ARTADIA ANNOUNCES 2022 HOUSTON FINALISTS

Top, left to right: Sandra de la Rosa, Matt Manalo, Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud
Bottom, left to right: Saúl Hernández-Vargas, Anthony Suber, Ian Gerson

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Artadia, a non-profit grantmaking organization and nationwide community of visual artists, curators, and patrons, is pleased to announce that Ian Gerson, Saúl Hernández-Vargas, Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud, Matt Manalo, Sandra de la Rosa, and Anthony Suber have been selected as the 2022 Houston Artadia Awards Finalists.

The Finalists will each hold virtual studio visits with second-round jurors, who will ultimately select three artists to receive $15,000 each in unrestricted funds. The 2022 Houston Artadia Awards are supported by the John R. Eckel Jr. Foundation, the Brown Foundation, Cecily Horton, the Artadia Board of Directors, Artadia Council Members, and individual donors across the country.

The 2022 Houston Artadia Awards application was open to visual artists working in any visual media, at any stage in their career, who have been living and working within Harris County for a minimum of two years.
This year’s semi-final jurors were Dr. Anita N. Bateman, Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Connie Choi, Associate Curator of Permanent Collection, The Studio Museum in Harlem; and Ryan Inouye, Associate curator of the 58th Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art.

The Round 2 jurors will be Dr. Anita N. Bateman joined by Phillip A. Townsend, Curator of Art, Art Galleries at Black Studies (AGBS), The University of Texas at Austin.

On the jurying process, juror Dr. Anita N. Bateman shared, “The virtual studio visits for the Houston Artadia Awards only confirmed the immense talent of the six finalists, and in effect, the creative force that is the Houston Arts community.”

“I very much appreciated the opportunity to see the breadth of work submitted by artists for the 2022 Houston Artadia Awards and to be in conversation with both Anita Bateman and Ryan Inouye about the artists’ diverse practices,” remarked fellow juror Connie Choi. “The Finalists demonstrated an incredible approach to materials that intrigued me and a deep commitment to the community that engaged me.”

Juror Ryan Inouye expressed, “It was meaningful to come together with other colleagues to learn from the artists in Houston. In their respective work, Anthony, Ayanna, Ian, Matt, Sandra, and Saúl develop critical language that enables us to recognize the rich social shapes and ways of being that comprise our present moment.”

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

About Artadia
Since its founding in 1999, Artadia has awarded over $6 million in unrestricted funds to over 370 artists nationally. Celebrating visual artists and their foundational role in shaping society, the Artadia Award benefits three artists annually in seven major US cities with high concentrations of creative workers—Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, and the San Francisco Bay Area.

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About Ian Gerson (they/he)
Ian Gerson is a queer and trans interdisciplinary artist and educator born and based in Houston, TX. Ian has participated in several residencies including Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, MacDowell, and Socrates Sculpture Park, and shared work across the US and in Mexico City, most recently at BOX13 in Houston and Galveston Artist Residency with an upcoming solo show at Art League Houston in 2023. Ian holds an MFA in Sculpture + Extended Media from Virginia Commonwealth University and a BFA in Studio Art from the University of Texas at Austin.

Working at the intersections of sculpture, installation, and community engagement, Ian’s practice investigates climate injustices, trans consciousness, and queer longing. Stemming from personal encounters with (un)natural disasters and transitioning, Ian’s work asks how a trans experience, embodying adaptability and resilience, can be looked to as a model for surviving precarity. Ian weaves flimsy tapestries with discarded materials culled from local waterways and coastlines as a way of centering the refused, the invisible, the marginal.

