

**For Immediate Release**

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**Major Lace Exhibition Opens at Hunterdon Art Museum**

Show Includes First-Ever U.S. Appearance of *the Urchins*,

Life-Size Carriage Four Decades in the Making

Clinton, NJ (Aug. 3, 2018) – A ground-breaking exhibition highlighting how lace makers are expanding the traditional boundaries of their art form to create exciting work that investigates contemporary themes, materials and forms opens at the Hunterdon Art Museum on Sunday, Sept. 23.

#### *Lace, not Lace: Contemporary Fiber Art from Lacemaking Techniques,* reveals how contemporary fiber artists are applying bobbin and needle lace techniques to a multitude of fibers and filaments in unlimited colors and textures to interpret their world.

#### “This is the first show in the United States to focus on contemporary art made in bobbin and needle lace techniques,” said Devon Thein, an internationally known lace expert who is curating the exhibition.

#### The show’s opening will be celebrated with a reception on Sept. 23 from 3 to 5 p.m., which everyone is welcome to attend. The opening features gallery talks by Thein at 4 p.m. and artists Jin Choi and Thomas Shine, at 5 p.m. Festivities will follow with live music and a food truck, and a special first lighting of *the Urchins* at dusk.

The exhibition features a special two-week engagement of *the Urchins*, two lace orbs, each 15 feet in diameter that will hang above the Museum’s Toshiko Takaezu Terrace, which overlooks the waterfall on the South Branch of the Raritan River. This exhibition marks the first United States appearance of *the Urchins*, which has only been shown in Singapore and Australia.

Created by Jin Choi + Thomas Shine, Architects, *the Urchins* will be suspended from thin, almost invisible cables spanning trusses that are 20 feet high. More than 50 people dedicated three months to meticulously hand craft the lace shells that are held in tension over an aluminum frame.

Gently guided by the wind and the touch of the visitors, *the Urchins* interact with natural light to create ephemeral shadows during the day and glow when illuminated at night.

Another showstopper is Lieve Jerger’s *Carriage of Lost Love*, which the artist has spent four decades creating. The work is a life-size carriage made of copper wire using bobbin lace technique. *The Carriage of Lost Love* began with just one panel, the Traveler window. But that sparked Jerger’s imagination and compelled her to build a ceremonial carriage that has been a labor of love for many years.

“I never thought of giving up, not even when wires kept breaking when I pulled them too tight,” Jerger noted. “I have used clear-coated American Standard wire gauges, as heavy as gauge 10 and as fine as 38. Even heavy gauge copper wire must be handled gently and kinks are unforgiving, but the strength and brilliance of copper wire is what seduced me.”

The exhibition features 41 works of lace art by 28 artists from around the world. Thein said she sought to create a show that demonstrated the versatility of bobbin and needle lace techniques.

“I wanted to include artists who had been major figures in the lace revival of the 1970s, as well as younger artists who had benefited from their innovations and discoveries,” Thein added.

Artist Pierre Fouché works in a self-designed methodology combining bobbin lace with another historical lace technique macramé. Although both are multi-element techniques, Thein said she is unsure whether anyone else has ever succeeded in moving between the weaving/braiding technique of bobbin lace, and the knotting technique of macramé in a single piece.

In his triptych called *Judgment of Paris after Wtewael,* Fouché took web-based news images of male protestors, some from the Occupy Movement, selected for their classical poses.

“Fouché’s work references the female nudes depicted in paintings of the myth in the academic tradition,” Thein said.

Jill Nordfors Clark presents a work that could well be taken for basketry. Although a major figure in the early needle lace revival of the 1970s when she used conventional thread, Clark became interested in using animal membranes in her work while on a trip to Alaska.

Returning home, she began to experiment with making needle lace in hog gut purchased at the butcher shop as sausage casing. This material -- pliable when wet, but solid when dried -- took dye easily. Clark began to work needle lace using a large needle threaded with gut, often forming the lace around a mold. When it dried and solidified, she would remove the mold. Her needle lace would no longer be fabric, but instead a rigid structure resembling sculpture.

The exhibition also includes four pieces by Milča Eremiášová, a legend in the world of Czech modern lace. The pieces in the show were selected by Dagmar Beckel-Machyckova, a student of Eremiášová. Beckel-Machyckova now lives in the United States where she is pursuing her own career as a lace artist, and has a piece in the show.

“For people who know about lace, Eremiášová’s work is Czech contemporary lace at its best, pure magic in terms of technique and artistry,” Thein said.

Other artists in the show are: Manca Ahlin, Jane Atkinson, Daniela Banatova, J Carpenter, Laura Friesel, Alex Goldberg, Maggie Hensel-Brown, Ágnes Herczeg, Ros Hills, Veronika Irvine, Nava Lubelski, Dorie Millerson, Penny Nickels, Wako Ono, E.J.Parkes, Lenka Suchanek, Lauran Sundin, Olivia Valentine, Nicole Valsesia-Lair, Denise Watts, Louise West, and Ashley Williams.

“Since lace technique is largely unknown, there are not many artists who work in it,” Thein said. “This show collects the work of a very large percentage of the outstanding artists who have worked in lace for the last 60 years. These artists are well known to American lace makers through their publications, but this will be the first opportunity to see their work assembled in one place.”

The exhibition runs until Jan. 6, 2019. The special limited engagement for Jin Choi + Thomas Shine’s *the Urchins* ends Oct. 7.

*The exhibition Lace, not Lace: Contemporary Fiber Art from Lacemaking Techniques* is generously supported by The Coby Foundation, Ltd. Support also provided by The International Organization of Lace, Inc. and Holiday Inn Clinton-Bridgewater.

**GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC**

The Museum is at 7 Lower Center St. in Clinton, New Jersey, 08809. Our website is [www.hunterdonartmuseum.org](http://www.hunterdonartmuseum.org) and our telephone number is 908-735-8415. Hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 11 am – 5 pm and suggested admission is $5.

**ABOUT THE HUNTERDON ART MUSEUM**

The Hunterdon Art Museum presents changing exhibitions of contemporary art, craft and design in a 19th century stone mill that is on the National Register of Historic Places.  Founded in 1952, the Museum is a landmark regional art center showcasing works by established and emerging contemporary artists. It also offers a dynamic schedule of art classes and workshops for children and adults.

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