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Apprentice Artists are Poised to Enhance Their Skills in the 2019 Master Artist/Apprentice Program

NASHVILLE, TN (December 4, 2018) [Tennessee Craft](#) and the Tennessee Arts Commission are delighted to announce the Master Artist / Apprentice Program (MAAP) pairings for 2019! The mission of the MAAP program is to encourage and invest in the continuation, advancement and creation of Tennessee craft by recognizing the role of the master craft artist/apprentice relationship as a way to preserve the state's cultural heritage.

To further that aim, Tennessee Craft Executive Director Teri Alea, Program Manager Kim McCurdy Waag, and Tennessee Arts Commission Director of Visual Arts, Craft, Media & Design Krishna Adams were joined by 2019 master artists Ben Caldwell of Kingston Springs (metal), Renee Ford of Franklin (jewelry) and Dennis Paullus of Memphis (woodturning) to interview applicants in November. "The masters enjoyed being together," says Teri. "They're so often in their individual studios and don't interact with other artists, so listening to their opinions about what characteristics might be important in an apprentice gave us insight into what it's like for craft artists as they work day to day."

Alea adds, "This class of apprentices has proven that they are poised to move to the next level in their craft careers. They've shown initiative in taking steps to hone their skills and get more experience, and they are ready to take off in this next phase. We can't wait to see how these apprentices grow and develop during this season! Their culminating exhibit will be installed at the galleries of the [Tennessee Arts Commission](#) next fall."

Meet the Artists:

The 2019 apprentices selected are Malachi Foriest of Columbia (metal), Blaque Reily of Nashville (jewelry) and Matthew Davis of Memphis (wood). The masters all agreed that they are impressed with the apprentices' motivation demonstrated by applying for programs like MAAP. All of the applicants are actively searching for development opportunities. All MAAP applicants receive a Tennessee Craft membership and are encouraged to apply for scholarships, classes, workshops and learning from other artists in the network.

Malachi Foriest: "Coppersmithing and silversmithing is a dying art and being mentored by Ben to grow as an artist would be an honor. I want to further my skills in welding, planishing and highly polishing pieces to create something unique and complex."

Blaque Reily: "I admire Renee's work both technically and creatively. Her use of mixed metals and integration of organic shapes into wearable art appeals to my aesthetic. I think she would

understand my creative perspective and be able to help me take my work to the next level and in a direction that is true to me creatively.”

Matthew Davis: “Dennis's artwork and style matches the type of work I aspire to make. I love his take on sculptural artwork and how he blends carving with woodturning. My goal is to gain the necessary techniques and teaching style that Dennis uses and be trained to help others learn the craft.”

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About Tennessee Craft

Tennessee Craft, formerly The Tennessee Association of Craft Artists (TACA), works to continue and create Tennessee’s fine craft tradition. With more than 500 members throughout the state, Tennessee Craft serves as the premier connecting point for local, independent makers and their audiences through Craft Fairs, exhibitions, professional development, networking, mentorship and other educational programs. Visit www.tennesseecraft.org to learn more.

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