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BLACKTAIL GALA BRINGS CONTEMPORARY WILDLIFE ART TO NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WILDLIFE ART

Jackson, WY — The National Museum of Wildlife Art is pleased to announce the acquisition of seven new works of contemporary art chosen at the Blacktail Gala on Saturday, February 11.

Now in its third year, Blacktail Gala, a democratic evening of art collecting, is modeled after the Museum's Collectors Circle Dinner. Each year, the National Museum of Wildlife Art's Curatorial Department and Collections Committee spend months researching and preparing for this festive evening. Thanks to the votes of the 145 guests who attended, the seven works of contemporary art are now part of the National Museum of Wildlife Art's permanent collection.



Marc Petrovic (American, b. 1967), *Avian Pair*, 2014. Hot sculpted glass and murrini. 7.5 x 14.5 x 10 inches. Gift of 2017 Blacktail Gala, National Museum of Wildlife Art. © Marc Petrovic.

“The Blacktail Gala is a way for the Museum to collect contemporary works by established and emerging artists who are exploring current issues and concerns using wild animals, and who often use mediums that have not previously been included in the permanent collection,” says Bronwyn Minton, the Museum's Associate Curator of Art and Research.

At the Gala, Minton introduced each artist's work, and explained how each work of art would complement the collection. The guests at each table then visited with each other, and discussed why the pieces were being considered and which they'd like to see added to the Museum's collection. Over dinner, having heard about and viewed all of the works in Johnston Hall, the guests voted in rounds.

The new works include Connecticut-based artist Marc Petrovic's “Avian Pair,” a gorgeous, lifelike sculpture of a bird; Juan Fontanive's “Ornithology” and “Colorthing”; Shelley Reed's “Stag (after Landseer)”; and Zoe Keller's graphite-and-paper works “Fire” and “Prey.”



William Sweetlove (Belgian, b. 1949), *Cloned Penguin with Petbottle*, Resin. 24 x 7 x 7 inches. Gift of 2017 Blacktail Gala, National Museum of Wildlife Art. © William Sweetlove.

William Sweetlove's “Cloned Penguin with Petbottle,” a set of six resin penguins, is a call for greater ecological awareness from this Belgian artist. These colorful birds carrying water bottles reflect a consequence of climate change: We are running out of drinking water.

In the past three years, the National Museum of Wildlife Art has acquired 19 new works of contemporary art through Blacktail Gala, from Dennis

Hlynsky's mesmerizing video "Line Birds F15" — footage of a swarm of birds on power lines — to Claire Brewster's "On the Wind," a cut-paper map.

Every element of the evening was special, from gorgeous floral arrangements by Floral Art, to music by Maddy German, to special signature cocktails served by Jackson Hole Still Works. Guests raved about the braised pork shank, red rice, and lentils, the tequila-jalapeño jam, and the roasted carrot purée prepared by Clark Myers, Executive Chef; and Chas Baki, Sous Chef of Palate. The Museum's much-anticipated Palate Restaurant will open in May.

"Blacktail Gala is becoming a tradition that many look forward to at the Museum," says Jocelyn Boss, Director of Philanthropy. "This event has helped us expand our collection while also engaging both longtime and new friends of the Museum."

The fourth Blacktail Gala will take place in February 2018.

The Blacktail Gala was generously sponsored by Bessemer Trust, J Singleton Financial, Snake River Interiors, Long Reimer Winegar Beppler LLP, Jackson Hole Still Works, The Scout Guide, Niner Wine Estates, and Western Range Clothing Company.

The National Museum of Wildlife Art, founded in 1987, is a world-class art museum holding more than 5,000 artworks representing wild animals from around the world. Featuring work by prominent artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe, Andy Warhol, Robert Kuhn, John James Audubon, and Carl Rungius, the Museum's unsurpassed permanent collection chronicles much of the history of wildlife in art, from 2500 B.C. to the present. Built into a hillside overlooking the National Elk Refuge, the Museum received the designation "National Museum of Wildlife Art of the United States" by order of Congress in 2008. Boasting a museum shop, interactive children's gallery, café, and outdoor sculpture trail, the Museum is only two-and-a-half miles north of Jackson Town Square, and two miles from the gateway of Grand Teton National Park.

www.WildlifeArt.org

INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

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