



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**2018 Carnegie International Fine Prize awarded to
San Francisco Art Institute Art + Technology Chair
Cristóbal Martínez's indigenous art collective Postcommodity**

San Francisco, CA, October 24, 2018 — Postcommodity, an indigenous art collective composed of San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI) Art + Technology Chair Cristóbal Martínez and Kade L. Twist, is the recipient of the prestigious Fine Prize, one of two major exhibition prizes awarded at the 57th edition of the Carnegie International.

Originally organized by Andrew Carnegie in 1896, the Carnegie International is the oldest contemporary art exhibition in the United States, and the second oldest in the world after the Venice Biennale. It takes place only every 3-5 years at the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, PA and includes works by prominent contemporary artists and collectives. The Fine Prize honors an emerging artist and comes with an award of \$10,000 and a medal, as does the Carnegie Prize, which was awarded to Lynette Yiadom-Boakye.

“Being commissioned to produce a new work at the Carnegie International is a huge honor for any artist, but to be recognized in this special way is of historical significance,” says Martínez. “Most importantly, we are proud to present a work of art that catalyzes a new public memory of migration and its relationship to labor. We are also proud to celebrate, with our collaborators at the Afro-American Music Institute in Pittsburgh, a local history of black self-determination that led to what is considered globally one of America’s greatest contributions to the arts, which is jazz.”

Postcommodity’s contribution to the Carnegie International is a massive installation on the first floor of the Hall of Sculpture entitled *From Smoke and Tangled Waters We Carried Fire Home*, inspired by Pittsburgh’s steelmaking past, the struggle of the first African American mill workers’ unions, and the jazz music scene in Pittsburgh that sprang from black self-determination in response to brutal labor conditions and racism in the United States.

Angular patches of crushed glass, coal, and rusted steel sourced from local businesses and collected at the Carrie Blast Furnaces, the National Historic Landmark in Rankin, are laid out on the floor within a 3,000-square foot rectangle, alluding to the indigenous practice of sand painting, connecting Postcommodity members, who are indigenous, to the history of the underground railroad and great northern migration, which provided labor used to build the individual wealth that later funded institutions like the Carnegie Museum of Art.

The work is also imagined as a “graphic score for solo jazz performance,” and throughout the run of the exhibition (on view through March 25, 2019), local musicians will interpret the piece live in the gallery several days a week, during which all the doors in the Hall of Sculpture will swing open, allowing the sounds of jazz to permeate the building. Andrew Russeth, writing about the experience for *ARTnews*, described it as “nothing less than total museum joy.”

“It’s bringing the spirit of the people into the museum so that we can remember,” says Martínez. “I think the people who really teach us the meaning of this piece are going to be the jazz musicians themselves.”

Postcommodity is also providing three SFAI students with the opportunity to participate in University Night at Carnegie International. April Martin (BFA), Sherwin Rio (MA/MFA), and Kate Laster (MA/MFA) will travel to Pittsburgh to take part in the Carnegie Museum of Art’s University Night with Postcommodity on November 1, 2018. The three will collaborate with students from Otis College of Art and Design on a performance that will dialogue with Postcommodity’s site-specific piece. The students from Otis are under the mentorship of Postcommodity’s founder, Kade L. Twist, who is the head of Art and Social Practice. At the event, expected to attract a large gathering of students from throughout the United States and abroad, Martínez and Twist will deliver a keynote address about their work and the challenges of communicating complex stories through visual language.

“On behalf of SFAI, I’m thrilled to congratulate Postcommodity and faculty member Cristóbal Martínez for this honor,” says SFAI President Gordon Knox. “Postcommodity’s work weaves complex narratives of our country’s history, present, and possible future into potent, sublime experiences, and there is no better demonstration for emerging artists of the true power of art to stimulate discourse and radiate change forward. As a teacher, Cristóbal is deeply committed to sharing his collaborative practice as well as empowering students in their own work, and I’m so pleased that three of SFAI’s outstanding students will have the chance to engage with Postcommodity’s work and present on this major international stage.”

The Carnegie International was organized by Ingrid Schaffner and includes more than 30 artists. The jury included Carin Kuoni, the director of the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at the New School in New York; Ruba Katrib, curator at MoMA PS1 in New York; independent writer Magalí Arriola, based in Mexico City; Ellen Kessler, board chair of the Carnegie Museum of Art; Douglas “Woody” Ostrow, board member; Catherine Evans, acting co-director; and Eric Crosby, its curator of modern and contemporary art.

Postcommodity is also scheduled to present a new exhibition project at SFAI’s Fort Mason Campus in fall 2019. The architectural installation, *The Point of Final Collapse*, will examine fiscal, social, and political accountability at the intersection of San Francisco’s private and public sectors. Postcommodity will focus its aesthetic lens on the sinking Millennium Tower,

responding to systems of justice and capital that are forming new conceptual and legal frameworks of accountability with national and global socio-economic implications. Postcommodity's composition will model the cognitive dissonance of San Francisco's socio-economic systems by using engineering and legal data tied to the sinking Millennium Tower as the engine for driving the installation's therapeutic and sacred sounds.

About Cristóbal Martínez

Cristóbal Martínez, PhD, SFAI Assistant Professor and Art & Technology Department Chair, is an artist-scholar who positions visual and sonic metaphors within sites of dromological, spatial, social, cultural, political, ecological, and economic anxiety. Within these locations, Martínez aestheticizes complexity to generatively engage publics in recovering/connecting knowledge. Martínez is an artist in Postcommodity and Radio Healer. He has exhibited in the 18th Biennale of Sydney, Adelaide International, Contour the 5th Biennale of the Moving Image, Nuit Blanche, Sundance Film Festival, Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Museum of Modern Art, 2017 Whitney Biennial, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Art in General, documenta14, and at the U.S./Mexico border - *Repellent Fence*.

About Postcommodity

Postcommodity is an interdisciplinary arts collective whose art functions as a shared indigenous lens and voice to engage the assaultive manifestations of the global market and its supporting institutions, public perceptions, beliefs, and individual actions that comprise the ever-expanding, multinational, multiracial and multiethnic colonizing force that is defining the 21st Century through ever increasing velocities and complex forms of violence. Postcommodity works to forge new metaphors capable of rationalizing our shared experiences within this increasingly challenging contemporary environment; promote a constructive discourse that challenges the social, political and economic processes that are destabilizing communities and geographies; and connect indigenous narratives of cultural self-determination with the broader public sphere. The collective has been exhibited nationally and internationally, including: Contour the 5th Biennial of the Moving Image in Mechelen, BE; Nuit Blanche, Toronto, CA; 18th Biennale of Sydney in Sydney, AUS; Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art in Scottsdale, AZ; 2017 Whitney Biennial, New York, NY; Art in General, New York, NY; documenta14, Athens, GR and Kassel, DE; and their historic land art installation *Repellent Fence* at the U.S./Mexico border near Douglas, AZ and Agua Prieta, SON.

About San Francisco Art Institute

Founded in 1871, SFAI is one of the country's oldest and most prestigious institutions of higher education in the practice and study of contemporary art. As a diverse community of working artists and scholars, SFAI provides students with a rigorous education in the arts and preparation for a life in the arts through an immersive studio environment, an integrated liberal

arts and art history curriculum, and critical engagement with the world. Committed to educating artists who will shape the future of art, culture, and society, SFAI fosters creativity and original thinking in an open, experimental, and interdisciplinary context.

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