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CONTEMPORARY CRAFT ANNOUNCES OPEN CALL FOR 2025 ELIZABETH R. RAPHAEL FOUNDERS'S PRIZE

PITTSBURGH, PA (August 2024) – Contemporary Craft is pleased to announce the call for entries for the 2025 Elizabeth R. Raphael Founder's Prize. This triennial juried competition recognizes an emerging or mid-career artist with a \$5,000 prize, an exhibition feature, a catalogue, and a professionally produced video. This year's prize will be awarded in the category of wood. The application deadline is Friday, October 18, 2024, and the exhibition will be on view September 19, 2025 – January 17, 2026.

Entries must have been created within the previous 12 months and address the theme of "Transformation." In addition to the prize-winning artist, a selection of entries will receive honorable mentions and will be included in the *Transformation 12: Contemporary Works in Wood* exhibition.

The full prospectus and application can be found at <https://form.jotform.com/233165018640147>

The jurors for the 2025 prize include Jennifer-Navva Milliken, Executive Director, Museum for Art in Wood, Philadelphia, PA; Christopher Kurtz, Artist, Hudson Valley, NY; Cathy Raphael, Artist, Writer, and Philanthropist, Pittsburgh, PA; Rachel Saul Rearick, Executive Director of Contemporary Craft; and Yu-San Cheng, Associate Director, Contemporary Craft.

Important Dates

- Call for Artists begins **August 12, 2024**
- Deadline for receipt of application **October 18, 2024, 11:59 PM EST**
- Notification of Finalists **November 30, 2024**
- Deadline for Finalists' submissions **July 5, 2025**
- Final work to be delivered by **August 2, 2025**
- Notification of prizewinners **August 29, 2025**
- Exhibition schedule **September 19, 2025 – January 17, 2026**
- Travel schedule begins **February 2026 (if secured)**

To promote artistic excellence and encourage innovation in the contemporary craft field, Contemporary Craft established the Elizabeth R. Raphael Founder's Prize and the *Transformation* exhibition series in 1997 to celebrate the organization's 25th anniversary and honor the legacy of found and arts patron Betty Raphael.

The Raphael Founder's Prize is vitally important to advancing the field of contemporary craft and provides a platform for artists working at the cutting edge in craft media (glass, wood, metal, clay, and found materials). The exhibition attracts emerging and established artists from around the world who are creating thought-provoking work that pushes the boundaries of craft media and techniques. Intrinsicly tied to CC's mission, the Transformation series specifically touches core value areas providing vital support for artists and sharing cross-cultural perspectives.

Jurors

Jennifer-Navva Milliken is the Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Museum for Art in Wood. At the helm of this unique art museum, she works to enfold contemporary issues into the museum's wood-focused approach, balancing traditional craft practices with broader considerations expressed through the hands and minds of creative makers. Milliken studied for her BA in Art History at Western Washington University and her MA in Art History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. Throughout her international career, she has curated dozens of exhibitions for museums, galleries, and unconventional spaces. Before joining the Museum for Art in Wood in 2018, she worked as an independent curator and consultant, as well as an embedded staff curator at several cultural institutions and museums in the US and abroad.

Christopher Kurtz has gained international attention for his sculpture and studio furniture, which is included in significant public and private collections. The artist was shortlisted for the Loewe Craft Prize 2018 with a signature wooden sculptural work, which was exhibited at the London Design Museum. He received the prestigious Louis Comfort Tiffany Award in 2005, and in 2007 he received a New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) Award (Lily Auchincloss fellow). He has exhibited as part of *Against the Grain: Wood in Contemporary Art, Craft and Design* at the Museum of Arts and Design, USA. In 2020, he exhibited in "Objects USA 2020" R&Company, New York. His work has been shown at numerous international art and design fairs, including Design Miami, PAD, FOG and TEFAF Maastricht.

Christopher Kurtz's pieces are born, first and foremost, from a sculptural motivation invested in the specificity of objecthood; he comments that, 'for me, making sculpture is not a conceptual or immaterial practice, it's physical. I settled on wood as my medium because it's structural, but also malleable and alive.' The artist expertly sculpts his material using a carefully chosen palette of tools; often beginning without a predetermined blueprint for the final piece, Christopher works intuitively to create poignant and poetic forms that respond to a personal narrative or reflection and which, in turn, elicit a powerful emotional response from the viewer. Christopher is represented by Sarah Myerscough Gallery in London.

About Contemporary Craft

Presenting contemporary art in craft materials by regional, national, and international artists since 1971, Contemporary Craft offers cutting edge exhibitions focusing on multicultural diversity and contemporary art, as well as a range of artist-led studio workshops, community engagement programs, and a store featuring work by top artists from across the country. Located at 5645 Butler Street in Pittsburgh, PA, Contemporary Craft's exhibition and Drop-In Studio are free to the public.