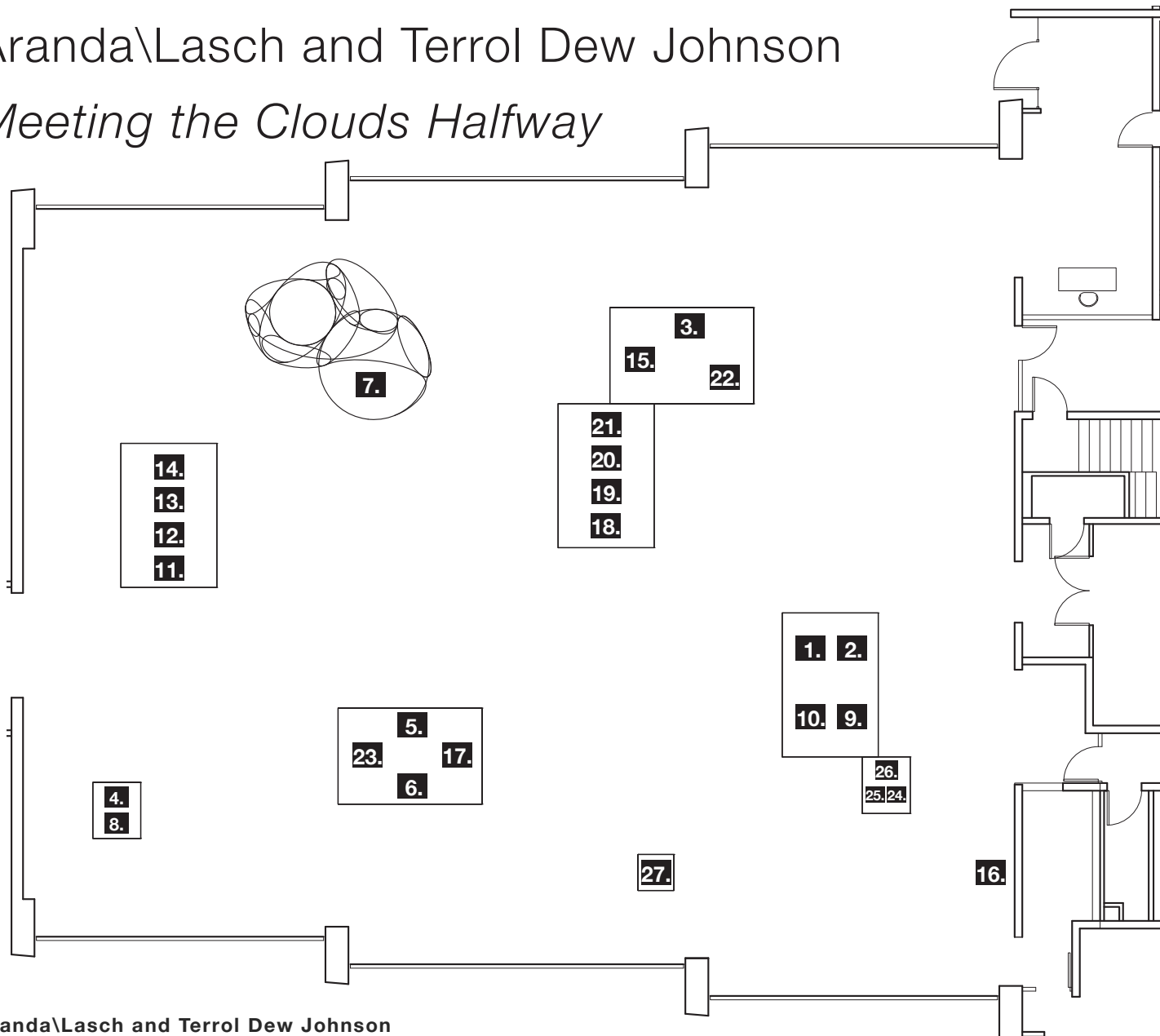


# GREAT HALL

Aranda\Lasch and Terrol Dew Johnson

*Meeting the Clouds Halfway*



## Aranda\Lasch and Terrol Dew Johnson

1. **Grass Coil 01** (2016) bear grass, sinew, and steel wire, 13" x 16" x 16"
2. **Grass Coil 02** (2016) bear grass, sinew, and steel wire, 24" x 24" x 21"
3. **Grass Coil 03** (2016) horsehair and waxed nylon, 16" x 16" x 12"
4. **Grass Coil 04** (2016) bear grass, sinew, and steel wire, 22" x 26" x 24"
5. **Wire Coil 01** (2016) steel wire and nylon, 26" x 18" x 20"
6. **Wire Coil 03** (2016) steel wire and nylon, 24" x 26" x 24"
7. **Wire Nest** (2016) fiberglass rod, 11'0" x 16'0" x 9'0"
8. **Wire Coil 05 w/ Yucca** (2016) steel wire, nylon, and yucca paper, 24" x 26" x 24"
9. **Wood Basket 01** (2016) wood, yucca, and sinew, 16" x 16" x 12"
10. **Wood Basket 02** (2016) wood, yucca, and sinew, 16" x 16" x 12"
11. **Copper Coil 01** (2016) copper, 16" x 16" x 12"
12. **Copper Coil 02** (2016) copper, 16" x 16" x 12"
13. **Copper Coil 03** (2016) copper, 16" x 16" x 12"
14. **Copper Coil 04** (Patina) (2016) copper, 24" x 31" x 18"
15. **Table** (2016) painted steel, 30" x 30" x 18"
16. **Knot #3** (2016) aluminum, creosote, yucca, and cedar bark, 3'4" x 5'6" x 5'8"

