

For Immediate Release

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Artists' Legacy Foundation 2013 Artist Award - \$25,000 to Dona Nelson

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA—September 19, 2013—The Artists' Legacy Foundation is pleased to announce its seventh annual Artist Award will be presented to noted American painter Dona Nelson on November 2, 2013. The purpose of the Artist Award is to recognize and honor the career and accomplishments of an outstanding visual artist whose primary medium is painting or sculpture.

Established in 2007, the Artist Award annually provides an unrestricted \$25,000 award to one artist in order to encourage his or her creative pursuits. Ten to fifteen painters and sculptors are anonymously nominated and candidates are unaware that they are under consideration. Nominators and jurors are art world peers with expertise in their fields. The Foundation's 2013 panel of jurors included painter Ron Bechet, visual artist Sarah McEneaney, and Berkeley Art Museum Director Larry Rinder.



In Step, 2013, recto (left) and verso (right), dye, acrylic paint, painted string and muslin on canvas. 90 x 60 inches. Images courtesy of the artist.

When informed of the award this summer, 2013 Artist Award recipient Nelson was navigating a heat wave in New York, her air conditioner on the fritz, and preparing for a fall show in Houston. Overwhelmed, she said, “The timing couldn’t be better.”

Regarded as one of the most vital, intellectually considered, aggressively tactile, and physically inventive American

painters of her generation, Nelson has been recognized with multiple prestigious honors, including a Guggenheim fellowship and multiple NEA grants, and has received solo exhibitions at P.S.1, University of North Carolina, and Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. An influential educator, she is a Professor of Painting and Drawing, Tyler School of Art, Temple University, in Philadelphia. Critic Roberta Smith noted in *The New York Times*, “Nelson has painted prolifically and innovatively for nearly 40 years, following her own path through the gap between abstraction and representation.”

Nelson describes her practice as an investigation: “In paintings, my own, and others, I am interested in imagination coupled with a quality of facticity. I have no over-riding ideology about painting. I don't know how it relates to culture, because I can't see paintings in photographs. I am a woman, but I don't know how that fact impacts my studio practice. I think even mild, general, ideas about gender identity and other aspects of "identity" are inhibiting, indeed hostile, to artistic exploration. What my paintings are, in relation to who I am, remains a mystery to me.”



And continues, “I start my two sided paintings by stretching one side and working on it for a while, and then reversing the canvas on the stretcher and working on the other side for a while, and I work back and forth that way, until I feel that there is a front side of the painting and a back side. From then on, the front is always the front of the painting and the back is always the back of the painting, but I often continue to work back and forth from one side to another. I never try to ‘improve’ one side of the painting independently of the other. I do not consider these works to be deconstructions of the form, Painting, or sculptures, though one can walk around them. The sides of the paintings are often very different from each other, and that

Spacey Characters, 2010, recto (above) and verso (below), acrylic and cheesecloth on canvas. 82 x 82 inches. Images courtesy of the artist.



interests me - the way in which two very different visual and physical manifestations can be inseparable from, and, indeed, create each other.”

ABOUT THE ARTISTS’ LEGACY FOUNDATION

Artist Squeak Carnwath, her husband, Gary Knecht, and their colleague and friend, sculptor Viola Frey incorporated the Artists' Legacy Foundation (ALF) in 2000. Carnwath and Frey planned to leave their artwork to ALF and all three arranged to leave their estates to the Foundation. The founders established a vision centered on painters and sculptors coming together to support and encourage fellow artists through awards and grants; promote, protect, and maintain the legacy of Foundation artists; and advance the visual arts through education, exhibitions, publications, and research.

After the death of Viola Frey in 2004, the Foundation received its first bequest of Frey's estate, which included her artwork and funds, to provide ALF's initial endowment. With anticipated bequests from other artists, ALF is uniquely positioned to encourage the work of visual artists.

Prior recipients of the Artists’ Legacy Foundation Award are: Donna Dennis, Judith Shea, John Outterbridge, Llyn Foulkes, Peter Saul, and Kathy Butterly.

For high-resolution images, please contact
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