

# Widening Circles

Portraits from the Joan Mitchell Foundation  
Artist Community at 25 Years

PHOTOGRAPHS BY REGINALD ELDRIDGE, JR.



Sonya Kelliher-Combs



Shervone Neckles



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*Widening Circles: Portraits from the Joan Mitchell  
Foundation Artist Community at 25 Years*  
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Joan Mitchell, *Faded Air II*, 1985  
Oil on canvas, 102 x 102 in. (259.08 x 259.08 cm)  
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Andrea Chung

**I live my life in widening circles  
that reach out across the world.  
I may not complete this last one  
but I give myself to it.**

– RAINER MARIA RILKE



Throughout her life, poetry was an important source of inspiration and solace to Joan Mitchell. Her mother was a poet, as were many close friends. We know from well-worn books in Mitchell's library that Rilke was a favorite. Looking at the artist portraits and stories that follow in this book, we at the Foundation also turned to Rilke, a poet known for his letters of advice to a young artist. In the following pages, we hope you will see how Mitchell's generosity has created a widening circle of impact on thousands of artists. The individuals the Joan Mitchell Foundation supports are, in turn, passing this generosity on to their communities and networks.

In 2018, at this particular point in our country's history, we believe that the radical generosity of Mitchell's legacy can serve as an inspiration to us all.

## Supporting One Artist, Supporting Many Artists: Joan Mitchell Foundation at 25 Years

Shortly before her death in 1992, Joan Mitchell signed a will outlining the creation of an organization with a mission of direct support to artists and their creative processes. For Mitchell, making art was essential; she once said, “Painting is a way of feeling ‘living.’” She had a vision that her legacy could be used to bolster other artists, to ensure their practices could flourish. The Foundation is grounded in the concept that, in stewarding Mitchell’s legacy, we in turn can be a catalyst for countless others.

Now, 25 years after being established, the Joan Mitchell Foundation has given grants directly to more than one thousand artists and supported thousands more artists nationally through programs including Art Education, Creating a Living Legacy (CALL), and residencies at the Joan Mitchell Center. Over the last three years, as the art world has begun to reconsider its male-dominated narratives, there has been growing recognition and appreciation for Mitchell’s artwork and her important role in art history. As managers of a collection of Mitchell’s artwork and her archives, we know that through our stewardship, we are advocating for the value of future artists. The stories within this book demonstrate how deeply one artist’s singular generosity can impact many.

In this anniversary year, we reached out to our recipients to hear their stories and map this ever-expanding circle of creativity and generosity. As an organization created by an artist for artists, we see no better way to celebrate our anniversary milestone than by sharing the portraits and voices of artists directly supported by the Foundation. We were lucky to find an exceptionally talented and thoughtful photographer, Reginald Eldridge, Jr., to partner with us on this project.

The 25 artists selected for this book intentionally come from a wide range of career points, ages, geographies, and communities. They were asked to participate because their stories collectively demonstrate the myriad ways the Foundation has worked with artists over the years—always with a firm commitment to the value of supporting creativity and practice over the object.

Enjoy, be inspired, and may your circle be ever widening.

Christa Blatchford

CEO, JOAN MITCHELL FOUNDATION

Michele Tortorelli

PRESIDENT, JOAN MITCHELL FOUNDATION

## About Joan Mitchell

Joan Mitchell (1925–1992) was an American artist whose career spanned more than four decades, from her first professional solo exhibition in 1950 until her death in 1992. Best known for her large abstract oils on canvas, Mitchell also created smaller paintings, as well as an extensive body of works on paper and prints.

Born in Chicago and educated at the Art Institute of Chicago, Mitchell moved in 1949 to New York, where she was an active participant in the downtown arts scene. She exhibited in the famous *Ninth Street Show* in 1951, and soon established a reputation as one of the leading younger American Abstract Expressionist painters. She exhibited regularly in New York throughout the next four decades and maintained close friendships with many New York School painters and poets.

In 1955 Mitchell began dividing her time between New York and France, and in 1968 she settled in Vétheuil, a small town in the countryside outside of Paris, where she worked continuously until her death in 1992. During the almost 50 years of her painting life, Mitchell's commitment to the tenets of gestural abstraction remained firm and uncompromising. Summing up her achievement, curator and art critic Klaus Kertess wrote, "She transformed the gestural painterliness of Abstract Expressionism into a vocabulary so completely her own that it could become ours as well. And her total absorption of the lessons of Matisse and van Gogh led to a mastery of color inseparable from the movement of light and paint. Her ability to reflect the flow of her consciousness in that of nature, and in paint, is all but unparalleled."

Mitchell personally supported many young artists who came to stay with her at Vétheuil—sometimes for just one night, sometimes for an entire summer. Correspondence in her papers reveals that this generosity often had a life-changing impact on those who spent time with her. Her generosity in her own lifetime continued after her death with the formation of the Joan Mitchell Foundation, called for in her will in order to create support and recognition for individual artists. The Foundation's mission also includes the promotion and preservation of Mitchell's legacy, which includes her remarkable body of artwork, her personal papers, and other archival materials related to her life and work.

Joan Mitchell in her studio in Vétheuil, France, 1983  
Photo by Robert Freson, Joan Mitchell Foundation Archives, © Joan Mitchell Foundation

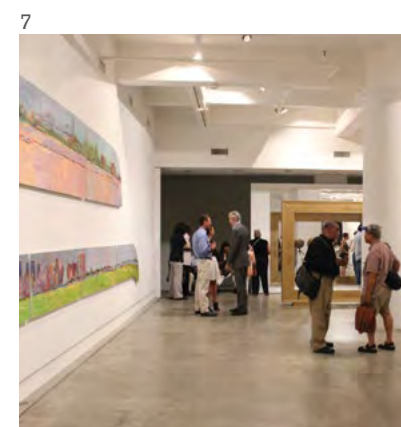
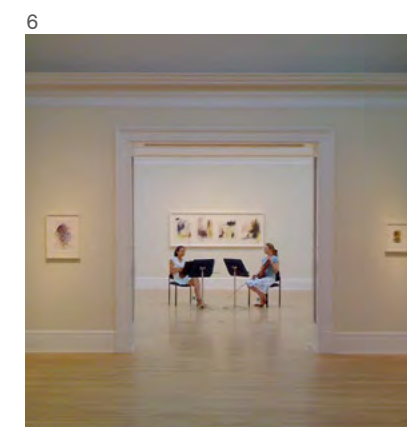
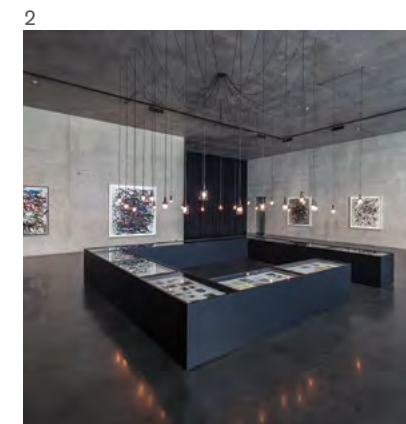


## About the Joan Mitchell Foundation

The Joan Mitchell Foundation celebrates the life of abstract artist Joan Mitchell by expanding awareness of her pioneering work and fulfilling her wish to support and provide opportunities for visual artists. Through grants, residencies, and related initiatives, the Foundation advances the work of today's artists and amplifies their essential contributions to communities around the world.

As the chief steward of Joan Mitchell's legacy, the Foundation maintains a collection of Mitchell's artwork (paintings, works on paper, and prints) as well as archival collections that include her personal papers and photographs. The Foundation loans artworks for exhibition at museums, academic institutions, and other nonprofit arts spaces, and the Legacy team provides scholars access to its collections with the aim of furthering scholarship and broadening appreciation for Mitchell's life and work. Major projects and exhibitions supported by the Foundation include: *Joan Mitchell* by Klaus Kertess, Harry Abrams (1997); *The Paintings of Joan Mitchell*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2002); *Remembering Joan Mitchell*, Newcomb Art Museum of Tulane University, the New Orleans Museum of Art, and the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans (2010); *Joan Mitchell: At Home in Poetry*, The Poetry Foundation, Chicago (2013); *Joan Mitchell: An American Master*, Lehigh University (2013); *Joan Mitchell Retrospective: Her Life and Paintings*, Kunsthau Bregenz, Austria (2015) and Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany (2015–16); and an upcoming retrospective co-organized by the Baltimore Museum of Art and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2020–21). The Foundation also supports the Joan Mitchell Catalogue Raisonné project, established in 2015.

