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## Lauren Halsey Receives 2018 Mohn Award

Additional Awards Given to Daniel Joseph Martinez and EJ Hill,  
in Conjunction with *Made in L.A. 2018* Biennial



(Los Angeles, CA)—The Hammer Museum today announced that artist **Lauren Halsey** will receive the **\$100,000 Mohn Award** honoring artistic excellence. Since 2012, the Mohn Award is given in conjunction with the museum’s biennial, *Made in L.A.*, organized this year by Hammer curators Anne Ellegood and Erin Christovale. As part of the Mohn Award, the museum will also produce a monograph of Halsey’s work.

Additionally, **Daniel Joseph Martinez** will receive the Career Achievement Award honoring brilliance and resilience; and **EJ Hill** will receive the Public Recognition Award, as chosen by visitors to the *Made in L.A. 2018* exhibition. Both artists will receive \$25,000.

“Lauren Halsey’s ambitious sculpture is impressive as a site-specific installation at the Hammer and as a prototype for her upcoming public artwork in the South Central community. The Mohn Award recognizes her distinctive iconography and community-building vision,” said **Ann Philbin, Director of the Hammer Museum**. “Daniel Joseph Martinez has been active for decades as both artist and teacher, and the Career Achievement Award celebrates his contributions to the Los Angeles art community. Our visitors responded strongly to EJ Hill’s moving durational performance and immersive installation. We are thrilled to distinguish all three of these formidable artists and their work.”

All three awards were once again funded through the generosity of Los Angeles philanthropists and art collectors **Jarl and Pamela Mohn** and the Mohn Family Foundation as part of Made in L.A., the Hammer's biennial exhibition series highlighting emerging and under-recognized artists from the Los Angeles region. The exhibition is on view through September 2, 2018.

A jury of professional curators selected the Mohn Award and the Career Achievement Award. The jury included **Thomas J. Lax**, associate curator of Media and Performance Art, The Museum of Modern Art; **Liz Munsell**, curator of contemporary art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and **Pilar Tompkins Rivas**, director, Vincent Price Art Museum.

The Public Recognition Award was determined by visitors to the Hammer Museum's *Made in L.A. 2018* biennial between June 3 and August 19, 2018. More than 70,000 people visited the exhibition in that time period. During their visit, audiences were encouraged to vote for their favorite artist in the biennial.

"The spaces Lauren Halsey invites us into are fantastically futuristic and historically rooted celebrations of the real life experiences of her friends, family, and neighbors who stay in the iconic neighborhood of South Central L.A., where she grew up and still works," stated **Thomas J. Lax**. "Lauren's installations are prompts for people to come together, both in the space of the museum where she observes, mourns, and celebrates the friends and neighbors who come in and out of the work, and in the middle of the city where daily life sustains this historic community."

"Daniel Joseph Martinez has had a tremendous impact on several generations of artists in Los Angeles, and has helped to shape the development of the art scene through his involvement in seminal art spaces in the city. He is an artist whose work and discourse are always profound, always question, and always push at the edges, whether it is through interrogations of power dynamics, global politics, or the nature of being. He is tremendously deserving of this award, and it is so wonderful to celebrate him at this moment," wrote **Pilar Tompkins Rivas**.

"EJ Hill's work best embodies, in the most literal sense, a theme we saw echoed throughout the biennial—the incredible human capacity for resilience," said **Liz Munsell**. "His stunning act of duration points to the systemic stacking of the odds against queer, black, and brown bodies while addressing the institutions that structured his upbringing. By externalizing his personal experiences, he has provided the public with a collective forum for release and growth. Clearly the generosity of his performance resonated with the communities of Los Angeles and beyond."