## Aranda\Lasch

17. **Rock Table** (2016) ferrock, 6'0" x 2'0" x 0'1"
18. **Bandshell Site Model** (2016) paper, paint, and foam, 2'0" x 4'0" x 1'0"
19. **Desert Shelter Site Model** (2016) paper, paint, and foam, 2'-0" x 4'0" x 0'9"
20. **Olaski Site Model** (2016) paper, paint, and foam, 2'0" x 4'0" x 0'8"
21. **Seed Bank Site Model** (2016) paper, paint, and foam, 2'0" x 4'0" x 0'6"
22. **Desert Shelter Sprayed Model** (2016) fiber glass rod, wire mesh, concrete, 3'6" x 3'8" x 2'0"
23. **Seed Vault Sprayed Model** (2016) fiber glass rod, wire mesh, and concrete, 3'6" x 3'8" x 2'0"

## Terrol Dew Johnson

24. **Gourd Basket** (2015) gourd, bear grass, and sinew, 9" x 9" x 12"
25. **Inlaid Gourd Basket** (2007) gourd, bear grass, and sinew, 15" x 15" x 18"
26. **Form Over Function** (2014) wood, bear grass, and sinew, 18" x 6" x 15"

## Matthew Ritchie

27. **Language of the Sun** (2016) plastic and paint, 3'0" x 2'6" x 4'0"

# Curator's Essay

## GREAT HALL

### Aranda\Lasch and Terrol Dew Johnson *Meeting the Clouds Halfway*

29 October 2016 – 29 January 2017

Coiling is the core of the collaboration between Tohono O'odham fiber artist Terrol Dew Johnson and New York and Tucson-based architects Aranda\Lasch. What began as a conversation about the similarities between traditional Native American craft and cutting-edge design became a decade-long exchange that re-imagines an ancient material practice within the needs of a contemporary world. The result of their dialogue is a range of constructions, from baskets to architecture, which suggest cross-cultural sharing as a means of reckoning, manifesting a shared truth that inspires reflection and action.

Meeting the Clouds Halfway at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson presents this new series of objects which use materials and rituals born from the Sonoran Desert, a region rich in both ancestral wisdom and visionary thinking. For many generations, the Tohono O'odham have coiled baskets out of desert fibers not only for domestic use, but also as a ceremonial meditation that unites art with life. The act of coiling creates form through an intuitive geometric system and iterative movements, building on a set of principles that can be manipulated to create new compositions.

A gifted weaver from a young age, Johnson has achieved national acclaim for pioneering abstract constructions that transcend familiar forms and materials in a way that invites reflection on a long-established practice. Johnson's novel approaches to cultural traditions informs every aspect of his life, and ultimately led him to found Tohono O'odham Community Action, an organization that advocates for a healthy and vital tribal community. Having won numerous awards, his work is included in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian and the Heard Museum.

Aranda\Lasch established their reputation with the 2006 publication of Pamphlet Architecture 27: *Tooling*, illustrating how phenomena in nature like weaving, flocking, and cracking, can generate architectural procedures. *Tooling* defined a way to use computer code to not only to facilitate the design process but also as a conceptual engine in its own rite. Their work has since been informed by collaborative making, translating abstract geometries into tactile forms through handcraft, performative construction, and partnerships with artists such as Matthew Ritchie, Casey Reas and fashion designer Silvia Fendi. The first series of baskets with Johnson was shown in 2007 at Artists Space in New York, which led to the Museum of Modern Art in New York acquiring several works from the exhibition for their permanent collection.

Alexandra Cunningham Cameron  
Guest Curator

**Terrol Dew Johnson** (Tohono O'odham, b. 1973) is a community leader, nationally recognized advocate for Native communities and renowned artist. In 1996, Johnson co-founded Tohono O'odham Community Action (TOCA), a grassroots community organization dedicated to creating positive programs based in the O'odham Himdag—the Desert People's Way. In 2002, Johnson and TOCA Co-Director Tristan Reader were recognized as one of the nation's top leadership teams when they received the Ford Foundation's Leadership for a Changing World Award. Johnson's collaborations range from museum exhibitions to documentaries and book publications. In October 1999, Johnson was named one of "America's top ten young community leaders" by the Do Something Foundation.

In 2009-10, Johnson walked from Maine to Arizona as a part of "The Walk Home: A Journey to Native Wellness," bringing awareness to the crisis of Diabetes in Native communities and highlighting the ways in which communities have the capacity to create wellness by drawing upon their rich cultural traditions.

As an artist, Johnson began learning to weave baskets in school when he was just ten years old. He is now recognized as one of the top Native American basketweavers in the U.S. He has won top honors at such shows as Santa Fe Indian Market, O'odham Tash, the Heard Museum Fair and the Southwest Indian Art Fair. His work is in the permanent collections of museums such as the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian and the Heard Museum. Today, Johnson combines basketry with other media such as bronze castings and gourds.

**Aranda\Lasch** designs buildings, installations and furniture through a deep investigation of structure and materials. Recognition includes the United States Artists Award, Young Architects Award, Design Vanguard Award, AD innovators, and the Architectural League Emerging Voices Award. Their early projects are the subject of the book, *Tooling*. Aranda\Lasch has

exhibited internationally in galleries, museums, design fairs, and biennials. Current building projects include stores in Miami, an outdoor theater in Gabon, and an Art Park in Bali. Aranda\Lasch continually develop furniture products and are represented by Gallery ALL. Their work is part of the permanent collection of the MoMA in New York.