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ARTADIA ANNOUNCES 2022 CHICAGO AWARDEES



Left to right: Maryam Taghavi, Selva Aparicio, Azadeh Gholizadeh

For immediate release

(Chicago, IL | March 30, 2022) **Artadia**, a nonprofit grant making organization and nationwide community of visual artists, curators, and patrons, is pleased to announce that **Selva Aparicio**, **Azadeh Gholizadeh**, and **Maryam Taghavi** have been selected as the recipients of the **2022 Chicago Artadia Awards**.

Artadia is honored to partner with three foundations who have committed to supporting exceptional artists in Chicago with these \$10,000 awards in their respective name. Selva Aparicio is the recipient of The Pritzker Pucker Family Foundation Artadia Award; Azadeh Gholizadeh is the recipient of The LeRoy Neiman and Janet Byrne Neiman Foundation Artadia Award; and Maryam Taghavi is the recipient of The Joyce Foundation Artadia Award.

Press-approved images of each artist's work are available [here](#).

In addition to the financial awards, all Awardees will have access to the ongoing benefits of the Artadia Awards program. The 2022 Chicago Artadia Award application was open to visual artists working in any visual media, at any stage in their career, who have been living and working within Chicago Cook County for a minimum of two years.

The decision was reached after an extensive two-tiered jury process, culminating in virtual studio visits with Jurors **Solana Chehtman**, Director of Creative Practice and Social Impact, The Shed and **Robyn Ferrell**, Associate Curator, The Art Institute of Chicago.

"It was an honor to participate as a Juror in the Artadia Awards, and learn more about the exciting current landscape of contemporary artists in Chicago," **Solana Chehtman** commented. "We had a wonderfully diverse group of artists, practices, and perspectives, which speaks not only to the outstanding local talent but also to their trust in Artadia as an important source of support."

Chicago-based curator **Robyn Farrell** shared in a similar vein, "The depth and range of this year's Artadia cycle is a testament to the brilliance and dynamism of Chicago's arts community. It was an honor to participate in Artadia's essential program of support that encourages artists to further engage and enrich their practice and our city's cultural landscape."

All three Awardees embodied the spirit of Artadia's mission to support some of the most innovative artists working today. Of **Aparicio's** work, **Chehtman** remarked that her "endless curiosity, conceptual and technical rigor, and the particular fascination she finds in liminal spaces around death and decay, set her work apart: it is not only beautiful and poetic, it is also powerful and transformative - both at the individual and the collective levels. She's at a pivotal point in her career, and not afraid to try new things, which makes her the perfect candidate for this kind of support." **Farrell** likewise noted, "[Selva's] distinct form of making is both corporeal and conceptual, executed through a range of unexpected media that includes lettuce, cicada wings, dandelions, and public gatherings. It is through these highly disparate sources that Aparicio imbues meaning through the ephemeral which manifests deeply sensitive issues of death, mourning, and intimacy."

"Maryam Taghavi situates language across material forms as a means to explore alternate belief systems and multidisciplinary models of meaning-making. Her experimentation and exploitation of traditional letter characters--through photography, painting, video, performance, and installation--opens up new interpretations and opportunities for experience. These transpositions push typical modes of exhibition and linguistic strategies that expose the intertwined and complicated relationship between language, politics, and cultural history," **Robyn Farrell** commented, on **Taghavi**. **Chehtman** echoed, "We were excited to select Maryam for the Artadia Awards, as a way to support the next stage of her already strong practice"

"In her particular use of abstraction and color throughout mediums, Azadeh Gholizadeh's work conveys a unique sense of togetherness in loneliness. While she considers her process a way to find balance in chaos, her work also dares to break the traditions of the landscape shape and the frame itself, inviting viewers to reconsider their perspective," **Chehtman** shared, "This award couldn't come at a more important point in her career, where she's opening up to new technologies, and continuing to evolve her strong research." **Farrell** also added about **Gholizadeh**: "[her] work finds freedom through rigidity in a methodic, yet meditative process that layers memory, loss, and place. Her abstracted tapestries redefine the traditions of her chosen

medium as she utilizes formal elements of color, composition, and scale to explore nostalgia and belonging through a host of sensorial considerations and personal experience.”

