

**JOAN MITCHELL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2020 RECIPIENTS  
OF PAINTERS & SCULPTORS GRANTS**

**25 Artists to Receive \$25,000 Each in Unrestricted Funds**

**New York, NY—October 21, 2020**—The Joan Mitchell Foundation today announced the 2020 recipients of its annual Painters & Sculptors Grants, which provide 25 artists with \$25,000 each in unrestricted funds. In a moment of profound change and contraction within the arts landscape, the Foundation felt it was particularly important to continue with its annual grants cycle, providing artists with flexible financial support as well as the recognition essential to career progress. Selected artists are first nominated by artist peers and arts professionals from throughout the United States and then chosen through a multi-phase jurying process, which this year was conducted virtually. The 2020 artist cohort represents a wide range of creative approaches and backgrounds as well as ethnicities, ages, and geographic locations—further enumerated below. In addition to the financial award, grantees also gain access to a network of arts professionals, who can provide consultations on career development and financial management.

"The Foundation first launched the Painters & Sculptors Grants 27 years ago with the vision to support and nurture the lives and careers of working artists, recognizing that creative endeavor is best supported through robust and unrestricted financial support. This year, the \$625,000 in unrestricted funds awarded through the Painters & Sculptors Grants builds on nearly \$1,000,000 in relief funding that the Foundation will have given by year's end to the coalition efforts Artist Relief and Creative Response NOLA, and direct aid to former grant recipients in need. All of these efforts are made possible by artist Joan Mitchell's foresight to establish, in her will, a Foundation that serves the ongoing and changing needs of working artists," said Christa Blatchford, Executive Director of the Joan Mitchell Foundation. "We are delighted to be able to recognize the artistic achievements of our new grantees and to continue to offer important lines of support, especially in a year that has brought particular challenges to the artistic community."

The 2020 Painters & Sculptors Grants recipients are:

[Zarouhie Abdalian](#), New Orleans, LA  
[Natalie Ball](#), Chiloquin, OR  
[Rina Banerjee](#), New York, NY  
[Bahar Behbahani](#), Brooklyn, NY  
[Sarah Cain](#), Los Angeles, CA  
[Luke Luokun Cheng](#), Falls Church, VA  
[Jesse Chun](#), Brooklyn, NY

[Gabriel Dawe](#), Dallas, TX  
[Joey Fauerso](#), San Antonio, TX  
[Colette Fu](#), Philadelphia, PA  
[Reggie Burrows Hodges](#), Maine  
[Linda Infante Lyons](#), Anchorage, AK  
[Kahlil Robert Irving](#), Saint Louis, MO  
[Tomashi Jackson](#), Cambridge, MA

# JOAN MITCHELL FOUNDATION

[Caroline Kent](#), Chicago, IL

[Fred H.C. Liang](#), Boston, MA

[Melissa Melero-Moose](#), Reno, NV

[Julio César Morales](#), Chandler, AZ

[Demetrius Oliver](#), New York, NY

[Diego Rodriguez-Warner](#), Aurora, CO

[Arvie Smith](#), Portland, OR

[Edra Soto](#), Chicago, IL

[Cory Kamehanaokalā Holt Taum](#),  
Kahalu'u, HI

[Jordan Weber](#), Des Moines, IA

[Didier William](#), Elkins Park, PA

The Foundation continues to deepen its historic commitment to increasing equity and access in its selection processes, expanding the pool of nominators and jurors to include more geographic, ethnic, and experiential diversity to ensure that grant nominees reflect a spectrum of backgrounds and approaches to their work. For 2020, the Foundation engaged more than 100 nominators from across 45 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico. The final selections were made by an outside jury—a group of artists and arts professionals who rotate annually—with an eye toward artists whose work has contributed to important artistic and cultural discourse and are deserving of greater recognition on a national level.

The work of the 2020 grant recipients represents a wide range of formal techniques, approaches, and concerns, and engages with complex and universally relevant issues, including immigration, protest and patriotism, the multiplicity of identity, and under-represented histories, among many others. They also encompass a wide breadth of demographic backgrounds: within the group, 32% of artists self-identified as Black, African, Caribbean, and African American; 20% Asian, East Asian, and South Asian; 12% as Hispanic, Latinx, and Chicax; and 8% as White and Caucasian. 52% of the artists self-identified as female. The artists also range in age from 28 to 82 and hail from across 17 states and territories across the U.S.

“Winning the Joan Mitchell Foundation grant brought a sense of affirmation, recognition, and assistance that reinforces my beliefs in my practice. As an artist of Cuban descent and a person of color, making work on issues that impact my community and me is essential. The grant provided an expanse to breathe and time to consider which direction I would pursue in the next stage of developing my artistic practice,” said artist Juana Valdes, who was awarded a Painters & Sculptors Grant in 2018.

Recipients of Painters & Sculptors Grants also become eligible to apply for residencies at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans. For the remainder of 2020 and through 2021, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Joan Mitchell Center residencies will be focused exclusively on the local artist community in New Orleans. Grantees from across the United States will once again become eligible for residencies beginning in 2022.

**About the Joan Mitchell Foundation**

The Joan Mitchell Foundation expands awareness of abstract artist Joan Mitchell's life and pioneering work and fulfills her wish to support and provide opportunities for visual artists. Through its work, the Foundation affirms and amplifies artists' essential contributions to society.

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, and ephemera. The Foundation provides loans of Mitchell artworks from its collection to museums, academic institutions, and other non-profit arts spaces. Foundation staff are dedicated to assisting researchers and sharing information about the Foundation's artwork and archival collections in order to further scholarship and broad appreciation for Mitchell's life and work. The Foundation is also supporting the Joan Mitchell Catalogue Raisonné, established in 2015, which is currently researching Mitchell's paintings in order to produce a scholarly, multi-volume book documenting all of the artist's known painted work.

Fulfilling Mitchell's mandate to "aid and assist" living artists, over the past 27 years the Foundation has evolved a range of initiatives that directly support visual artists at varying stages of their careers. The Foundation's grant programs include the annual Painters & Sculptors Grants, which provide 25 artists with unrestricted funds of \$25,000, and Emergency Grants for disaster recovery, currently committed for 2020 to the national Artist Relief initiative and Creative Response New Orleans, both responses to the COVID-19 crisis. The New Orleans-based Joan Mitchell Center traditionally hosts residencies for national and local artists, as well as artist talks, 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, along with additional professional support services, actively engage with working artists as they develop and expand their practices. For more information, visit [joanmitchellfoundation.org](http://joanmitchellfoundation.org).

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