



## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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**Renowned Artists Take Center Stage**  
**at**  
**The Hermitage Artist Retreat's**  
**Greenfield Prize Weekend: A Celebration of Art**  
**April 18 and 19**

*Events include a world premiere reading of a new play by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and 2018 Greenfield Prize winner Martyna Majok, and a talk with the winner of the 2020 Greenfield Prize, visual artist Jennifer Packer.*

(Sarasota County) The Hermitage Artist Retreat, in collaboration with the Greenfield Foundation, presents the Hermitage Greenfield Prize Weekend, April 18-19. Each year in April, the Hermitage Artist Retreat hosts the Greenfield Prize Weekend to celebrate the award of a new Greenfield Prize winner, to premiere the winner's commission from two years prior, and to present programs and panels that share these artists' journeys, creative processes, and bodies of work with local audiences. The prize offers a \$30,000 commission that rotates annually among theater, music, and visual art. This year's celebration includes a world premiere reading of *Babushka*, a bold and original new work by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and winner of the 2018 Greenfield Prize, Martyna Majok (*Saturday, April 18, 4 p.m., at the Asolo Repertory Theatre*). The weekend also features "Artist Talk: The Work and

Influences of Jennifer Packer” with celebrated painter and the winner of this year’s Greenfield Prize, Jennifer Packer (*Sunday, April 19, 1-2:30 p.m., at the Sarasota Art Museum*). The weekend concludes with the twelfth annual Greenfield Prize Award Dinner, Sunday, April 19, 6-9 p.m., at Michael’s On East. *For details about these events and information on how to reserve seats, visit [www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org).*

**A world premiere play reading of *Babushka*, a new musical play by Martyna Majok**, the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright of *Cost of Living*, is Saturday, April 18, 4 p.m., at the Asolo Repertory Theatre, 5555 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. This play is the direct result of Majok’s \$30,000 commission from the Hermitage Greenfield Prize and her work in residence at the Hermitage Artist Retreat. Sarasota audiences will be the first to see this work. *The event is free, but reservations must be obtained by visiting [www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org), or by calling 941-351-8000. Tickets can also be obtained in person at the Asolo Repertory Theatre.*

The Polish-born writer Martyna Majok is known for her plays about immigrants, women, the working class, and people with disabilities. “I think people are more alike than we are different. We all understand love and loss, betrayal, despair, hope,” she told Playbill in 2018. In addition to winning the 2018 Greenfield Prize, Majok is the recipient of the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for her play *Cost of Living*. The Pulitzer board described the play as “an honest, original work that invites audiences to examine diverse perceptions of privilege and human connection through two pairs of mismatched individuals: a former trucker and his recently paralyzed ex-wife, and an arrogant young man with cerebral palsy and his new

caregiver." Some of Majok's notable works include her 2016 drama, *Ironbound*, a portrait of an independent Polish immigrant searching for the American Dream and *queens*, which examines the sacrifices made by two generations of immigrant women living in New York City. Her honors include The Dramatists Guild's Lanford Wilson Award, The Lilly Award's Stacey Mindich Prize, Helen Merrill Emerging Playwright Award, Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding Original New Play at The Helen Hayes Awards, The Kennedy Center's Jean Kennedy Smith Award, New York Theatre Workshop's 2050 Fellowship, and the NNPN/Smith Prize for Political Playwriting. Majok earned her BA from the University of Chicago and MFA from the Yale School of Drama and Juilliard. Majok was a 2012-2013 NNPN playwright-in-residence and the 2015-2016 PoNY Fellow at the Lark Play Development Center.

