

JOAN MITCHELL FOUNDATION

\$900,000 IN UNRESTRICTED GRANTS TO 15 ARTISTS ANNOUNCED FOR 2024 JOAN MITCHELL FELLOWSHIPS

New York, NY—August 14, 2024—The Joan Mitchell Foundation announced today the 15 artist recipients of the 2024 Joan Mitchell Fellowship—each of whom will be awarded an unrestricted grant of \$60,000, paid over a five-year period: \$20,000 in 2024, and \$10,000 in each of the four subsequent years. The multi-year financial support is interwoven with regular opportunities for skills development, peer exchange, and network building—all critical resources that artists need to sustain their practices. The jurors selecting this year’s Fellows were: Valerie Cassel Oliver, Sydney and Frances Lewis Family Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; Adriana Corral, artist, Texas; Michelle Grabner, artist, critic, and independent curator, Wisconsin; and Elana Herzog, artist, New York. Los Angeles-based curator Diana Nawi additionally participated in the first round of application review. Now in its fourth year, the program has awarded \$3.6 million in funding directly to artists since 2021.

Artists are nominated and selected for the Joan Mitchell Fellowship through a tiered process. For 2024, 86 nominators—a diverse group from 45 states, 53% of whom identify as artists and 46% of whom were first time participants in this process—each proposed two artists whose work they feel “contributes to important artistic and cultural discourse, are deserving of greater recognition on a national level, and for whom the receipt of this award would be meaningful and impactful.” This nominating process produced a pool of 154 artist applications, narrowed to a group of 60 in the first round review by the jury, and subsequently narrowed to the final 15 recipients of the award.

This year’s Joan Mitchell Fellows work in a variety of media within the evolving fields of painting and sculpture—including drawing, printmaking, mixed media, and installation art—and the cohort includes two artists who are self-taught:

- Scott Anderson’s (Albuquerque, NM; b. 1973) paintings explore the tension between external perception and internal experience through material negotiations and abstract representations.
- Michaela Pilar Brown (Columbia, SC; b. 1970) addresses the politics of the Black body, using materials and spaces to construct counter-narratives and explore themes of identity, memory, and loss.
- Victoria Burge (Harrisville, NH; b. 1976) creates small-scale sculptures and works on paper, exploring visual languages, the traditional labor of women, and the organizing principles of the grid through historical archives.
- Peggy Chiang (Brooklyn, NY; b. 1989) makes sculptures that explore the presentation and representation of ordinary things, incorporating elements like sound, smell, and touch to cast doubt on the passivity of objects.
- Ruby Chishti’s (Brooklyn, NY; b. 1963) process transforms discarded clothing into evocative structures that explore social memory, love, loss, and the passage of time.

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- Sharif Farrag (Reseda, CA; b.1993) creates ceramic art that blends traditional styles and iconography with unconventional techniques to explore themes of growth, decay, and personal experience.
- Emilie Louise Gossiaux's (New York, NY; b. 1989) multidisciplinary art translates her inner worlds into physical forms, exploring themes of interdependence, disability joy, and the intersectionality between disabled people and non-human species.
- André Leon Gray (Raleigh, NC; b. 1969) investigates social power structures, culture, identity, and history, using objects charged with sociopolitical meaning to forge links between the past and the present.
- Joe Harjo's (San Antonio, TX; b. 1973) installations challenge the erasure and misrepresentation of Native culture in America, advocating for resilience, empowerment, and social justice.
- Rebecca Morris (Los Angeles, CA; b. 1969) makes abstract paintings that question elements such as stroke, surface, and frame to expose the tensions between the flat surface and the painting as a discrete object.
- Gamaliel Rodríguez's (Cabo Rojo, PR; b. 1977) drawings imagine dystopian landscapes, critiquing societal and economic failures and the impacts of extraction in his native Puerto Rico.
- Abigail Kahilikia Romanchak (Waiohuli, HI; b. 1976) perpetuates Hawaiian knowledge and explores the interplay between human impact and the natural environment through her contemporary works on paper.
- Rupy C. Tut (Oakland, CA; b. 1985) adapts traditional Indian painting techniques to create works that center a female figure navigating complex environments.
- Yvonne Wells (Tuscaloosa, AL; b. 1939) creates intricate narrative "story quilts" that blend geometric abstraction with bold figuration, improvising compositions through an intuitive approach with repurposed fabrics.
- Sandy Williams IV's (Richmond, VA; b. 1992) interdisciplinary practice generates communal catharsis through ephemeral public memorials and performances, films, and sculptures that visualize frameworks of emancipation.