The Mohn Award is among the largest international art prizes. The award, along with the Career Achievement Award and Public Recognition Award, is dedicated to recognizing the work of emerging and under-recognized artists based out of the greater Los Angeles region. In 2016, dancer **Adam Linder** received the Mohn Award; **Wadada Leo Smith** received the Career Achievement Award; and **Kenzi Shiokava** received the Public Recognition Award. In 2014, **Alice Könitz** received the Mohn Award; **Magdalena Suarez Frimkess and Michael Frimkess** received the Career Achievement Award; and **Jennifer Moon** received the Public Recognition Award. And in 2012 **Meleko Mokgosi** received the Mohn Award, which was selected by both a professional jury and the public.

#### **About the Award Recipients**

**Lauren Halsey** (b. 1987, Los Angeles, California) was born and raised in Los Angeles, and received her MFA from Yale University and her BFA from California Institute of the Arts. Her practice considers the relationship between architecture and community-building in urban centers and beyond. For *Made in L.A. 2018*, she created a prototype for what she calls *The Crenshaw District Hieroglyph Project*, which, when completed, will be realized in a public space on Crenshaw Boulevard that formerly held an African bazaar, which she frequented as a child. Halsey has created a functional space built of plywood and gypsum, a mineral that has been used in the construction of

major structures for thousands of years, including in the pyramids of Ancient Egypt. Sampling and reinterpreting ancient hieroglyph writing, Halsey has individually inscribed every panel on the main structure with signifiers of her community and neighborhood of South Central. The structure stands as a dedication to and record of the area, which is currently undergoing a major transition, as mass development and new residents restructure the local economy and neighborhood. Halsey hopes the future, permanent structure will become a communal space in which locals can gather and hold public events as a testament to not only surviving but thriving in an ever-evolving city.

**Daniel Joseph Martinez** (b. 1957, Los Angeles, California) received his BFA from California Institute of the Arts in 1979. Martinez cofounded Deep River and LAXART, both in Los Angeles. He is Donald Bren Distinguished Professor of Art at the University of California, Irvine. His practice takes up such issues as the relationship between individual and collective identity, socially prescribed categories that serve to oppress the most vulnerable in our society, and state sanctioned violence, and he works across media, including sculpture, photography, prints, site-specific interventions, and installations. *Made in L.A. 2018* features eight photographs from a recent body of work titled *I am Ulrike Meinhof or (someone told me time is a flat circle)*. For this series, Martinez visited numerous sites along the 103-mile border between the former East and West Berlin, where the Berlin Wall once stood, and held up a banner featuring a portrait of Ulrike Marie Meinhof, the German left-wing militant and cofounder of the Red Army Faction, who was later arrested and died in prison. The artist's exploration of this pivotal period in Europe is a reminder to heed the lessons of the past at an unprecedented time in American history, in which threats to democracy loom large.

**EJ Hill** (b. 1985, Los Angeles, CA) received his MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles and his BFA from Columbia College, Chicago. At the core of his practice is a form of durational performance that reflects both the hardships that certain bodies are forced to endure and the enormous resilience of those bodies. Hill insists that we look at how our society's deeply held prejudices and inequalities continue to render black, brown, and queer bodies the targets of violence. Through writing, painting, sculpture, and performance he remains committed to providing visibility for those who have been ignored or disregarded and to affirming experience. For *Excellentia, Mollitia, Victoria*, his contribution to *Made in L.A. 2018*, Hill visited six of the seven schools he attended in Los Angeles—from preschool to community college—and ran around each of them. He describes these runs as "victory laps," and each run is an act of reinserting his body into places foundational in his development as well as a process of unlearning the lessons that have conditioned his thoughts and his behaviors. Resembling a school running track, the installation includes photographs documenting each of the six runs as well as several sculptures related to competition and recognition.

#### **About Jarl Mohn**

Jarl and Pamela Mohn are art collectors committed to supporting emerging L.A. artists. Professionally, Jarl Mohn is president and CEO of NPR since July 2014. Prior to that Mohn divided his time between being a corporate director and advisor to a number of media companies, making direct early stage angel and seed investments in digital media/technology ventures, and managing The Mohn Family Foundation—the philanthropic entity that he and his wife created in 2000. In addition to supporting arts initiatives, the Mohn Family Foundation funded the Mohn Broadcast Center for KPCC, a significant contribution to Public Radio in Southern California. Mohn is the former chair of the ACLU Foundation of Southern California, and the former chair of The Annenberg School at USC.

