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GRIFFIN MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY ANNOUNCES 2017 FOCUS AWARD RECIPIENTS As part of the FlashPoint Boston Photography Festival

Mingle with local and national leaders in the art, craft and business of photography at the Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester!

WINCHESTER, MA – August 9, 2017 – The Griffin Museum of Photography (<http://www.griffinmuseum.org/>) announced the recipients of its twelfth annual Focus Awards.

“This year’s Focus awardees are a combination of local and international photography trendsetters and innovators. The Focus Awards recognize the hard work, dedication and enthusiasm of a select group of enthusiastic, creative individuals and organizations dedicated to the art and business of photography,” says Paula Tognarelli, executive director of the Griffin Museum. <http://griffinmuseum.org/focus-awards/>

This year’s Focus Award recipients are:

- Lifetime Achievement – Elizabeth Avedon
- New England Beacon – Paul Messier
- Spotlight – American Photography Archives Group
- A Culture of Legacy – Beuford Smith

The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to an individual whose ongoing commitment to photography has created far-reaching impact. **The New England Beacon Award** is given to a local individual whose work brings prominence to the local photographic scene. **The Spotlight Award** is given to an entity that consistently shines a light on photography and has created a far-reaching impact in the field. **A Culture of Legacy Award** is given to an individual (or entity) who demonstrates a life course philosophy with respect to photographic endeavor. A culture of legacy takes place when history informs the present and works towards a better future with conscience.

Elizabeth Avedon -- Lifetime Achievement Award

ELIZABETH AVEDON is an independent curator and writer, photography book and exhibition designer. She is a sought after consultant for photographers; editing, sequencing, and advising towards their exhibition, book, and portfolio projects. She is the former Director of Photo-Eye Gallery, Santa Fe; Creative Director for The Gere Foundation; and received numerous awards and recognition for her exhibition design and publishing projects, including the fashion retrospective book and exhibition, “Avedon: 1949–1979” for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, among others; and “Richard Avedon: In the American West” for the Amon Carter Museum, the Corcoran Gallery of Art and The Art Institute of Chicago; and exhibition designs for

the Estate of Diane Arbus, the Menil Collection, Texas and the Leica Gallery, New York.

In conjunction with Random House, she co-published the series "Elizabeth Avedon Editions/Vintage Contemporary Artists", working with distinguished art critics such as Donald Kuspit and Peter Schjeldahl, and contemporary artists Francesco Clemente, Louise Bourgeois, Robert Rauschenberg and others.

Ms. Avedon was a jurist for the 2017 8th Edition of the Carmignac Photojournalism Award in Paris; curated the 22nd Peter Urban Legacy Exhibition for the Griffin Museum of Photography and APA-LA's 2017 "Off The Clock" exhibition. Additionally, she is a reviewer for The New York Times LENS Portfolio Reviews; FotoFest Biennial; Photolucida; CENTER's Review Santa Fe; the Landskrona Fotofestival Review, Sweden; CPW's Woodstock Review; Filter Photo Festival, and juried and designed the publication, "fossils of light + time," for the Detroit Center for Contemporary Photography.

Her writings on photography include, the recent essay for Dornith Doherty's monograph, "Archiving Eden" (Schilt Publishing, 2017) and "Self Portrait: My Impressions of Vivian Maier" for John Maloof's "Vivian Maier: Self Portraits" (powerHouse Books). As a long-time contributor to "L'oeil de la Photographie," she has profiled notable leaders in the world of Photography, such as Joel-Peter Witkin, W.M. Hunt, Anne Wilkes Tucker, among many others.

Ms. Avedon is also an instructor in both the BFA Photography & Video department and Masters in Digital Photography program at the School of Visual Arts, New York.

