VIA ART FUND AWARDS $1 Million IN GRANTS IN 2021

Major support provided for projects by Ian Cheng, Simone Leigh, Lydia Ourahmane, Arlene Shechet, and Fred Wilson

Recognition given to small, visual arts non-profit organizations

Dr. Kimberli Gant selected as 2022 VIA Curatorial Fellow

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE) VIA Art Fund is pleased to announce its 2021 grant recipients across three categories: Artistic Production Grant Fund, VIA | Wagner Incubator Grant Fund, and the VIA Curatorial Fellowship.

Bridgitt Evans, President of VIA Art Fund, commented: “2021 marked a year of exciting growth for VIA, extending our impact into new geographies across all three of our grantmaking programs. Visionary artists inspired us to follow them to remote regions of the world by proposing projects that challenge borders while promoting local knowledge. In the United States, small arts organizations in the Southwest, Southeast, and Midwest affirmed the power of incubating artistic promise beyond large coastal cities. From incubation to artistic production and acquisition, we are proud to partner with our 2021 grantees to ensure that every stage of the artistic process receives game changing, critical support.”

Over the course of 2021, VIA Art Fund approved $775,000 in Artistic Production grants for the production, exhibition, and accessioning of new works of art. Projects supported included Arlene Shechet’s site specific sculpture conceived to foster intimate social gatherings on the public campus of University of California San Diego, commissioned by The Stuart Collection; Fred Wilson’s first-ever large-scale public sculpture and intervention in the contested terrain of historical monuments, commissioned by More Art; Ian Cheng’s genre-defying animated film that explores the transformation of human life scripts in an era of AI, commissioned by The Shed; Jill Magid’s elegiac film, which documents the dynamics of circulation, value, and exchange that shape our collective social fabric during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic; Lydia Ourahmane’s film and sculptural installation tracing lost histories and rewriting colonial narratives of the desert in southeastern Algeria, commissioned by SculptureCenter; and Simone Leigh’s sculptural installation for the American Pavilion, an historic event marking the first time a Black woman has represented the United States at the Venice Biennale Arte.

In addition to funding the production of new work, VIA Art Fund also gifted two VIA-produced artworks to US-based public collections: Lynn Hershman Leeson’s Shadow Stalker (2019) to the Whitney Museum of American Art as well as Tuan Andrew Nguyen’s Crimes of Solidarity / Crimes de solidarité to the Museum of Modern Art, NYC.
In partnership with Wagner Foundation, VIA awarded $200,000 in VIA | Wagner Incubator Grant Fund grants. Five geographically diverse visual arts nonprofit organizations received $40,000 each for general operating support over two years: Museum of Contemporary Art, an alternative art space and residency in Tucson, AZ; Santa Fe Art Institute, a residency and discursive platform in Santa Fe, NM; Stove Works, a residency and alternative art space Chattanooga, TN; The Union for Contemporary Art, a transdisciplinary art space dedicated to serving artists and communities of color in Omaha, NE; and Wave Pool, an experimental art space invested in socially engaged art in Cincinnati, OH.

Finally, Dr. Kimberli Gant was selected as VIA’s 2022 Curatorial Fellow, which carries an award of $25,000 to support curatorial research and travel. Gant was previously Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, VA and begins her new role as Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Brooklyn Museum of Art beginning mid-January 2022.

After an extensive national search, Brooke Davis Anderson joined VIA as the inaugural Executive Director in September. Anderson most recently served as the Edna S. Tuttleman Director of the Museum at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) in Philadelphia. Her tenure at PAFA featured the most significant commitment to date for collecting and exhibiting work by women and artists of color, thus expanding the narrative of American art in the oldest museum in the nation. With Anderson’s arrival, and beginning in January 2022, VIA Art Fund will relocate from Boston to New York, NY and introduce a growing team of colleagues to the organization.

“It is such an exciting time to join VIA Art Fund. Our participation in the art world is touching so many constituents in countless ways—artists, curators, and other colleagues. VIA’s funding, partnering, and thought leadership will only deepen with our arrival in New York City,” said Anderson.

VIA Art Fund 2021 Grantees:

Artistic Production
Arlene Shechet, for the production and exhibition of The Sound of One Hand at The Stuart Collection, University of California, San Diego
Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, for the production and exhibition of Maya Dunietz’s Reflections and Reverberations
El Museo del Barrio, for the production and public accessioning of Reynier Leyva Novo’s Methusalah
FRONT International, for the production and exhibition of Sarah Oppenheimer & Tony Cokes’s Sensitive Instrument
FRONT International, for the production and exhibition of Maria Hassabi’s And there’s also gravity
Institute of Contemporary Art Boston, for the production and exhibition of Simone Leigh's GRITTIN and Loophole of Retreat: Venice at the American Pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale Arte
Jill Magid, for the production and public accessioning of Tender (film)
Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, for the production and exhibition of Andrea Bowers's Exist, Flourish, Evolve
More Art, for the production and exhibition of Fred Wilson's Mind Forged Manacles/Manacles Forged Mind
Park Avenue Armory, for the production and exhibition of Carrie Mae Weems's The Shape of Things and Land of Broken Dreams
SculptureCenter, for the production and exhibition of a new film and installation by Lydia Ourahmane
The Shed, for the production and exhibition of Ian Cheng's Life After BOB

VIA Artworks Gifted and Accessioned
Shadow Stalker by Lynn Hershman Leeson to the Whitney Museum of American Art
Crimes of Solidarity / Crimes de solidarité by Tuan Andrew Nguyen to the Museum of Modern Art, NYC

VIA | Wagner Incubator Grant Fund
Museum of Contemporary Art, Tucson, Arizona
Santa Fe Art Institute, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Stove Works, Chattanooga, Tennessee
The Union for Contemporary Art, Omaha, Nebraska
Wave Pool, Cincinnati, Ohio

2022 VIA Curatorial Fellow
Dr. Kimberli Gant, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Brooklyn Museum of Art (beginning mid-January 2022).

ABOUT VIA ART FUND:

VIA Art Fund is a 501(c)(3) founded by an international coalition of individuals and private foundations who believe in the central role art plays in society. VIA’s activities support innovative, ambitious and rigorous works of art and endeavors with far-reaching public impact realized in various forms including institutional production and acquisition, exhibitions, public installations, curatorial research, publications and symposia. Funding artists, curators and arts organizations around the world, VIA Art Fund awards grants in three categories – Artistic Production Grants, Incubator Grants and an annual Curatorial Fellowship grant – that exemplify VIA’s core values of Artistic Production, Thought Leadership, and Public Engagement.

For press images and inquiries: press@viaartfund.org