

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Artist Collaborative Die-Cast Awarded \$20,000 Juried Prize at *No Vacancy, Miami Beach***

**Miami Beach, FL, December 4, 2020** — The City of Miami Beach, in collaboration with the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority (MBVCA) is pleased to announce that the *No Vacancy* Juried Prize has been awarded to Die-Cast for the artist collaborative's work titled *Temporary Occupancy*. The work was selected from the 10 participating artists and collectives by a jury of Miami Beach art experts including Silvia Karman Cubiña, Director and Chief Curator of The Bass Museum of Art; Dennis Scholl, Executive Director of Oolite Arts and Maria Elena Ortiz, Associate Curator at the Perez Art Museum Miami.

"With impressive technological qualities, *Temporary Occupancy* is an ambitious and poignant project, embodying the artistic spirit of Miami Beach", says Ortiz.

Installed at the Betsy Hotel, *Temporary Occupancy* is a digital-live hybrid installation that opens the privacy of the hotel room for public display. With both in-person and digital aspects of the project, *Temporary Occupancy* offers a larger world for visitors to explore.

The work imagines a fictional company called Vicurious, which offers potential visitors short stays in virtual hotel rooms, vicariously experiencing another person's life. The boutique hospitality company is looking to open a new office in Miami. Through projected videos, in-person physical performances, and a fully-immersive digital component, Die-Cast's newest creation asks visitors to explore how they center themselves in the experiences of others.

"Die-Cast's process begins with a space as the foundation of our work. We look to fill that space with our art and have our art in turn shaped by the space", explains Brenna Geffers, who comprises one half of the collaborative along with artist Thom Weaver. "Our work ends up being love letters to these special spaces that are often inaccessible to visitors and this is definitely a love letter to the Betsy Hotel. In many ways, this piece required us to use tools we have never used before, like streaming multiple camera phones. In other ways however, the piece feels very much like our work; it is communal, intimate, and of the moment from which it was born. We want to sincerely thank the City of Miami Beach for this recognition."



*No Vacancy* is a juried art competition that celebrates artists, provokes critical discourse, and invites the public to experience Miami Beach's famed hotels as destination art spaces. Artists were drawn from a call for submissions issued by the city in February 2020 and selected by representatives from the City of Miami Beach Art in Public Places Committee (AiPP), Cultural Arts Council and MBVCA.

For the inaugural edition of *No Vacancy*, \$25,000 in prizes will be awarded. In addition to the \$20,000 juried prize there will be a \$5,000 prize by the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) determined by public vote. The winner of the Public Prize will be announced on December 12, 2020.

For additional information and to vote on the Public Prize please visit:

[www.mbartsandculture.org/no-vacancy](http://www.mbartsandculture.org/no-vacancy)

Funding for this project is provided by the City of Miami Beach Cultural Arts Council, Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority and the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau.

**Die-Cast** was founded by Brenna Geffers and Thom Weaver in order to explore new relationships between the visitor and space. Die-Cast incubates work within spaces that are often inaccessible to audiences or are not thought of as performative spaces. Die-Cast has invited visitors into derelict ballrooms, historical mansions, and even schooner ships. The collaborative has created work for digital spaces, allowing audiences to choose their own adventures using chatbots and BuzzFeed quizzes. Die-Cast has been nominated for the prestigious Harvey Award for Best Adaptation of A Comic Book alongside Hollywood Blockbusters.

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### **About the Miami Beach Cultural Arts Council**

The Cultural Arts Council (CAC) is an eleven-member council created in 1997 for the purpose of developing, coordinating and promoting the performing and visual arts in the City of Miami Beach. The CAC serves as arts advocates before governmental bodies, coordinates collective marketing initiatives for the local arts community and funds not-for-profit arts organizations. Since the program's inception, the CAC has awarded approximately \$18 million in cultural arts grants, supporting thousands of performances, exhibits, and other cultural activities in Miami Beach.

### **About the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority**

The MBVCA is a seven-member authority, appointed by the City of Miami Beach Commission, with the goal of encouraging, developing and promoting the image of Miami Beach locally, nationally and internationally as an outstanding tourist destination. To this end, the MBVCA strategically focuses its funding investments in a balanced manner, fostering outstanding existing programs, stimulating new activities, and encouraging partnerships. The MBVCA is committed to a careful, long-term plan for allocation of resources to help Miami Beach thrive as a destination with something for everyone.

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