Quotes:

"The Twitter feed of master photo book designer, curator and author Elizabeth Avedon is a one-stop shop for the best and latest in photography. As a hub of the photographic world, Avedon's feed surfaces must-see photography exhibits, the most interesting photo events and content from her equally excellent blog where she frequently interviews the industry's most legendary figures."
—Mia Tramz, TIME Magazine

Paul Messier – New England Beacon Award

Paul Messier is founder and Head Conservator, of Paul Messier LLC from 1994-present. The studio provides conservation treatment services for a broad range of international public and private clients including museums, libraries, archives, auction houses, galleries, and collectors. Major recent projects include: treatment and exhibition preparation for 125 photographs for the opening of the National Museum of African American Art and Culture (2015) and consulting with conservation and curatorial staff for the Mellon-funded Walther Collection research initiative at the Museum of Modern Art (2009-12).

He is also founder and director of UV Innovations Inc., since 2009- present. UV Innovations develops and licenses imaging standards for the repeatable and accurate photographic documentation of ultraviolet fluorescence. The standards are used by museum photography / conservation departments and forensic imaging labs worldwide.

Messier founded and is the director of M110, Inc., since 2011- present. M110 is a consultancy for preservation planning and the management of large-scale cultural heritage projects including: the development of a reference collection of photographic paper; project development and consulting to establish the Yale Lens Media Lab (2013-15); managing a five-year \$3.46M Mellon-funded initiative to establish a department of photograph conservation at the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia (2010-15).

In 2015 to present day Messier founded and directs Lens Media Lab, at Yale University. The LML is a research lab focused on the material history of photography. The lab houses the largest reference collection of photographic papers in the world. Characterization studies of this collection, in collaboration with institutional partners, provide insight into the expressive intentions of photographers. Worked to secure \$6.65M in private donor funding to endow the director position and fund lab activities.

American Photography Archives Group—Spotlight Award

The American Photography Archives Group (APAG) located in New York is 501(c)(3) non-profit that is a resource organization for individuals who own or manage a privately held photography archive. Collectively, the group has dealt with everything from archival supplies and copyright infringement to working with photo dealers. APAG began when founder and president, Mary Engel, assumed responsibility for the archive of her mother, photographer and filmmaker Ruth Orkin. It was a difficult task, with much to learn about intellectual property rights, conservation and preservation, promotion, and the world of photography galleries and dealers. Mary has gained a wealth of knowledge and know-how, and when her father, photojournalist and filmmaker Morris Engel, passed away in 2005, she inherited his archive as well.

Over the years, Mary reached out to others who were in a similar situation and became an informal consultant. As her network of fledgling archive managers grew, so did the demands on her time. She realized that everyone could benefit from each other's experience, so she started organizing meetings. At first the group was small enough to meet over dinner in a restaurant. Soon, however, more people joined, and a larger, quieter meeting space was needed. Mary arranged for the group to meet at ICP, and the organization has become more structured, holding meetings three or four times a year.

A Culture of Legacy Award

Beuford Smith was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. A self-taught photographer, he began freelancing in the late 1970s. His clients include Black Star, AT&T, Emory University, Merrill Lynch, Avon, and GE. Smith is the founder of Cesaire Photo Agency and a founder and chief photo editor of the Black Photographers Annual (1973-1981). He has taught photography at Cooper Union, Hunter College, and the Brooklyn Museum. Smith served as staff photographer for Emmanuel Baptist Church from 1995-2007. He also was a writer and volunteer for the James VanDerzee Institute Newsletter.

Smith is a former President (1997-2003) and member (1965-2005) and now President Emeritus of Kamoinge, Inc. Smith spearheaded the group's effort to achieve 501(c)3 status and facilitated collecting photos for Kamoinge's book, *The Sweet Breath of Life*, edited by Frank Stewart. Smith

served on the curatorial committee for the Committed to the Image exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum in 2001. He is also a former Advisory Board member of En Foco, Inc. (2005-2012).

Smith received a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in 1990, 2000 and 2002, a Light Work Artist-in-Residence Fellowship in 1999, and an Aaron Siskind Fellowship in 1998, among other awards.

Solo Exhibitions: Keith De Lellis Gallery, Wilmer Jennings Gallery, The Studio Museum in Harlem, Benin Gallery, New York University, Jefferson Public Library, Tolkin's Place, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center (Erie, PA). Group Exhibitions: MoMa, The Schomburg Center, Light Work Gallery, Dorsey Gallery, Corcoran Gallery, and Tate Modern, London.

