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**The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Awards Nearly \$120,000 to 19 Commonwealth Artists
2023–24 Visual Arts Fellowship Recipients Named**



Left to right: Brittany Ofori, photography, Richmond resident; Nadia Msalek, painting, Virginia Beach resident, Virginia Commonwealth University student; Sandy Williams IV, sculpture, Richmond resident; Ben Durham, drawing, Henrico resident

Richmond, Virginia — The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) is excited to announce the 2023–24 recipients of its Visual Arts Fellowships. Nineteen students and professional artists were awarded \$116,000 toward their artistic careers.

The [VMFA Visual Arts Fellowship program](#) has awarded more than \$6 million to more than 1,400 artists since 1940. Recipients must be Virginia residents and may use the award as desired, including for education and studio investments. Each year, art curators and working artists serve as jurors to select the award recipients.

“We are truly honored to have the opportunity to recognize the talented student and professional artists through our longstanding fellowship program,” said Alex Nyerges, VMFA’s Director and CEO. “As one of the largest fellowship programs in the country, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is proud to continue honoring and supporting the careers of artists across the Commonwealth.”

This year, Brittany Webb, Evelyn and Will Kaplan Curator of Twentieth Century Art and the John Rhoden Collection at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, served as the professional-level fellowship juror. Amy Torbert, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Assistant Curator of American Art at the Saint Louis Art Museum, served as graduate art history juror and Anna Buchanan, Curator of Contemporary Fine Art and Craft at the William King Museum of Art in Abingdon, Virginia, served as the graduate and undergraduate visual arts juror.

VMFA awarded seven professional fellowships of \$8,000 each to Roberto Bocci, photography, Arlington resident; Vivian Chiu, crafts, Henrico resident; Ben Durham, drawing, Henrico resident; Sheila Giolitti, painting, Norfolk resident; Brittany Ofori, photography, Richmond resident; Eleanor Thorp, drawing, Richmond resident; and Sandy Williams IV, sculpture, Richmond resident.

Five graduate students were awarded \$6,000 each. The awardees are Alex Del Dago, art history, Charlottesville resident, University of Virginia; Stephanie Germosen, sculpture, Richmond resident, Virginia Commonwealth University; Michelle Smith, sculpture, Annandale resident, James Madison University; Morgan Williams, mixed media, Chesapeake resident, Norfolk State University; and Sara Zhou, painting, Fairfax resident, Mary Washington University.

Undergraduate fellowship awards of \$4,000 each went to six students. The recipients are Sydney Harrison, photography, Mechanicsville resident, Virginia Commonwealth University; Alex Henion, mixed media, Boones Mill resident, Cave Spring High School; Fiona Marinaro, mixed media, Yorktown resident, Savannah College of Art and Design; Walker Moore, film and video, Richmond resident, Virginia Commonwealth University; Nadia Msalek, painting, Virginia Beach resident, Virginia Commonwealth University; and Laneecia Ricks, photography, Richmond resident, Virginia Commonwealth University.

The Cy Twombly Graduate Fellowship, supported by the McClintock Endowment, honors a two-time fellowship winner. This year's awardee is Nile Price, film and video, Richmond resident, New York University.

About the Visual Arts Fellowship Program

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Visual Arts Fellowship Program was established in 1940 with a generous contribution made by the late John Lee Pratt of Fredericksburg. Offered through the VMFA Statewide Program, fellowships are still largely funded through the Pratt Endowment and the J. Warwick McClintic Jr. Scholarship Fund. In addition to providing financial rewards to all recipients, VMFA exhibits works by past fellowship winners in VMFA's Amuse Restaurant and Claiborne Robertson Room, VMFA's Pauley Center Galleries and select spaces at Richmond International Airport. Several past and present fellowship recipients have also shown their work in the galleries of the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton and the Capital One Commons in Richmond.

About the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Virginia, is one of the largest comprehensive art museums in the United States. VMFA, which opened in 1936, is a state agency and privately endowed educational institution. Its purpose is to collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret art, and to encourage the study of the arts. Through the Office of Statewide Partnerships program, the museum offers curated exhibitions, arts-related audiovisual programs, symposia, lectures, conferences, and workshops by visual and performing artists. In addition to presenting a wide array of special exhibitions, the museum provides visitors with the opportunity to experience a global collection of art that spans more than 6,000 years. VMFA's permanent holdings encompass nearly 50,000 artworks, including the largest public collection of Fabergé outside of Russia, the finest collection of Art Nouveau outside of Paris and one of the nation's finest collections of American art. VMFA is also home to important collections of Chinese art, English silver, and French Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, British sporting and modern and contemporary art, as well as renowned South Asian, Himalayan and African art. In May 2010, VMFA opened the James W. and Frances G. McGlothlin Wing I after a transformative expansion, previously the largest in its history.

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts has begun its more than \$190 million expansion and renovation project led by the international architecture firm SmithGroup. Tentatively scheduled for completion in 2027, the project consists of adding a new wing of nearly 170,000 square feet and renovating 45,000 square feet of existing spaces, while maintaining four acres of green space in the Sculpture Garden. Visitors will experience a seamless journey through the collections in the new wing, which will house contemporary art, African art, American art, a new suite of galleries for rotating special exhibitions and a special-events space. The expansion and renovation will enable the museum to display more art, welcome more visitors and provide more enjoyment.

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is the only art museum in the United States open 365 days a year with free general admission. For additional information, telephone 804.340.1400 or visit www.VMFA.museum.

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