

MIKE KELLEY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

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MIKE KELLEY FOUNDATION AWARDS ARTIST PROJECT GRANTS FOR THE THIRD YEAR *Grants to Ten Los Angeles Organizations Totaling \$400,000*



LOS ANGELES, CA., April 11, 2018 – The Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts announced today the ten recipients of the 2018 Artist Project Grants, an initiative in its third year that seeks to further Mike Kelley’s philanthropic work and honor his legacy by supporting innovative artist projects at Los Angeles nonprofit institutions and organizations. The grants support compelling projects of any duration or type, particularly work that is lesser-known or has proven difficult to make or fund. This year’s grantees are the **Craft & Folk Art Museum, Fulcrum Arts, Hammer Museum, JOAN, LA Freewaves, LAXART, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Museum of Latin American Art, Self Help Graphics & Art, and The Underground Museum**. The 2018 grants mark both the largest total sum awarded and group of grantees to date.

A combination of small, mid-size, and large institutions will present the 2018 projects, which span a wide range of disciplines such as performance, multimedia art, sculpture, and printmaking. The projects include solo, group, and collaborative exhibitions, as well as interactive workshops and related publications. "The grantees this year reflect Los Angeles’s energized and diverse art scene, and underscore the Foundation’s commitment to support risk-taking, underseen, and hard-to-fund work," said Mary Clare Stevens, Executive Director of the Foundation. "From a historical examination of printmaking by Latin American, Chicano, and Latino artists in the exhibition *Gráfica América*, to Rodney McMillian’s powerful videos and performances, to Alison O’Daniel’s use of skateboards as percussive instruments to investigate the experience of sound, this year’s recipients highlight the range and depth of curatorial and artistic practices in Los Angeles."

Four grant-supported exhibitions focus on individual artists, including established artist Andrea Fraser and emerging artist Indira Allegra. Since the 1980s, Fraser has created incisive performances and installations that interrogate social structures with humor and pathos,

offering insights about the constraints on subjects working within contemporary social systems. In her project at the Hammer Museum, the internationally respected artist will premiere a new performance and a publication that will make her works and interviews spanning three decades newly accessible to a broad audience, in a partnership between the Hammer Museum and A.R.T. Press. “I’m very excited about collecting my interviews in one book and about collaborating with the Hammer Museum. From traditional to concocted, sociological to psychoanalytic, constructed to found, written, recorded, and enacted dialogues have been central to my activity as an artist for almost thirty years,” remarked Fraser. “Dialogues have also been an important part of the Hammer’s programs. The prospect of bringing these together with a new performance is an incredible opportunity. It’s an honor to have the support of the Mike Kelley Foundation.”

No Space Without Tension at the Craft & Folk Art Museum will be artist Indira Allegra’s first solo museum exhibition. Allegra’s fiber sculptures, looms, video projections, and live and live-streamed performances make visible the tensions that exist within societal interactions—both personal and public. She represents these tensions through the process of weaving, the resulting fiber works, and through her own body and choreographed movements. “It is an immense honor to be recognized with the Mike Kelley Foundation Artist Project Grant. I’m obsessed with tension as a creative material, so I appreciate Kelley’s obsession with repressed memories and desires and how they act as unseen forces—shaping what is mundane, absurd, and curious about America. This generous support will allow me to follow my own impulses to use material, performance, and installation to locate tensions that bind our societal body even as we pull apart,” noted Allegra. “I am simply overcome with gratitude.”

Self Help Graphics & Art, an organization dedicated to the production, interpretation, and distribution of prints and other art media by Chicano and Latino artists since 1970, will present the *Chicana/o and Latinx Print Summit Portfolio & Atelier*. Twelve master printers from across the United States will come together to create new work and share best practices and techniques through public workshops and mentorship. The project will culminate in the production of the *Print Summit Portfolio*, an edition of prints produced by each artist that will be on view in Self Help’s Annual Print Fair exhibition in 2019. “This support from the Foundation is crucial in a moment when our nation’s highest office is constantly questioning and threatening the Chicano and Latino experience. Our world-renowned print studio has been from inception a space for innovation, political interrogation, and cultural expression,” explained SHG Co-Director, Advancement and Administration, Betty Avila. “The support from the Mike Kelley Foundation contributes to the work of SHG in recreating and strengthening, through the production of this print portfolio, a national network for a new generation of artistic changemakers,” added SHG Co-Director, Programs and Operations, Joel Garcia.

