



**Governors Island Art Fair Expands to Castle Williams,
A Former Military Defense Structure and Prison on the Island**

**Installations Will Occupy Eight of the Building's Casemates Turned Prison Cells,
Encouraging Renewed Engagement with the Historic Location**

**GIAF Opens to Public September 3,
With Work by 100 Artists from Across the U.S. and Abroad**

New York—August 16, 2016—The nonprofit 4heads announced today that the ninth edition of Governors Island Art Fair (GIAF) will expand to include new installations at Castle Williams, a former defense structure on the Island. Artists will install works in eight of the building's casemates— which later served as military prison cells—marking the first time ever that art will be featured in these spaces, which the National Park Service only recently opened to the public as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the fortress and make it fully accessible to visitors. This expansion of GIAF builds on last year's incorporation of the underground munitions chambers at Fort Jay, further enhancing the dynamic experience of the fair on the Island and 4heads' mission to enliven historic locations throughout the city with contemporary art. GIAF will open to the public on September 3—and remain open every weekend throughout the month—presenting the work of 100 artists, from the U.S. and abroad, across Castle Williams, Colonels Row, and Fort Jay, as well as many designated outdoor locations.

Among the exhibitors at Castle Williams are Vermont-based artist **Mark Lorah**, who will create a site-specific installation, using a system of white boxes, that responds to the physical experience of confinement; New York-based artist **Chaney Trotter**, who collected hundreds of pounds of driftwood in North Carolina to construct a monumental ribcage based on a painting she created in 2010; and New York artist **Mitsutaka Konagi**, who has worked as a stone carver, restoring landmark buildings in New York City, and will create a site-specific installation from individually crafted chunks of marble. Artists for this section of GIAF were specifically selected to show a diversity of responses to the spaces, which themselves have served many purposes since the fortress was designed and constructed between 1807 and 1811.

Castle Williams was designed and completed by Chief Engineer of the US Army Corps of Engineers, Lt. Col. Jonathan Williams, and is named in his honor. The structure includes multiple levels of enclosed gun casemates, the design of which became a prototype for other coastal fortifications in the U.S. throughout the 19th century. During the Civil War, Castle Williams served as both barracks for Union troops and a prison for Confederate soldiers. At the start of the 20th century, a commitment was made to preserve Castle Williams, and it was updated to serve as a prison facility, operational until 1965. Castle Williams was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, assuaging ongoing attempts to demolish it.

The inclusion of Castle Williams highlights 4heads' ongoing collaboration with the National Park Service, which has provided Fort Jay as a location for GIAF and Federal Hall National Monument as the inaugural site for Portal art fair, and with which 4heads' has partnered for education programming this summer. Additional locations for GIAF are made possible through a long-standing relationship with the Trust for Governors Island.

"4heads is grateful to the Trust for Governors Island and National Park Service for continuing to allow us to highlight the astounding, little-known historic locations on Governors Island with the work of our community of artists. These spaces offer dynamic new platforms for the presentation of art, and inspire us, and our artists, to create compelling new experiences that excite active arts patrons and the public at large," said Antony Zito, 4heads co-founder. "We've always tended to work best outside of the white box experience to explore the relationships between art, place, and history—to explore and stay connected to our country's foundations. With the help of these new, site-responsive installations, we are thrilled to heighten public awareness of yet another historic structure, a place that deserves greater recognition and wider public use for the arts."

GIAF, a selling fair, includes more than 100 artists, who represent a wide breadth of creative disciplines: painting and photography, sculpture and video, sound, and mixed media installations. As with previous iterations of GIAF, the artists featured indoors are given individual rooms in which to show, creating an overall experience of a hundred solo exhibitions side-by-side, where artists interact with the historic architecture as well as the vital arts community of which they are now a part. Artists are selected via open call each spring, an application available to artists new and returning to the 4heads community. Among the selected returning artists are **Emily Chatton, Ed Grant, Sam Horowitz, George Kroenert, Rodrigo Nava, Aleksandr Razin**, and several others. 4heads offers free admission to its art fairs, never charges artists to exhibit, and helps develop the careers of exhibitors, with 70% of sales going directly to the artists.

"Nix, Zito, and I are all working artists. We recognize how challenging it can be to garner visibility and support. So with GIAF, and with Portal, we see ourselves more as facilitators than artists. We provide the opportunity and framework of the fair, but we recognize that it is really the exceptional work of the artists that brings these spaces and the whole event to life. It's about them, and the selection process and our sort of socialist fair model, is one way to emphasize that vision," said Jack Robinson, 4heads co-founder.

A comprehensive list of featured artists is available upon request. Highlights from the fair include:

- **New York-based artist Olivia Taylor**, who focuses on the tactility and physical attributes of skin. She says of her subject, "The aesthetic of one's skin gives insight into many of the wearer's traits: history, style, ethnicity, age, etc. At the same time, these characteristics also operate on a purely physical level, highlighting different bodily effects, such as bruises, freckles, or veins." For her paintings, Taylor creates her own skin-like material, using a system of casting in silicone and painting in translucent layers to achieve a lifelike aesthetic. Elements of the skin are broken from their context, emphasizing color and texture and encouraging visitors to experience the work through touch. The works pull the viewer between satisfaction and repulsion. For her presentation

at GIAF, Taylor plans to reupholster cushioned wooden chairs with her own material, using the skin in place of standard textiles, and adorn the walls with muted colored pieces, with bruises serving as a floral accent.

