



**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Anne Thwaits  
520-616-2687  
athwaits@TucsonMuseumofArt.org

**Tucson Museum of Art presents four Southern Arizona artists in  
*4x4: Willie J. Bonner, Nazafarin Lotfi, Alejandro Macias, and Anh-Thuy Nguyen***

**Four solo shows in one exhibition explore the politics of space and social issues of our time**

Tucson, AZ - The Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block (TMA) examines the diversity of human experiences in our community in *4x4: Willie J. Bonner, Nazafarin Lotfi, Alejandro Macias, and Anh-Thuy Nguyen*. The exhibition is scheduled for May 20 to September 26, 2021.

*4x4* presents four solo shows, making up one large exhibition, by four Southern Arizona artists selected by four TMA curators. The exhibition is organized by the Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block and curated by Dr. Julie Sasse, Jeremy Mikolajczak, Dr. Kristopher Driggers and Dr. Marianna Pegno.

While the artists' work spans a wide range of media and styles, common themes include the influence of personal experiences, politics of space and social issues of our time. They are four distinct voices that contribute to the unique artistic landscape of Southern Arizona.

"This exhibition has been a wonderful opportunity for collaboration and multivocality," said Dr. Julie Sasse, chief curator. "Four artists from the community were chosen by four curators from the museum. Each artist will present a body of works in a dedicated gallery; in essence, four solo shows in one. *4x4* offers a chance to showcase the vitality of talented artists in the Tucson area."

**Willie J. Bonner** creates an extended dialogue regarding the culture of African American people both historically and in contemporary society; **Nazafarin Lotfi** explores the spatial and temporal experience of bodies out of place and belonging; **Alejandro Macias** considers his Mexican-American identity and the current socio-political climate; and **Anh-Thuy Nguyen** investigates conflicting emotions and thoughts about existing between two cultures –Vietnamese and American.

Through their distinct bodies of work and media exploration, including painting, sculpture, photography, video and drawing, the artists remind us that there is no collective experience of life in contemporary society. Instead, the range of human conditions is varied, nuanced and individual.

"As an institution committed to amplifying, stewarding and preserving our diverse region's people, histories and cultures, TMA aspires to find new and unique ways to highlight and support artists within our community," said Jeremy Mikolajczak, Jon and Linda Ender Director and CEO. "Through programs and exhibitions like *4x4*, in addition to a concentrated effort to acquire work for the permanent collection, we are steadfast in our pursuit to listen and respond to the communities we serve and explore new ways of improving cultural participation."

*4x4: Willie J. Bonner, Nazafarin Lotfi, Alejandro Macias, and Anh-Thuy Nguyen* will be supported by a series of virtual public programs featuring the artists and curators. All programs will be delivered online

through Zoom. Visit <https://www.tucsonmuseumofart.org/events/> to find program dates and descriptions as they become available. Program information will also be shared in TMA's weekly e-newsletter. Visit <https://www.tucsonmuseumofart.org/contact/> to sign up for the mailing list.

*High-resolution images are available upon request.*

#### **About the artists:**

**Willie J. Bonner (American, b. 1952)** Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Willie J. Bonner's artistic practice is not about gaining social acceptance in the larger American society but rather an allegory of what it means to be Black in postmodern America. Through a multitude of media, including painting, assemblage, and sculpture, the multi-layered and multi-cultural works seek to engage audiences through the content of its social applicability and the intricate rhythmic patterns that exist in the work itself. After an extensive teaching career in the Northwest, Bonner returned to Tucson. His work has been exhibited at the Joseph Gross Gallery at the University of Arizona; the former Davis and Dominguez Gallery, Tucson, Arizona; and the Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington; among others.

**Nazafarin Lotfi (Iranian, b. 1984)** Nazafarin Lotfi is a visual artist who divides her time between Tucson, Arizona, and Chicago, Illinois. Her interdisciplinary practice combines drawing, painting, video, and sculpture to explore the spatial and temporal experience of bodies out of place. Lotfi was a 2020 recipient of Phoenix Art Museum's Contemporary Art Grant, and her work has been exhibited extensively, including MOCA Tucson, Tucson, Arizona; Soon.tw, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Chicago, Illinois; Brand New Gallery, Milan, Italy; and Tony Wight Gallery, Chicago, Illinois.

**Alejandro Macias (Mexican-American, b. 1987)** Born and raised in Brownsville, Texas, along the U.S.–Mexico border, Alejandro Macias's body of work addresses themes of heritage, immigration and ethnicity, which are set in contrast to his critical engagement with the assimilation and acculturation process, often referred to as "Americanization." Macias currently serves as an Assistant Professor at the University of Arizona School of Art. His work can be found in the collections of the Brownsville Museum of Art, Brownsville, Texas; The City of San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas; and many private collections.

**Anh-Thuy Nguyen (Vietnamese-American, b. 1983)** Anh-Thuy Nguyen is a multi-media/transdisciplinary artist whose work spans photography, video, installation and performance art. Using her personal history as a resource, Nguyen's work delves deeply into conflicting emotions, feelings and thoughts by often portraying strikingly strange yet hauntingly beautiful visual manifestations of gain and loss. Nguyen currently serves as the head of the photography program at Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona. Her works are in permanent collections of Amarillo Museum of Art, Amarillo, Texas; Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, Arizona; Center for Photography at Woodstock, Woodstock, New York; among others.

#### **About the Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block**

As an institution built upon the original territories of the O'odham, the Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block (TMA) acknowledges the Indigenous Sonoran Desert communities, past and present, who have stewarded this region throughout generations.

TMA connects art to life through meaningful and engaging experiences that inspire discovery, spark creativity and promote cultural understanding. Founded in 1924, TMA encompasses an entire city block in historic downtown Tucson and is committed to developing quality exhibitions, expanding and diversifying its collection and presenting relevant and innovative programs while broadening public access to the arts.

The museum features exhibitions of Modern and Contemporary art, Latin American art from ancient to today, Indigenous arts and Art of the American West. A permanent collection of over 12,000 works of art spans continents, centuries and media. TMA's campus includes five properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, an art education center and research library, the Museum Store and the highly acclaimed museum restaurant Café a la C'Art.

TMA is a private 501(c)(3) charitable arts and education organization. For additional information visit [TucsonMuseumofArt.org](http://TucsonMuseumofArt.org) or call (520) 624-2333.

The 2020-2021 Exhibition Season at TMA is presented by James and Louise Glasser.

With support from the following season sponsors: Fran and Jim Allen, Alice and Paul Baker, Mary Jo Brown, Connie Hillman Family Foundation, I. Michael and Beth Kasser, Anne and Ed Lyman, Jeanne Pickering and Mike Andrew, TMA League, Contemporary Art Society, Latin American Art Patrons and Western Art Patrons.

###