The 2018 grantees were selected through a competitive application process by an independent panel that included Naomi Beckwith, Marilyn and Larry Fields Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; artist and activist Andrea Bowers; Ciara Ennis, Director and Curator at Pitzer College Art Galleries, Pitzer College; Christopher Y. Lew, Nancy and Fred Poses Associate, Whitney Museum of American Art; and multimedia artist Bruce Yonemoto. Totaling

\$400,000, the grants cover project-related expenses and a modest portion of the organization's overhead costs, and recognize the participating artists with a dedicated fee. The grant-funded projects will take place throughout 2018 and 2019, and the Foundation will share updates on performances and exhibitions on its website.

"Mike Kelley was deeply engaged in the Los Angeles arts community and started his Foundation to support artists and arts institutions that were doing meaningful and necessary work. In the three years since the grants were established, it has been our great pleasure to echo that commitment and help the grantees realize boundary-pushing work," said Stevens. "Now more than ever, projects like these demonstrate the importance of art as a voice of the times and as an agent for change. They create diverse spaces where artists and audiences can reflect, interpret, and comment on both critical issues of the day and visionary ideas."

For organizations interested in applying for the next round of Artist Project Grants, updated information about the 2019 cycle will be posted later this spring on the Foundation's website (last year's guidelines remain there for reference only).

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About the Foundation

The Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts seeks to further Kelley's philanthropic work through grants for innovative projects that reflect his multifaceted artistic practice. The Foundation also preserves the artist's legacy more broadly and advances the understanding of his life and creative achievements. The artist established the nonprofit foundation in 2007. For additional information about the Foundation, please visit www.mikekelleyfoundation.org.

About the Artist

The work of artist Mike Kelley (1954-2012) embraced performance, installation, drawing, painting, video, sound works, and sculpture. Kelley began his career in the late 1970s with solo performances, image/text works, and gallery and site-specific installations. He came to prominence in the 1980s with a series of sculptures composed of common craft materials. The artist's later work addressed architecture and filmic narratives using the theory of repressed memory syndrome coupled with sustained biographic and pseudo-biographic inquiry into his own aesthetic and social history. Regarded as one of the most influential artists of our time, Kelley produced a body of deeply innovative work in dialogue with American popular culture as well as both modernist and alternative traditions.

Image captions L-R: Indira Allegra, *BODYWARP: Decommissioning VIII*, 2017, archival ink jet print, courtesy of the artist and Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco. Photo: Robert Young; Rogelio Gutierrez, *Ni de Aqui Ni de Alla*, 2015, stone lithograph, 30 in. x 22 ½ in., courtesy of the artist; Rodney McMillian, *Untitled (sheet performance)*, 2005, courtesy of the artist and Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects; *Dis...Miss*, an apron display with 10 artists postcards, courtesy of LA Freewaves, 2017.

Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts 2018 Artists Project Grants

Craft & Folk Art Museum

Indira Allegra: No Space Without Tension

\$25,000

The Craft & Folk Art Museum will present the first institutional solo exhibition of Oakland-based artist Indira Allegra. Allegra's work makes visible the tensions that exist within societal interactions—both personal and public—and represents these tensions through woven sculpture, choreography, and multimedia text/file performance. Opening in September 2019, *No Space Without Tension* will coincide with the beginning of the 2020 presidential campaign cycle, addressing social tensions of the moment and offering alternative perspectives and ways of processing larger political circumstances. Through live and live-streamed performances, Allegra will reveal the role of the artist-as-correspondent, deepening the audience's personal connection to her and her work.

Fulcrum Arts

Lawrence English: Sirens

\$40,000

Fulcrum Arts will present artist Lawrence English's project *Sirens* during its AxS Festival starting November 2, 2018. English will create a site-specific installation utilizing some of the 160 remaining civil defense sirens from the Cold War that are scattered across Los Angeles. In *Sirens*, English re-appropriates the devices, employing sound as a means to create a spatial mapping, reconfiguring Los Angeles's geographic, political, and historical landscapes. Broadly, English's works call into question how sound is used on and around us; with *Sirens* he examines use of sound as a cultural signifier, first codified by its role in civil defense, then contrasted with its shift today to a so-called "non-lethal" weapon. English's interest in the weaponization of sound is fueled by his research around listening and the role audition, or the process of active listening, plays in our understanding of place at all levels—re-engaging listeners by shifting sound to reshape our orientation within physical and metaphysical spaces. A publication will accompany the installation.

