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The Ford Family Foundation Names Three Oregon Visual Artists as Hallie Ford Fellows in the Visual Arts for 2022

Roseburg, Oregon: The Ford Family Foundation today named its 2022 Hallie Ford Fellows in the Visual Arts, recognizing three Oregon visual artists for demonstrated excellence.

A jury of five arts professionals from within and outside of Oregon selected John Houck, Brenda Mallory, and Arvie Smith, all of Portland, from a competitive pool of 175 applicants. They will receive a \$35,000 unrestricted award and will join 46 of their peers selected over the last 12 years as Hallie Ford Fellows.

“These three artists share a sincere self-awareness that brings confidence in their choices as makers. They are working quite personally but making globally relevant and impactful artworks.” says Anne Kubisch, president of the Foundation.

The jurists individually reviewed and then collectively discussed the applicants. They determined that each awardee demonstrates a mastery of artistic practice that prepares them to step into rigorous and meaningful opportunities in the global contemporary art world. Serving on the panel were: Amy Adams, Owner, Adams & Ollman (Portland); Erin Christovale, Associate Curator, The Hammer (Los Angeles); Margot Norton, Allen and Lola Goldring Curator, New Museum (New York); Victoria Sung, Associate Curator of Visual Arts, Walker Art Center (Minneapolis); Abigail Susik, Associate Professor of Art History, Willamette University (Salem).

The 2022 recipients were selected based on the following criteria:

- Quality of work: Artists demonstrate artistic excellence, exemplary talent, and depth of sophisticated exploration.
- Evolution of work: Artists stand at a pivotal point in their practice and would benefit from a Fellowship at this point in their careers.
- Impact of work: Artists' goals are consistent with Fellowship goals, and they show potential for future accomplishment and capacity to contribute significantly to Oregon's visual arts ecology.

ABOUT THE 2022 HALLIE FORD FELLOWS

John Houck (b. 1977. Lives and works in Portland, Oregon)



John Houck. Photo: Sam Gehrke / Pure Colour, 2022. Oil on Canvas, 21 x 28" inches

John Houck is a multi-disciplinary artist relocated to Oregon from Los Angeles in 2018. As a former software engineer, Houck began his artistic career using technical, methodical and repetitive processes of photography and reprographics to construct a layered image. By photographing and re-photographing objects that hold sentimental value, the resulting works contain a multitude of perspectives and illusion of depth in a singular work.

After completing the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program, Houck became interested in relational psychoanalysis, which shifted his conceptual framework as an artist.

He began combining painterly gestures into his photographs to create playful, subjective experiences pulled from memory. He states, “‘Free associating’ or ‘remembering with feeling’ in analysis completely changed the rigid and precise way I had seen the world as a software engineer. I learned the importance of play, how to feel strong emotions, and reside with ambivalence.” By painting on photographs, Houck brought a personal touch to works that towed the line between reality and unreality, and the analog and digital.

Over the course of the pandemic, Houck has embraced painting in its entirety as a way to disengage from the “digital renaissance” we are currently experiencing. Of Houck’s work, curator Pedro Alonzo writes, “His paintings and photo-based works are a metaphor for our memories, which we assume to be precise, like digital technology, but are in fact are malleable, changing over time. His work points to humans as emotional beings whose memory and sense of reality can easily be easily distorted by feelings.” Houck will be exhibiting his first solo exhibition of paintings in New York this fall.

John Houck received his Bachelor of Arts in architecture from University of Colorado Boulder in 2000, and Master of Fine Arts from University of California, Los Angeles, in 2007. His work has been exhibited internationally including Dallas Contemporary, International Center of Photography, Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín, Colombia; the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto; the Jewish Museum, New York; and Los Angeles County Museum of Art. His work is included in public collections at The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Milwaukee Art Museum, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA; and The Art Institute of Chicago, among others.

Brenda Mallory (Cherokee Nation) (b. 1955. Lives and works in Portland, Oregon)



Brenda Mallory. Photo: Sam Gehrke / Soft Focus #4, 2018. Waxed cloth, hog rings, welded steel armature, 66 x 100 x 2 inches

Brenda Mallory is a multi-disciplinary artist primarily working in sculpture. A citizen of the Cherokee Nation who grew up in Oklahoma, lived experience deeply informs her practice, as do the histories of survival inherent to Indigenous peoples. Mallory uses reclaimed raw materials, dismantled and repaired into compelling and formally beautiful objects. She views this pattern as “disruptions” following global and historical forces: “Disruptions occur at many levels: families have untimely deaths; communities get uprooted and dislocated; climate change impacts ecosystems. Disruption can result in complete destruction, but more often, adaptations take place and the systems continue on, sometimes stronger, sometimes weaker, sometimes even more beautiful, but never the same.”