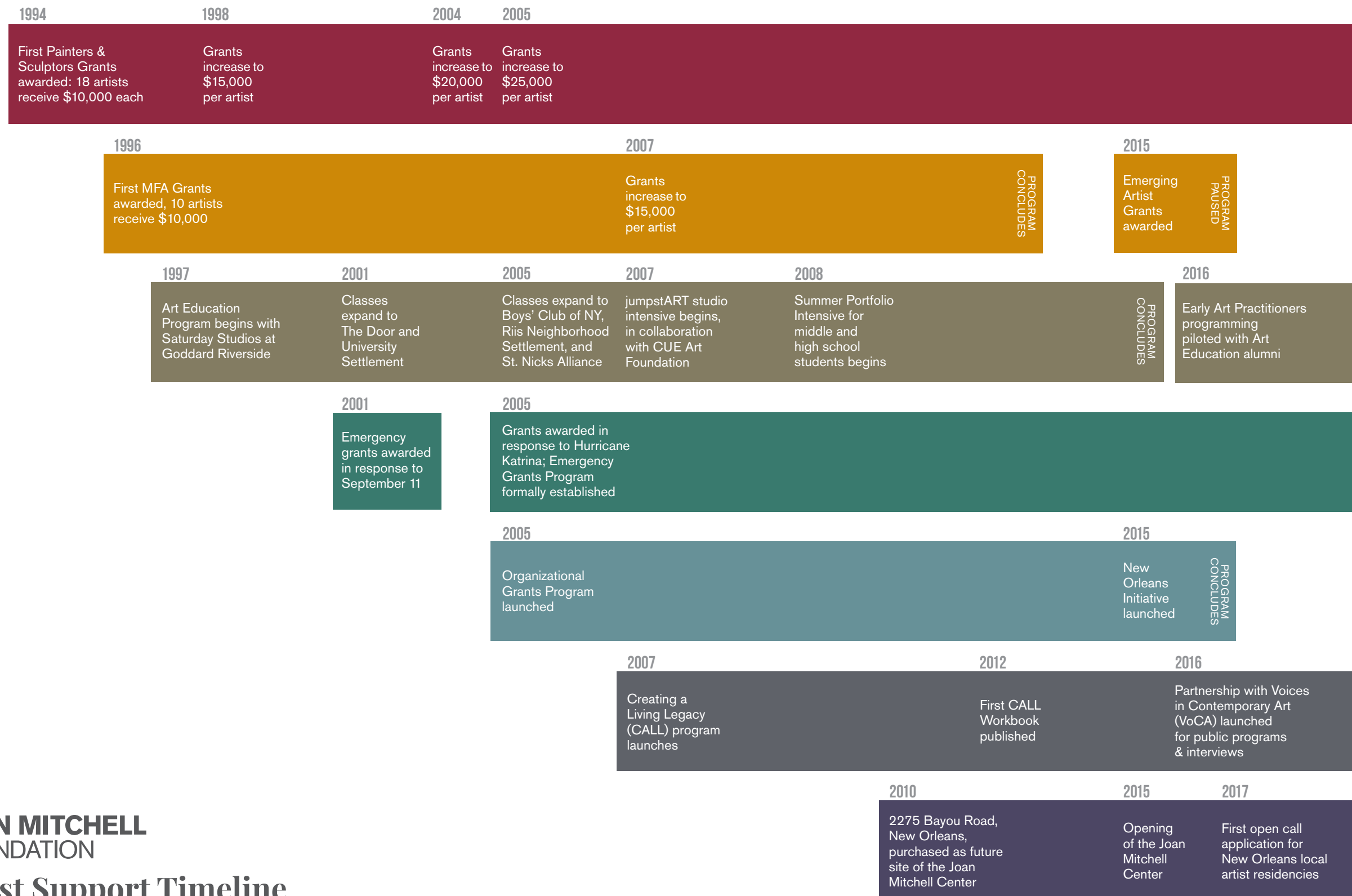
Fulfilling Mitchell's mandate to "aid and assist" living artists, over the past 25 years the Foundation has evolved a range of initiatives that directly support visual artists at varying stages of their careers. The Foundation's grant programs include the annual Painters & Sculptors Grants, which provide 25 artists with unrestricted funds of \$25,000, and Emergency Grants of up to \$6,000 for disaster recovery. The New Orleans-based Joan Mitchell Center hosts residencies for national and local artists, as well as artist talks, 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. Past programs include Art Education (1997–2016), MFA Grants (1997–2012), Organizational Grants (2005–17), and Emerging Artist Grants (2015–16). Together, the Foundation's programs, along with additional professional support services, actively engage with working artists as they develop and expand their practices.



1—The inaugural recipients of Painters & Sculptors Grants, 1994. 2—Installation view of *Joan Mitchell Retrospective: Her Life and Paintings* at Kunsthau Bregenz, Austria, 2015. Photo by Markus Tretter, courtesy of Kunsthau Bregenz. 3—Joan Mitchell Foundation Art Education Alumni Council at the opening of *TRANSPARENCY*, CUE Art Foundation, 2018. Photo by Alice Grindling. 4—Ephemera and photographs from the Joan Mitchell Papers, Joan Mitchell Foundation Archives. 5—Studio of Artist-in-Residence Gregory Coates (left) at the Joan Mitchell Center, 2017. Photo by Instapix. 6—Performers during an evening for educators at *Joan Mitchell in New Orleans: Paintings* at New Orleans Museum of Art, 2010. 7—Exhibition featuring four pilot CALL Artists at CUE Art Foundation in 2012. Photo by Osha Waiters. 8—CALL Legacy Specialist Beth Krebs and CALL Apprentice Elizabeth Reynoso, working with CALL Artist Arlan Huang to document an artwork. Photo by Anne Polashenski. 9—Community Coffee at the Joan Mitchell Center, 2015. Photo by Jeremy Tauriac.

1992 Mitchell passes away; her will directs estate to establish a foundation in her name.

1993 Joan Mitchell Foundation incorporated in New York.



**\$14,800,000+**  
in unrestricted funds distributed to individual artists

**1000+**  
artists awarded grants

**5,000+**  
young artists supported or educated

**285**  
Emergency Grants distributed

**\$7,800,000+**  
in funds given to organizations providing artist support

**20+**  
free resource guides and workbooks published for artists, students, teachers, and legacy workers

**188**  
Artists hosted in residencies at the Joan Mitchell Center

**JOAN MITCHELL  
FOUNDATION**

## Artist Support Timeline



# From the Photographer

REGINALD ELDRIDGE, JR.

During the summer of 2018, I had the great joy and honor to photograph the artists in this collection, each of whom has produced bodies of work whose breadth, scope, clarity of expression, and invitation to reflect (on beauty, on craft, on our place in the world) extend beyond my capacity to contain them in succinct language. Each session, co-composed between the artist and myself, was an exchange of ideas of which these images are a record.

While we worked, I asked the artists about their philosophies. Cullen Washington, Jr., spoke to me of the sacredness of the painterly space, how the act was akin to an act of worship. Adejoke Tugbiyele spoke of the sacredness of the self, and the work between self and world that art—and living—involves. I found similar reflections with Mario Martinez, whose ideas about the nature of the artist's individual soul resonated with me, and with Wojciech Gilewicz, who suggested that we are our most artist selves when we are looking closely at the world. Denise Schatz's drawings, which catalog the mundane, brought to mind a similar meditation.