Smith's photographs are published in Timeless (Kamoinge), Harper's Magazine, the MoMa 2014 calendar, 100 New York Photographers, The Self in Black and White, Exposure (Spring 2011), Light Work #107, Reflection in Black, Nueva Luz Vol.7 #1, Collecting African American Art, Camera #7, Acne Paper #14, Committed to the Image, Sweet Breath of Life, In the Spirit of Martin, Artnews May 2012, Ten*8 #24, Photophile #41, Miles Davis: Kind of Blue, Playboy Japan #373, Valentine NY, Hip Hop (Jeff Chang), Photograph, Amsterdam News, the Wall Street Journal, and other publications.

Smith's photographs can be found in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMa), Wilmer Jennings Gallery, Princeton University, Harlem Hospital, Light Work, Schomburg Collection, Hallmark, Inc., Louis Armstrong Foundation, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Queens Community College, Hatch-Billows Collections, Chase Bank, Jazz @ Lincoln Center, and the Library of Congress, as well as in private collections.

Video features: Beuford Smith: Photographer (Karen Bell, 2004), Artist and Influence: Louis Draper (Hatch-Billops, Inc., 1999), Jazz: Ken Burns, and A Walk up Broadway (PBS).

Smith has collected over 360 photographs in the past 30 years, and he is organizing his archives and editing his photographs for a book. Keith DeLellis Gallery represents a selection of Beuford Smith's photographs.

Awards Presentation and Celebration

This year's event is being held in Winchester, MA, home of the Griffin Museum of Photography. The event will take place on October 22, 2017 at the Griffin Museum of Photography at 67 Shore Road. A mimosa brunch will take place at 11 AM on October 22th, 2017 at the museum. The awards ceremony is being held at NOON on October 22, 2017 at the museum in Winchester. The master of ceremonies is internationally recognized photographer **Lou Jones**. Award presenters include **Sean Perry**, a photographer and educator, will present the Lifetime Award; **Melissa Banta**, author and the projects curator at Harvard's Weissman Preservation Center, will present the New England Beacon Award, **Judith Thompson**, director of the Harold Feinstein Trust will present the Spotlight Award and **Bill Gaskins**, photographer and educator, will present the Culture of Legacy Award.

Sean Perry is a fine-art photographer based in Austin, Texas and New York City. His photographs and books center on architecture, space and light – the ambiance felt within built and temporary environments. He is currently completing three projects on the City entitled Monolith, Gotham, and

Fotopolis, as well as producing new works experimenting with form in Japan.

Cloverleaf Press published Perry's first limited edition book, *Transitory* in 2006, and followed with a second title, *Fairgrounds* in the fall of 2008. Both comprised a featured case study in two editions of *Publish Your Photography Book*, coauthored by Mary Virginia Swanson & Darius Himes. (Princeton Architectural Press). Perry was also selected as a finalist for the Hasselblad Masters award for his photographs and book *Fairgrounds*. In 2015, Perry was selected as the cover artist for the book, *Fossils of Light + Time*, published by the Detroit Center for Contemporary Photography.

Perry currently serves as Associate Professor of Photography at Austin Community College where he founded a mentoring program and lecture series titled, *The Picture Review*. He was honored with the national John & Suanne Roueche Excellence Award and Innovation Grant for its content. The bi-annual project has featured curated exhibitions and talks with notable artists and leaders in the field of photography; including Elizabeth Avedon, Kate Breakey, Michael O'Brien, Mary Virginia Swanson, Dan Winters, Elinor Carucci, and Nicholas Vreeland. Perry attended Berklee College of Music and was a working musician before turning to photography in 1996. He previously served as adjunct faculty for the School of Visual Arts in New York City.

