

# PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Tanya Labeck  
Marketing Manager  
[tanya@mattmuseum.org](mailto:tanya@mattmuseum.org)  
(203) 753-0381 x127



**MATTATUCK MUSEUM**

*Adventures in Art & History*

144 West Main St. Waterbury, CT 06702

[mattmuseum.org](http://mattmuseum.org)

## Mattatuck Museum Announces MIXMASTER 2026 Award Winners

**WATERBURY, CT** –The Mattatuck Museum has announced the award recipients for MIXMASTER 2026, its ninth annual Juried Members Exhibition, recognizing outstanding artistic achievement among artists working across the Northeast.

The awards were presented during the exhibition's Opening Celebration, with remarks by Museum Director **Bob Burns**, Juror **Laurel V. McLaughlin, PhD**, and **Julie Francois**, Art Bridges Curatorial Projects Manager Fellow. MIXMASTER 2026 features work by artists from Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont, highlighting a wide range of contemporary practices by both emerging and established artists.

This year's exhibition was juried by Laurel V. McLaughlin, Curator and Director of the Collective Futures Fund at Tufts University Art Galleries. McLaughlin selected award-winning works based on originality, technical excellence, and conceptual clarity, reflecting the strength and diversity of contemporary artistic practice represented in MIXMASTER 2026.

### MIXMASTER 2026 Award Winners:

- **First Prize:** *Instructions for Looking* by **Sonja Langford**, \$500 and a solo exhibition at the Mattatuck Museum
- **Second Prize:** *Pink Lightning +* by **Blinn Jacobs**, \$300
- **Third Prize:** *Reader on the Beach* by **Larry Morse**, \$200
- **Staff Favorite:** *Quarrel* by **Eddie Hall**, upgraded Director's Circle membership, \$500 value



### **Sonja Langford**

#### ***Instructions for Looking*, 2025**

Found x-ray light viewing boxes, archival image transparencies, and found x-rays

Courtesy of the artist

"This work reimagines vintage x-ray light boxes as spaces for examining the power and fragility of medical sight. The language and imagery draw from the clinical rather than the personal, positioning the viewer within systems of observation rather than experience. Through this reframing, the pieces invite reflection on the ethics of looking and the limits of knowing."

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|   | <p><b>Blinn Jacobs</b><br/> <b><i>Pink Lighting +</i>, 2024-2025</b><br/> Casein and oil pastel on gatorboard<br/> Courtesy of the artist<br/> “The basis of my work, as an abstract artist, has been a dialogue between polygonal “shaped” constructs and the use of “painterliness” in regard to the interaction of color. The hexagon or parts of it, have been the foundation of most of my work throughout my career. The hexagon is inspired by the benzene ring. It is the building block of life, connected to all the diversity of life on a fundamental level. My work uses color as a connection to light, which is a human experience that relates us to the universes beyond.”</p> |
|   | <p><b>Larry Morse</b><br/> <b><i>Reader on the Beach</i>, 2022</b><br/> Oil on canvas<br/> Courtesy of the artist<br/> “Another painting in my ongoing series called Black Men Reading meant to fill the void of images of Black men reading in our society.”</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|  | <p><b>Eddie Hall</b><br/> <b><i>Quarrel</i>, 2025</b><br/> Acrylic and copper leaf on reclaimed window<br/> Courtesy of the artist<br/> “<i>Quarrel</i> is a work which started as a depiction of a traditional arrow pattern. The work is on a reclaimed window from the early 20th century taken from a reformatory in Pennsylvania.”</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

The **Visitors’ Choice Award**, selected by public vote, will be announced after voting concludes on **February 25, 2026**, and will also receive an upgraded Director’s Circle membership, \$500 value.

Support for MIXMASTER 2026 is provided by **Post University** and **Thomaston Savings Bank**. **MIXMASTER 2026** is currently on view through **February 22, 2026**, at the Mattatuck Museum, **144 West Main Street, Waterbury, Connecticut**.

For more information, high-quality images, or to request interviews, please contact **Tanya Labeck, Marketing Manager**, at [tanya@mattmuseum.org](mailto:tanya@mattmuseum.org) or **(203) 753-0381 x127**.

#### **ABOUT THE MATTATUCK MUSEUM**

Located in the heart of downtown Waterbury’s architectural district, the Mattatuck Museum is a vibrant destination, known locally and regionally as a community-centered institution of American art and history. The collections at The MATT span the history of American art from the colonial era to the present day with special strengths in Naugatuck Valley history and Connecticut artists, as well as artists from around the world representing the diversity of our community. The collection includes more than 8,000 objects including paintings, unique works on paper, photography and sculpture.

In February 2021, The Mattatuck reopened after a \$9 million renovation project to reimagine the Museum while continuing to be a welcoming, inclusive, stimulating, and enriching community anchor. The “new” Mattatuck Museum, designed by Ann Beha Architects, includes an extensive 14,000 square foot renovation to the existing space and an addition of almost 7,000 square feet to enhance public access, educational programming, collections storage, and exhibitions.

The Museum is operated with support from the Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development/CT Office of the Arts, which also receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The Museum is a founding member of the Consortium of Connecticut Art Museums and is a member of the Connecticut Art Trail, a group of 29 world-class museums and historic sites ([ctarttrail.org](http://ctarttrail.org)).

The Mattatuck Museum is located on the Green in Waterbury, CT at 144 West Main Street. The Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. The Museum is closed on Mondays from September through May. The Museum offers free, convenient off-street parking directly behind the Museum and in additional lots on Park Place. The Mattatuck Museum website ([mattmuseum.org](http://mattmuseum.org)) outlines the Museum’s updated guidelines for visitors, including what to expect on your visit, cleaning and safety protocols, and frequently asked questions. Face masks are currently not required indoors. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for more updates and content.

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