

**JOAN MITCHELL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES INAUGURAL RECIPIENTS
OF JOAN MITCHELL FELLOWSHIPS**

***15 Artists Will Receive \$60,000 in Unrestricted Grant Funds
And Professional Support Over a Five-Year Period***

New York, NY—October 13, 2021—The Joan Mitchell Foundation today announced the inaugural recipients of its new Joan Mitchell Fellowship, which annually awards 15 artists working in the evolving fields of painting and sculpture with \$60,000 each in unrestricted funds, distributed over a five-year period. Announced in February 2021, the Foundation’s new Fellowship program re-envisioned and enhanced the impact of its earlier Painters & Sculptors Grants by significantly increasing the financial award and expanding the professional development offerings that are a hallmark of the Foundation’s approach to supporting working artists. The 15 artists receiving Fellowships range in age from 35 to 71; 80% are artists of color—and 40% identify as Hispanic, Latinx, or Chicanx—while 47% identify as female and 13% as gender non-conforming. The artists were selected in a multi-phase, juried process from 166 applicants who were identified by a diverse pool of nominators from across the country and who reflect a wide range of backgrounds in the arts.

The 2021 Joan Mitchell Fellows are:

María Berrío, Brooklyn, NY
Margaret Curtis, Tryon, NC
Adam de Boer, Los Angeles, CA
Raúl de Nieves, Brooklyn, NY
Justin Favela, Las Vegas, NV
Chie Fueki, Beacon, NY
Emily Gherard, Seattle, WA
Angela Hennessy, Oakland, CA

Mie Kongo, Evanston, IL
Guadalupe Maravilla, Brooklyn, NY
Kambui Olujimi, Queens, NY
Ronny Quevedo, Bronx, NY
Rose B. Simpson, Santa Clara Pueblo, NM
Liza Sylvestre, Champaign, IL
Luis Tapia, Santa Fe, NM

Under the new, five-year award structure, the Fellows receive an initial payment of \$20,000 this year and annual installments of \$10,000 each year for the subsequent four years. This more than doubles the \$25,000 awards from the Foundation’s earlier Painters & Sculptors Grants—while extending the impact of that support by spreading it over a five-year period to sustain longer-term financial and career planning. In total, each new yearly cycle of Fellows reflects an investment of \$900,000 directly to artists. The decision to transform the Foundation’s approach to grantmaking is an outgrowth of a strategic planning process undertaken in 2019 and 2020 that in part evaluated the best possible use of the Foundation’s resources—as informed by the national landscape of support for visual artists and the types of support that artists most need.

“We are excited to share the names of our inaugural Joan Mitchell Fellows, whose backgrounds and work capture an incredible range of creative vision, approach, and experience,” said Christa

Blatchford, Executive Director at the Joan Mitchell Foundation. “The new fellowship program continues the Foundation’s decades-long commitment to providing unrestricted resources directly to individual artists working in painting and sculpture, while expanding to a five-year model that strengthens the financial and career-development support we will provide. This Fellowship, which bears Joan Mitchell’s name, deepens the way we fulfill her wishes for the Foundation to give artists the agency needed to sustain a life-long studio practice.”

The financial awards are augmented by an expansive range of programs, services, and consultations that help working artists at different career stages address professional and personal needs and goals. This includes: virtual studio visits and one-on-one professional practice consultations; convenings that facilitate network-building; and programs that focus on personal finance, legacy planning, and thought leadership, among other opportunities. Many of these offerings will be tailored to the particular interests of each class of Fellows based on information provided by each artist during their first year of the Fellowship. As with the previous Painters & Sculptors Grants, the Joan Mitchell Fellows will also be eligible to apply for a residency at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans, further increasing the range of support available to them.

"The transition from our annual grants program to a multiyear model is a commitment to a sustained engagement that enhances the benefit to our artist community and supports the creation of new approaches to direct support for artists," said Kay Takeda, Deputy Director of Artist Programs at the Joan Mitchell Foundation. "Over five years, the funding will be reliable and predictable, but the non-monetary support will be responsive, flexible, and open to change in order to best support artist priorities and decisions. We are very much looking forward to kicking off this process with such a diverse and innovative group."

The selection of the 2021 Joan Mitchell Fellows was initiated by 88 nominators, 44% of whom are themselves artists, and nearly a quarter of whom were participating in the process for the first time. The nominators reflect broad geographic diversity—representing 47 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico—as well ethnic, gender, and age diversity, and they work as curators, educators, and arts administrators, in addition to those who identify as artists. They identified the 166 artists who were then invited to apply for Fellowships. A group of five jurors subsequently evaluated the submissions with an eye to artistic achievement, the relationship between the artists’ stated goals and their work, and the financial impact of the award, to arrive at a final group of 15 awardees.

The selected artists are responding to the news of their awards by sharing intentions for their work and professional growth over the next five years. Among the intentions articulated thus far are plans to expand physical studio space, explore new collaborations, cut back on teaching and prioritize studio work, focus on legacy planning, and find new ways to give back to their communities.

“Beyond the financial support of the Joan Mitchell Fellowship, there is a level of recognition that aids in securing additional support needed for long-term projects,” said 2021 Fellow Kambui

Olujimi. “The investment, support, and belief of an esteemed institution such as the Joan Mitchell Foundation greatly contributes to the sustainability of my practice, and the Fellowship addresses the administrative, strategic, and logistical support I need at this point in my career. I believe that this Fellowship will have exciting, and also unpredictable, resonance for me and for my work.”

The Joan Mitchell Fellowship maintains the Foundation’s longstanding commitment to recognize and support US-based artists working in the fields of painting and sculpture, whose work has contributed to important artistic and cultural discourse and is deserving of greater recognition on a national level. The emphasis on painters and sculptors is in accordance with artist Joan Mitchell’s specified focus for the Foundation’s support and also recognizes studio-based and process-driven creative practices that may not align well with prevailing models of annual, project-based visual arts support.

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. Fulfilling Mitchell’s mandate to “aid and assist” living artists, over the past 28 years the Foundation has evolved a range of initiatives that have directly supported more than 1,000 visual artists at varying stages of their careers. The Joan Mitchell Fellowship gives annual unrestricted awards of \$60,000 directly to artists, with funds distributed over a five-year period alongside dedicated and flexible professional development. 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; due to COVID-19, the program is focused on local artists for 2021. 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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