Hammer Museum

Hammer Projects: Andrea Fraser

\$40,000

The Hammer Museum will present the first in-depth presentation in Los Angeles of both the video and performance work of renowned artist Andrea Fraser. Since the 1980s, Fraser has created incisive performance and installation works that interrogate social structures with humor and pathos, aligning herself with the concerns of feminism and institutional critique. Fraser's work explores the role of art in mediating between the individual and larger social

structures. Organized by Chief Curator Connie Butler and opening in September 2018, the exhibition will feature a selection of works from the Hammer Contemporary Collection that were developed between 1989 and 2003, and will include a new performance in the museum's Billy Wilder Theater. The performance draws inspiration from Fraser's response to the 2016 presidential election. The performance related videos are a foundational part of her work and, like the new performance work, frequently explore the social positions and psychological states inhabited by individuals in the current sociopolitical climate. *Andrea Fraser: Collected Interviews, 1990-2018*, a publication co-edited by art historian Rhea Anastas and artist Alejandro Cesarco and published by A.R.T. Press, will be released concurrently with the exhibition. The publication presents the artist's voice as mediated through interlocutors ranging from professional peers to popular media, and contextualizes Fraser's practice in the artistic, institutional, and discursive fields in which she intervenes. The exhibition and publication offer an opportunity to make Fraser's performance-based works and interviews spanning three decades newly accessible to a broad audience.

JOAN

JOAN Performance

\$45,000

JOAN will present a series of performances curated by director Summer Guthery. Beginning in fall 2018, JOAN will bring together six artists for four multi-night programs. Artist Brian Bress will collaborate with a choreographer on a performance that relates the aesthetics of Dadaism to the devices of the contemporary entertainment industry. Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz will present a film installation activated with a live performance portraying a series of political, activist, and poetic speeches by different performers. Alison O'Daniel will work with a composer and six hard-of-hearing skateboarders to create a musical composition that utilizes skateboards and ramps as percussive instruments. Ieva Misevičiūtė and Ana Prvački will collaborate on a performance in the style of a theatrical revue that shifts between stand-up comedy, physical comedy, butoh dance, and absurd costuming in what they describe as "sexual slapstick." Connected by a communal sense of play, the performances in this series model novel approaches to queer politics, differently-abled experience, post-industrial labor, and feminist humor while sharing a desire to create a space of open-ended creativity that engages freely with possibility and potential.

LA Freewaves

Ain't I a Womxn?

\$40,000

LA Freewaves, an organization that creates public media art events that bring diverse audiences and independent media artists together in dialogue on current issues, will stretch gender expressions in new directions through *Ain't I a Womxn?*, a celebration of performance art, spoken word, poetry, sonic art, media projections, and zines. LGBTQ and feminist artists will come together in an outdoor participatory event under a full moon to explore queer and intersectional use of public space. The event, scheduled for Saturday, July 28, 2018 in Los

Angeles State Historic Park next to Chinatown, will feature artists Nao Bustamante, Reanne Estrada, Raquel Gutiérrez, Sebastian Hernandez, Elana Mann, Amitis Motevalli, Think Nguyen, Snatch Power, Christine Ree, Christy Roberts, Yozmit Walker, and Kristina Wong, among others. Related screenings, workshops, exhibitions, and discussions are occurring throughout the greater Los Angeles area and beyond. All these events will be documented in the interactive online publication *Dis...Miss*, which comprises a continuing series of audience engagements about gender using postcards, videos, and performance art. Each *Dis...Miss* postcard asks a related question that viewers answer anonymously, and then answers are gathered, analyzed, displayed, and visualized.

LAXART

Sperm Cult

\$45,000

LAXART will present *Sperm Cult*, a collaborative exhibition by artists Elijah Burgher and Richard Hawkins. Although *Sperm Cult* was initially realized as a book, LAXART has invited Burgher and Hawkins to reconceive the project as an exhibition. Opening in January 2019, the exhibition will take on the candidly homosocial and homosexual content of the book—which features photographs of young gay men, sometimes styled with boldly painted bodies and masks, engaged in sexual acts—and will be accompanied by elements of each artist’s practice: Burgher’s interest in the occult and Hawkins’s interest in ethnographic sexual taboos and rituals. *Sperm Cult*’s Edenic mis-en-scene is cast as a decidedly queer space, one of seclusion where desire can be acted upon in free form. Burgher and Hawkins reimagine homosexuality’s subcultural past as tribalism as they push against its normalization within contemporary society. With respect to gay subcultures, *Sperm Cult* is willfully regressive for the sake of being critical rather than nostalgic. Burgher, based in Berlin, will travel to Los Angeles for a short production residency in advance of the exhibition, working both individually and collaboratively with Hawkins. The resulting body of work will further evolve on-site at LAXART during an installation process that incorporates ritualistic and performative actions. Curated by Hamza Walker, this exhibition, along with a robust series of related public programs, will serve as moment to reflect on gay subcultures in both theoretical and historical senses.

