

## MEDIA RELEASE

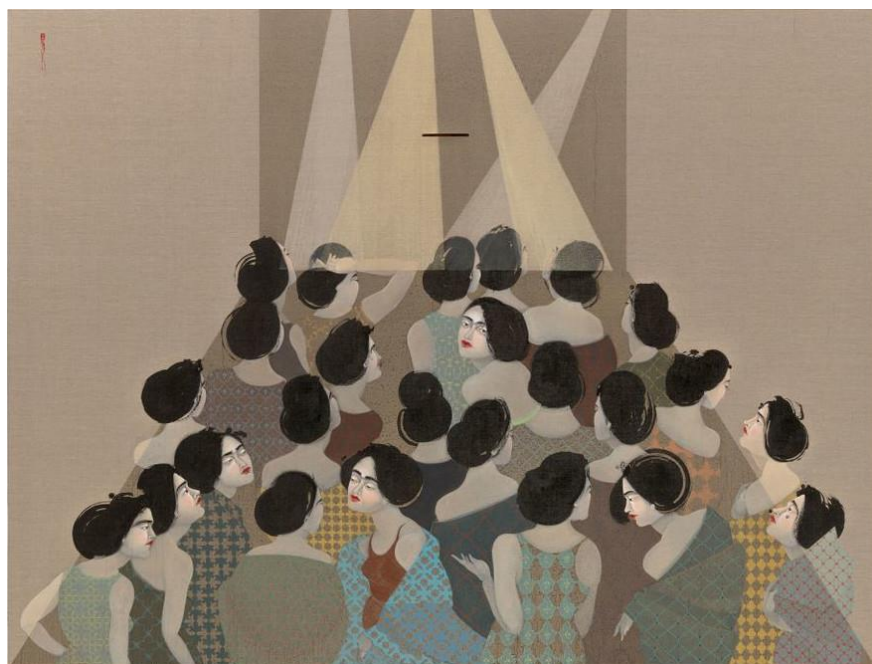
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(206) 616-8671 (not for publication)

### *In Plain Sight*

November 23, 2019 – April 26, 2020



Hayv Kahraman. *The Audience*. 2018. Oil on linen. Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas, Gift of the Jedel Family Foundation. Courtesy of the artist and Susanne Vielmetter, Los Angeles. Photo: Robert Wedemeyer.

### Museum-wide *In Plain Sight* exhibition brings hidden stories into public space

Seattle, WA—The Henry Art Gallery is pleased to announce *In Plain Sight*, a museum-wide exhibition that engages artists whose work addresses narratives, communities, and histories that are typically hidden or invisible in our public space. It features the work of fourteen U.S.-based and international artists, along with a diverse schedule of events and programs. *In Plain Sight* is the first large-scale exhibition curated by Shamim M. Momin since joining the Henry as Senior Curator in fall of 2018.

The presenting artists approach the exhibition's theme from a range of directions, varying across all media as well as aesthetic and conceptual contexts. Works encompass deliberately activist endeavors and direct documentation; the unpacking of individual histories excluded due to race,

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ethnicity, or class; explorations of coded language for protection, secrecy, or both; the illumination of invisible or covert systems of labor, exploitation, and capitalist control; and translation through surreal, oblique, or fantastical frameworks.

Artist Ebony G. Patterson, for example, creates a mixed-media sculptural installation and multi-layered wall tapestry to celebrate specific rituals in Jamaican culture that memorialize the overlooked, as well as to commemorate individual victims of violent deaths that often go unnoticed. Nicole Miller's three-channel video installation plumbs the individual accounts of those inhabiting one of the unincorporated communities of Los Angeles, questioning whose voices are amplified and whose are stifled. In her ongoing, multi-media project *The Tuba Thieves*, Alison O'Daniel weaves together seemingly unrelated narratives to tease out the loss and transformation of information for those living with hearing loss or deafness.

Sanford Biggers' work investigates identity, race, African American history, and spirituality in multiple media, mostly by blending installation and performance; while Andrea Bowers probes history to amplify present-day activism, often of lesser-known resisters like the trans activists celebrated in the work on view. Like Bowers, Oscar Tuazon's socially-oriented sculptural practice is only complete in collaboration with communities and audiences. For this exhibition, Tuazon continues his multi-disciplinary *Water School* project which weaves together the relationship between art, architecture, and environmental politics. Fiona Connor's work is similarly energized by the communities it represents. Through her cast resin paintings and sculptural simulacra, she captures the residue of community spaces and interactions that are becoming obsolete, often through gentrification.

