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VMFA Awards Nearly \$120,000 to 19 Visual Arts Fellowship Recipients
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Names 2024–25 Visual Arts Fellowship Recipients



Works of art by VMFA Visual Arts Fellowship recipients (left to right): *Third Home* by Rebecca Oh, *Rock Faerie* by Isaiah Mamo, *Driver & Passenger* by Abed Elmajid Shalabi, *Ryan Bell and Dodge, Berryville, Virginia* by Matt Eich

Richmond, Virginia — The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) is pleased to announce the 2024–25 recipients of its Visual Arts Fellowships. This year, nineteen professional artists and graduate and undergraduate students were awarded \$118,000 toward their artistic careers.

“The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is committed to nurturing professional artists and students from throughout the Commonwealth — this is a core part of our mission,” said Director and CEO Alex Nyerges. “Each year, through one of the largest fellowship programs of its kind in the United States, we recognize and provide transformative financial resources and exhibition opportunities to help advance the artistic careers of talented Virginians.”

Recipients must be residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia and may use the award as desired, including for education and studio investments. Each year, museum curators and working artists serve as jurors to select the award recipients. This year, Jennifer Inacio, associate curator at the Pérez Art Museum Miami in Florida, served as the professional-level fellowship juror. Betsy Chunko-Dominguez, professor of art history at the Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia, served as graduate art history juror, and Veronica Jackson, visual artist, curator and interpretive exhibit designer in Bedford, Virginia, served as the graduate and undergraduate visual arts juror.

VMFA awarded eight professional fellowships of \$8,000 each to the following artists:

- **Mamadou Dia** (Charlottesville), film and video
- **Matt Eich** (Charlottesville), photography
- **Ali Kaeini** (Richmond), painting
- **G.M. Keaton** (Richmond), new and emerging media
- **Rosalind Koons** (Richmond), sculpture
- **Abed Elmajid Shalabi** (Richmond), sculpture
- **Kate Sicchio** (Richmond), new and emerging media
- **Yulin Yuan** (Harrisonburg), mixed media

Five graduate students were awarded \$6,000 each:

- **Pooja Campbell** (Chantilly), painting, American University

- **Truman Deree** (Burke), photography, George Mason University
- **Isaiah Mamo** (Alexandria), photography, Virginia Commonwealth University
- **Rebecca Oh** (Richmond), painting, Virginia Commonwealth University
- **Isabelle Ostertag** (Charlottesville), art history, University of Virginia

Undergraduate fellowships of \$4,000 each were awarded to four students:

- **Margaret Gambino** (Vienna), drawing, Wake Forest University
- **Levi Mason** (Arlington), photography, Virginia Commonwealth University
- **Laneecia Ricks** (Richmond), photography, Virginia Commonwealth University
- **Kaitlyn Stanton** (Vienna), painting, Rhode Island School of Design

A \$2,000 half-year fellowship was awarded to Midlothian resident and Dec. 2024 graduate **Patton Westphalen**, who is studying film and video at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

The Cy Twombly Graduate Fellowship, supported by the McClintock Endowment, honors a two-time fellowship winner. This year's awardee is Richmond resident **Tyna Ontko**, who is studying sculpture at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Established through a generous contribution made by the late John Lee Pratt of Fredericksburg in 1940, VMFA's Visual Arts Fellowship Program marks its 84th anniversary this year. Offered through the VMFA Statewide Program, fellowships are still largely funded through the Pratt Endowment and supplemented by the J. Warwick McClintic Jr. Scholarship Fund. As a vital source of funding for the visual arts and art history, the museum has awarded nearly \$6 million in fellowships to Virginians since its inception.

For more information about the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, visit www.VMFA.museum.

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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 awards 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, Postimpressionist, 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. A new expansion, the McGlothlin Wing II, is

planned to open in 2028. Comprising more than 170,000 square feet, it will be the largest expansion in the museum's history and will make VMFA the fifth largest art museum in the United States.

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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