Several of the artists I photographed make work that grapples directly with memory. Maia Cruz Palileo reckons with the impact—aesthetic and spiritual—of the colonial and migratory memory of those descended from the Philippines. In another register, Ashley Teamer incorporates 1990s basketball cards in massive painterly collages. A child of the '90s myself, I felt, walking amongst them, the immersive reckoning childhood memory imposes on the reflective adult. Louise Mouton Johnson's tapestries in paper and fabric evoke the patchwork quilts Black women in the Antebellum South produced not only to keep warm but also to share vital messages. And Amy Sherald's stark, magnetic paintings grasp the historical, collapsing the viewer's expected alienation from certain historical narratives while inviting—for me, at least—an interrogation of the ways in which such an alienation remains ever-contemporary among the Black lives she explores.

The guiding role of narrative and myth could be found in many of the profiled artists' works. Andrea Chung's work problematizes the concept of paradise, formulating a material meditation on the story of those whose labor made the New World. Katrina Andry's carvings and prints upstage mermaid mythos by connecting it with the aquatic memory of those who died in the Middle Passage, among other events. Shervone Neckles's multimedia origin myths, like the work of several others in this collection, returned me to Jamaican theorist Sylvia Wynter's recent conversations on the human as a hybrid being of *mythos* and *bios*: that stories are as essential to our being as our biologies, that each informs the other.

To encounter Jess Perlitz's looming sculptures is to walk among the destabilizing figures

of dreams. Anne Buckwalter's work, striking its own oneiric registers, invites, among other things, a structural reflection on how narratives around femaleness are marked by myths of the danger of feminine power. Sarah Wagner's surreal constructions subtly ring the personal and historical memory of the American experience, connecting the trade in cotton to an aspirational imagination, seeming to say that if we could interrogate this massive, tempestuous mythic in which we find ourselves, we might be able to steer ourselves through it. Lilian Garcia-Roig's large indexical abstract works, in the tradition of Joan Mitchell herself, evoke consideration of what it means to form one's own grammar of images.

Mel Chin's massive retrospective at the Queens Museum (through which I was guided by the artist himself) felt like a long walk through History. His works, spanning decades, were in conversation with one another as well as with the major questions that guide civilizations. Indeed, questions like, *Who are we? What are we doing? Where are we going?* are evident in the works of all the artists. Stacy Lynn Waddell's glimmering textual works invite such an act of epistemic wayfinding. Her deconstruction of the phrase "BLACK LIVES MATTER" mirrors the ways the movement itself has encountered the inevitable dialogic entropy our civilization imposes on such movements almost as soon as they crest.

There were many happy coincidences that intersected with my sessions with these artists. Tomie Arai's photo shoot occurred the day before her birthday. We talked about how she arrived at her years, about the little things she would do to celebrate herself. My session with Julie Green happened on my own birthday. We talked, over lunch, about the contemporary world, specifically our American world—a topic that entered almost every conversation throughout the sessions. How could it not? Heather Cox spoke of metamorphosis, and we thought together on what a more perfect internal union might mean. Rontherin Ratliff's installation-meditation on space-making offered, for me, some response to just such an inquiry.

When I shot with him at the Foundation, Lobsang Tsewang was intent on making work before the camera. One of the younger artists participating in this project, he showed me some of the mementos from his time as a youth taking classes at the Foundation. Another of the younger artists—Angelica Santiago—struck me with her focus in describing how her paintings were informed by her faith. It rang as similar in spirit to that of many of the other artists whose studio spaces took on the quality of the sacred, like Sonya Kelliher-Combs, whose wide-ranging practice includes rigorous preparation of scores of objects whose energy resonates with deep memories. I could not help but be moved.

As we worked together, all of the artists mentioned the importance of the Foundation's generosity in the pursuit of their creative lives. I heard so many stories of how receiving a grant helped them to secure space, to focus on their craft, how in the years since receiving a grant the Foundation continued to support them with resources, information, and other opportunities.

I'm grateful to the Joan Mitchell Foundation for the opportunity to have shared with these artists. I learned and will continue to learn from their work and spirits for a long time to come. Where my words fail, may these images begin to say that most fully.



Louise Mouton Johnson



Wojciech Gilewicz

# Heather Cox

I've always considered Joan Mitchell to be my fairy godmother. When I received the MFA Grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation in 1998, Mitchell's gift allowed me to relocate to New York City, maintain a hold on my art-making practice, and keep my health insurance—which was key while I attempted to find a job. I made art in my apartment and shortly thereafter started working at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Twenty years later, I have an active studio practice (outside my apartment, thank heavens), and I continue to work part time at the Whitney in its Conservation Department. I have the honor of being a steward of the Whitney's collection, with Mitchell's painting *Hemlock* being one of my very favorites. Every time I see it in storage or on view in the gallery, I hear a whisper from the past and a great big shout into the future. Joan's voice continues to be heard.

*Heather Cox is a New York City-based artist who employs a variety of materials in her projects to address issues of visibility, discovery, and metamorphosis.*



# Tomie Arai

*When the gift moves in a circle, its motion is beyond the control of the personal ego, and so each bearer must be a part of the group and each donation is an act of social faith.*

—Lewis Hyde

As one of the first artists to be awarded a Painters & Sculptors Grant in 1994, this year's 25th anniversary also marks my 25-year connection with the Joan Mitchell Foundation—a connection that deepened into a working relationship when I joined the Foundation's board of directors in 2010.

In the inaugural year of the grant program, I was invited to meet the other 17 grantees at a reception that was held at the Robert Miller Gallery in New York. Posing together for the first group photograph of Joan Mitchell Foundation grant recipients, I remember the thrill of standing alongside Melvin Edwards, Howardena Pindell, Leonardo Drew, Terry Adkins, Tyrone Mitchell, and Emilio Cruz—artists who were each, in their own way, trying to change the face of the art world.

Since that very first round of grant recipients, I have always regarded the Foundation as a space of generosity. Direct and unrestricted support to artists is a rare gift, and in the spirit of reciprocity, my work with the Foundation has allowed me to reimagine a world in which cooperation and creativity across cultures, genders, borders, and race are valued and protected. By participating in the Foundation's ongoing conversations about the need to build a more equitable and inclusive arts community, I've had the privilege of advocating for artists who truly reflect the diverse worlds in which we live. In the words of Lewis Hyde, these acts of social faith have been set in motion by a circle of giving. By joining this circle, the relationships I have built with artists, cultural spaces, and the Joan Mitchell Foundation have sustained my art practice and light my way in these very dark times.

*Tomie Arai is a public artist whose work examines issues of cultural equity. A cofounder of the cultural collective The Chinatown Art Brigade, she lives and works in New York, NY.*



# Mel Chin

I met Joan Mitchell before I got an award named after her. It was at Robert Miller's Gallery, 1991, in New York City. I was with the curator/director James Harithas and painter Norman Bluhm. They both knew Joan very well. Norman, an artist with a big personality, was uncharacteristically subdued that night, yet he offered her a heartfelt cocktail of admiration. They had a few words, then Joan quickly moved on, looking for more from others. I don't think Norman took it as a slight; maybe it was a moment when both understood there was less and less time to represent the spirit, individuality, and tenacity it takes to be an artist, regardless of fame and hype.

I mostly remember her thick glasses and felt a strange eyewear kinship. As an artist, my work is so different from Joan Mitchell's; maybe that is why I was surprised as well as honored by her posthumous generosity when I received the Painters & Sculptors Grant in 1997.

I dedicated the funds I received at that time toward a spectrum of works that represented two extremes of my practice: an experiment in covert collective engagement on one end, and the production of introspective, discrete objects on the other.

Years later, in 2011, the Joan Mitchell Foundation's Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) initiative provided an essential instrument in the organization of works to be considered for my retrospective at the New Orleans Museum of Art. Thanks to the Foundation's archival support, forty years of complex output were lifted out of inadequate documentation and given a chance at critical assessment.

Joan Mitchell certainly captured light in her art, and her thoughtful legacy created the capacity for another type of illumination to be placed on the works of future generations of artists.

