

# JOAN MITCHELL FOUNDATION

## Joan Mitchell Foundation Announces 2026 Artists-in-Residence at New Orleans-Based Joan Mitchell Center



New York, NY—January 14, 2026—The Joan Mitchell Foundation today announced the 31 visual artists who have been selected for residencies this year at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans. The dynamic and diverse 2026 cohort includes 14 artists who will travel to the Center from across the United States and 17 artists based in New Orleans—all of whom will participate in either 6- or 14-week residencies in the Spring, Summer, or Fall sessions, with up to 9 artists in residence at any given time. The participating artists range in age from 27 to 75 and represent a variety of ethnicities, personal backgrounds, and creative practices rooted in the visual arts.

Residencies at the Joan Mitchell Center support individual artistic growth, while also fostering community in the heart of one of America's most creatively rich cities. The program provides artists at pivotal junctures in their careers with critical resources, including private studio space, a weekly materials stipend, on-site studio assistants, professional development, and community-building opportunities. Now in its 11th year of operation, the Center has hosted over 350 artists, more than a third of whom are local to New Orleans. This mix of visiting and local artists working together in all sessions is a hallmark of the program, as local artists can serve as ambassadors to the city's culture and resources, while national residents bring expanded networks and experiences that can benefit the local residents. This year, four of the selected national artists are native to New Orleans but living elsewhere—an outcome that aligns with one of the residency program's goals of supporting the return of displaced artists to the city post-Katrina.

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## The 2026 Artists-in-Residence are:

[Vee Adams](#), New Orleans, LA

[Michael Arcega](#), San Francisco, CA

[Rachel Berwick](#), Killingworth, CT

[Farah Billah](#), New Orleans, LA

[Efrem Z. Boles \(Big Chief ZeeBo\)](#),

New Orleans, LA

[Kelly Pearson Boles \(Big Queen Kelly\)](#),

New Orleans, LA

[paris cian](#), New Orleans, LA

[Dillon Dillon](#), Bronx, NY

[Michel Droke](#), Arrowsic, ME

[Celia Eberle](#), Ennis, TX

[Brandon Felix](#), New Orleans, LA

[Rachel Gorman](#), New Orleans, LA

[Shana M. griffin](#), New Orleans, LA

[Ana María Agüero Jahannes](#), New Orleans, LA

[Fred H. C. Liang](#), Boston, MA

[Felicia Felli Maynard](#), New Orleans, LA

[Jessica Monette](#), East Palo Alto, CA

[Nadrea Njoku](#), Atlanta, GA

[Hakeem Olayinka](#), Brooklyn, NY

[Rachel Parish](#), Atlanta, GA

[Mary Jane Parker](#), New Orleans, LA

[Sienna Pinderhughes](#), New Orleans, LA

[Naomi Kawanishi Reis](#), Brooklyn, NY

[SÉAN](#), New Orleans, LA

[Analia Segal](#), Brooklyn, NY

[Shaina Simmons](#), New Orleans, LA

[Edra Soto](#), Chicago, IL

[Jade Thiraswas](#), New Orleans, LA

[Trish Tillman](#), Brooklyn, NY

[Gabrielle Tolliver](#), New Orleans, LA

[Caitlin Ezell Waugh](#), New Orleans, LA

"The 2026 Joan Mitchell Center Artists-in-Residence reflect the rich diversity of creative practices throughout the US and within the vibrant arts scene of New Orleans," said Christa Blatchford, Executive Director of the Joan Mitchell Foundation. "We are proud to provide each of these artists with time and space to pursue specific projects or develop new ideas, continuing the generosity that Joan Mitchell showed to other artists who came to live and work at her home in France. The Foundation's ongoing support for artists is particularly meaningful and important in this challenging moment of diminishing opportunities, and we continue to be committed to our values in ensuring that the Joan Mitchell Center is a safe and inclusive space for creative work and exchange."

The Foundation's residency program grew out of decades of grantmaking that included support for artists and arts organizations nationwide, with a notable focus on providing resources to the arts community in New Orleans post-Katrina. To deepen its relationship with its community both in New Orleans and of past grantees across the US, the Foundation began offering residencies in 2013 through a pilot program in the French Quarter. In 2015, the Joan Mitchell Center officially opened its two-acre campus on Bayou Road in the Seventh Ward, with residencies open by application to two groups: the Foundation's past grant recipients and visual artists local to or born in New Orleans. Each

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year, both groups' applications are reviewed by a rotating jury of artists and arts professionals, who evaluate the artists' overall bodies of work and dedication to maintaining a studio practice, while considering which of the applicants are at a pivotal moment in their careers when they would most benefit from participating in the residency program.

The jurors for 2026 were: **Hannah Chalew**, a New Orleans-based artist, activist, and residency alum; **Rian Crane**, an independent curator, organizer, and artist from Houston, TX; **Ama Rogan**, managing director of A Studio in the Woods at Tulane University, New Orleans; **Dewey Tafoya**, a visual artist and master printmaker based in Los Angeles; and **Allison K. Young**, Associate Professor of Contemporary Art History at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA.

