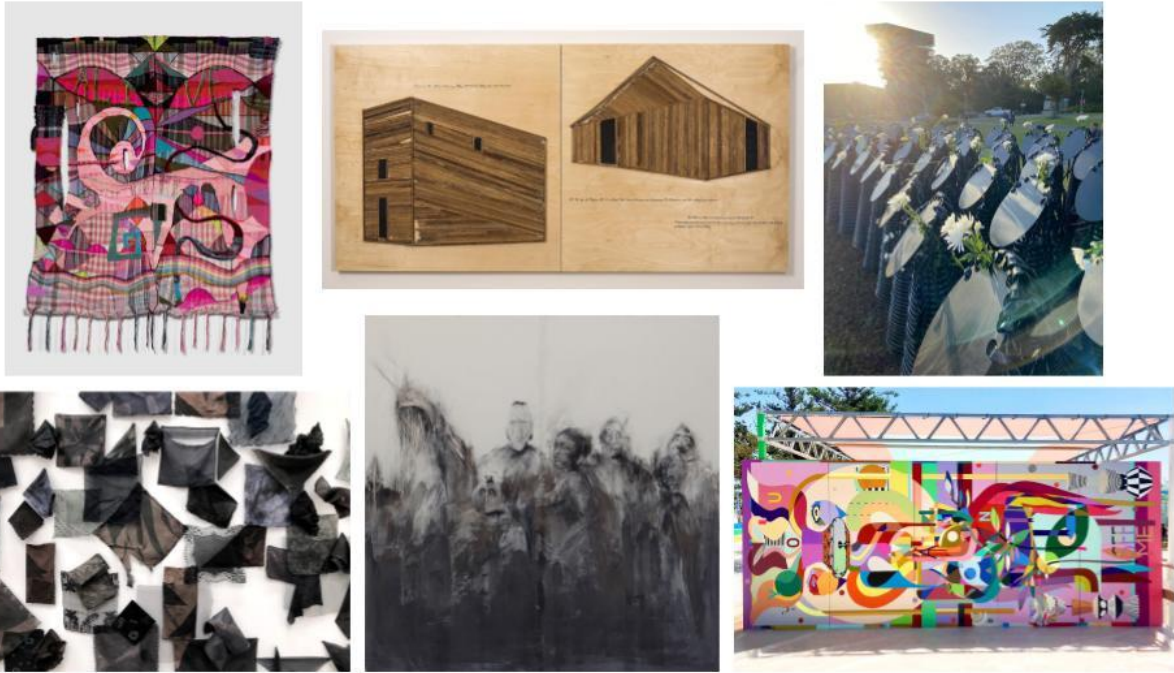


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## ARTADIA ANNOUNCES 2021 SAN FRANCISCO FINALISTS



**Top, Left to Right:** Terri Friedman, Rodney Ewing, Dana King. **Bottom, Left to Right:** Klea McKenna, Sydney Cain, MCXT Collective

**Embargoed through August 10, 2021, 1:00pm ET**

(NEW YORK, NY | August 10, 2021) – **Artadia**, a nonprofit grant making organization and nationwide community of visual artists, curators, and patrons, is pleased to announce that **Sydney Cain, Rodney Ewing, Terri Friedman, Dana King, Klea McKenna**, and **MCXT Collective** have been selected as the 2021 San Francisco Artadia Awards Finalists.

The Finalists will each receive virtual studio visits with second-round jurors, who will ultimately select three artists to receive \$10,000 unrestricted funds.

Press-approved images of each artist's work are available **here**.

The 2021 San Francisco 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 nine Bay Area counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma for a minimum of two years.

This year's Finalists jurors were **Pujan Gandhi**, Jan Emison Assistant Curator of South & Southeast Asian Art, Minneapolis Institute of Art; **Monetta White**, Executive Director, Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco; and **Juana Williams**, Independent Curator.

Of the Finalists, **Pujan Gandhi** states "After a stimulating and methodological process, it was such a treat to arrive at these 6 artists, each of whom has crystalized a distinctive approach in their respective medium and left us wanting to learn and see more."

"As I have a mostly outsider viewpoint, the wide array of media and themes depicted in the submissions gave me a pleasant sense of the outstanding artwork being created in the San Francisco area. While the selection process was difficult, the group of finalists portrays a diversity of artists who have impressive careers and stunning artwork -- artists whose careers will ideally launch into new stages with Artadia's support," says **Juana Williams**. "I was honored to have the opportunity to learn about so many new artists and works, and to play a role in the continued support San Francisco Artadia offers to local artists."

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 six major US cities with high concentrations of creative workers—Atlanta, 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.

The 2021 San Francisco Artadia Awards are generously supported by the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation as well as the Artadia Board of Directors, Artadia Council Members, and individual donors across the country.

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### **About Sydney Cain**

Sydney “Sage” Cain is a visual artist born and raised in San Francisco, CA. As an act of empowered remembering, Cain’s work invites viewers to challenge the continuum of colonialism that privileges scientific language and understanding of mystical experiences over indigenous epistemologies. Utilizing graphite, powdered metals, printmaking, and chalk as transcendent emblems for myth-making, her work offers reverent narratives that reveal the power of remembrance and spiritual evolution within “unseen” Black afterlives.

