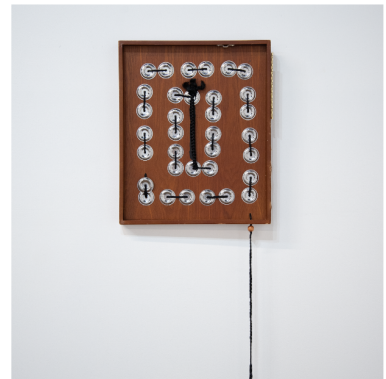


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## ARTADIA ANNOUNCES 2023 ATLANTA AWARDS FINALISTS



**Top, left to right:** Stefanie Jackson, Jane Foley, and Courtney McClellan.  
**Bottom, left to right:** Jessica Caldas, Sergio Suarez, and Nneka Kai.

(Atlanta, GA | November 9, 2023)

**Artadia**, a non-profit grantmaking organization and nationwide community of visual artists, curators, and patrons, is pleased to announce that **Jessica Caldas, Jane Foley, Stefanie Jackson, Nneka Kai, Courtney McClellan** and **Sergio Suárez** have been selected as the **2023 Atlanta 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 in unrestricted funds. The 2023 Atlanta Artadia Awards are supported by the Ressler/Gertz Family Foundation, Artadia Board of Directors, Artadia Council supporters, and individual donors across the country.

The 2023 Atlanta 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 **Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton,**

**Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Morgan, Newton, Paulding, Pickens, Rockdale, Spalding, and Walton counties** for a minimum of two years.

This year's Round 1 jurors were **Rachel Adams**, Chief Curator and Director of Programs, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts; **Liz Andrews**, Director, Spelman College Museum of Fine Art; and **Jia Yi Gu**, Director and Curator, MAK Center in LA. The Round 2 jurors will be **Liz Andrews** joined by **Rory Padeken**, Vicki and Kent Logan Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Denver Art Museum.

“It was a joy to see the excellent pool of Artadia applicants from Atlanta. The finalists represent a vibrant and diverse group of artists in terms of medium, themes, and cultural representation,” remarked juror Liz Andrews.

“I was thrilled to be part of the Round 1 jurying of this year's Atlanta Artadia Awards, getting to know the work of over a hundred artists through their open call process,” shared fellow juror Rachel Adams. “The impressive art making happening in Atlanta shows how selective the jury needed to be to determine the top 6 finalists.”

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 390 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 [Jessica Caldas](#)** (she/her)

Jessica Caldas is a Puerto Rican American, Georgia and Florida based artist. Her work connects personal and community narratives to larger themes and social issues. She has recently completed the Working Artist Prize Fellowship at MOCA GA in 2022-2023. Her work has been shown at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, GA as well as the Art & History Museums of Maitland, FL and is included in the collections of Kilpatrick Townsend, The City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs, MOCA GA, and the Kyoto International Community House. She looks forward to her first international solo exhibition at CICA Museum in Korea in 2024.

Caldas received her Masters of Fine Arts degree at Georgia State University in 2019 and received her BFA in printmaking from the University of Georgia in 2012. She is a part of Living Melody Collective and currently runs Good News Arts, a small community arts space and gallery in rural North Central Florida and holds a part time position as the Program Manager at Pro Bono Partnership of Atlanta.

Caldas' work is driven by personal experience and its connection to contemporary and historical issues. Overall, her work addresses the complexities and intricacies of care and identity in our current culture. She seeks to make challenging experiences accessible to those without the same somatic knowledge while still engaging in conversation and confrontation. In her practice, she incorporates layered, labor intensive drawings, collage, sculpture, performance, et al, into fully realized mixed media works and immersive installations. Within her work, the viewer is met with bodily experiences that mirror the complexities of the stories she shares, with a focus on shared knowledge, awareness, empathy, and change.

**About [Jane Foley](#)** (they/she)

Jane Foley (they/she) is a sculpture, sound, and new media artist living in Atlanta, Georgia (US). Jane Foley has created sound sculptures for the Architecture Triennale in Lisbon, Portugal and La Friche Belle de Mai in Marseille, France with Zurich-based Sound Development City, as well as composed sounds that played in taxicabs throughout the 5th Marrakech Biennale in Morocco. In Atlanta, they have created public artworks for the High Museum, Dashboard, The Beltline, Flux Projects, and the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta Airport, among others. Foley currently teaches Sculpture and New Media at Emory University.