Mika Rottenberg is best known for her surreal video installations dealing with female labor, and—as in the installation for *In Plain Sight*—with the visible ramifications of the commodification of the body and the often invisible global economic systems they create. Speaking from a global perspective as well, Hayv Kahraman's painting and performative practice addresses the marginal spaces of diasporic life, migrant consciousness, and concepts of gender, both as in the cultural objectification/victimization of the refugee body and through her personal history as an Iraqi émigré. Beatriz Cortez also invokes colonialist and migratory histories, parallel to those of racism and violence, and often invisibly embedded in the systems of education and governance. Exploring the notion of temporal and geographic simultaneity in her sculptural and audio installations, Cortez suggests that memory and loss can become the histories of the future.

Sadie Barnette's immersive installations, sculptural objects, and photographs propose another hybrid approach to the true complexities of the present invoking potential futures—here reactivating the narrow, sanitized documents of her father's FBI file (of his life as a founding Black Panther member) via the three-dimensional technicolor of lived experience and personal memory. Similarly to Barnette, William Cordova re-presents Black Panther history in a newly created installation drawing on Seattle's own stories of marginalized communities. A.L. Steiner also looks to activist

histories, weaving together political and autobiographical historiographies of individual “radicals” in a video and photo-based installation. Like cordova and Connor, Tom Burr explores the physical and architectural spaces and structures of our public life for how they are imprinted on our personal, emotional, and sexual present and past, and how coded histories become embedded in the literal paths we navigate and the walls that both bind and protect us.

Ultimately, all of the artists strive to tell previously untold stories, to speak for voices that have been undervalued or deliberately silenced, to reveal aspects of our public narratives that have been obfuscated, and to reimagine histories for the future. Site becomes a material through which what we have heretofore considered the complete, authoritative story is expanded and retold.

In keeping with the inclusive approach of the thematic, the exhibition will expand into and activate the entire museum, including interstitial/transitional spaces throughout as well as several external sites, with physical artwork as well as programs, performance, and community activations and partnerships.

Related programs include a poetry workshop with Washington State Poet Laureate Claudia Castro Luna (in conjunction with Oscar Tuazon’s *Water School*) on November 16; a public opening celebration on November 22; and an artist panel featuring Andrea Bowers, Tom Burr, Beatriz Cortez, and Nicole Miller (moderated by Associate Professor and filmmaker Minda Martin) on November 23. Additional programs include a sonic activation of Alison O’Daniel’s *The Tuba Thieves* and an artist talk with Sadie Barnette in February, as well as several programs hosted by Fiona Connor who will be a visiting Gurvich Contemporary Art Project artist during the month of April. Visit [henryart.org](http://henryart.org) for details.

## PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

Sadie Barnette (U.S., born 1984), Sanford Biggers (U.S., born 1970), Andrea Bowers (U.S., born 1965), Tom Burr (U.S., born 1963), Fiona Connor (New Zealand, born 1981), william cordova (Peru, born 1971), Beatriz Cortez (El Salvador, born 1970), Hayv Kahraman (Iraq, born 1981), Nicole Miller (U.S., born 1982), Alison O’ Daniel (U.S., born 1979), Ebony G. Patterson (Jamaica, born 1981), Mika Rottenberg (Argentina, born 1976), A.L. Steiner (U.S., born 1967), Oscar Tuazon (U.S., born 1975)

*In Plain Sight* is organized by Shamim M. Momin, Senior Curator. Lead support is provided by the True Family. This exhibition is also made possible through the generous support of Virginia and Bagley Wright, 4Culture, Phillips, the Washington State Arts Commission, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support is provided by the Consulate General of Israel to the Pacific Northwest.

## ABOUT THE HENRY

A museum of contemporary art and ideas, Henry Art Gallery presents exhibitions by a multi-national roster of emerging and mid-career artists. Known for taking risks and for allowing space for uncertain outcomes, we anticipate the conversations and opinions that will be important and relevant in the field.

[www.henryart.org](http://www.henryart.org)

### HOURS & ADMISSION

Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun: 11 AM – 4 PM

Thurs: 11 AM – 9 PM

Mon, Tues: Closed

\$10 general, \$6 seniors (62+); free to Henry members; UW students, faculty and staff; students, and children.

Admission is free every Sunday, as well as on First Thursdays.

### CONTACT

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### SOCIAL

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