*Mel Chin investigates how art can provoke greater social awareness and responsibility. He was born in Houston, TX, and now lives in Egypt Township, NC.*



# Rontherin Ratliff

In 2005, I arrived in New York as a result of the flooding of New Orleans that followed Hurricane Katrina. I heard about the Joan Mitchell Foundation Emergency Grant from a fellow New Orleans artist who I was working with on a mural project, and I applied for and received a grant from the Foundation. That support provided a way for me to continue developing my work before I returned home to New Orleans to help with recovery. While in New York, I was afforded the time and space to put into words my experience of evacuating from New Orleans. In 2009, I translated that experience into three-dimensional sculptures as part of my first contemporary art exhibition. This exhibition, *On Piety*, led to the production of sculptures for *Works & Process* at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City in 2010.

At that time, my understanding of how to sustain a contemporary art practice was unclear. I gained that clarity during the Joan Mitchell Center Artist-in-Residence program in 2012–13. The feedback I received during studio visits, artist talks during dinners, and professional development sessions made it clear that fellow artists and arts professionals are willing to be a support system if I reach out. The time and wisdom offered to me has been priceless and continues to influence my artistic career.

The residency program provided continued opportunities to collaborate and exhibit with local and national artists. The most notable collaboration is Level Artist Collective in New Orleans, which I cofounded in 2015 with my Joan Mitchell Center studio mate Carl Joe Williams and artists Ana Hernandez, Horton Humble, and John Isiah Walton—all of whom have now also completed residencies at the Joan Mitchell Center. Through cohesion and the merging of creative resources, the objective of Level Artist Collective has been to cultivate a platform that promotes, supports, and sustains our individual and collective voices and vision. This mission is in direct response to the challenges local artists shared with me during my time at the Joan Mitchell Center and collective thinking on how to overcome them through shared resources and space.

*Rontherin Ratliff is a conceptual artist from New Orleans, LA, who creates mixed-media assemblages, art installations, and sculptures.*



# Shervone Neckles

My 13-year relationship with the Joan Mitchell Foundation began in 2005 as an MFA Grant recipient. After receiving the grant, I had the opportunity to teach with the Art Education Program, and in 2013 I was invited to join the Foundation's staff full time. This evolving relationship has shaped my perspective and understanding of my position in the art scene and market. Years of research findings have shown and my own lived experiences have confirmed the disjointed ladder I'm fated to climb. The challenges of building and maintaining a thriving art career as a woman of color, parent, and first-generation American with full-time employment are in fact real.

Even in the midst of my weariness, I've witnessed firsthand selfless gestures and acts of generosity between artists both within the Joan Mitchell Foundation and the extended community that challenge my leanings toward disenchantment. I owe my renewed civic engagement to a number of artists who are doing culture-shifting work, day-to-day, on the ground and in boardrooms. These artists are stretching and broadening the perspective of the field by integrating concepts and practices related to art, academic research, policy analysis, and social entrepreneurship.

For me, Joan Mitchell's request to create a foundation in her name that would be both a steward of her legacy and support the advancement of other visual artists punctuates how one lives beyond the physical realm. In my role as the Foundation's Artist Programs Manager, I am able to develop programs with the intention of connecting our artist community to the resources and tools essential to cultivating a sustainable art career.

Despite our differences (socioeconomic, generational, and even geographical), Joan Mitchell and I share a conviction as artists to make work according to the way we see the world, along with an unwavering commitment to a critical and rigorous studio practice. Knowing we share these artistic values has shifted the dynamic of "funder and grantee" to a "gesture of generosity" between artists. I feel compelled to be a responsible steward of this legacy of generosity through my own studio/community practice and my work at the Foundation.

*Shervone Neckles was raised in Brooklyn, NY, and lives in Queens, NY.  
Her interdisciplinary art practice draws inspiration from the duality  
and transitional nature of her Caribbean-American identity.*



# Lilian Garcia-Roig

In 2006, I received a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant, which had a large impact on the development of my work at that time. The financial freedom it provided allowed me to spend the time and resources to expand the scale and scope of my work to room-sized installations. I produced extensive on-site painting series at various locations around the country. Increasing scale proved to be key to the success of these paintings; I received renewed positive attention and many invitations to exhibit these works.

As my work developed, my interest in the landscape shifted from the formal to the personal. I became more interested in the connections between place, belonging, and identity. This shift coincided with a second great opportunity provided by the Joan Mitchell Foundation in 2017, when I was selected to participate in the Artist-in-Residence program at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans. Prior to the residency, I had returned to my native Cuba to paint for the first time. The studio environment at the Center turned out to be the ideal setting to reflect upon and respond to that experience on a personal level. The interaction with other artists and the community engagement opportunities further supported new directions in my work.

My residency led to the creation of two radically different bodies of work that explore the relationship between my Cuban and American identities through place/displacement, sampled modernist aesthetics, and a combination of pictorial and actual landscape. I was able to greatly expand my painting practice while simultaneously strengthening my sense of belonging to a greater artistic community.

*Lilian Garcia-Roig is a Cuban-American painter who lives in Florida. Painted on-site, her installations of densely forested landscapes explore the materiality of paint and complicate the nature of perception over time.*





# Denise Schatz

I was honored to work as an Artist-Teacher for the Joan Mitchell Foundation for close to a decade (2007–16). The Foundation's Arts Education program was stellar in its scope and philosophy. It brought together a group of strong and tirelessly creative individuals who shared a common goal: bringing art to Out-of-School-Time programs throughout the city that instilled our students with a sense of artistic curiosity and nourished critical-thinking skills—strengths that Joan Mitchell herself embodied. Our students were excited to be working with artists and materials that were new to them and often shared how important and supportive this creative time was in their lives. My colleagues at the Foundation have been like family, and I am so proud to have been part of the education program.

I also worked as a Legacy Specialist in the Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) program and was very lucky to spend time with the artist Mimi Smith. While working on her archive, I learned a great deal about the art world through her artwork and experiences. Mimi is prolific and her commitment to creating on a daily basis has inspired how I go about making my own work. We came across some photographs of fabric sculptures she installed on the roof of her East Village apartment, pieces she referred to as “earrings for the city.” I went on to publish a small artist book of these photographs, titled *1965*, through my imprint, Miniature Garden.

In addition to publishing Mimi's book, I have collaborated on projects with other Joan Mitchell Foundation artist colleagues, including Natalie Beall, Sharela Bonfield, Valerie Piraino, Antonia Perez, Gretchen Scherer, and Sarah Wang. I feel very lucky to have worked with so many incredible artists through the Foundation.

*Denise Schatz is an artist based in Brooklyn, NY. She founded the small press Miniature Garden, which publishes limited-edition artist books.*



# Cullen Washington, Jr.

On a cold winter day in 2009, while standing near the Utrecht Art Supplies store on Massachusetts Avenue, I received a phone call from my Associate Dean of Academic Affairs stating that I had been nominated for the Joan Mitchell Foundation MFA Grant. At the time, I was in the last year of the graduate program at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Throughout my time in grad school, I had intensely desired this award. I had inquired to faculty about the application process and was informed that it was by nomination only. I thought, this may be hopeless. So I replaced my desire to win the award with the desire to make good work. I practically lived in my studio, making work, challenging myself, and on occasion, creating something beautiful. This did not go unnoticed. I recall that I sat on my chilly apartment floor as I listened to the representative on the other end of the phone line share that I had been picked among fourteen other artists to receive the Joan Mitchell Foundation MFA Grant.

For me, this meant that the many hours and minutes of anxiety, anguish, and sacrifice were rewarded in a big way, and that I was being honored with an award in the name of someone I truly admired. As I walked across the stage during my graduation, while my work flashed on the big screen, the mention of the award rang loud. The award money allowed me to make art and not work for a year (I found ways to live meagerly). The exhibition of the MFA Grant recipients' work at the CUE Art Foundation was my second exhibition in New York City. For a graduate student, this was very meaningful.

In addition to being a source of support for me, the Joan Mitchell Foundation has been a vehicle for me to support other artists. It has given me the opportunity to reciprocate by nominating artists for this prestigious award. I received invaluable legal support through the Foundation's partnership with the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. This led to a new way to give back via donations of my work. And in fall 2018, I will be one of the Artists-in-Residence at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans. As a Louisiana native, this is a place of roots, ritual, and comfort for me.

