

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pulitzer Arts Foundation and Sam Fox School Announce Winner of PXSTL Design-Build Commission Architect

Amanda Williams and Artist Andres L. Hernandez Will Transform Vacant Lot Into Site of Public Programs

A collaborative program of the Pulitzer and Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts, PXSTL is key component of efforts to address critical issues facing the city of St. Louis



Amanda Williams
Photo by Ann Ryan



Andres L. Hernandez
Photo by Joe Mazza

ST. LOUIS, March 2, 2016—Pulitzer Arts Foundation and the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis today announced that architect **Amanda Williams** and artist/educator **Andres L. Hernandez** have won the competition for the 2015–17 iteration of **PXSTL**, a design-build commission for a temporary structure that will transform a vacant lot into the site of community-based programs and events. The selection panel, which comprised representatives from the Pulitzer and the Sam Fox School, based its decision on criteria that

included the strength and creativity of their past work, innovation of approach, and the potential to invite public engagement.

Launched in 2013, PXSTL (the name is an acronym for the **P**ulitzer, **S**am **F**ox School, and **St.** **L**ouis) is intended to explore the ways in which small-scale creative interventions might serve as meaningful catalysts for urban transformation, as well as to examine how arts and culture can best help fortify and sustain vital communities. The first project, designed by Freecell Architecture, of Brooklyn, was completed in summer 2014. The final design of this year's PXSTL will be realized in spring 2017, and programming will take place during that summer.

Throughout the course of this PXSTL project, the Pulitzer and the Sam Fox School will work to expand community engagement through the design of both the structure and the programs that it will house. The Pulitzer will meet with various members of the St. Louis community to solicit their ideas, and the two organizations will hold a charrette this fall in order to encourage public feedback. This year, in addition to project development, Williams and Hernandez will teach an architecture studio as visiting faculty in the Sam Fox School's Graduate School of Architecture & Urban Design, where students will play a role in developing the winning concept, including aspects of its design, implementation, and community engagement.

Pulitzer Arts Foundation Director Cara Starke states, "This year's PXSTL, which invited proposals from an international group of architects, designers, and artists, drew a great diversity of practitioners, approaches, and designs. Deciding who among this year's three finalists should receive the commission was, to say the least, difficult. I'd like to thank Mary Ellen Carroll and Merve Bedir & Jason Hilgefort for their thoughtful and creative submissions, and welcome Amanda and Andres to St. Louis. We are thrilled that they will bring their experience working in cities marked by vacancy—along with an approach that is at once deeply thoughtful, bold, and practical—to the St. Louis community. We look forward to working with them to ensure that the Pulitzer continues to have a positive impact on the city in which it is so deeply rooted."

Carmon Colangelo, Dean of the Sam Fox School and the E. Desmond Lee Professor for Collaboration in the Arts, adds, "I am very pleased that Amanda Williams and Andres L. Hernandez have been selected as the winners for PXSTL; they are both remarkable individuals and will make a stellar team. Through each of their professional practices, they combine the roles of artist, architect, art educator, and social activist, and I am confident that they will bring the same dynamic dialogue to this project, activating the space and spurring inclusive conversation about art and design in the public realm. I look forward to working with them as colleagues, and fully expect that their team-taught studio will leverage the interdisciplinary strengths of the Sam Fox School and our collaborative relationship with the Pulitzer."

Amanda Williams and Andres L. Hernandez

For nearly two decades, Amanda Williams has focused on how combining art and architecture can promote thriving cities. A graduate of Cornell University's architecture school, the Chicago-based Williams creates projects that center on color, race, and space. Her *Color(ed) Theory* series shrouds the exterior of soon-to-be-demolished houses with vivid, culturally derived colors, marking the pervasiveness of undervalued Black city spaces. Williams has exhibited and lectured

throughout the United States. She is an adjunct professor at Illinois Institute of Technology, where she recently received an award for excellence in teaching.

Artist, designer, and educator Andres L. Hernandez works with youth and adults to interpret, critique, and re-imagine their physical, social, and cultural environments. A co-founder of Revival Arts Collective—a network of citizen activists committed to using arts and culture as a catalyst for community redevelopment in Chicago—he earned his Bachelor of Architecture from Cornell University and a master's degree in art education from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he is associate professor and chair of the Department of Art Education. Hernandez holds a concurrent faculty position in the Graduate Studies in Art & Design Education programs at Vermont College of Fine Arts.

Opening Event

The PXSTL project will open to the public in early May 2017. More details about the opening weekend will be announced in the coming months.

About PXSTL

PXSTL is a direct outgrowth of the Pulitzer and Sam Fox School's shared commitment to rethinking the future of St. Louis, and is one of several projects funded by an endowment created by Emily Rauh Pulitzer to support collaboration between the two institutions. The program contributes to the ongoing revitalization of the Grand Center neighborhood, while creating a venue for St. Louis residents and artists to collaborate in the creation of site-specific programming. PXSTL also builds upon St. Louis' larger history of site-specific projects and temporary installations that have informed the city's development. The most famous among these is, surely, the Gateway Mall, with Eero Saarinen's now-iconic Gateway Arch (1965) and Richard Serra's *Twain* (1982).

About the Pulitzer Arts Foundation

Pulitzer Arts Foundation is a non-collecting arts institution that presents experimental, progressive, and multidisciplinary exhibitions and programs, encompassing both historic and contemporary art from across the globe. Founded in 2001, the Pulitzer is dedicated to utilizing the naturally lit, contemplative spaces of its Tadao Ando-designed building—one of the country's most celebrated examples of contemporary museum architecture—to create multilayered experiences that link the visual arts with other cultural forms and heighten audience understanding and enjoyment. Through diverse exhibitions and public programming, the Pulitzer seeks to deepen community engagement with art, and to inspire audiences to think differently about art and its relationship to their lives. Deeply committed to serving the broader St. Louis community, the Pulitzer is an integral part of the Grand Center arts district and the wider cultural and civic landscape in St. Louis.

The Pulitzer is free and open to the public Wednesday through Saturday. Hours are 10am–5pm on Wednesday and Saturday, 10am–8pm on Thursday and Friday. For more information, visit pulitzerarts.org or call 314-754-1850.

About the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts

The Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts is an interdisciplinary and diverse community of artists, architects, designers, curators, and scholars dedicated to excellence in learning, creative activity, research, and exhibition. The School's unique structure allows it to build on the strengths of each unit— Art, Architecture, and the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum—and to draw on the resources of Washington University to create new knowledge and address the social and environmental challenges of our time. For more information, visit samfoxschool.wustl.edu.

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