

ARTADIA  
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## ARTADIA ANNOUNCES 2026 NEW YORK CITY AWARDEES



**Left to right:** David L. Johnson (photo courtesy of the artist), Frank WANG Yefeng (photo credit: a015), and Carrie Yamaoka (photo courtesy of the artist).

**EMBARGOED THROUGH TUESDAY, MAY 26TH AT 4PM ET/1PM PT**

(New York, NY | May 26, 2026)

**Artadia**, a non-profit grantmaking organization and nationwide community of visual artists, curators, and patrons, is thrilled to announce the 2026 New York City Artadia Awardees: **David L. Johnson, Frank WANG Yefeng**, and **Carrie Yamaoka**.

The 2026 New York City 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 the five Boroughs: Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island for two consecutive years at minimum. We received **886** eligible applications, with **56%** of the applicants identifying as African, African American or Black, Multiracial, Arab, Arab American, Asian or Asian American, Latina/e/o/x, Middle Eastern, or North African; **58%** as women, gender nonconforming, or nonbinary; and **61%** as emerging artists.

This year's New York City Artadia Awards are generously supported by **The Willem de Kooning Foundation**, with additional support provided by the Cowles Charitable Trust, L91 Foundation, Frederick Baba, Lauren Geller, Daryl Simon, the Artadia Board of Directors, Artadia Council supporters, and individual donors across the country.

The Awards decision was reached after an extensive two-tiered jurying process. This year's finalists for the Awards included **Alice Gong Xiaowen, Suneil Sanzgiri**, and **sweat variant (Okwui Okpwasili and Peter Born)**, selected by Round 1 jurors **Mariana Fernández**, Independent Curator; **Sadaf Padder**, Independent Curator; and **Elisabeth Sherman**, Chief Curator, Museum of the City of New York.

**Padder** reflected on the strength of this year's finalists, "The depth of vision and commitment among artists working in New York is remarkable. These finalists represent only a fraction of that field, yet each brings a distinct perspective shaped by varied experiences, backgrounds, and approaches. The selection process was rigorous, and I look forward to following the continued evolution of their work."

"It was a huge privilege to serve as a juror and to engage so closely with such a dynamic and intellectually rigorous group of practices," said **Fernández**. "Spanning a wide range of career stages and mediums, the finalists collectively demonstrate a deep commitment to material experimentation and ability to confront the complexities of the present—in all its uncertainty, violence, and fracture—through distinct conceptual frameworks and sensibilities."

"Given my work at the Museum of the City of New York, where we explore the people, places and ideas that shape this city's iconic character—it was quite impactful for me to see the range of work being made right now in the five boroughs by artists at all stages of their careers. The applicants represented the great breadth and diversity of this city, and I was honored to have a chance to get to know all of their work," shared **Sherman**. "These six finalists stood out for their singular artistic voices. Each has a clear perspective that their work articulates, and they each could not be more different in their approach and intention from one another. Together, they present a collective vision of where artists' practices are heading, and I'm excited to see what unfolds for each of them."

All six finalists held virtual studio visits with Round 2 jurors **José Carlos Diaz**, Chief Curator, Pérez Art Museum Miami, and **Elisabeth Sherman**, Chief Curator, Museum of the City of New York.

"**Johnson's** precise lens allows us to see the relationship between the structural with the personal and how these registers define our lives in New York City," shared **Sherman**. "There's a poetic quality to his incisive critique that asks the viewer to keep returning to the work."

"Johnson's practice is daring and dangerous," added **Diaz**. "It's mundane yet provocative, teetering between art and activism."

"**Frank's** work is exceptionally singular, with an aesthetic clarity that is both captivating and beguiling," noted Sherman. "He has a remarkable range across mediums that he deploys in service of a vision that unites many ways of working into a clear and unique whole."

"Yefeng impressed me with his thorough exploration of digital art and new media, continually expanding his use of technology and evolving the work into new perspectives," said Diaz.

"**Yamaoka's** practice, sustained over many years, has a clarity and confidence that she uses to push herself to take risks," reflected Sherman. "She courageously mines her own past to move her work into the future."

"Yamaoka is an artist who is subtle and elegant yet adventurous in her medium and presentation," added Diaz.

"Participating in the Artadia Awards was an honor and an opportunity to represent the jury from another dynamic art destination by engaging in conversations about these contemporary artists and their expansive practices," concluded Diaz. "I congratulate the awardees and wish them success in their next chapter."

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 400 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.

