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ELLEN LESPERANCE NAMED 2010 BETTY BOWEN AWARD WINNER

Two Special Recognition winners also selected

Artists will be honored at an awards ceremony and reception Thursday, October 21, at 6 pm in the Plestcheeff Auditorium at the Seattle Art Museum.

SEATTLE, SEPTEMBER 17, 2010 – The Betty Bowen Committee, chaired by Gary Glant, has announced Ellen Lesperance as winner of the 32nd annual Betty Bowen Award, which comes with an unrestricted cash prize of \$15,000. A selection of Lesperance's work will be on view at the Seattle Art Museum beginning October 21, 2010.

Eli Hansen was awarded the PONCHO Special Recognition award in the amount of \$2,500, and Barbara Sternberger was selected to receive the Kayla Skinner Special Recognition Award in the amount of \$2,500. Five finalists chosen from a pool of 350 applicants from Washington, Oregon and Idaho, including Chris Engman and Emily Gherard, competed for the \$20,000 in awards.

Lesperance, Hansen and Sternberger will receive their awards and discuss their work at a public award ceremony on Thursday, October 21 from 6-7 pm in the Plestcheeff Auditorium at SAM downtown. A public reception will follow from 7-8 pm in SAM's Arnold Board Room. Both the ceremony and reception are free and open to the public.

Ellen Lesperance received a M.F.A. in Visual Arts from Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University in 1999 and a B.F.A. in Painting from the University of Washington in 1995. She lives in Portland, Oregon. She will exhibit at 37-A Gallery in Portland, Maine, in 2011, and her work is currently included in *People's Biennial*, a traveling exhibition curated by Harrell Fletcher and Jens Hoffman on view at PICA, Portland. Additional group shows include *Art as Intervention*, a performance with William Pope L and James Luna at the Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio in 2007 and *Redykeulous*, curated by Nicole Eisenman and A.L. Stein at Participant Inc., New York in 2006. This year, Lesperance received both the MacDowell Colony Artist-in-Residence and a Faculty Development Grant from Pacific Northwest College of Art. Lesperance's recent work draws influence from the women in Direct Action campaigns and the clothing worn to reflect their ideologies. Working with gouache and graphite, the sweater patterns are recreated on paper in an effort to keep the resistance of these women in the popular memory, giving valor to young women of the Pacific Northwest.



Eli Hansen studied at the New Orleans School of Glass and Print in New Orleans in 2001. He currently lives in Tacoma, Washington. Most recently he exhibited work at Lawrimore Project with *We Used to Get So High* and also in *All Programs Subject to Change* (with Anna Linzer and Oscar Tuazon) as part of Western Bridge's *New Years Project* in Seattle, WA. Other solo exhibitions in 2010 include *Halfway There* (with Oscar Tuazon) at Balice/Hertling in Paris, France and *This is the Last Place I Could Hide* at Maccarone Gallery in New York, NY. Since 2006, Hansen has worked as a glassblower at the Museum of Glass in Tacoma where from 2007-2008 he worked as Artist-in-Residence.

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Interested in how specific objects function within the ritual of daily life, Hansen explores, the way certain forms, materials and substances contain and reflect traces of human experience, carrying with them the weight of personal history. Most often realized in glass, the artist's work both honors and challenges the traditional use of the medium. Hansen is represented by Lawrimore Project, Seattle, WA.

Barbara Sternberger was an M.F.A. graduate from the University of California, Irvine. She resides in Bellingham, Washington and has been a lecturer and painting instructor at Western Washington University since 1994. She is represented by Elizabeth Leach Gallery, where she will show in a solo exhibition this year. Her work was included in *Show of Hands: Northwest Women Artists 1880-2010* at Whatcom Museum, WA. Sternberger's paintings demonstrate her interest in discovering a harmony between the application of paint and how it expresses the artist's lived experiences.

THE BETTY BOWEN AWARD

Betty Bowen (1918–1977) was a Washington native and enthusiastic supporter of Northwest artists. Her friends established the annual Betty Bowen Award as a celebration of her life and to honor and continue her efforts to provide financial support to artists of the region. Since 1977, SAM has hosted the yearly grant application process by which the selection committee chooses one artist living and working in the Northwest (Washington, Oregon and Idaho) to receive an unrestricted cash award.

In 2009, the Committee granted a grand prize of \$15,000 to Josh Faught, the Kayla Skinner Special Recognition Award of \$2,500 to Matt Offenbacher and the PONCHO Special Recognition Award of \$2,500 to Jenny Heishman.

The 2010 Betty Bowen Committee members are:

Michael Alhadeff

Jeffrey Bishop

Cris Bruch (Rotating Artist, 1st year of 2 year term)

Marisa C. Sanchez (SAM's Assistant Curator of
Modern and Contemporary Art)

Gary Glant (Chair)

Peggy Golberg

Anne Gould Hauberg

Mike Hess

Isaac Layman (Rotating Artist, 2nd year of 2 year term)

Mark Levine

Llewelyn Pritchard

Greg Robinson

Norie Sato

Bill True

Maggie Walker

Tom Wilson

Dan Webb

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IMAGE CAPTION:

Oh, Let Us Tear the Bolts from the Armored Bulldozer and Leave Them to Rust on Free, Open Land. We Will Use Them as a Mordant to Affix to Wool the Dye from Flowers of the Spectrum. For Rachel Corrie's Death Shroud - Safflowers, Tansies...Heather - Everything Beautiful and Living We Can Find, 2010

Ellen Lesperance, American, born 1971

Gouache and graphite on paper

24 x 29 inches

Courtesy of the artist

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