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

Cameron Rowland

\$40,000

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA) will present Cameron Rowland’s first solo museum exhibition. Comprised of a newly commissioned body of work, the exhibition opens in October 2018. The project considers “accumulation by dispossession” and the contingency of property as means of understanding the racial imperatives that continue to format accumulation in the afterlives of colonization and slavery. The project considers both the market and state development facilitated by these legal and economic operations. The project will consist of a group of tax receipts documenting the property taxes on slaves collected by state governments alongside a grandfather clock from a South Carolina plantation,

which was also a taxable asset in the early 19th century South; a piece of real estate in the region allocated for ex-slave resettlement by General Sherman's Field Order 15, which was revoked by Andrew Johnson in 1866; a modification of a public MOCA donor plaque to acknowledge the patronage of the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles, which forcibly removed the largely working-class community of color in Bunker Hill beginning in 1959, eventually allowing for the construction of MOCA; and objects seized by local and federal police through the process of civil asset forfeiture, which are sold at auction to fund the police departments that seize them. The project studies the racial genealogy of property in the United States.

Museum of Latin American Art

Gráfica América

\$40,000

The Museum of Latin American Art will present *Gráfica América*, an exhibition that traces the legacy of printmaking in the Americas through images, art objects, and publications created using traditional as well as contemporary and experimental processes. Opening in March 2019, *Gráfica América* will feature works by approximately 100 artists from the United States, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean whose practices are based in the communal and collaborative spirit of independent workshops and educational institutions. Here artists hone their visual voices, activists and communities come together to negotiate cultural expressions, and marginalized individuals of diverse backgrounds are given a platform through which to tell their stories. Artists include Pepe Coronado, Sandra C. Fernández, Demián Flores, Fernando De León, Miguel Ledezma, Poli Marichal, Lorena Padral, Coral Revueltas Valle, and Humberto Saenz, and collective workshops like Taller de Gráfica Experimental in Cuba and Estampa Feminista in Buenos Aires, Argentina, among many others. The exhibition accentuates the radical political role of printmaking in Latin America's history and creates an environment through exhibition and workshops in which those ideas and skills can be shared with a new generation of artists and community organizers in Southern California.

Self Help Graphics & Art

Chicana/o and Latinx Print Summit Portfolio & Atelier

\$40,000

Self Help Graphics & Art will present the *Chicana/o and Latinx Print Summit Portfolio & Atelier*. For forty-five years, Self Help Graphics has been dedicated to the production, interpretation, and distribution of prints and other art media by Chicana/o and Latinx artists. The Print Summit Portfolio and Atelier program, which brings together master printers and apprentices to work alongside one another, is at the cornerstone of this mission. The upcoming atelier includes multiple generations of the Chicana/o and Latinx printmaking community, representing seasoned local, regional, and national artists such as Sonia Romero, Dewey Tafoya, Poli Marichal, Francesco Siqueiros, and Pepe Coronado; alongside Sandra Fernandez, Malaquias Montoya, Jesus Barraza and Melanie Cervantez of Dignidad Rebelde, Rogelio Gutierrez, and Humberto Saenz. The summit places an emphasis on fostering a creative workforce pipeline

that includes mentorship, training, and knowledge sharing practice within the Chicana/o and Latinx community, allowing for expertise expansion in printmaking techniques and best practices that are passed to the next generation of printmakers-of-color. This atelier of renowned printmakers will culminate in the production of a Print Summit Portfolio, which will include an edition of collaborative prints produced by each artist and public workshops in 2018. The Print Summit Portfolio editions will then be featured in the Annual Print Fair & Exhibition in 2019.

The Underground Museum

Rodney McMillian: Videos and Performance

\$45,000

The Underground Museum will present a solo exhibition by Los Angeles-based artist Rodney McMillian, known for his multimedia sculptural installations of found and sometimes crafted domestic objects, live performance, and video. Co-curated by filmmaker Kahlil Joseph and The UM's Director Megan Steinman, the exhibition will open in late 2019 with a focus on McMillian's performance-based videos, which feature characters created and portrayed by McMillian to explore topics of race, gender, class, and belonging. Like his sculptures, the source material for McMillian's onscreen performances are "found objects," such as political speeches, historical events, science fiction, popular music, and people on the streets. These materials form the psychological and social conditions of each character, who serve as archetypes to explore, among other concepts, black identity as a form, a color, a politic, a people, and as a construct to be projected either outward or upon. The UM's late founder, Noah Davis, once said that McMillian could take over "his whole damn museum." McMillian's works will, indeed, occupy all of The UM, transforming it into a space that integrates the viewer's physical presence with the building's domestic past. Public programming for the exhibition will include performances and lectures by artists and writers who are central to McMillian's research process.