

Advertisements



Aineki Traverso, winner of Artadia's inaugural SEEN award, in her artist's studio. (Photo by Walker Bankson; all images are courtesy of Artadia and Aineki Traverso)

Aineki Traverso: Artadia's first SEEN award recipient



Aineki Traverso (center) speaks to visitors at Atlanta Contemporary.



Casita, 2023.

Painter Aineki Traverso's studio at Atlanta Contemporary bears all the hallmarks of an artist with relentless creative impulses. Traverso works on many large-scale canvases at once, moving from painting to painting as

inspiration hits. The walls are punctuated here and there with family photos, sketchy doodles and what appear to be small bits of larger compositions.

Given that her signature expressionistic style includes many elements of unfinished figures, how does she know when a work is complete? "A painting lives and dies many times while I'm working on it," she says. But she relies on an inner sense of completeness to know when the painting has reached a final state. "Or," she confesses, "when someone tells me to stop."

Traverso is one of three Atlanta artists awarded an Artadia artist grant in 2024. Artadia, a New York-based nonprofit, has been making unrestricted cash grants to artists in select cities since 1999. Over \$6 million has been distributed since the organization's founding. Other 2024 grantees were Ariel Dannielle and Sergio Suárez.



I beheld the wretch, 2024.

Now, Artadia has deepened its commitment to Atlanta and to Traverso by naming her the inaugural winner of the organization's new SEEN Award. The award is designated for women-identifying artists and is funded exclusively by women. It takes the form of support for the kinds of activities that can boost an artist's career — public talks, gatherings and mentorship — as well as the prestige of being recognized for extraordinary work.

The award was originated by healthcare industry executive Stacey Empson and independent curator Mary Kemper Wolf and is supported by individual donations from women across the country. As noted in a press statement from Artadia, the award is designed to "shift the long-standing dynamics of the art world that have favored male artists by recognizing a woman-identifying artist at a pivotal stage in her career."

Traverso's remarkable paint-handling and mark-making caught the eye of Artadia judges last year, including curator Lauren Cross who called Traverso's works "new avenues for contemplation and interpretation." The paintings — often in the form of diptychs and triptychs — draw from a trove of family photographs and other sources to convey a sense of the passage of time. Multiple figures and marks weave, pushing and pulling green, ochre and amber hues in what resembles a mixed web of memory and reality.

Traverso is currently at work on three shows with fast-approaching deadlines: one at Wolfgang Gallery, another in upstate New York and a third in Los Angeles during the Frieze Art Fair. Until then, the paintings currently in her studio will doubtless experience many deaths and resurrections before their final birth into life.



greener than grass I am and dead or almost, 2024.



Blessings, 2024.



Apeiron, 2024.



sub specie aeterni, 2024.



to see you around here in the solitude (*installation view*), 2024.



Cinqué Hicks is Editor-in-Chief of ArtsATL.

SHARE ON:   

Cornerstone Jazz Center: a pitch perfect addition to Atlanta's jazz scene

STAY UP TO DATE ON ALL THINGS ArtsATL