**"Artist Talk: The Work and Influences of Jennifer Packer"** is Sunday, April 19, 1-2:30 pm, at the Sarasota Art Museum, 1001 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. Celebrated painter and 2020 Hermitage Greenfield Prize winner Jennifer Packer will speak about her life and work as an artist, followed by a conversation between Packer and this year's Greenfield Prize jury chair Valerie Cassel Oliver, curator of modern and contemporary art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. As the winner of the Greenfield Prize, Packer will receive a \$30,000 commission to create a new work of art, as well as a six-week residency at the Hermitage Artist Retreat. Her commission will premiere in Sarasota in 2022 in partnership with The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. *The event is free, but tickets must be obtained at [www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org).*

Jennifer Packer creates expressionist portraits, interior scenes, and still lifes that suggest a casual intimacy. Packer views her works as the result of an authentic encounter and exchange. The models for her portraits—commonly friends or family members—are relaxed and seemingly unaware of the artist's or viewer's gaze. Packer's paintings are rendered in loose line and brush stroke using a limited color palette, often to the extent that her subject merges with or retreats into the background. Suggesting an emotional and psychological depth, her work is enigmatic, avoiding a straightforward reading. "I think about images that resist, that attempt to retain their secrets or maintain their composure, that put you to work," she explains. "I hope to make works that suggest how dynamic and complex our lives and relationships really are."

Born in 1984 in Philadelphia, Packer received her BFA from the Tyler University School of Art at Temple University in 2007, and her MFA from Yale University School of Art in 2012. She was the 2012-2013 Artist-in-Residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem, and a Visual Arts Fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, MA, from 2014-2016. Her most recent solo show, "Tenderheaded," exhibited at the Renaissance Society, Chicago, in the fall of 2017 before travelling to the Rose Museum at Brandeis University in March of 2018. Packer currently lives and works in New York and is an assistant professor in the painting department at RISD.

Packer will be honored at the cornerstone event of this celebratory weekend, the **2020 Greenfield Prize Award Dinner**, Sunday, April 19, 6-9 p.m., at Michael's On East, 1212 East Avenue South, Sarasota. Tickets begin at \$175; reservations can be made online at [www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org).

“One of the most unique and extraordinary qualities of the Hermitage is the cross-pollination of the world’s leading artists across multiple creative disciplines,” said Andy Sandberg, the Hermitage’s artistic director and CEO. “To welcome a celebrated playwright like Martyna Majok and a renowned visual artist like Jennifer Packer to Sarasota County is truly an honor. To host them jointly as part of the 2020 Greenfield Weekend is a particular privilege. With this annual prize, we are honored to have this opportunity to put forth bold and impactful new works into the world, and to support the creative processes of such brilliant artists. We are thrilled to simultaneously be hearing the premiere of Martyna’s newest work and presenting Jennifer with the 2020 Greenfield Prize.”

### **About the Greenfield Prize:**

The Greenfield Prize, presented by the Hermitage Artist Retreat, is a groundbreaking partnership between the Hermitage Artist Retreat and the Greenfield Foundation. Rotating between the fields of music, theater, and visual art, this prestigious national prize seeks to “bring into the world works of art that will have a significant impact on the broader or artistic culture.” The Greenfield Prize is awarded annually and includes a Hermitage fellowship, as well as a \$30,000 commission for a new piece of work to be created within a two-year time frame. A residency at the Hermitage Artist Retreat on Manasota Key in Englewood, Florida, ensures time and space in which to do the work.

Former Greenfield Prize winners include **Helga Davis**, Music (2019); **Martyna Majok**, Drama (2018); **David Burnett**, Visual Photography (2017); **Coco Fusco**, Visual Art (2016); **Bobby Previte**, Music (2015); **Nilo Cruz**, Drama (2014); **Trenton Doyle Hancock**, Visual Art (2013); **Vijay Iyer**, Music (2012); **John Guare**, Drama (2011); **Sanford Biggers**, Visual Art (2010); **Craig Lucas**, Drama (2009) and **Eve Beglarian**, Music (2009).

### **About the Hermitage Artist Retreat:**

The Hermitage is a nonprofit artist retreat located in Manasota Key, Florida, inviting accomplished artists across multiple disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Hermitage artists are invited to interact with the local community, touching thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors each year with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage fellows have included nine Pulitzer Prize winners, along with multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy and MacArthur Fellowship award winners. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theatres, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. The Hermitage awards the \$30,000 Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, and the Aspen Music Festival awards the annual Hermitage Prize in Composition. For more information about The Hermitage Artist Retreat, visit [HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://HermitageArtistRetreat.org).

**Support for the Hermitage:**

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