Perry's photographs and books have been acquired by notable private collectors, including Manfred Heiting and Alan Siegel, in addition to being held in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the Amon Carter Museum, the Wittliff Collections, the Harry Ransom Center, and the Haas Arts Special Collections at Yale. He has been published and exhibited widely, including commissions for the *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, *Billboard* and *New York Magazine*, as well as featured by *American Photography*, *Graphis*, *Creative Quarterly*, the *Elizabeth Avedon Journal* and *L'Oeil de la Photographie*.

Perry's work is represented by the Stephen L. Clark Gallery.

Melissa Banta is Projects Curator at the Weissman Preservation Center, Harvard Library, where she works to preserve, exhibit, and publish photograph collections throughout Harvard's museums, libraries, and archives. Ms. Banta was formerly Director of the Photographic Archives at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard. She also serves as consulting curator at Baker Library, Harvard Business School and at Mount Auburn Cemetery. Her exhibitions and publications include *From Site to Sight: Anthropology, Photography, and the Power of Imagery*; *A Timely Encounter: Nineteenth-Century Photographs of Japan*; *The Invention of Photography and Its Impact on Learning*; *A Curious and Ingenious Art: Reflections on Daguerreotypes at Harvard*; and *At the Intersection of Science and Art: Edwin H. Land and the Polaroid Collection, The Formative Years*.

Judith Thompson is the Director of the Harold Feinstein Photography Trust. In that role she works to preserve and promote the legacy of her late husband, Harold Feinstein who was awarded the Living Legend Award by the Griffin Museum in 2011. Like others who have inherited the estate of a well-known artist, she has been on a steep learning curve and credits APAG and Mary Engel for providing crucial support and guidance. For nearly three decades prior to her current responsibilities she worked in the field of reconciliation and social healing running organizations and speaking worldwide. She has a Ph.D. in peace studies and was a former Peace Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies at Harvard.

From a professional base in photography and arts writing, an academic foundation in fine art, the history of photography, American Studies and the perspective of a citizen of the United States, the work of **Bill Gaskins** explores questions about photography and the portrait in the 21st century. A critical entry point for the viewer is his fascination with the myths of photography and American culture and representations of African American people. His approach to photography as both producer and critical spectator has garnered attention through commissions, artist residencies, grants, public lectures, solo and group exhibitions, exhibition catalogs and books.

Good And Bad Hair: Photographs by Bill Gaskins is his breakthrough monograph on the role of hairstyling and photographic representation in African American culture(s) that is also a reflection on the societal and transcultural role of hair, adornment and personal identity.

As an artist, teacher, scholar, and essayist, Bill Gaskins' artwork, teaching, writing, lectures and workshops examine race and visual representation, photography & the portrait, the history of photography, contemporary art and the politics of visual culture, media literacy, the evolution of university art education, and the artist as citizen.

As a professor of art, Bill Gaskins has taught at The Ohio State University, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the University of Missouri, the College of Art, Media & Technology and the College of Art and Design Theory and History at Parsons School of Design, and the graduate program in Media Studies in The New School for Public Engagement. Presently he is an Associate Professor in the Department of Art with a faculty appointment in the American Studies Program at Cornell University.

Bill Gaskins received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Tyler School of Art, a Master of Arts Degree from The Ohio State University, and a Master of Fine Arts Degree from the Maryland Institute, College of Art.

For more information and tickets, please see our website, call 781-729-1158 or email photos@griffinmuseum.org There are a limited amount of tickets for the mimosa brunch and focus award ceremony on October 22, 2017. Tickets are \$85 for brunch/awards ceremony. There are limited number of FREE tickets (20) for full-time students of the Griffin's Academic Membership institutions. Admission with valid school ID (for award ceremony only/brunch not included).

The Griffin Museum created the annual awards in 2006 to recognize individuals who have made critical contributions to the promotion of photography. They are one of the few to recognize the work of those who have been instrumental in building greater awareness of the photographic arts in the general public.

The Griffin Museum of Photography is a nonprofit organization dedicated solely to the art of photography. Through our many exhibitions, programs and lectures, we strive to encourage a broader understanding and appreciation of the visual, emotional and social impact of photographic art.

Visit www.griffinmuseum.org and <http://griffinmuseum.org/focus-awards/>

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Griffin Museum Focus Awards

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