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VMFA awards 27 fellowships to Virginia students and artists

Awards total almost \$5 million since 1940

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts awarded 27 fellowships to Virginia art students and professional artists in 2014-15 for a total of \$162,000.

VMFA received 798 applications for the 2014-15 cycle, the highest number since the program's inception. During the Fellowship Program's 74 years, the museum has awarded approximately \$5 million and 1,200 awards to Virginia's art students and professional artists.

"The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts continues its commitment to nurture artists throughout the Commonwealth," Director Alex Nyerges said. "We are grateful to the late John Lee Pratt of Fredericksburg for establishing a VMFA endowment that makes this support possible, as well as others who have contributed funds to further this mission-based objective throughout the years."

Twelve professional fellowships, each worth \$8,000, were awarded. The recipients are (in alphabetical order by hometown): Susan Sterner, photography, **Arlington**; Steve Bernard, drawing, **Boones Mill**; Leeta Harding, photography, **Boykins**; David Crane, crafts, **Blacksburg**; Sarah Boyts Yoder, painting, **Charlottesville**; Ryan Crowley, sculpture, **Richmond**; John Dombroski, new/emerging media, **Richmond**; Michael Lease, photography, **Richmond**; Molly McFadden, film/video, **Richmond**; Paul Norton, film/video, **Richmond**; Mark Strandquist, new/emerging media, **Richmond**; Millicent Young, sculpture, **Ruckersville**.

The juror for the professional fellowship awards was Tina Kukielski, co-curator of the 2013 Carnegie International and curator of the Hillman Photography Initiative, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, Penn.

Four graduate students won awards worth \$6,000 each. They are: Corey Piper, art history, **Charlottesville**; Nils Westergard, painting, **Falls Church**; Anna Hogg, film/video, **Hampton**; and Stephen Fuller, sculpture, **Richmond**.



Steve Bernard (Professional, drawing, Boones Mill)
Thawn, 2013
Pastel on paper, 18x24"



Nils Westergard (Graduate, painting, Falls Church)
Calvin, Navajo Nation, Oct 2013
Latex paint on wall, 40x15 ft.

Ten undergraduate students won awards worth \$4,000 each. They are: Jennifer Davis, photography, **Arlington**; Camille Speer, film/video, **Great Falls**; Alaina Wibberly, drawing, **Henrico**; Braxton Congrove, crafts, **Midlothian**; Danya Smith, sculpture, **Midlothian**; Remy-Katherine Ciuba, mixed media, **Richmond**; Carson Jones, drawing, **Richmond**; Catherine Samples, drawing, **Richmond**; Stuart Shepard, sculpture, **Richmond**; and Michelle Selwyn, crafts, **Woodstock**.

In addition, undergraduate student Justin Garcia, film/video, of **Virginia Beach** was awarded a fellowship worth \$2,000 for his final semester.

The jurors for the undergraduate and graduate awards were: Graham C. Boettcher, Ph.D., William Cary Hulseley Curator of American Art, Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, Ala., and Scott Habes, visiting professor of art in the Department of Theater, Art, and Graphic Design at Longwood University, Farmville, Va.

The fellowship funds come from a privately-endowed fund administered by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. The Fellowship Program was established in 1940 through a generous contribution made by the late John Lee Pratt of Fredericksburg (the husband of Lillian Pratt, donor of the museum's Fabergé collection). Offered through the VMFA Art and Education Division, fellowships are still largely funded through the Pratt endowment and supplemented by annual gifts from the Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation and the J. Warwick McClintic Jr. Scholarship Fund.



Michelle Selwyn (Undergraduate, crafts, Woodstock)
Untitled (brooch), 2013
Brass and plastic, 3x4 in.

About the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

VMFA's permanent collection encompasses more than 33,000 works of art spanning 5,000 years of world history. Its collections of Art Nouveau and Art Deco, English silver, Fabergé, and the art of South Asia are among the finest in the nation. With acclaimed holdings in American, British Sporting, Impressionist and Post-Impressionist, and Modern and Contemporary art – and additional strengths in African, Ancient, East Asian, and European – VMFA ranks as one of the top comprehensive art museums in the United States. Programs include educational activities and studio classes for all ages, plus lively after-hours events. VMFA's Statewide Partnership program includes traveling exhibitions, artist and teacher workshops, and lectures across the Commonwealth. VMFA, a certified Virginia Green attraction, is open 365 days a year and general admission is always free. For additional information, telephone 804-340-1400 or visit www.vmfa.museum.

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