- **New York-based artist Manju Shandler**, who uses her background as a master puppet builder and set designer for The Walt Disney Company and The Muppets to construct visual narratives that speak to contemporary events. Much of Shandler's mixed media works focus on themes relating to mankind's destruction of the natural world in pursuit of progress. Of her process she says, "I isolate a contemporary phenomenon, seek out relevant and related myths and stories, and illustrate their intersection. In my own two-dimensional work, I often incorporate polyester film, a thin translucent plastic. I mark this surface with India ink, grease pencil, printing, acrylic and spray paint, and then sew the work together, creating large multi-layered plastic tapestries." Shandler will create a site-specific work for GIAF, drawing on the decaying architecture of the homes in Colonels Row as a backdrop to explore the turmoil of political and social wars at home and abroad.
- **New York-based artist Kat Ryals**, who uses dry plate tintype, one of the first photographic processes, to explore the relationships between what we deem as "human" and "animal". Kat says of her work, "It explores curiosities, 'otherness', hybridity, exploitation, and the human condition. With this most recent body of tintypes, called Anthropomorphous, I combined animal features and human characteristics to create a visual hybrid between the two. Hybridity is often used to illustrate the contemporary blending of cultures and societies due to globalization, but this particular use of hybridity unites us all under the same umbrella as animal." The use of the tintype also connects Ryals' work to the portrayal of "freaks" throughout history, emphasizing both our interest in and fear of "otherness." Ryals will display approximately 20 tintypes at GIAF, along with new sculptures created for the fair that relate to the subject.
- **Los Angeles-based artist Meegan Barnes**, whose sculptures frequently feature "a voluptuous derriere". Barnes' sculptures are inspired by craft traditions, and reference ancient artifacts and folklore, spiritual symbolism, warrior women, and pop culture. She describes her sculpture as "cheeky, irreverent, and empowering. They are feminine and feminist. Butts are sensual, symmetrical, and also represent a duality that's a big part of my own personality." For her installation at GIAF, Barnes will group her sculptures in a manner that speaks to narratives about pop culture, body image, feminism, and the history of female form in art.
- **The artistic duo Coalfather Industries**, which consists of Kara Jansson and Craig Newsom, working between New York and Illinois. Their work melds video, animation, and performance to explore how consumerism, technology, and surveillance encourage a culture of anxiety. They say of their practice, "We focus on the endless cycle of desire, consumption, and disappointment pervasive in contemporary life." They will show their video "User History," which was shot at Governors Island, Rockaway Beach, on Route 66 in Illinois, and in central Finland, in the underground munitions chambers, known as the Magazine at Fort Jay.

- **Copenhagen-based artist Mikkel Johnsen**, who explores the relationship between industrial architecture and landscape photography. “My images have a sense of the uncanny. Something isn’t quite right. I want the viewer to become curious and shape her/his own conception of the contextual history and the relationship between the landscape and the architecture,” said Johnsen. The architectural elements in the photographs are imaginary, and are composed and processed photographically. The landscapes are also imaginary, and are composed of many different images taken in different places and at different times during the day. For GIAF, Johnsen will present a set of his photographs to relate to the space in which they are presented.
- **New York-based artist Sam Horowitz**, whose mixed wood installation and sculptures were among the major highlights of the 2015 edition of GIAF. Horowitz is currently participating in 4heads’ Artist in Residence program on Governors Island, and his summer studio space on Colonels Row will evolve into his exhibition for the upcoming GIAF. Of his process Horowitz says, “I have been collecting vines, curious branches, and scrap wood from my shop, which I will craft into a series of screens. The screens will grow into one another organically, fusing as if alive and steering the audience deep within the folds of twig and vine. The screens are scorched and raw, burned, pitted, and somewhat forbidding.”

About 4heads:

4heads is a 501(c)3 nonprofit arts organization run by artists for artists. It was launched in New York in 2008, when Nicole Laemmle, Jack Robinson, and Antony Zito, who are working artists themselves, saw an opportunity to create a platform that would serve emerging artists and the local community through exhibitions, education programs, and artistic collaborations. The organization’s DIY spirit helps catalyze the ongoing dialogue between artists and people from all walks of life. Its diverse slate of initiatives includes the Governors Island Art Fair, Portal art fair, arts-education initiatives for underserved communities, and a summer Artists in Residence program on Governors Island. 4heads is committed to shedding new light on hidden culture and bringing new life to unexpected and unique spaces across the city.

Getting to GIAF:

Governors Island is less than 10 minutes away from Manhattan and Brooklyn by ferry. Ferries dock at Battery Maritime Building in Manhattan (10 South Street) and Brooklyn Bridge Park’s Pier 6 (Atlantic Avenue at Columbia Street). Brooklyn and Manhattan ferries are free before noon and \$2 thereafter for a round-trip ticket. Additional information about getting to Governors Island can be found on the 4heads website at www.4heads.org

GIAF Hours and Admission:

Every Saturday and Sunday from September 3 - 25, 2016.

11:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Admission is free.

Exhibition catalogues are available for purchase for \$20. For further information call 212.673.9074 or visit www.4heads.org.

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For more information, please contact:

Alina E. Sumajin
PAVE Communications & Consulting
alina@paveconsult.com
646-369-2050