"I am excited to welcome our 2024 Fellows, whose work represents new ideas and approaches in artmaking and for whom these unrestricted grants can have a transformative impact on their lives and their work," said Christa Blatchford, Executive Director at the Joan Mitchell Foundation. "During her lifetime, Joan Mitchell often offered personal assistance to other artists, and her directive for her foundation was to directly support artists. Throughout our 30-year history of grantmaking, our programs have continued to evolve in response to feedback from participating artists. The relaunch of the Joan Mitchell Fellowship in 2021 is an example of this ongoing process, exploring creative models that fulfill our mission and carry Mitchell's legacy forwards."

In addition to regular evaluative criteria used in selecting Fellows each year—including artistic vision, and articulations of the impact the fellowship funds might have—applicants this year

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were asked to address their interest in peer support and exchange. This additional question was added in response to ongoing feedback from current Fellows chosen since this grant program was reconceived in 2021: that an essential benefit to the Fellowship award is becoming part of a nationwide cohort of artists, with regular opportunities to connect around shared interests and concerns.

“Four years into this new Fellowship model, we’re witnessing a diverse community of practice taking shape,” noted Solana Chehtman, Director of Artist Programs at the Joan Mitchell Foundation. “We see clearly the impact of the financial resources, but equally important are the non-monetary supports. We continue to expand the opportunities for gathering and exchange, providing the artists a group of peers with whom they can share experiences, learn new tools and techniques, and discuss the practice-related challenges that can come with being a working artist.”

The Foundation facilitates learning and dialogue among the Fellowship’s cohorts through a robust schedule of events, including workshops, monthly artist exchange sessions via Zoom, and a three-day in-person convening held each June for artists in the second and third years of the program. Recent sessions have focused on gallery relationships, contract law, self-care strategies, sourcing materials, and navigating the dual responsibility of being both an artist and a caregiver. Fellows additionally have access to coaching sessions with Joan Mitchell Foundation staff and experts in the fields of finance and strategic planning, and are eligible to apply for residencies at the New Orleans-based Joan Mitchell Center once they have reached the fourth year of the program.

“I’ve really appreciated this past year of being a Joan Mitchell Fellow,” said New York-based artist Anina Major, a 2023 Joan Mitchell Fellow. “In particular, the in-person convening in New Orleans was a wonderful opportunity to spend time with other Fellows. You don’t have a lot of situations where artists come together outside of the context of a show or a residency, where the focus is on work. Sometimes you think that the challenges you may be having as an artist are so singular to your unique experience, but then through the conversations that unfolded at the convening, we realized that there are many similarities. It’s encouraging and motivating to know that you’re not in it alone and that you have somebody else you can talk through that with, creating a space where you feel safe to do so.”

The 2024 cohort of Joan Mitchell Fellows reflects notable diversity across several dimensions. A slightly older group than previous years, 33% of the 2024 cohort are between age 50-59, 20% are between 40-49, and 33% are between 30-39—with the remainder age 60 and above. Of these, 7% each identify as Hispanic or Latino/a/x, Native American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or as a person of Middle Eastern Descent; 13% each identify as Indigenous or White; 20% identify as a Person of European Descent; and 27% identify as Black. Women and female-identifying artists continue to be the largest cluster within the cohort, comprising 60% of

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the fellows, while 33% identify as male and 7% as non-binary. 20% identify as LGBTQIA+, and 7% declined to answer.

About the Joan Mitchell Foundation

The Joan Mitchell Foundation cultivates the study and appreciation of artist Joan Mitchell's life and work, while fulfilling her wish to provide resources and opportunities for visual artists. As the chief steward of Joan Mitchell's legacy, the Foundation manages a collection of Mitchell's artwork and archives containing her personal papers, photographs, sketchbooks, and other historical materials. The Foundation administers copyright and reproduction requests related to Mitchell's artwork, and regularly partners with institutions to ensure that a wide audience has access to Mitchell's work through exhibitions, educational activities, and public programming. In 2015, the Foundation established the Joan Mitchell Catalogue Raisonné project, a long-term research project that will result in a scholarly publication documenting the artist's paintings. Fulfilling Mitchell's mandate to "aid and assist" living artists, over the past 31 years the Foundation has evolved a range of initiatives that have directly supported more than 1,300 visual artists at varying stages of their careers. The Joan Mitchell Fellowship gives annual unrestricted awards of \$60,000 directly to artists working in the evolving fields of painting and sculpture, with funds distributed over a five-year period alongside learning, peer engagement, and network-building opportunities. The New Orleans-based Joan Mitchell Center hosts residencies for national and local artists, complemented by professional development offerings, open studio events, and other public programs that encourage dialogue and exchange with the local community. The Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) initiative provides free and essential resources to help artists of all ages organize, document, and manage their artworks and careers. Together, these programs actively engage with working artists as they develop and expand their practices. For more information, visit joanmitchellfoundation.org.

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