Foley's sculptural work in materials such as cast concrete, wood, and neon, form unlikely pairings of fragility and strength. Foley hand-makes ropes from concrete—weavings around neons that hold them up while tying them down, exploring gestures of support, grief, and repair. Casting concrete into pool floats and balloons, cavities made for air, and allowing them to solidify with neons threading through, also plays with the liquid nature of glass and concrete, pushing these hard materials towards softness and mutability. These forms, often dried while patiently held for hours in their hands, bear physical imprints of support. They appear caught between falling and floating, which for Foley, contains metaphors of gender fluidity, and the precariousness of living as a queer person in the American South.

**About [Stefanie Jackson](#)** (she/her)

Jackson's paintings draw on her life experience, having lived in Detroit, New York, New Orleans,

Athens, Georgia and now Atlanta, Georgia. She is interested in how southern culture has influenced the North, especially the blues as a musical, literary, and visual phenomenon. Her artwork has responded to the Atlanta Race Riots of 1906, the devastation of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina, Motown Detroit, issues of violence and neglect in urban environments, and the community of Hog's Hammock, Sapelo Island, Georgia. Jackson draws inspiration from family tragedies, including losing her cousin to violence in Detroit, which is commemorated in *Little Girl Blue* in the collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts.

Stefanie Jackson is an American painter whose art deals with themes of African American culture and contemporary issues. Born in Detroit, Michigan, she has lived for decades in the South, and her visual concepts reflect that dichotomy between north and south. She is a recipient of numerous awards, including Anonymous Was a Woman, the Pollock Krasner Foundation Award, the Georgia Council of the Arts Award, the Adolf and Esther Gottlieb Foundation Award, and the National Endowment for the Arts in recognition of her life's dedication to art. Jackson's work has been shown at the Georgia Museum of Art, the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Walker Art Center, and many other museums across the country. Her solo exhibition *Pastime Paradise* was shown at Richard Beavers Gallery in New York, Fall of 2022. She has studied in France, Italy, and attended several artist-in-residence programs.

**About [Nneka Kai](#)** (she/her)

Nneka Kai is an interdisciplinary artist from Atlanta, GA. She received her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago from the Fiber & Material Studies Department and her BFA in Textiles from Georgia State University. Her work and research explore the material and conceptual language of Black hair.

Nneka Kai's interdisciplinary practice begins with the question, "What is the free Black feminine form?" By employing natural and synthetic hair, Kai uses textile, performance, and sculpture to expand and question the notions of history, site, and identity.

**About [Courtney McClellan](#)** (she/her)

Courtney McClellan is an interdisciplinary artist living in Atlanta, GA. Her work has been shown at museums and exhibition spaces like SculptureCenter in Long Island City, NY (2018); the University of Michigan Museum of Art in Ann Arbor, MI (2020); and the Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia in Atlanta, GA (2021). McClellan has been awarded fellowships at the Library of Congress and the University of Michigan, and her practice has been supported by residences at McDowell, Yaddo, the Hambidge Center, and Stove Works. Her work has been written about in *Art in America*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, and the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*.

McClellan makes work about the relationship between performance and the law, focusing on legal simulations used to educate future attorneys. Working in photography, video, performance, and installation, she addresses the aspirations and failings of the American judicial system as it pertains to gender equity, racial justice, technology, and the erosion of the separation of church and state.

**About [Sergio Suárez](#)** (he/him)

Sergio Suárez (B.1995) is a Mexican-born, Atlanta-based visual artist and printmaker. His work, prompted by an interest in translation, examines porosity, the body, and materiality as a way to shape and reimagine cosmology. His work has been exhibited at MoCA GA, Johnson Lowe Gallery, Bo Bartlett Center, Consulate General of Mexico in Atlanta, and Atlanta Contemporary. Internationally his work has been included in the Haugesund International Relief Festival in Norway, Woolwich Print Fair, and the Ionian Arts Center in Greece. His work is also included in the SGCI archives of the Zuckerman Museum. Suarez has been in residency at: Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Penland School of Craft, Stove Works, the Hambidge Center, and the Ionian Center for the Arts. He lives and works in Atlanta Georgia, where he was part of the Studio Artist Program at Atlanta Contemporary from 2021 to 2023. Currently he is seeking a balance between, life, work, and being the Co-director of Eso Tilin Projects.

Suárez's work is a mixture of woodblock carving, ceramics, and installation. Mixing seemingly contradictory past and present codes of visual representation such as baroque painting, Mesoamerican material culture, and contemporary telescope imagery, the work looks at the porous boundary between images, objects, and spaces to reconcile being in a space of cultural, temporal, and geographical liminality. Meditating over the filtration, preservation, and organization of memory, the work is suspicious of narratives that make time and entropy implicit agents in the destruction of alternative cosmologies and histories, reducing and essentializing them. It proposes instead that the present is a metaphysical surface where entities float, emerge, sink, and possess a buoyancy linked to attention/care.