**TACOMA
ART
MUSEUM**

Admission:

\$18 Adult, \$15 Senior (65+), \$15 Military (active duty or retired with ID), \$10 (youth 6-18), free for TAM members