In addition to Aparicio, Gholizadeh, and Taghavi, this year’s Finalists for the Chicago Award included **Ashley January**, **Jeffly Gabriela Molina**, and **Judith Mullen**, selected by **Christina de Léon**, Associate Curator, Cooper Hewitt, **Negarra A. Kudumu**, Independent Curator and Founder/Director, Art + Healing, and **Robyn Farrell**, Associate Curator, Art Institute of Chicago.

Since its founding in 1999, Artadia has awarded over \$5 million in unrestricted funds to over 350 artists. Celebrating visual artists and the foundational role they play in shaping society, the Artadia Award benefits three artists annually in each of seven major US cities with high concentrations of creative workers—Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York. Beyond the grant, the Award includes lifelong access to a community of fellow artists and patrons. The Artadia Award is designed to provide essential funding and recognition to artists at pivotal points in their careers, strengthen their communities, and spur new levels of career achievement.

Additional supporters of the 2022 Chicago Artadia Awards include the Artadia Board of Directors, Artadia Council Members, and individual donors across the country.

Press Contact

Bora Kim

bora@artadia.org | 212 727 2233

About [Selva Aparicio](#) (she/her)

Selva Aparicio (b. 1987) is a Catalan artist living and working in Chicago. She holds a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, an MFA in Sculpture from Yale. Her work has been shown internationally in solo and group exhibitions including the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Yale Center for British Art, Can Mario Museum, CRUSH Curatorial, Kyoto International Craft Center, Instituto Cervantes NY, and the Centre de Cultura Contemporanea de Barcelona. She has received several major awards including a JUNCTURE Fellowship in Art and International Human Rights (2016), the Blair Dickinson Memorial Prize (2017), a MAKER Grant from the Chicago Artists Coalition (2020), and was named one of the 2020 breakout artists in Chicago by NewCity Art.

Aparicio identifies as an interdisciplinary artist exploring ideas of memory, intimacy, and the temporality of life through installations that celebrate the cyclicity of the natural world. Working with nature's ephemera, including cicada wings, oyster shells, and human cadavers, her praxis is an extended death ritual which foregrounds a unique reverence for the discarded. Capturing the meanings imbued in these materials and the rituals informing their significance and sentimentality enables both the facilitation of environmental, social, and political activism through art and the creation of outlets for the public navigation of grief and mourning in a world so defined by loss.

About [Azadeh Gholizadeh](#) (she/her)

Azadeh Gholizadeh is a Chicago-based artist and educator. Born in Tehran, she received her MA in architecture from Iran University of Science and Technology and her MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Solo exhibitions include *Dawn to Dusk*, which currently is on view at Goldfinch Gallery in Chicago. Gholizadeh's work has been featured in the December edition of Zwirner's Platform Initiative in 2021. In addition, Gholizadeh was a finalist for the Hopper Prize in 2021.

Azadeh Gholizadeh's works explore the body, landscape, and the fragmentation of memory through an examination of her own emotional connection to a sense of belonging. She is interested in thinking about the relationship of landscape to memory in a manner described by Simon Schama as "a way of looking; of rediscovering what we already have ... instead of being yet another explanation of what we have lost, it is an exploration of what we may find."

About [Maryam Taghavi](#) (she/her)

Maryam Taghavi is an artist and educator. She was born in Tehran, moved to Canada for art school and currently resides in Chicago. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Emily Carr University and Master of Fine A from School of the Art Institute of Chicago where she was the recipient of New Artist Society Scholarship. Her work appears across disciplines of installation, painting, video, publication, and performance. She has exhibited nationally and internationally at institutions such as LAXART, Queens Museum, Exterressa Museum, Chicago Cultural Center, Sullivan Galleries, EXPO, Driehaus Museum, Chicago Artists Coalition, The University Club, and Sazmanab Gallery among others. Her work will be a part of the permanent collection at the O'Hare airport in January 2023.

Language has a strong presence in Taghavi's work. She is driven by a curiosity to experience language beyond the limits of linguistic signifiers. She engages with various forms of language through her process so that the letter forms can begin to act rather than speak. In her latest work she is using language of the occult practices derived from Islamic mysticism. These letter forms, sigils, promise to evoke metaphysical powers. These forms become channels in her work to transition from form to formlessness, concept to volition, presence to absence. Her abstracted forms hold a possibility of a wish yet to come into fulfillment. In Islamic mysticism, the word *gheib* translates to "absent"; it is the force that is not perceived yet shapes all things. In occult practices, its power is experienced through repetition, ritual, prayer, and movement. For Taghavi, there is enduring power in *gheib*.