



MEDIA RELEASE

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Henry Art Gallery
Faye G. Allen Center for the Visual Arts
University of Washington
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Seattle, WA 98195-1410
Gallery information (phone number for publication): 206.543.2280

The Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington is delighted to announce Isabelle Pauwels as the recipient of the The Brink award. The Brink is a new biennial award granted to an early-career artist working in Washington, Oregon, or British Columbia. Pauwels and the short-listed nominees will be recognized at 8PM at the April 17, 2009 Henry Open House. In partnership with long-time Henry Art Gallery benefactors and Seattle art supporters John and Shari Behnke, Isabelle Pauwels will receive a prize of \$12,500, and be given a solo exhibition at the Henry. A work of her art will be acquired for the museum's permanent collection.



Isabelle Pauwels. *The Embellishers*, 2007.
Video for television monitor
Dimensions variable. Image courtesy of the
artist and Catriona Jeffries Gallery,
Vancouver.

Through her videos, Isabelle Pauwels tackles reality TV, talk shows, and the documentary, often beginning with her personal experiences or surroundings for inspiration. As she describes it, “my work attempts to interrupt the audience’s familiar reading of a genre in order to alter its expectations of what content should do, and what its reaction should be.” Pauwels has exhibited

in several venues across Canada in solo and group exhibitions. Born in Belgium, she is a graduate of Emily Carr Institute and earned her MFA in 2006 from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has had solo exhibitions at Artspeak, Contemporary Art Gallery, Or Gallery, Catriona Jeffries Gallery in Vancouver, and Blackwood Gallery in Toronto.

The 2008-2009 selection committee—Henry director Sylvia Wolf and curators Elizabeth Brown and Sara Krajewski; Seattle artist Joe Park; Portland artist Harrell Fletcher; Vancouver’s Contemporary Art Gallery director, Christina Ritchie; and John and Shari Behnke—reviewed 72 nominations from art professionals across the Pacific Northwest. Of those nominated, 57 artists chose to submit materials for consideration. Six finalists were selected. The selection committee visited them in their studios before selecting the award winner. Henry Art Gallery Chief Curator Elizabeth Brown remarked, “Over the course of last week we visited six terrific, innovative, hard-working, and insightful artists in Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver. Members of the committee agreed that Isabelle Pauwels’ work best exemplified the creativity, newness, and on-the-brink qualities that define this particular award program. We are all delighted to have her art initiate this new venture.”

The short list of finalists included Matt Browning (Seattle, WA), Alex Felton (Portland, OR), Aaron Flint Jameson (Portland, OR), Isaac Layman (Seattle, WA), Gareth Moore (Vancouver, BC), and Isabelle Pauwels (Vancouver, BC). The majority of these artists will attend the award ceremony on April 17, when the work of each will be introduced.

About The Brink finalists:

Matt Browning works in a variety of mediums to critically investigate the contemporary male experience. As the artist explains, “Men seek to carve out identity and acceptance by climbing the tallest tree in youth, establishing athletic prowess in adolescence, and winning reckless drinking games in young adulthood. There is beauty and absurdity in this behavior and my work speaks to both.” Browning received his BFA from the University of Washington in 2007.

Alex Felton makes drawings that are, in his words, “a synthesis of visual styles known to art history, as well as those more familiar to the couch potato.” These works are characterized by an accumulation of frequent marks built up on a surface. Concurrently, he is expanding his architectural references into three-dimensions. The sculptures resemble “models for potentially monumental structures” while actually taking on a miniaturist scale. Trained in printmaking, Felton graduated from the Pacific Northwest College of Art (Portland) in 2005.

Aaron Flint Jamison received his MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2006 in the field of “New Genres.” His work exists in a variety of formats such as publications, websites, sculptural objects and cultural centers, each of which set up a dynamically shifting relationship between artist, viewer, context, and medium.

Isaac Layman explores the ways in which photographic technology makes an impact on our perception of images. For a recent body of work, Layman pictured everyday objects from his immediate environment. He used a digital 4 x 5 camera to make many separate images from slightly different viewpoints then seamlessly combined them into a single photograph. His process yields a hyper-focused, hyper-real image that tweaks our understanding of what a photograph should look like.

Gareth Moore creates art about journey-making, self-mythologies, and how to find beauty in the mundane. It is performative in nature and frequently participatory. Each project seems to build on a master narrative of the artist as journeyman, observer, and social being. Moore has had solo exhibitions in Vancouver, San Francisco, Rotterdam, and Berlin. His work has been included in group shows at White Columns in New York and the National Gallery of Canada. He is a graduate of the Emily Carr University of Art and Design.

About The Brink

The Brink is awarded to an early-career artist in Washington, Oregon, or British Columbia whose work shows artistic promise and who appears to be on “the brink” of a promising career. The selection committee considers artists whose work explores a range of ideas beyond the surface of mainstream culture and demonstrates innovation and high artistic quality. Evidence of some professional achievement is required as a demonstration of the artist’s commitment, but the artist does not need to possess an extensive record of accomplishments (exhibitions, critical reviews, commissions, grants, residencies, etc.) Eligible artists have demonstrated a commitment to a professional artistic career within the last five years. Appropriate benchmarks include a first significant exhibition, the receipt of an MFA or equivalent academic degree, or other evidence that marks the beginning of a professional artistic career.

This award reflects both the adventuresome collecting interests of John and Shari Behnke and their desire to support artists in the region. In developing the idea of The Brink, they sought a name that would evoke a critical point in an artist’s career, described by the Behnkes as “a crucial moment, the point at which something is likely to begin.” The Behnkes noted, “We hope this award will provide a compelling reason for artists to stay in the region.”

This initiative was proposed as a measure to remind artists that their ongoing presence and their profession are essential to the Pacific Northwest’s dynamic cultural landscape. The Brink complements the Henry Art Gallery’s role as a catalyst for the creation of new work, while simultaneously demonstrating the museum’s commitment to artists working in our region.

The Henry Art Gallery

The Henry Art Gallery delivers a direct experience of the art of our time.

The Henry Art Gallery engages diverse audiences in the powerful experience of artistic invention and serves as a catalyst for the creation of new work that inspires and challenges. Exhibitions, collections, and public programs stimulate research and teaching at the University of Washington, provide a creative wellspring for artists, students, and educators, and reveal a record of modern artistic inquiry from the advent of photography in the mid-19th century to the multidisciplinary art and design of the 21st century. Founded in 1927 when business leader Horace C. Henry donated funds and a collection of 19th- and early 20th-century paintings to the University of Washington for creation of the facility, the Henry Art Gallery was the first public art museum in the state of Washington.

Current and Upcoming Henry Art Gallery Exhibitions

Jacob Dahlgren

Jan 10, 2009–June 28, 2009

William Kentridge

February 7 – May 3, 2009

+ROOM –ROOM

February 7 – May 3, 2009

Ann Lislegaard:2062

Apr 18 – Aug 2, 2009

2009 University of Washington MFA Thesis Exhibition

May 23, 2009 – June 21, 2009

Business As Usual: New Video from China / Cao Fei and Yang Fudong

July 11, 2009 – October 4, 2009

Jasper Johns: Light Bulb

July 11, 2009 – October 25, 2009

WEBSITE

www.henryart.org

ADMISSION

\$10 general, \$6 seniors (62 and older); free to Henry Art Gallery members, UW students, faculty and staff with ID, high school and college students with ID; children 13 and under.

Thursday 11AM– 8:00PM is pay-what-you-wish admission.

PHONE NUMBERS

Henry Art Gallery Information

206.543.2280

Lecture Tickets

206.543.2281

Media/Press Contact

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