It has been and continues to be an honor to be affiliated with the legacy of Joan Mitchell. I am truly appreciative of the staff and of the resources the Foundation has provided me all these years.

*Cullen Washington, Jr., utilizes the grid to communicate humanity and interconnectedness. He describes his collage abstract paintings as "nonrepresentational fields of activity." He lives in Long Island City, NY.*



# Jess Perlitz

When I reflect on what has helped me sustain my art practice, the MFA Grant I received from the Joan Mitchell Foundation back in 2009 is one of the pivotal things. I remain very thankful for it. Money like that clearly allows for choice and possibilities, but there was also something more complicated about the support the award gave.

The grant came at a time when I was very unsure about whether what I was making was good or not. I was about to graduate, wading through lots of rejections, and the award really felt like a gesture of confidence. It allowed me to establish a studio practice and forge deeper. At a time when I couldn't muster it for myself, it validated what I was doing.

I teach now, and when I watch my students graduate and struggle with how to start out, I am reminded again and again about this. Because access to money ultimately isn't fair, the thing I try to focus on with them is confidence. Because without at least a little bit of confidence, it's too hard. That's the best way I've figured out how to pass on some of the gift I was given.

*Jess Perlitz is an artist based in Portland, OR, whose work—ranging from performance to drawing—considers landscape and the ways we define and seek to recognize ourselves within it.*



# Maia Cruz Palileo

I received the Joan Mitchell Foundation's MFA Grant in 2008, just as I was graduating from Brooklyn College. Being nominated was a big deal and receiving it was even bigger. It was not only financially supportive, but the validation that came along with it is the hidden gift. At that time, I had no idea how the Foundation was going to impact my life beyond the grant, which I used to rent a studio and buy supplies.

Around the time of my award, the Foundation was expanding its Art Education program and looking to hire artists to work as teaching assistants. I applied. I interviewed in the same conference room where I envisioned my images had been projected to the MFA Grant jury. For the next eight years, that conference room became my second home as an Artist-Teacher for the Foundation. Working as an educator supplemented my income enough so that I could work part time and be in the studio.

The Foundation connected me to an incredible intergenerational community of artists, both through teaching and through the Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) Program, through which I was trained as a Legacy Specialist. The collective energy and ideas that came out of the Art Education team have informed my values as an artist and as an educator.

The Foundation has continued to support my work over the years through a residency at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans and professional development opportunities. I am very grateful to be a part of the Joan Mitchell Foundation community.

*Maia Cruz Palileo is a multidisciplinary, Brooklyn-based artist whose work explores migration and the permeable concept of home.*



# Angelica Santiago

When I was growing up, as the daughter of a low-income single mother, the Brooklyn Public Library was everything for me. One day when I was in 6th grade, I saw a flyer at the library that said the Joan Mitchell Foundation was offering free art classes on Saturdays at The Door. I was so excited because the only thing I loved to do more than reading was making art. I was 10 years old and had just started taking the subway to school by myself. It was a huge deal for me to travel to the city alone, especially for an art class. That to me was only a privilege that rich kids had.

On my first day, it was raining, and I couldn't see the street signs because I'm nearsighted. I called the phone number on the class flyer, and José Ortiz answered to me practically in tears. He stayed on the phone and gave me step-by-step directions. I made it, and my life changed forever. I was amazed at all the materials available for us to use, and there was no pressure or judgment in that space about the level of art education one had. They shared that every week we'd do a different project to learn new art-making techniques. I was in love!

I continued going every Saturday, and over the years, José became a mentor to me, helping me understand the importance of portfolio development and guiding me through the college application process. Throughout my JMF art education, an extreme amount of real-life issues were happening around me. Every girlfriend I had in school became pregnant, my guy friends were all joining gangs, selling/doing drugs, and social media was just beginning to take form as a massive distraction. José and the jumpstART program truly kept me sane and grounded. I used the portfolio José helped me create to apply to Pratt Institute for Graphic Design/Illustration and I got selected to join the associate's degree program.

I thought art school was going to be JMF all the time—extremely inclusive and fun, and that creativity would beam out of everyone. Unfortunately that was not my experience. I felt invisible to everyone but the security guards and custodians, and I eventually dropped out of classes. I was utterly miserable until I got the courage to reach out to José again. I was expecting him to look down upon me as a failure, but to my surprise, it was the exact opposite. He encouraged me to work with and around other young artists like myself, which created the opportunity for my passion for art-making to be reignited.

Today, as a JMF Art Education Alumni Council member, I meet regularly with other artists who are in college or on their way, in support of a vision of professional development for young artists through workshops, networking events, and exhibitions. I'm proud to say the transformation that I have experienced internally and externally with the helpful support of the Foundation is truly remarkable. Without it, my worst fear would have come true. I would be just another statistic.

*Angelica Santiago draws on her Christian faith and a variety of media to examine contemporary American cultural concerns. She lives in Brooklyn, NY.*



# Stacy Lynn Waddell

I can still remember receiving the call from Allison Hawkins that I had been awarded a 2010 Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant. I'll never forget that moment because it reinforced the adage that artists hear time and time again: Never give up. The award had come after my third or fourth nomination. When the last nomination letter arrived, I hesitated a good while before following through with submitting my application materials. I had grown frustrated with applications and the torture of waiting that an artist submits to during the course of a career. Ultimately, I submitted the necessary materials, and I am forever glad that I did.

Being awarded this grant gave me a sense of validation that I had not felt before. The prestige associated with the Foundation and the legacy of Joan Mitchell was incredibly empowering, but the time, space, and ability to purchase necessary tools and materials was invaluable and arrived at a critical juncture.

Earmarking "uninterrupted" time and money consumes a great deal of an artist's headspace. The challenge becomes a never-ending balancing act. This award afforded me a calendar year of time and space to work and build upon ideas and approaches that have remained foundational to my work. In the years since, the confidence and validation of the award have helped me continue despite periods of uncertainty and financial difficulty.

In 2011, in an effort to pay the Foundation's gift forward, I founded a program that hosts arts professionals from across the country here in the Southeast. This program provides a group of select local artists with an opportunity to have critical dialogue with a diverse lineup of curators, writers, and cultural leaders.

*Stacy Lynn Waddell uses a variety of art processes to create sites of intersection between real and imagined aspects of history and culture. She resides in Chapel Hill, NC.*



# Wojciech Gilewicz

In 2012, my mother's house in Rockaway, Queens, was badly impacted by Superstorm Sandy, as were most houses in the area. We lost all electricity and heating systems due to the flood and stayed in cold and dark for several days. The basement, where I'd had my painting studio, was completely destroyed, with water up to the ceiling. Fortunately, that very week, I had taken most of my paintings upstairs where the light is better to document the progress on a new series. However, I did lose some important artworks, along with all my painting materials, my art books, notes, and music equipment.

What happened to me and my studio during Sandy seems now, with the perspective of time, to have had a purpose. Applying for the Joan Mitchell Foundation Emergency Grant was a great opportunity for me to get my life as an artist together. When I got the grant, I thought for quite some time about how to use this money in the best possible way. Intuitively, I did not want to spend it on fixing things, but rather to make some positive changes to my artistic development. Since I had already been in a sort of artistic transition, I decided not to invest the grant money in the renovation of my basement painting studio but to instead buy a good computer, a professional camera, and a hard drive. We all know that electronic equipment is quite expensive, and saving to get it takes a lot of time, especially for an emerging artist without gallery representation like myself. Thanks to the support from the Joan Mitchell Foundation, it all became suddenly easier and within my reach.

As strange as it might sound, the disaster of losing my painting studio opened before me some new opportunities and pushed me in quite new directions. I am still a painter, but with my new equipment, I am also capable of realizing video and photography projects, some of which I've used to question the relevance of the medium of painting and the role of a painter today. Since I did not have my studio anymore, I applied for studio opportunities in the city, and I was lucky to become a Workspace resident artist at Lower Manhattan Cultural Council for a year, where I later became On-Site Studio Assistant for two more years.

