



HERRON SCHOOL *of* ART + DESIGN FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2015 Outstanding Student Achievement in Contemporary Sculpture Awards goes to Herron's Yasmine K. Kasem

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(r-l) *El Qamesha El Wahida (The Lonely Cloth)*; Yasmine K. Kasem
Photos courtesy of the artist

The International Sculpture Center has announced that Yasmine K. Kasem (B.F.A. in Sculpture, '15) is a recipient of the Outstanding Student Achievement in Contemporary Sculpture Award for 2015 for her work *El Qamesha El Wahida (The Lonely Cloth)*.

In a letter notifying associate professors of sculpture **Eric Nordgulen** and **Greg Hull**, Kasem's faculty nominators, a center representative said there were "an exceptional number of nominees this year; 423 students" The nominees came from more than 158 college and university sculpture programs in North America and abroad.

The judges, all from New York, included sculptor **Chakaia Booker**, Dia Art Foundation assistant curator **Kelly Kivland**, and professor of fine arts, CUNY, **Maki Hajikano**. They selected Kasem's sculpture after deliberating over 952 images of sculptural works, the letter said.

The award includes an exhibition with catalog at Grounds for Sculpture—a sculpture garden on the former New Jersey State Fairgrounds in Trenton. The exhibition will take place October 2015 through March 2016 with an opening reception for honorees and their faculty sponsors on October 24. *Sculpture* magazine will also feature the awards in its October issue. Kasem's work will be added to an archive of winners on

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the International Sculpture Center's website.

"It's very good for an undergraduate student to get this award," said Nordgulen. Although Kasem joins recipients from Herron including alumni **Emily Stergar** (B.F.A. in Sculpture, '04) and **James Darr** (B.F.A. in Sculpture, '03), they had already graduated from Herron and were nominated by the graduate schools they were attending at the universities of Arizona and Delaware, respectively.

Kasem said her experiences at Herron have been among the best of her life. "The faculty and facilities gave me the guidance and resources I needed to explore and develop. But not only that, I saw that Herron genuinely cares about its students and their ability to succeed. I owe so much of my success to Herron, my professors and peers. I've gotten the wonderful opportunity to work alongside so many talented artists and grow with them in the studio as well."

"I'm truly grateful for being selected for this award," she said. "If you would have told me four years ago that I would've accomplished what I have, I wouldn't have believed you. I was so insecure about what I was making and how it held up in comparison to my peers. But all of the positive support, honest critiques and conversations I've had with friends, faculty and staff at Herron is what motivated me to keep working hard through any obstacle I encountered."

As she got closer to applying for college, Kasem said, "I realized that I felt much stronger about visual art and that it would be a better fit for me than studying jazz," as had been her initial intent.

Once she decided on Herron, there was no question she wanted to study sculpture. "Growing up I always looked for ways to keep myself occupied," she said, "which usually led me to building something in the back yard, or playing with the leftover clay my mom had from making beads for her jewelry." Kasem loved making something beautiful out of nothing, but "wanted to work with even more materials, so sculpture was the logical choice."

Kasem has applied for residencies in Egypt and Switzerland and sees her future at an as yet undetermined graduate school. She's making new work for a group show in the fall.

"Now that I've graduated, I haven't slowed down at all," Kasem said. "After that, just continuing my process and hoping I can get my message across to as many people as I can" is the plan.

"Career wise, I'd love to teach, and that's something I've discovered more recently. On the other hand, working at the Herron Galleries has really instilled a deep interest in what goes into running a gallery. But beyond all of that, I want to be a successful artist. That's what I'm working towards and that's what gets me up in the morning."

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