### **Press Contact**

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## About the Awardees

[David L. Johnson](#) (he/him)

Johnson (b. 1993, New York, NY) received a BFA from The Cooper Union in 2015 and an MFA from the University of Pennsylvania in 2020. He is an alumnus of the Whitney Independent Study Program and a part-time faculty member in the Fine Arts MFA program at Parsons School of Design. His work has been exhibited at the 2026 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus; Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Chicago Architecture Biennial, Chicago; and MoMA PS1, New York.

David L. Johnson's work focuses on the ongoing effects of privatization, real estate development, and policing on public life in cities. Working across photography, video, found and stolen objects, and sound, Johnson uses direct forms of intervention to engage the politics, histories, and forms of use that define contemporary urban space. Through subtractive gestures, including the removal of hostile architecture, property markers, and surveillance devices, his work traces the material and legal conditions of these sites, producing moments of slippage between public and private property.

[Frank WANG Yefeng](#) (he/they/it)

Frank WANG Yefeng (b. 1984, Shanghai) is a transdisciplinary artist based in New York City and Shanghai. He holds an MFA in Art and Technology Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and has had recent solo presentations at The Window, CHANEL Culture Fund, London (2026); artport at the Whitney Museum of American Art (2025); High Line Originals (2025); Shanghai Museum of Glass (2025); Art Basel Hong Kong Encounters (2025); NARS Foundation (2024); and Smack Mellon (2023). He has received numerous residencies and fellowships, including Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP), MacDowell, K11 Art Foundation × ArtReview, and Asia Art Archive in America, and was named an ISCP honoree in 2026.

Frank WANG Yefeng's practice navigates the instability of identity, place, and perception, exploring the experience of "in-betweenness" that arises from a nomadic, transnational existence. Taking a non-hierarchical approach across 3D animation, video installation, sculpture, painting, drawing, and text, he constructs speculative worlds of whimsical characters and uncanny landscapes in which the boundaries between the human and non-human, virtual and physical, dissolve. Blending playful aesthetics with conceptual depth, his work invites viewers into nomadic spaces where perception is fluid and new connections and imagination continuously unfold.

[Carrie Yamaoka](#) (she/her)

Yamaoka (b.1957, Glen Cove, NY) lives and works in New York City. Her work has been exhibited at the Institute of Contemporary Art (Philadelphia), MoMA PS1 (New York), Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Zilkha Gallery/Wesleyan University (Middletown, Connecticut), Centre Pompidou (Paris), Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington (Seattle), Artists Space (New York), Wexner Center for the Arts (Columbus, Ohio), Mori Art Museum (Tokyo), Participant Inc. (New York),

Grey Art Museum (New York), and MASS MoCA (North Adams, Massachusetts). Writing on her work has appeared in the New York Times, Artforum, Art in America, Artnews, The New Yorker, Time Out/NY, Hyperallergic, Interview, Ursula, and BOMB. Her work is included in the public collections of the Buffalo AKG, the Art Institute of Chicago, Centre Pompidou, Dallas Museum of Art, Henry Art Gallery, Sunpride Foundation, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. She is the recipient of the 2025 Maria Lassnig Prize, a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship (2019) and an Anonymous Was A Woman award (2017). A monograph, RE: Carrie Yamaoka, was published by Radius Books in 2025. Her work is included in the main exhibition In Minor Keys curated by Koyo Kouoh at the 61st Venice Biennale opening in early May 2026.

Carrie Yamaoka is an interdisciplinary artist whose work ranges across painting, drawing, photography, and sculpture. She engages with the topography of surfaces, materiality and process, the tactility of the barely visible and the chain of planned and chance incidents that determine the outcome of the object. Her work addresses the viewer at the intersection between records of chemical action/reaction and the desire to apprehend a picture emerging in fleeting and unstable states of transformation. Her material engagement and rule-breaking strategies embrace accidents and dissolve binaries, such as improvisation/intention, methodology/intuition, and surface/depth. Toggling between visibility and invisibility, overlaying legibility and illegibility, breaking apart and recomposing, Yamaoka's work is in a constant state of mutation.

### **About the finalists**

[Alice Gong Xiaowen](#) (she/her)

Alice Gong Xiaowen (Canadian b. 1994, Beijing) received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA in Sculpture from Yale School of Art. Solo and two-person exhibitions have been held at Franz Kaka, Toronto (2025); Gallery Vacancy, Shanghai (2025); lower\_cavity, Holyoke (2024); and House of Seiko, San Francisco (2023). Selected group exhibitions have been held at Silke Lindner, New York (2025); Minor Attractions, London (2025); Island Gallery, New York (2025); Bank, New York (2025); Kiang Malingue, New York (2025); Romance, Pittsburgh (2025); Stilllife, New York and Shanghai (2024); Franz Kaka, Toronto (2024); Iowa, New York (2024); and DUPLEX, New York (2022). Xiaowen is a recipient of the Susan H. Wedon Award (2025), the Explore and Create Grant from the Canada Council for the Arts (2022), and the John W. Kurtich Foundation Travel Fellowship (2015).