I have learned in my new American life, as a first-generation immigrant to the US, to always be flexible and to try to turn any inconvenience you might encounter into something positive. As it happens, this is also the only way for visual artists to survive in New York City, really. Strengthened by all these experiences, in 2017 I decided to found a residency space for creative individuals in my mother's house in the Rockaways called Beach64retreat. As my personal response to the rising precarity in arts and culture around the world, the retreat is free of charge. It is my way of giving back to the creative community.

*Wojciech Gilewicz is a Polish-born, New York-based artist whose paintings and video works provoke reflection on the mechanisms that govern perception and its cultural conditioning.*



# Julie Green

In December 2011, during a break from critiques at my university, a 212 area code call came through. Allison Hawkins from Joan Mitchell Foundation told me I had been awarded the Painters & Sculptors Grant. I cried with joy, collected myself, went to class, and shared the news with the painters.

For years, I half-joked that I would be offered a show at MoMA before I showed in Portland. Regional discrimination is less prevalent now, but is still challenging for artists living far from a cultural center. Joan Mitchell Foundation is helping level the field. The grant raised my profile in the region. In 2015, I had my first show in Portland and gained representation at Upfor. The gallery support, like the Foundation's support, is significant, ongoing, and can't be overstated.

The Painters & Sculptors Grant goes beyond financial assistance and recognition. The award is validating and gives me faith in the system. Here's a painter, quietly working in the Willamette Valley, noticed by a major New York art foundation. Besides regularly referring to the Foundation's online listing of other recipients for teaching and research, since 2011, I have become friends with numerous awardees. Not a week passes without shared research, studio visits, hikes in the forest, or good news from a JMF friend. I also have regular conversations with the staff.

Recently, I had the opportunity to nominate an organization for a prestigious award, and while I know many worthy groups, I selected Joan Mitchell Foundation. I know of no organization doing more for artists across the country.

*Julie Green, professor at Oregon State University, lives with artist/husband Clay Lohmann. Green spends half of each year working on The Last Supper, an ongoing project about capital punishment.*





# Katrina Andry

In 2012–13, I was a part of the year-long pilot Artist-in-Residence program at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans. During the residency, there were several opportunities for studio visits, informal talks with writers and curators, and informal dinners to build a stronger community amongst the artists. Five years later, I'm still friends with some of the artists I met there and I'm still feeling the effects of the residency.

All and all, being a resident at the Joan Mitchell Center changed my life in that I went from being unknown outside of New Orleans, to people seeking me out because of the opportunities I've had to show my work in other cities. It also increased visibility of my work in New Orleans. I had gallery representation for a stint because of a friend of a gallerist who passed through my studio on an open studios night. The curators from the Hammonds House Museum came through on an open studios night and invited me to have a show in Atlanta at the museum two years later. I was curated into the Atlanta Biennial, which led to an upcoming show at the Halsey Institute in Charleston in 2019. Closer to home, I was honored to be included in the 2018 exhibition *Changing Course: Reflecting on New Orleans Histories* at the New Orleans Museum of Art.

I'm still struggling a bit with creative development, finding meaningful ways to support my practice, and finding ways to reach "my audience," but showing in institutions outside of New Orleans is the biggest impact I've seen from the residency so far.

*Katrina Andry is a New Orleans native whose printmaking work explores the negative effects of stereotypes on the lives of Black people.*



# Lobsang Tsewang

I moved to this country six years ago, in 2012. At that time, I entered 10th grade at Newtown High School in Queens. English is not my first language, and I barely spoke it then. I had a hard time getting along with other students due to the language barrier. My art teacher recommended that I take after-school art classes because he recognized my passion for art and my desire to pursue a degree from an art college. That is how I found out about the Joan Mitchell Foundation's Saturday Studios program.

In that program, I noticed myself being very engaged with other students and teachers compared to my regular class at high school. Because of that wonderful experience, I decided to be part of other programs like jumpstART and Summer Portfolio Intensive, and I did a summer internship at Joan Mitchell Foundation. Throughout the process of learning and making art at Joan Mitchell Foundation, we also had other social activities like critiquing each other's artwork, collaborating on murals, and field trips to art galleries and museums. Being in those programs, where I was surrounded by students who were as passionate as I am about making art, really helped me develop and fit into the community even though I'm a first-generation immigrant.

Looking back to myself when I started, I see that one of my biggest accomplishments through the Joan Mitchell Foundation's art programs is that they helped me drastically improve my English language skills.

After I graduated from high school, I continued to pursue a career in the art field in college. With the help of a scholarship that I received from Metropolitan Museum of Art during my senior year in high school and the Sue Daykin Award from the FIT Fine Art Department, I was able to finish my BFA from the Fashion Institute of Technology on time. Since then, I have been actively involved in exhibiting my artworks at various venues and preparing my portfolio to apply for grad school next year.

*Lobsang Tsewang is an artist who was born in Nepal and now lives in Queens, NY. His paintings are influenced by Tibetan traditional art, particularly Thangka paintings.*



# Amy Sherald

I am grateful to the Joan Mitchell Foundation for its support and guidance at critical junctures in my creative practice. My 2014 Painters & Sculptors Grant and 2017 residency in New Orleans nurtured the development of my paintings, enabling me to sustain and centralize my artistic projects.

The grant gave me the financial freedom required to focus on art production towards an upcoming exhibition at a point when I was a couple months short of not being able to pay my rent. Later, during my residency at the Joan Mitchell Center, I benefited from a similarly crucial opportunity, with the chance to take a breather from the routines of my studio and seek out models for my paintings in a city new to me, yet still inherently connected to my Southern culture and history. While in New Orleans, I revisited and engaged with a familiar, complex past.

The resources I received from the Foundation as an emerging artist provided the time and space integral to expanding my ideas into the body of work that continues to grow with me today.

*Born in Columbus, GA, and now based in Baltimore, MD,  
Amy Sherald paints portraits that document contemporary  
African-American experience in the US.*



# Sarah Wagner

It was 2014, and I had just completed three shows in six months. I was exhausted, my work was slipping conceptually, and I was extremely disheartened at the thought of continuing to earn a living in ways that didn't feel right. I received the call about being awarded the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant at the perfect moment.

I decided to use my award to work at a more deliberate pace, allowing my practice to morph from process-based to research-based projects, shifting my focus back to reading, inquiry, and experimentation. The grant gave me breathing room desperately needed at that stage of my career, allowing me to move forward with renewed pride, sensitivity, and fresh perspective: freedom. I discovered that time spent on reading, reflection, and introspection is vital for more complex work that can occupy space well beyond myself, somewhere in the world beyond what I had known.

The award, the professional workshops, and the financial education offered by the Foundation allowed me to grow into an artist who can successfully identify and negotiate for my own best interests and ultimately feel right-sized and more myself going forward. No longer hostage to a zero-sum mindset, I recognize that making art, supporting my family, working for myself, and developing passive income streams can all happen concurrently and symbiotically. I have come to accept that as an artist I am basically a small business, and as such, I've been experimenting with multiple bookkeeping methods (finding one that works well for me) and progressively making better business-minded choices, such as turning down terribly paid work and dreaming bigger than I had previously.

I could not be more grateful for the experience and am excited to discover what new plateaus are ahead!

*Sarah Wagner is a sculptor and installation artist whose work renders the frailties and strengths wrought by invisible forces on an increasingly unnatural world. She resides in Detroit, MI.*



# Mario Martinez

The Joan Mitchell Foundation's Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) Award began the process of my becoming more confident in myself and my art. The program helped me look beyond what is—the conditions and realities of most artists' lives—and focus on what can be. I started letting go of thoughts such as, *One artist in millions gets taken seriously by contemporary culture and the art market*, or *It's so hard to be an artist/Native artist in the current modern context*. Now I truly believe it's a new age and that something as special and powerful as Yaqui Indian cultural concepts should be used in my abstract vision. That's the most rewarding aspect of the CALL program—seeing oneself as an important artist/creator that matters in one's time or history.