“Brenda’s Mallory’s work is a healing influence,” says Rebecca Dobkins, Curator of Native American Art, Hallie Ford Museum of Art. “She is a constructor, a maker of connections. Her work provides an important reminder that ‘contemporary Native American art’ is not limited to narrowly defined iconographies.”

Mallory has been recognized as a Mentor Artist Fellow with the Native Arts and Culture Foundation, a Ucross Foundation Fellow for Native American Visual Artists, and a Contemporary Native Artist Fellow by the Eiteljorg Museum. She has been offered numerous residencies including Crow’s Shadow Institute of the Arts, Bullseye Glass, Anderson Ranch, and

most recently Township10. Mallory holds a Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and English from UCLA, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in General Fine Arts from Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland, OR. She has an upcoming 2023 solo exhibition at The Heard Museum, Phoenix, AZ.

Arvie Smith (b. 1938. Lives and works in Portland, Oregon)



Arvie Smith. Photo: Sam Gehrke / Cupid and Psyche, 2021. Oil on Canvas, 72 × 60 inches

Arvie Smith is a painter, educator, and visual storyteller whose work addresses the complex histories of social and racial injustices in the United States from the perspective of a Black man. Living and working in the Pacific Northwest for decades, Smith creates large-scale, figurative oil paintings that are rich and vivid in color. He addresses complex subject matter by compiling narratives of stereotypes and biases historically placed on Black bodies, incorporating semiotic reference points like those found in advertisements, which relate to the inequalities and oppression experienced by Black Americans. Smith states, “I pull images from the charged air and merge them with my life experience in a power structure currently referred to as systemic racism. I respond through my art, always attempting to move the needle from transition to transformation.... By critiquing atrocities and oppressions and creating images intended to advance dialogue, I hope my work makes repeating those atrocities and injustices less likely. These are the reasons I paint.”

In speaking to Arvie Smith’s achievement as a Hallie Ford Fellow, Grace Kook-Anderson, Arlene and Harold Schnitzer Curator of Northwest Art, Portland Art Museum says, “I think it is

very important to acknowledge Smith's career and impact on the region as a devoted painter and enthusiastic educator. Smith has been unusually prolific late into his career and it is one that deserves greater recognition. Smith has continued to maintain the use of taboo or uncomfortable images consistently focused on the message at-hand.”

Smith is one of nine African American artists presenting work in the 2022 Venice Biennale. A retrospective of his work was shown earlier this year at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University. He is the recipient of several prestigious awards, including the 2020 Joan Mitchell Painters and Sculptures Award, the Oregon Governor's Award for the Arts in 2017, and an honorary PhD from Pacific Northwest College of Art, where he is a Professor Emeritus. His work has been exhibited extensively both internationally and nationally, and can be found in the permanent collections of the Petrucci Family Foundation Collection of African American Art, Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation, Hallie Ford Museum, Portland Art Museum, Reginald F. Lewis Museum Baltimore, MD, among others. He completed a Master of Fine Arts from Hoffberger School of Painting, Maryland Institute College of Art and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Pacific Northwest College of Art, Portland.

ABOUT THE FORD FAMILY FOUNDATION VISUAL ARTS PROGRAM

The Visual Arts Program honors the late Hallie Ford, co-founder of The Ford Family Foundation, who left a legacy based on an interest in and a lifelong support of the visual arts. The Hallie Ford Fellowships are the flagship element of the Visual Arts Program. In addition, the program offers grants to visual artists for unanticipated career opportunities; supports artists-in-residence programs in Oregon and out of state; brings curators and critics from outside the region to Oregon for studio visits and community dialogue; supports exhibitions, catalogues and other forms of documentation; and awards grants for small capital projects. The Ford Family Foundation was established in 1957 by Kenneth W. and Hallie E. Ford. Its mission is “successful citizens and vital rural communities” in Oregon and Siskiyou County, California. The Foundation is located in Roseburg, Oregon, with a Scholarship office in Eugene. For more information about the Foundation and its Visual Arts Program, visit www.tfff.org.

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