About Saúl Hernández-Vargas (he/him)
Saúl Hernández-Vargas is an interdisciplinary artist. Saúl has exhibited in spaces such as the Blaffer Art Museum (Houston, Tx.), the Lawndale Art Center (Houston, Tx.), and Casa Amano (Guatemala City, Guatemala). In 2020, he developed Afilada Radio—a series of radio essays that explored the US-Mexico boundary as a line that could be reshaped or completely erased (radioensayo.com). He has been an artist in residency at the Center for Imagination in the Borderlands (Arizona State University). His first collection of essays, Te preparé humo, was published in 2019 by UNAM (Mexico). Saúl Hernández-Vargas holds an MFA in Visual Arts from University of California, San Diego; and a PhD in Studio Art and Hispanic Studies from University of Houston. Currently, he is a Core Fellow at the Museum of Fine Art Houston.

Hernández-Vargas’ work operates as an archive intervention in Nation-States’ official narratives: It is forensic poetry that invokes the specters haunting their margins, cracks, and fissures. Through sculptures, installations, performances, videos, drawings, poetry, and radio essays, he explores the material making of the US-Mexico boundary (1849-1857), underscoring its discursive fragility.

About Matt Manalo (he/him)
Matt Manalo is a multidisciplinary artist who was born in Manila, Philippines and resides in Houston. He received his Bachelors of Fine Arts in Painting at the University of Houston. His environmentally conscious work incorporates raw materials and found objects and tackles ideas surrounding his own immigrant identity, displacement, and how “home” is defined. Manalo is influenced by the physical and social structures that exist in both the Philippines and the United States as well as the erasure of histories and presence of colorism that have resulted from colonization.

His work was recently seen in the exhibition, Carriers: The Body as a Site of Danger and Desire, Blaffer Art Museum in Houston, Texas curated by Tyler Blackwell and Steven Matijcio and he is included in the 2021 Texas Biennial: A New Landscape/ A Possible Horizon curated by Evan Garza and Ryan Dennis. Manalo is the founder of Filipinx Artists of Houston, a collective of visual, performing, literary, culinary, and multidisciplinary artists. He also runs an alternative art space: Alief Art House, a hub for creativity that highlights the cultural richness of the multiple communities within a unique Houston neighborhood.
About Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud (she/her)
Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud is an artist based in Houston, Texas. She has participated in exhibitions and residencies throughout the Americas in the Caribbean, México, Argentina, and the U.S., and she studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She also has worked in environmental education and advocacy, and currently leads water management efforts at Bayou City Waterkeeper.

Mccloud's art is an act of recalling and imagining forgotten spaces, histories, and memories through mark-making, mapping, and unconventional approaches to landscape art. Most of her work is ephemeral, temporal, or rooted in processes. Central themes include geography, nature, and African American diasporic rituals - many of which have been erased. Through Mccloud's art, she seeks to restore and reimagine these connections.

About Sandra de la Rosa (she/her)
Sandra de la Rosa is an artist from (b. 1991) San Luis Potosi, Mexico. She earned her Masters of Fine Arts in 2019 at the University of Florida and her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Houston in 2015. Sandra has exhibited her work across Texas and nationally in shows that emphasize the visibility of artists of color, immigration, and border issues.

de la Rosa creates abstracted spaces through painting and drawing that are representations of experiences felt by immigrants. We are both surrounded and kept out by metaphorical walls that creates a liminal space felt internally. This liminal experience manifests from the ambiguity and uncertainty of living in the United States as someone with a hybridized identity: Mexican, American, Texan, former DACA recipient, brown, other.

About Anthony Suber (he/him)
Texas native Anthony Suber is a Southern based multimedia artist who defines himself as an American visual griot. His work is derived from his personal perspective and experience of spirituality, cross-generational relationships, history, and narratives he heard as a child. Suber is a graduate of the University of Houston with a BFA in studio art and also has an MFA from Houston Baptist University. Outside of his studio practice, Suber has served almost two decades as a fine arts educator in Texas.

Child-like exploration, anthropological discovery, and mysticism are the thread that stitches Suber's work together. Through re-interpreting language and movement, reference of living elements, and iconography from the African diaspora, he explores ways to preserve what has been (history) while highlighting our connections to the now (present) and what can be (future).