The CALL program also showed me that the painter's studio door shouldn't be closed all the time. Working with the Foundation staff and my Legacy Specialists weekly, I learned organizational skills and broadened my computer skills. The experience taught me that collaboration with arts professionals and other artists can be of utmost importance. This affirmation has greatly improved my life.

On a practical level, the CALL experience organized my artistic life and workspace and documented my life's work in a database for posterity. In an esoteric way, it opened the floodgates to the most success I've ever had in my life. In two short years, I received gallery representation, two major museum shows, and a Rauschenberg Residency. I realized that an artist could create their own artistic and professional reality. Now that's empowerment!

Since New York artists of the mid-twentieth century are some of my biggest influences, I feel especially honored to have received the CALL Award, for Joan Mitchell was one of the most important members of the New York School. Thanks for having my back, Joan—you're a saint to me.

*Mario Martinez is a Yaqui Indian from Penjamo, AZ, who lives in Brooklyn, NY. He is an abstract painter who draws inspiration and imagery from his cultural traditions.*



# Andrea Chung

The Joan Mitchell Foundation has given me the ability to maintain my practice, providing me with my first studio and the time to focus.

In 2014, I got the call that I had received the Painters & Sculptors Grant while I was in my car, having left the zoo with my screaming toddler. I remember bursting into tears on the phone with whomever it was that called me. It had been such a hard year. My father had stopped speaking to me because he didn't believe in my career. The award meant so much more than money. It meant that my practice was going in the right direction and all my years of hard work were noticed and appreciated.

Since receiving the award, I applied for and was accepted to attend the Joan Mitchell Center residency in 2016, I am proud to say that I keep in touch with my fellow residents and staff members from the Center who have continued to support me. As an artist based in Southern California, I am grateful for the opportunity to spend time in New Orleans, which is considered by many to be the northernmost Caribbean city. Given that my work focuses on the Caribbean, New Orleans feels like home and the city encapsulates a piece of my history. I was recently included in Prospect.4, curated by Trevor Schoonmaker, and the Center supported me throughout the exhibition providing housing during site visits and the opening weekend.

*Andrea Chung explores themes of labor and materials and their relationships with postcolonial countries in the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean. She lives in San Diego, CA.*



# Ashley Teamer

I first came into contact with the Joan Mitchell Foundation in 2014 when I had my first solo show, *Booty Galaxy*, at the Joan Mitchell Studios on Rampart Street in New Orleans. This was where the Foundation hosted residencies and other programs while the Joan Mitchell Center on Bayou Road was under construction. The opportunity to participate in *Visual MashUp* made me feel like there was space for me in the “new” New Orleans. The feeling of recognition continued four years later when I was accepted into the Artist-in-Residence program. It felt like I wasn’t on this nebulous path of being an artist alone. It is uniquely empowering to know there is an arts organization invested in multiple generations of New Orleans artists that is also invested in me.

I will never forget going to an information session about the residency in 2017, and being surrounded by Black artists from New Orleans. Simply being in that info session impacted me because according to the art openings on St. Claude, the contemporary art scene in New Orleans is predominately white. Being a part of the local Joan Mitchell community means being connected with artists who reflect the expanse of New Orleans visual culture.

When I started the residency in February 2018, my art practice was at a point where I needed guidance on how to achieve my vision of success, and I needed the space to experiment. Within the first few weeks, we had a workshop with Creative Capital specifically about strategic planning. Over the course of the five-month-long residency, I was able to explore ideas that would have taken me twice as long to materialize outside the residency. The monthly stipend, the access to a large-scale printer, the meals provided by the Center, and the space itself allowed me to actually focus on just making the art.

Lastly, this residency has shown me how I should expect to be treated as an artist. I had gotten used to unsafe studio spaces, opaque financial practices, and the attitude that I should be lucky to have any opportunity. The amount of thoughtful care that went into my experience at the Joan Mitchell Center made me see that my artistic vision is valuable and should be treated with respect.

*Ashley Teamer is a New Orleans-based artist whose work explores the complexities of Black femininity through painting, collage, and animation.*



# Adejoke Tugbiyele

The 2016 Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant has had a tremendous impact on my art and career, one that can be viewed from three different perspectives: emotional space, head space, and physical space. Emotionally, I have felt safe to produce art as an openly queer Black woman. I have been blessed with the headspace to better articulate my artistic vision and come to a deeper understanding of the symbolic strength of my materials. While doing so, my physical live/work space has literally held space for an entirely new body of work comprised of drawings, painting, sculpture, mixed media, and video.

I am proud to share that I saw increased recognition of my work within weeks of receiving the Painters & Sculptors Grant, in the form of museum acquisitions, exhibition opportunities, residency invitations, and speaking engagements. The impact of the grant has thus been transformative within a relatively short period of time.

Being supported by the pioneering feminist and artistic legacy of Joan Mitchell has been particularly significant during this time in our nation's history, when the rights of women, as well as Black people, LGBTQ individuals, and immigrants, are virtually under attack. I believe we are currently living at a crossroads, where the question of "past and future" is ever so crucial. *What do we do now?* The creative spirit is called to respond! As an artist, I hope my work reveals my sense of responsibility in speaking to the contemporary issues of our time. The Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant has been a critical resource and investment towards this shared goal.

*Adejoke Tugbiyele is a New York artist who creates intricate mixed-media sculptures charged with symbolic meanings that bridge and layer ideas around race, gender, sexuality, and religion.*





# Anne Buckwalter

As someone who tends to shy away from hyperbole, I don't often use signifiers like "life changing." However, there isn't a more accurate way to describe the impact of receiving the Emerging Artist Grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation in 2016. This grant has been so much more than generous financial assistance. Being connected to a community of dedicated artists and arts workers has radically altered my sense of purpose as an artist working in the world.

I have always struggled to balance a full-time job with a full-time studio practice. Being unwilling to make sacrifices in terms of my commitment to painting, I continually make an exhausting schedule work out of simple financial necessity. When asked the dreaded question by a new acquaintance—*What do you do?*—I'm often torn between giving an answer that explains how I pay my bills or how I hope to manifest social change through my creative practice. I usually fumble around with a response that hybridizes the two activities, but feel a faint haze of self-betrayal set in afterwards. Why isn't it enough to say the four declarative words: *I am an artist?* After all, that's how I think of myself first and foremost.

In August 2016, the Foundation's Emerging Artist Grant cohort gathered at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans. It was an incredible gift to be surrounded by such an inspirational group of artists sharing their work. During one of our group sessions, I spoke of my internal conflict in terms of self-definition, and realized aloud that I had the agency to name myself as an artist to others with the same conviction that I name myself an artist every morning when I walk into my studio and get to work. Only I could give myself that permission. In the New Orleans airport the following day, I was chatting with a fellow passenger who asked me, *What do you do for work?* So I gave him the same answer I give myself every day: *I work as an artist. And more than anything else, I love to work.*

I am forever grateful to the Foundation for giving me the confidence, courage, and affirmation to own my creative practice as my job. I know what my work is.

*Anne Buckwalter is a painter whose work explores how gender-related expectations are defined and disrupted. She lives and works in Philadelphia, PA.*



# Louise Mouton Johnson

The Joan Mitchell Foundation supported my practice in a variety of ways in 2018 while I was in residence at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans. As an artist, I was allowed the time and space both physically and mentally to think, recharge, and engage in inspiring conversation with my fellow resident artists. The atmosphere and surroundings provided the motivation and encouragement to relax and unplug, which is crucial to inspiring creativity.

I came to my residency at the Center as a retired art educator more than 33 years in the New Orleans public school system. This was a career that I truly enjoyed, and the focus was on teaching and the students. But it was a career that did not always allow the time necessary to focus on my professional career as an artist. A year and a half into retirement, I decided to apply for the Center's NOLA Artist-in-Residence program with the body of work I had completed within the last two years of my teaching career. I felt humbled and grateful to find out I was accepted out of the vast pool of artists who submitted applications. So, the timing for me was ideal. I describe my renewed dedication of time devoted to my professional art career as a "resurgence."

