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**MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE CITY ARTIST
TRAVEL PRIZE 2018 RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED**
Two Awardees Selected for a \$6,000 Award for 2018

The **Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA)** and the **Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City (MASB)** announce **Erin Fostel** and **Erick Antonio Benitez** as recipients of the **Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City Artist Travel Prize**. The MASB board of directors awarded a \$6,000 prize to two Baltimore-based visual artists for 2018. Fostel and Benitez were selected from a highly competitive pool of applicants. The prize is intended to function as funding for travel essential to an artist's studio practice that an artist may not otherwise be able to afford. The third annual Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City Artist Travel Prize is managed by Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts, and sponsored by the Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City.

Fostel will use the award for a three-week trip to Japan, where she will research and draw. She plans to focus on the cities of Tokyo and Hiroshima and surrounding areas. Her concentration will be on urban architecture as well as the architecture, rites and rituals of Shinto, a main religion in Japan. Benitez will use the award to conduct research on the Amazon city of Iquitos, exposing him to a vast biodiversity landscape and the native culture. The project will be a lasting source of material for his practice, including sound field recordings, video footage, photographs, drawing studies and found objects.

About the Artists

Erin Fostel was born in Baltimore, MD, where she lives and works. Her interest in drawing and storytelling led her to the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). She graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2004 from the art and design college. More than a decade later, Fostel continues to explore visual storytelling through drawing. In her visual art, she pushes the tonal

boundaries of charcoal, which is her primary medium. The artist's works of art have been included in local and international publications about drawing.

Erick Antonio Benitez is a Salvadoran-American multidisciplinary artist based in Baltimore, MD. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Maryland Institute College of Art. Benitez has exhibited internationally, including CONNERSMITH, Washington, DC, Baltimore Museum of Art, Greenpoint Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, and Metàfora Studio Arts, Barcelona, Spain, in addition to private collections. His works of art have also been reviewed by regional and national publications. The artist has been a recipient of a Ruby Artist Project grant; The Contemporary: Grit Fund 2; Y.L. Hoi Memorial Award, Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize 2018, and a residency at the Studios at MASS MoCA.

Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City

The Municipal Art Society of Baltimore was founded in 1899 as part of the City Beautiful movement. It is one of only two remaining societies to be operating under its original charter "to provide sculptural and pictorial decoration and ornaments for the public buildings, streets and open spaces in the City of Baltimore, and to help generally beautify the City." Artistic contributions to the City span more than one hundred years. In 2016 the MASOB embarked on a path to provide new opportunities to Baltimore artists and art places within the City, including this Artist Travel Prize and an annual Public Art Prize.

Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts

The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA) is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization which serves as Baltimore City's arts council, events center and film office. By producing large-scale events such as Artscape, the Baltimore Book Festival and Light City, and providing funding and support to artists, arts programs and organizations across the city, BOPA's goal is to make Baltimore a more vibrant and creative city.

For more information on the **Municipal Art Society of Baltimore City Artist Travel Prize**, visit www.promotionandarts.org or call 410-752-8632.

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