"As an artist, I always learn a great deal by serving on grant juries. With the Joan Mitchell Center attracting such a strong applicant pool, it was inspiring to get to see so much compelling work," reflected Hannah Chalew. "I gained valuable insights from hearing the diverse perspectives of my fellow jurors while contributing my own as a former Artist-in-Residence at the Center. I especially appreciated the Center's commitment to an intentional jury process that cultivates cohorts of talented artists dedicated to their practices, including a roster of local artists that reflects the population of our city."

Artists begin arriving at the Joan Mitchell Center's New Orleans campus on February 2 for the Spring session, with artists in residence for either 6 or 14 weeks, as their schedules permit, through May 8. Nine artists will be in residence for the Summer session, which runs June 22–July 31. For the Fall session, artists again rotate in for 6- or 14-week residencies, from September 8–December 18.

"With each residency season, we see the transformative impact a residency can have on an artist's practice—whether through uninterrupted time to focus on their work, connections made through studio visits and public events, exchange with fellow residents, or immersion in the unique culture of New Orleans," noted Veronique LeMelle, who was recently named Senior Director of the Joan Mitchell Center. "We're excited to welcome each of the 2026 Artists-in-Residence to campus and support their diverse practices and residency goals."

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Among the incoming participants are:

**Kelly Pearson Boles** and **Efrem Z. Boles**, both leaders in the Black Osceolas tribe in the Black Masking Indian tradition of New Orleans. Big Queen Kelly and Big Chief ZeeBo will complete separate residencies (Spring and Fall, respectively) to focus deeply on their work creating beaded parade suits and move the cultural traditions that they steward forward.



**Shana M. griffin**, a New Orleans-based interdisciplinary artist, feminist geographer, and researcher. Her practice engages history and memory as counter-archives of resistance, centering black women's spatial knowledges and the counter-geographies black communities forge. During her residency, griffin will focus on black visualities of refusal and counter-narratives of monumentality.



**Fred H. C. Liang**, a Chinese-born and Boston-based installation artist with a practice rooted in the traditional Chinese paper-cutting technique of Jianzhi. Liang, whose residency comes as the artist transitions out of a 40-year teaching career, will further develop a recent body of work that directly responds to the current US social and political climate. Through this work, he interrogates enduring questions of belonging, identity, and what it means to be American.



**Felicia Felli Maynard**, an interdisciplinary artist and archivist originally from Brooklyn and now based in New Orleans, who focuses on building inclusive community archives where Black queer and trans narratives are not only preserved but also continually remapped and reclaimed. Maynard sees their upcoming residency as a chance to strengthen community ties within the 7th Ward and across their adopted city, while continuing projects rooted in a global South context.



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**Jessica Monette**, a New Orleans-born, Bay Area-based interdisciplinary artist and educator whose practice takes the form of painting, sculpture, and installation. Monette, who was displaced by Hurricane Katrina, expressed a desire to reconnect with her New Orleans family while in residence at the Center and to create a new body of work rooted in both archival research and family storytelling, exploring themes of cultural inheritance, displacement, and resilience.



**Naomi Kawanishi Reis**, a Brooklyn-based Japanese/American visual artist who translates everyday life into labor-intensive collaged paintings, inspired by the Japanese aesthetic concept of *monono aware* (the impermanence of life). As she both enters a new decade and embarks on her residency, Reis expressed an intention for her work to “open up and become more weird, funny, three-dimensional, and surprising, even to me.”



**Edra Soto**, a Puerto-Rican artist based in Chicago whose sculptural installations dissect the underlying relationship between Spanish colonial military architecture in Puerto Rico and notions of self-value. Soto, who is preparing for solo exhibitions at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art and the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, will use her residency to reconnect with painting and drawing, while seeking conversations and collaborations with artists from the residency community and its surroundings.



## About the Joan Mitchell Foundation

The Joan Mitchell Foundation cultivates the study and appreciation of artist Joan Mitchell's life and work, while fulfilling her wish to provide resources and opportunities for visual artists. As the steward of Joan Mitchell's legacy, the Foundation manages a collection of Mitchell's artwork and archives containing her personal papers, photographs, sketchbooks, and other historical materials. Fulfilling Mitchell's mandate to “aid and assist” living artists, over the past 33 years the Foundation has evolved a range of initiatives that have directly supported more than 1,300 visual artists at varying stages of their careers. The Joan Mitchell Fellowship gives annual unrestricted awards of \$60,000 directly to artists, with

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funds distributed over a five-year period alongside flexible professional development and convenings that facilitate community building and peer learning. The New Orleans-based Joan Mitchell Center hosts residencies for national and local artists, complemented by professional development offerings, open studio events, and other public programs that encourage dialogue and exchange with the local community. The Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) initiative provides free and essential resources to help artists of all ages organize, document, and manage their artworks and careers. Together, these programs actively engage with working artists as they develop and expand their practices. For more information, visit [joanmitchellfoundation.org](http://joanmitchellfoundation.org).

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