The connections and reconnections that I formed during my residency were numerous. My time there overlapped with the residency of one of my former art students—an inspiration in itself. Other former students who had previously been residents came to visit during many of the social activities coordinated by the Center. These same events attracted other community and cultural leaders with whom I exchanged contact information and have been in touch with since, even leading to my involvement in a major event in January 2019. The residency was an experience that exceeded my expectations on many levels.

*Louise Mouton Johnson is a visual artist and arts instructor from New Orleans, LA. She draws on family and cultural history to create imagery for her prints and quilts.*



# Sonya Kelliher-Combs

Like many indigenous artists, I work to support programs that help pass on endangered arts and knowledge to the next generation and promote understanding. I live in a modern world, but still depend on the cultural traditions and values of our people: respect of land, animals, sea, and each other. The Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant that I received in 2017 is allowing me freedom to research, experiment, and grow my work unencumbered by financial constraints.

With the Foundation's support, I have been fortunate to work on several projects that have brought me abroad to foster dialogue by curating public lectures and panel discussions. These conversations give voice to First Peoples' concerns in the Arctic, voices that historically have been stifled. In addition to speaking about my own concerns, I strive to elevate the work of other indigenous artists, activists, and culture bearers by inviting them to exhibit, share their projects, and take part in conversations related to social justice, the commodification of indigenous cultures, global warming, and other current debates. The award from the Foundation is allowing me to advance this discourse on a larger global and national scale. It has also provided me with resources to professionally document and catalogue over twenty years of work as an artist and to comprehensively redesign my website.

The Joan Mitchell Foundation grant allowed me to pursue time-consuming, large-scale projects and provided resources to share these among a broad range of Northern communities, many of which are among the most remote in the world.

*Sonya Kelliher-Combs employs mixed-media painting and sculpture to offer a chronicle of the ongoing struggle for self-definition and identity in the Alaskan context. She lives in Anchorage, AK.*





Stacy Lynn Waddell



Julie Green



## About the Photographer

Reginald Eldridge, Jr., is a multidisciplinary artist, writer, and educator. A graduate of the University of South Florida's graduate program in Africana Studies, where he focused on literature and critical theory, Eldridge has engaged widely on the role of the arts in constructing identity, and seeks to contribute to contemporary discussions of performance, history, race, ontology, and myth. His work has appeared in *Catapult*, *Vinyl*, *Apogee Journal*, *AFROPUNK*, *Obsidian*, *Puerto del Sol*, *wildness*, and other publications.



# Joan Mitchell Foundation Supported Artists, 1993–2018

Includes recipients of the Painters & Sculptors Grants, MFA Grants, and Emerging Artist Grants, as well as participants in the Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) program and the Joan Mitchell Center Artist-in-Residence program.

Samira Abbassy	Adam Bateman	Janet Bruhn	Edward Clark	Vanessa Diaz
Ahmed Abdalla	Rollin Beamish	Anne Buckwalter	Dawn Clements	Jane Dickson
Faisal Abdu'Allah	Stephanie Beck	Ruth Buentello	Glenn Lewis Clevenger	Lesley Dill
Ray Abeyta	Charlotte Becket	Julie Buffalohead	Gregory Coates	Marcos Dimas
Manuel Acevedo	Miriam Beerman	Tyanna Buie	Cog•nate Collective	Xiaoqing Ding
Nick Ackerman	Aron Belka	Derrick Buisch	Willie Cole	Mark Dion
Lauren Adams	Neil Bender	Edgar Buonagurio	Aaron Collier	Jason Tomory Dodge
Terry Adkins	Matthew Benedict	Tom Burckhardt	Andy Collins	Wei Dong
Regina Agu	Marissa Lee Benedict	Denise Burge	Jon Conner	Tara Donovan
John Ahearn	Kajahl Benes	Charles Burwell	William Cordova	Bailey Doogan
Mequitta Ahuja	Keith Benjamin	Kendall Buster	Loring Cornish	Daniel Douke
Norman Akers	Leonardo Benzant	Ambreen Butt	Adriana Corral	Daniel Dove
Sachiko Akiyama	Lili Bernard	Kathy Butterly	Mario Correa	Karen Dow
Diana Al-Hadid	Jacqueline Bernat	Franz Buzawa	Esperanza Cortés	Kerry Downey
Elia Alba	Judith Bernstein	Margarita Cabrera	Cicely Cottingham	Allan Doyle
Brian Alfred	Rachel Berwick	Sam Cady	Pamela Council	Leonardo Drew
Laylah Ali	Shalini Bhat	Mark Calderon	Alexander Couwenberg	Michel Droge
Morehshin Allahyari	Andria Bibiloni-Morales	Rodriguez Calero	Heather Cox	Jenny Dubnau
Jennifer Allora	James Biederman	Guillermo Calzadilla	Petah Coyne	Keith Duncan
Jerri Allyn	Willie Birch	Terrence Campagna	William Cravis	Holly Eberhardt
Seth Alverson	A. Robert Birmelin	Pamela Cardwell	Roy Crosse	Celia Eberle
Sarah Amos	John Bisbee	Andrea Carlson	John Crowe	Melvin Edwards
Molly Anderson	Anthony D. Black	Diane Carr	Emilio Cruz	Nicole Eisenman
Smigelski	Alexandra Blau	Jason E. Carter	Veronique d'Entremont	Stephen Ellis
Katrina Andry	Betty Blayton Taylor	Carolyn Castaño	Devraj Dakoji	Dahlia Elsayed
Janine Antoni	Suzanne Bocanegra	Jo Cattell	Eileen David	Dara Engler
Polly Apfelbaum	Rosalyn Bodycomb	Nick Cave	Jamie Davidovich	Solomon Enos
Tomie Arai	Chakaia Booker	Hannah Chalew	Lauren Davies	Leandro Erlich
Michael Arcega	Douglas Bourgeois	Freddy Chandra	Scott Davis	Gaela Erwin
Eve Aschheim	Natasha Bowdoin	Colin Chase	Stephen Davis	Carlos Estevez
Sarah Awad	Katherine Bradford	Jason Chase	Bruce A. Davenport, Jr.	Yvonne Estrada
Nicole Awai	Mark Bradford	Juan Angel Chavez	Micah Daw	Nancy Evans
Olive Ayhens	Michael Bramwell	Dan-Qing Chen	Matthew Dehaemers	Nicholas Evans-Cato
Luis Cruz Azaceta	Otho Branson	Long-Bin Chen	Lee Deigaard	Jonathan Faber
M. Firelei Báez	Troy Brauntuch	Kathy Chenoweth	James De La Vega	Gwen Fabricant
David Bailey	Rolando Briseno	Marta Chilindron	Einar de la Torre	Tory Fair
Radcliffe Bailey	Maria Brito	Mel Chin	Jamex de la Torre	Kimberly Faler
Xenobia Bailey	David Brothers	Nandini Chirimar	Elena del Rivero	Amir H. Fallah
Joe Baker	Galen Brown	Emmeline Cho	Florine Demosthene	Jes Fan
Conrad Bakker	James A. Brown	Cecile Chong	Jim Denomie	Asad Faulwell
Chris Ballantyne	Jessica Vogel Brown	Anne Chu	Steven Deo	Skylar Fein
Greta Bank	Melissa Brown	Kaili Chun	Xiomara De Oliver	Rochelle Feinstein
John Bankston	Nyame Brown	Yoonjo Chun	Blane De St. Croix	Amy Feldman
Kim Baranowski	Ashlynn Browning	Andrea Chung	Jer'Lisa Devezin	Chris Fennell
James Barsness	Evelina Brozgul	Shay Church	Abigail DeVille	Cecelia Fernandes
Frances Barth				

Ana Fernandez	Peter Gregorio	Jacqueline Humphries	Gary Komarin	Whitfield Lovell
Patricia Fernandez	Rashawn Griffin	Ying Hung	Mayumi Komuro	Alvin Loving
Joan Ffolliott	Nancy Grossman	Maria Hupfield	John Koos	Judith Lowry
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