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Artadia Announces 2023 Houston Awardees

by Jessica Fuentes | January 23, 2024



Artadia, a national nonprofit grantmaking organization, has named Violette Bule as the Horton Artadia Award Recipient, and Saúl Hernández-Vargas and Irene Antonia Diane Reece as the recipients of its 2023 Houston Artadia Awards.

For 25 years Artadia has provided unrestricted grants to artists in eight cities across the United States, including Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Since its inception, it has given more than \$6 million to 400 artists. The 2023 round of Houston artists have received \$15,000 each. In addition to the monetary award, grantees have the opportunity to participate in the Artadia Network, where they receive structured opportunities to build their connections and share resources with other artists.

According to a press release by Artadia, "the 2023 Houston Artadia Awards received 110 applications with 75% of the applicants identifying as Black, Native American or Alaskan Native, Latinx, Asian, Arab, biracial or multiracial; 58% of applicants identify as women, gender nonconforming, or nonbinary; and 56% self-identify as emerging artists."

Awardees were selected through a two-tiered jurying process. The first round of jurors included Alana Hernandez, Senior Curator + CALA Alliance Curator of Latinx Art at Arizona State University Art Museum; Anna Walker, Executive Director at Lawndale Art Center; and Adeze Wilford, Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami. Keliy Anderson-Staley, Ann Johnson, and Anna Mayer, and the awardees were among the six finalists that had virtual studio visits with jurors Omar Lopez-Chahoud, an independent curator, and Ms. Walker.

Regarding the jurying process, Ms. Walker remarked, "Being part of the jury process for Houston's Artadia award reaffirmed my belief in the breadth and depth of Houston's artistic talent. There are so many artists making work

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part of the process."

She continued, "My hope is that this work and investment in the Houston community acts as a catalyst for others to recognize and invest even further in the wider community of creativity happening in our city and region."

Learn more about the 2023 awardees below via descriptions provided by Artadia.



Violette Bule, "Dream America," 2015, photograph, 60 x 40 inches.

Violette Bule (she/they)

Violette Bule is a conceptual artist and photographer. Ms. Bule draws on her experiences as a queer woman and Venezuelan immigrant of Lebanese descent in the United States. Ms. Bule's work builds on social and economic vulnerability as a tool for creativity and political empowerment, engaging with topics such as identity, memory, violence, the politics of space, and digital technologies. She examines power dynamics shaping everyday life, underscoring the entanglement of capitalism and structural racism in interrelated patterns of migration, nationalism, populism, and social justice.





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Saúl Hernández-Vargas (he/him)

Saúl Hernández-Vargas is a visual artist who recently exhibited at the Houston Climate Justice Museum. He has been an artist in residence at the Center for Imagination in the Borderlands (Arizona State University) and he is a Core Fellow at the Museum of Fine Arts of Houston. Mr. Hernández-Vargas' work is a forensic poetry that invokes the specters haunting the margins, cracks, and fissures of the Nation-State's official narratives. Thus, his work explores the intricate relationship between the Nation-State, and the so-called national territory and history.

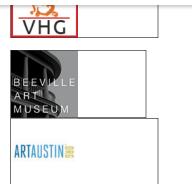


Irene Reece, "I will come to visit you, as often as I can," 2022, alternative process print on fabric, series.

Irene Antonia Diane Reece (she/her)

Irene Antonia Diane Reece, born and raised in Houston, identifies as a contemporary artist and visual activist. She earned her BFA in Photography and Digital Media (Houston, TX) and MFA in Photography and Image-making (Paris, France).

The topics surrounding her work are racial identity, African diaspora, social injustice, family histories, re-memory, mental and community health. With a background in photography and image-making Ms. Reece's journey through lens-based work has transformed her art practice to become critical of the tools that we use to create art in an effort to decentralize whiteness, engage/deconstruct the



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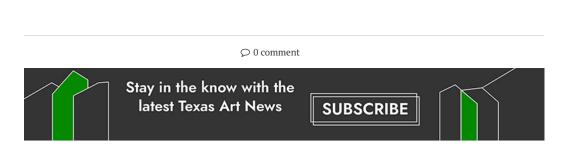
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