Cain’s work has been exhibited at Betti Ono, Ashara Ekundayo Gallery, Rena Bransten Gallery and the Oakland Museum of California. They have received the Emerging Artist Award at the Museum of the African Diaspora and the Honorary AIR Award at Kala Art Institute. Cain is currently represented by Rena Bransten Gallery with a solo exhibition scheduled to open there late 2021.

### **About Rodney Ewing**

Rodney Ewing (b. 1964, Baton Rouge, La.) is a visual artist, whose drawings, installations, and mixed media works focus on his need to intersect body and place, memory and fact, and to re-examine human histories, cultural conditions, and trauma. His work has been exhibited at The Museum of the African Diaspora in San Francisco, The Drawing Center in NY, and most recently at the Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco. Ewing is a grantee of the San Francisco Art Commission Individual Artist Grant (2016-2020) and his work has recently been included in to the collection of Tufts University Art Gallery.

As a topic-based artist, Ewing’s interdisciplinary practice involves extensive research of overlooked historical objects, individuals, spaces and events of the Black Diaspora. His narratives explore and translate the actual and emotional dimensions of these subjects to draw the viewer in toward the piece and immerses them in a reorienting experience of images, words and ideas. Ewing’s layering of visual elements create an experience that is unique and nuanced within the context of his prints, sculptures, drawings, or installations. With his work he is creating a platform that requires us to be both present and profound in our observations.

### **About Terri Friedman**

Terri Friedman’s work responds to the current climate of anxiety and uncertainty by enlisting color, abstraction, and text to explore topical issues and personal narratives. Brain science, in particular research on neuroplasticity and epigenetics, are growing fields that set the context for her work. She explores with fiber and optimism the brain-body connection, mental health, and the brain’s ability to rewire from psychological and physical trauma.

After receiving her BA from Brown University and her MFA from the Claremont Graduate School, Friedman exhibited her kinetic sculptures at such venues as the San Jose Museum of Art, MOCA’s Geffen Contemporary, Orange County Museum of Art, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. More recently she has exhibited her large scale tapestries at the Berkeley Art Museum, San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, Long Beach Museum of Art, CODA Museum, Netherlands, and gallery exhibitions in New York and California curated by Jenelle Porter, Glenn Adamson, Betty Sue Hertz and Rirkrit

Tiravanija. In 2019 she was featured in Vitamin T: Threads and Textiles in Contemporary Art (Phaidon Press) and in 2020 she had a solo show at the CUE Art Foundation in NYC curated by artist Kathy Butterly.

### **About Dana King**

Dana King is a classical figurative sculptor who creates public monuments of Black Bodies in Bronze. King prefers sculptures because they inhabit space and space is power. She believes sculpture provides an opportunity to shape culturally significant memories that determine how African descendants are publicly held and remembered.

I create Black Bodies in Bronze. My work explores a subversive concept in a traditional form. I rescue everyday Black American heroines/heroes from unjust obscurity and then ennoble their tenacity and courage through figurative sculpture.

Across countless generations elders have communicated culture, history, and wisdom through storytelling. I continue that tradition in bronze, resurrecting our ancestors' love and truth from America's buried past. Intense research shapes these memories. It empowers me to create art that invites people to understand themselves and their lives in a connected and compelling way.

Equity and justice are integral to my art practice.

### **About Klea McKenna**

Klea McKenna (born 1980, Freestone, CA) is a visual artist who also writes and makes films. She is known for cameraless photography and her inventive use of light-sensitive materials. Her work is held in several public collections, including SFMOMA, LACMA, Getty Museum, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, the US Embassy Collection and The Victoria and Albert Museum in London. She studied art at UCLA, UCSC and California College of the Arts. Klea is the daughter of renegade ethnobotanists who raised her in Hawaii, California and on the road. She now lives in San Francisco with her partner and their young children.

In her recent work Klea McKenna uses analog light-sensitive materials to reanimate artifacts from material culture. Her subjects (found clothing, textiles and amateur paintings) bear the marks, flaws, fingerprints and damage that accumulate through time, devotion and contact with our human bodies. In darkness, she embosses these charged objects into photographic paper then casts light across the resulting textures. This unruly process subverts photography's intended use by making touch more primary than sight and generates images that contain a confounding blend of evidence and fiction. Her tactile way of reading the world reveals broken patterns, and imperfections everywhere - our stories recorded in the surfaces we live with.

### **About MCXT Collective**

MCXT is a creative partnership between Monica Canilao and Xara Thustra birthed out of a joint wish to communicate care and empowerment within public spaces. The duo uses public murals, performance, artist dinners, installation, and film, placing special emphasis on putting the most

vulnerable people in society first, uplifting and using their work to directly support community via mutual aid. Together the artists share a deep need to make a vibrant, interactive and accessible world using the tools of art and activism.

Xara Thustra's art has been inseparable from resistance and queer community. Xara has toured back and forth across the country with the intention of recruiting the greater queer spirit, demanding basic needs for QTBIPOC and all people within the struggle and under the thumb. With great emphasis on celebration, self worth, and empowerment- Doing so using art, mutual aid, performance, feeding others/ using food as a medium and listening.

Monica Canilao earned a BFA at The California College of Arts and Crafts and utilizes recycled materials in both art practice and all aspects of her life as a way to generate a personal and living history. In 2013 she was awarded the Fleishhacker Fellowship and has shown in galleries, community spaces and abandoned places world wide. Both artists are currently based in Oakland, California and have each played vital roles for over two decades in the San Francisco Bay Area DIY and mission school art scenes and beyond.