



For Immediate Release

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## ARTADIA ANNOUNCES FIVE FINALISTS FOR 2017 HOUSTON AWARDS

New York, NY - Artadia is pleased to announce the five Finalists for the 2017 Houston Awards: **Regina Agu**, **Catherine Colangelo**, **Gabriel Martinez**, **Kaneem Smith**, and **Sarah Welch**. The Finalists will receive studio visits with second round jurors, who will ultimately select two artists as Awardees to receive \$10,000 in unrestricted funds.

The Finalists were selected by jurors **Ryan N. Dennis**, Public Art Director, Project Row Houses, Houston, TX; **Claire Gilman**, Senior Curator, The Drawing Center, New York, NY; and **Ryan Trecartin**, artist, Los Angeles, CA.

Local juror **Dennis** spoke to the strength of the submissions: "It was a treat to be on this review panel with my colleagues in the field and represent Houston with pride. All the artists that applied are producing good work and add to the contemporary landscape so it was a hard decision to narrow it down to five but we did, and I feel great with our selections."

The review piqued **Gilman's** interest in the Houston arts community: "It was a pleasure and a privilege to get to know the work of so many talented artists through the Artadia review process. It was inspiring to be introduced to the vibrant Houston artistic community, and it was equally rewarding to share thoughts and opinions with my fellow jurors both of whom brought unique perspectives and insights to the conversation. I look forward to seeing how the work of the Houston applicants develops and am encouraged to take a trip to Houston in the future to see for myself."

This is Artadia's eighth Award cycle in Houston. The application was open to all visual artists living in Houston for over two years, working in any media, and at any stage of their career. Finalists and Artadia Award recipients are selected through Artadia's rigorous, two-tier jury review process. In the first round of review, jurors evaluated the merit of all submissions and collaboratively determined the five Finalists.

Artadia is a national non-profit organization that supports artists with unrestricted, merit-based Awards followed by a lifetime of program opportunities. Artadia is unique in that it allows any artist to apply, engages nationally recognized artists and 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 Houston Artadia Awards are generously supported by The Brown Foundation, the Houston Endowment, Artadia Houston Council members, and Artadia's Board of Directors.

## 2017 Houston Awards Finalists

### REGINA AGU

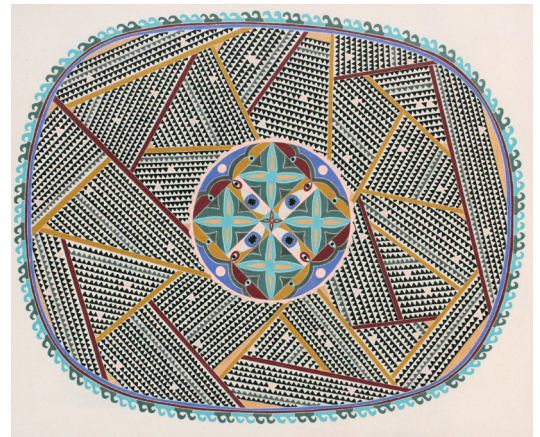
“My work is conceptually oriented towards language, history and representation. I address these as they coalesce and intersect in contemporary ideas around the landscape and communities of color. I produce drawings, installations, photographs, performances, texts, and collaborative public projects.”



Regina Agu, *Sea Change* (installation view at Project Row Houses), 2016, vinyl print, 80 x 6 feet

### CATHERINE COLANGELO

Catherine Colangelo's paintings stem from a visual vocabulary as varied as illuminated manuscripts, Indian and Islamic miniatures, textiles, and visionary art. Her vibrant and unusual works are painstakingly created with graphite and gouache on muslin, using a process of concentration and skill that is also comforting and meditative. Her recent work explores the idea of shields, seen to act as talismans or charms, which ward off evil, while simultaneously bringing good fortune. They encompass the values of motherhood and evoke the role of protector that one must assume over her children.



Catherine Colangelo, *Green Center Shield*, 2016, gouache and graphite on muslin over wood, 20 x 24 inches

### GABRIEL MARTINEZ

“I employ a series of ongoing gestures in the built environment to interrogate the power relations at work in the management of dominated spaces. I use repetition to address political, biological, and cultural conflict. These interventions are part of an everyday set of activities intended to catalyze and criticize my relationship to the city and the role it plays in disguising the direct action of power over the bodies of its citizens.”



Gabriel Martinez, *Jar of Trinitite (Taster's Choice/Proving Ground)*, 2015, digital print from X-rays exposed to atomic rocks, 22 x 28 inches

### KANEEM SMITH

Kaneem Smith's sculptural installations draw themselves from a familial and historical standpoint of personal experience and the human condition. Smith's exploration of three-dimensional form and installation incorporates deceptively subtle ideas of the exploitation of human anthropology, archeology, and American history. These concepts run a common thread throughout her body of work.



Kaneem Smith, (left to right) *Reap and Sow*, 2014, linen, encaustic wax, cotton bolls 4 x 5 x 3 inches; *Wring Out*, 2014 green cotton, burlap, encaustic wax 4 x 8 1/2 x 5 inches

### SARAH WELCH

Sarah Welch self-publishes comic books, zines, and prints. She regularly creates installations in tandem with her comics. These spaces are built around objects and imagery lifted from the books' narratives and function as reading rooms for viewers. Her stories chronicle the present and speculative future of the Gulf Coast with a focus on women's solidarity and climate change.



Sarah Welch, *Endless Monsoon IV: Very Pleasant Transit Center*, 2016, Risograph printed comic, 5 x 7 inches