



For Immediate Release

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ARTADIA ANNOUNCES AWARDEES FOR EIGHTH CHICAGO AWARDS

Chicago, IL - Artadia is pleased to announce the Awardees for the 2017 Chicago Artadia Awards: **Rashayla Marie Brown** and **Claire Pentecost**. As the 2017 Chicago Artadia Awardees, **Brown** and **Pentecost** will receive \$10,000 in unrestricted funds as well as access to the ongoing benefits of the Artadia Awards program. Additionally, Artadia's booth at EXPO CHICAGO will feature original artwork by the two Awardees. Pentecost will present *The Library of Tears*, a large-scale sculpture that employs materials resulting from oil and gas extraction, and Brown will present a multimedia installation featuring photographs, video, and ephemera. This is Artadia's eighth Award cycle in Chicago providing unrestricted Awards to artists in the city. Applications for the Awards were open to any visual artist living in Chicago for over two years, working in all media, and at any stage of their career.

In the first round of jurying, **Rashid Johnson**, artist; **Omar Kholeif**, Manilow Senior Curator and Director of Global Initiatives, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and **Susan Thompson**, Assistant Curator, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, selected five Finalists: **Rashayla Marie Brown**, **Alex Chitty**, **Cameron Clayborn**, **Faheem Majeed**, and **Claire Pentecost**. **Megha Ralapati**, Residency and Special Projects Manager, Hyde Park Art Center joined Kholeif for the second round of evaluations. The jurors conducted studio visits with the five Finalists to determine the Awardees.

"Rashayla Marie Brown is developing a new paradigm that shifts the way we consider identity and representation today," Ralapati said. "The work enacts a code of ethics for all who participate in it: artistic collaborators, patrons, and of course the artist herself. Rashayla is on the verge of big things, which we hope this Award will help make possible." Kholeif expanded upon the selection of Brown as an Awardee: "Rashayla Marie Brown's practice critically explores modes of production and display. Working as a true interdisciplinary artist, her work encompasses photography, installation, and performance, and brings together these fields in new and discursive ways. Her work engages with questions of identity and how it is posited for a world that has become increasingly fragmented and we truly believe that this Award recognizes her analytical thinking in relation to the broader social, cultural realms of what it means to be an artist working today."

Kholeif went on to describe the significance of Pentecost's work: "Claire Pentecost's rich practice interrogates the fundamental meaning of what it means to live in the world today. In the age of great social turmoil, her work returns us to the elemental facets of life, soil! How do the elements that we use help fundamentally construct us as human beings? How have corporations co-opted ways of living and how are they changing our collective future? Pentecost's work proposes a possible utopia, but also urgently raises key questions about the nature of the changing environments that we inhabit each day. In an age where the precarity of the environment is continually brought into question, her work feels more important than ever, and we hope that this Award will continue to expose to as broad as possible an audience." Ralapati reiterated this sentiment: "Claire Pentecost has spent two decades evolving a practice, which ardently interrogates the cumulative impacts of climate change on our planet and all its life forms. Her work reminds us of the great urgency of this issue, to science and art in equal measure."

Artadia is now holding Awards cycles in each one of its cities every year, allowing the organization to provide more consistent support to distinct arts communities across the United States.

Artadia is a national non-profit organization that supports artists with unrestricted, merit-based Awards followed by a lifetime of program opportunities. Artadia's Awards program is unique in that it allows any artist to apply, engages nationally recognized curators to review work, and culminates in direct grants. Since 1999, Artadia has awarded over \$3 million to more than 300 artists in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco.

The 2017 Chicago Awards are generously supported by The Joyce Foundation, Artadia's Board of Directors, and Chicago Council members.

2017 CHICAGO ARTADIA AWARDEES



Rashayla Marie Brown, *Credibility, Viability, Accuracy/ Maya Angelou as a Sex Worker/Can't Knock the Hustle*, 2016 archival pigment print, 24 x 36 inches

RASHAYLA MARIE BROWN

Artist-scholar Rashayla Marie Brown (RMB) manages a living studio practice across an extensive list of cultural production modes, including photography, performance, writing, drawing, installation, and video art. Encompassing themes of autonomy and self-mastery at the intersections of art history, religion, and popular culture, RMB's work often investigates power dynamics through the emotion and personal vulnerability of lived experience.



Claire Pentecost, *The Library of Tears*, 2016
petroleum coke, Baken crude, Texas sweet crude, Alberta tar sands, Athabasca River mud, Calumet-Saganashkee Canal algae, sulfur, copper, zinc, asphalt, aluminum, clay, wax, paper, glass, wire, gauze, glue, string, feathers, fur, snakeskin, egg shells, seeds, shredded US currency, scaffolding, miscellaneous, 72 (L) x 31 (W) x 144 (H) inches

CLAIRE PENTECOST

"I feel that our times impose something like a critical juncture on all of us. Among the many urgencies of this moment is the likely repeal of every significant policy and legislation designed to protect the natural environment and the health of all living things, including humans. More than ever I wonder how to leverage my limited influence as an artist toward building a culture of care for life."