Previously he was the founding president and CEO of Liberty Digital, a public company that invested in the internet and digital media. Prior to Liberty Digital, Mohn created E! Entertainment Television serving as its president and CEO from January 1990 to December 1998. Mohn was formerly executive vice president and general manager of MTV and VH1 from 1986 to 1990 where he led the transformation from music videos to long form programming. Prior to his career in television, Mohn had a 19-year career in radio. He began as a disc jockey and rose through the ranks as a programmer, general manager, and then owner of a group of radio stations.

Originally from Doylestown, Pennsylvania, Mohn attended Philadelphia's Temple University where he studied mathematics and philosophy. He currently lives in Brentwood with his wife. Jarl and Pamela Mohn's commitment to the awards extends through the first five cycles of *Made in L.A.* with the option to continue beyond.

#### **About Made in L.A.**

The Hammer's biennial exhibition series *Made in L.A.* focuses exclusively on artists from Los Angeles with a primary focus on emerging artists. The Los Angeles biennial debuts new installations, videos, films, sculptures, performances, and paintings commissioned specifically for the exhibition and offers insight into the current

trends and practices coming out of Los Angeles, one of the most active and energetic art communities in the world. *Made in L.A.* began in 2012 with a second iteration in 2014 and a third in 2016, and followed the tradition of the Hammer Invitational exhibitions, which occurred every two years and included *Snapshot* (2001), *International Paper* (2003), *Thing* (2005), *Eden's Edge* (2007), *Nine Lives* (2009), and *All of this and nothing* (2011).

*Made in L.A. 2012* was organized by a team of curators from the Hammer Museum and LAXART: Hammer senior curator Anne Ellegood, Hammer curator Ali Subotnick, LAXART director and chief curator Lauri Firstenberg, LAXART associate director and senior curator Cesar Garcia, and LAXART curator-at-large Malik Gaines.

*Made in L.A. 2014* was cocurated by Hammer chief curator Connie Butler and Los Angeles-based independent curator Michael Ned Holte.

*Made in L.A. 2016: a, the, though, only* was cocurated by Hammer curator Aram Moshayedi and Hamza Walker, former director of education and associate curator at the Renaissance Society in Chicago and currently director of LAXART in Los Angeles.

### **Exhibition Credit**

*Made in L.A. 2018* is organized by Anne Ellegood, senior curator, and Erin Christovale, assistant curator, with MacKenzie Stevens, curatorial associate. Performances are coordinated by Vanessa Arizmendi, curatorial assistant.

The exhibition is made possible in part by the Mohn Family Foundation and members of the Hammer Circle.

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### **About the Hammer Museum**

The Hammer Museum is part of the School of the Arts and Architecture at UCLA, and offers exhibitions and collections that span classic to contemporary art, as well as programs that spark meaningful encounters with art and ideas. Through a wide-ranging, international exhibition program and the biennial, *Made in L.A.*, the Hammer highlights contemporary art since the 1960s, especially the work of emerging and under recognized artists. The exhibitions, permanent collections, and nearly 300 public programs annually—including film screenings, lectures, symposia, readings, music performances, and workshops for families—are all free to the public.

### **Hammer Museum Information**

Admission to all exhibitions and programs at the Hammer Museum is free, made possible through the generosity of benefactors Erika J. Glazer and Brenda R. Potter. Hours: Tuesday–Friday 11 a.m.–8 p.m., Saturday & Sunday 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Closed Mondays and national holidays. Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard at Westwood, Los Angeles. Onsite parking \$3 (maximum 3 hours) or \$3 flat rate after 6 p.m. Visit [hammer.ucla.edu](http://hammer.ucla.edu) for details or call 310-443-7000.