Working across sound, sculpture, and installation, Alice Gong Xiaowen's practice unfolds as an indexical methodology, presenting ready-mades in dialogue with what precedes them, tethered to historical and personal lineages.

How do things come into being, when does sensory perception end, and how do impressions remain within repetitive recollection? While mourning often fixates on a specific object of loss, Xiaowen's research moves in cylindrical orbits around a void; the indecipherable, buried, or missing reemerge as physical remnants and evidentiary residue.

Indexicality is understood as a temporal condition: sound unfolds durationally, while casting and mold-making register as its counterpart—a moment recorded and already past, like a single

frame in a film—making perceptible the presence of absence, time, and change.

Abstraction becomes a method for expanding interpretive potential, allowing recognition to unfold over time. Meaning remains open, contingent, and generative. The referent is elaborated through transformation rather than symbolically represented, drawing on the subtleties of difference and repetition as a modality against closure.

[Suneil Sanzgiri](#) (he/him)

Suneil Sanzgiri is an artist, filmmaker, and researcher. His award-winning work has been screened and exhibited extensively at festivals and arts venues around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art, 18th Istanbul Biennial, International Film Festival Rotterdam, New York Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival, Doclisboa, Viennale, lo Schermo dell'Arte, de Appel, Jameel Arts Center, ICA London, Whitechapel Gallery, MASS MoCA, e-Flux, Hessel Museum, Criterion Collection, and many more. His first institutional solo exhibition, "Here the Earth Grows Gold," opened at the Brooklyn Museum in Fall 2023. Other solo exhibitions include "An Impossible Address" at Mercer Union in Toronto, Canada (2025), and at EMPAC in Troy, NY (2025). His work has been written about in BOMB Magazine, MOUSSE, e-Flux, Art in America, Filmmaker Magazine, Film Comment, Hyperallergic, the Brooklyn Rail, C Magazine, Film Quarterly, SEEN Journal, Dissent, November Magazine, and more.

Suneil Sanzgiri's research-driven practice considers questions of inheritance and indebtedness in relation to histories of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle across the Global South. Spanning experimental video and film, animations, essays, and installations, his work explores image-making, collective memory, and testimony, and are often in dialogue with the works of filmmakers, revolutionaries, and poets, drawing together a slippage between the living and dead. Beginning with an examination of his family's legacy of resistance in Goa, India, to centuries of Portuguese colonial occupation, Sanzgiri's recent works contend with the possibilities of transhistorical and cross-continental solidarity, wrestling with their own forms to test the efficacy of words and images in times of struggle, mourning, suffering, and action.

[sweat variant \(Okwui Okpawasili and Peter Born\)](#) (she/her; he/him)

sweat variant describes the collaborative practice of Okwui Okpokwasili and Peter Born. Since 1996, we have been working at the intersection of dance, theater, and visual art to make challenging and rigorous work that reaffirms that which has been deemed marginal as the true center through the exploration of Black interiority. We are interested in building a spectacle of radical intimacy, where both performers and audience are acknowledged as being locked in a mutual gaze.

Okwui Okpokwasili (she/her) is a Brooklyn-based performer, actor, choreographer, and writer. Okpokwasili has earned numerous accolades, including a 2025 Art Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, 2018 Princeton University Hodder Fellowship, a 2018 Herb Alpert Award, a 2018 Doris Duke Artist Award, and a 2018 MacArthur Fellowship, and was the 2015-2017 Randjelovic/Stryker New York Live Arts Resident Commissioned Artist, the inaugural

artist for the Kravis Studio Residency program at MoMA in 2022, and an artist in residence at the Brown Arts Institute in 2023. She continues to collaborate with Ralph Lemon, Kevin Beasley, Saidiya Hartman, and Kaneza Schaal, among other artists.

Peter Born (he/him) works as a director, composer, and designer of performance and installation. In collaboration with Okpokwasili, Peter's work has been featured in the Berlin Biennale, "Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America" at the New Museum, "Witch Hunt" at the Hammer Museum, "Loophole of Retreat: Venice", "sex ecologies" at Kunsthall Trondheim, as well as performance work at MoMA, the Whitney Museum, MASS MoCA, the Irish Museum of Modern Art and ICA Boston, among others. He is the recipient of four New York Dance Performance "Bessie" Awards. His work as an art director and prop stylist has been featured in video and photo projects with Vogue, Estee Lauder, Barney's Co-op, Bloomingdales, Old Navy, 25 magazine, The Wall Street Journal and No Strings Puppet Productions.