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SHORT-LIST OF 15 FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR ARTADIA AWARDS 2012 CHICAGO

New York, NY—The exceptional range of artists living and working in Chicago was evident as three prominent panelists selected the 15 finalists for the Artadia Awards 2012 Chicago. Panelists **Shannon Stratton**, Executive & Creative Director, threewalls, Chicago; **Kelly Kivland**, Curatorial Associate, Dia Art Foundation, New York; and **Clifford Owens**, artist, New York named the finalists out of nearly 500 applications received for the sixth cycle of Artadia Awards in Chicago.

The 15 Finalists for the Artadia Awards 2012 Chicago are: **Candida Alvarez, Mike Andrews, Leslie Baum, Samantha Bittman, Tirtza Even, Diana Guerrero-Maciá, David Hartt, Richard Hull, Anna Kunz, Lisa Lindvay, Heather Mekkelson, Harold Mendez, Rebecca Shore, Deb Sokolow, and Ian Weaver.** (See attachment for images and descriptions of the Finalists' work.)

First-round panelist Kelly Kivland said of the process, "My experience as a juror for the Chicago Artadia Awards was incredibly inspiring and, moreover, an important and valuable reminder of the diverse depth of contemporary artistic creation in the United States at this moment. While our decision was hard given the quality of the applicants, we were all honored to select Chicago artists who are well deserving of this year's Artadia Award."

Applications for the Artadia Awards were open to visual artists in all media and at any stage of their career working and living in Cook County. The application was available online for two months from June 20 to August 20, 2012. A total number of 481 applications were received in response to the open call to Chicago artists.

Fellow juror **Clifford Owens** added, "As a New York City-based artist, I rarely have an opportunity to engage with the work of my contemporaries based in other U.S. cities. As an Artadia panelist, I was impressed with the remarkably fearless, cutting-edge work by Chicago-based artists. Clearly, Artadia is wholly committed to supporting artists across the U.S. without concern for or deferring to the market forces or institutional conceits that drive the art-world. In this respect, Artadia is a radical, artist-sensitive organization that understands why serious artists across the nation who are engaged in a "life of the mind" must be supported and celebrated."

Later this month **Shannon Stratton** will be joined by **Jill Dawsey**, Associate Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; and **Evelyn Hankins**, Associate Curator, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC in Chicago for the final-jury studio visits with the 15 Finalists Sunday, September 16 through Tuesday, September 18. The jury will then select seven Artadia Awardees for two awards of \$15,000 and five awards of \$3,000.

Additionally, Artadia is pleased to partner with EXPO CHICAGO for this awards cycle: In conjunction with the final round, works by the finalists will be on view at the Artadia booth at EXPO CHICAGO September 19–23, 2012. The Artadia booth is being curated by Steven Bridges, Assistant Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago.

Artadia will announce the awardees at the fair on Friday, September 21 at 12:15 pm at the Dialogues stage.

Lead funding for the Chicago Artadia Awards is generously provided by Larry and Marilyn Fields. Additional support provided by Sally and Jon Kovler, Artadia's National Council members Barbara Fosco, Jack and Sandra Guthman, and Anne Van Wart and Mike Keable; as well donations by Karen and Steve Berkowitz, Eszter Borvendeg and Mark Wight, Curt Conklin, Dirk Denison, Brian Herbstritt, Gael Neeson and Stefan Edlis, Pamela and Art Sanders, and Linda Warren. All contributions to Artadia Chicago directly support the awards and program. Program operations and overhead are underwritten by Artadia's Board and special donor groups. Artadia has long-standing, close relationships with local foundations and private patrons of the arts who recognize the importance of providing unrestricted funding to visual artists at the local level.

About Artadia: The Fund for Art and Dialogue

Artadia's mission is to encourage innovative practice and meaningful dialogue across the United States by providing visual artists in specific communities with unrestricted awards and a national network of support. Artadia was founded as The ArtCouncil in 1997 by investment banker and art collector Christopher E. Vroom. The first awards were given in San Francisco, where Vroom was living at the time. Chicago was added as a program city in 2001, Houston in 2003, Boston in 2007, and Atlanta in 2009. Started as an individual's vision, Artadia's base of support now includes private foundations, a national Board of Directors, a National Council, a Junior Council, and members who are active in supporting the core of creative culture: the individual artist.

Artadia Awards are determined through a rigorous jury process that employs nationally prominent curators, artists, and critics. Artadia partners with local foundations and individuals in the host cities to raise funds that go directly to artists in that community. Artadia matches those contributions by providing the funds that administer the program. Once an artist receives an Artadia Award, he or she becomes part of a national network of lifetime support.

In 2009, Artadia launched a New York Artist Residency program, which brings Artadia Awardees from each of its program cities to New York for a three-month residency at the International Studio and Curatorial Program (ISCP) in Brooklyn. This groundbreaking addition to Artadia's commitment to individual artists is the first of its kind in New York City for US-based visual artists and is supported by the National Endowment for Arts (NEA). In 2010, Artadia launched a publications program and an Exhibitions Exchange program that shows Awardees from one partner city in another, offering Awardees crucial exposure outside of their local communities. Artadia also presents events in New York and Miami, which intend to not only demonstrate the tremendous creativity in partner communities, but also facilitate exchange and dialogue nationwide. Most recently, Artadia inaugurated an exhibitions space in New York to provide a platform for awardees to present their work in New York.

For press inquiries and information on Artadia, contact news@artadia.org.

For information on becoming a member or joining the National Council, Junior Council, or Junior Council WEST at Artadia, contact: Ute Zimmermann, Program Director, utezimmermann@artadia.org; 212-727-2233.

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