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ENTERTAINMENT

Kresge announces 2021 Artist Fellows

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A mix of 20 visual artists, poets, writers and more from all over Metro Detroit will receive \$25,000 each as the latest winners of Kresge Artist Fellowships along with 10 Gilda Awards recipients who will receive \$5,000 each.

The awards, announced Thursday by the Kresge Arts in Detroit office at the College for Creative Studies, which administers them for the Kresge Foundation, total more than \$550,000. This year's group of winners is one of the largest after Kresge added two more fellowships last year and added eight more Gilda recipients amid COVID-19.

“We know from the testimony of artists themselves how important the support and affirmation of these awards can be — life-changing in some cases,” said Rip Rapson, president and CEO of the Kresge Foundation, in a press release. “There’s no doubt the past year-plus of pandemic and unrest has been particularly challenging for the arts sector, and we hope that the elevation of these 30 artists — exciting as they are — speaks also to our admiration and support for our community of artists writ large.”

More than 800 people applied for the Kresge fellowships. The Gilda awards are named after the late Detroit artist Gilda Snowden. They recognize artists who are early in their artistic career, are gaining momentum, and who "demonstrate exceptional potential through creative risk-taking and pushing the boundaries of their chosen art form," according to Kresge.

In addition to \$25,000 with no strings attached, each Kresge Artist Fellow also receives one year of professional development support and are invited to participate in strategic planning workshops, mentorship sessions, artist salons and more.

“I am in awe of this cohort's immense talent and range — they undoubtedly represent the best of what Metro Detroit has to offer,” said Literary Arts panelist Jina B. Kim.

This year's cohort of Kresge Fellows, selected by a panel of local and national artists, includes Literary Arts fellows and Visual Arts fellows. Literary Arts winners include Emell

Derra Adolphus (creative nonfiction); Danielle Aubert (Interdisciplinary Work); Jeni De La O (poetry); Ann Eskridge (playwriting); Tariq Luthun (poetry); MARS Marshall (poetry); Jassmine Parks (spoken word); B. Van Randall, (graphic novels); Casey Rocheteau (poetry); and Zig Zag Claybourne (fiction).

For Visual Arts, winners are Peter Daniel Bernal (painting); Judy Bowman (collage); Brian Day (photography); Darcel Deneau (glass); Solomon Johnson (illustration); Gisela McDaniel (painting); Sabrina Nelson (Interdisciplinary Work); Rachel Reid (animation); Andrew "AndyT" Thompson (installation); and Graem Whyte (Interdisciplinary Work).

Gilda Awards recipients, meanwhile, who will receive \$5,000 each, include Bayan the Poet (spoken word); Ana Gavrilovska (arts criticism); Rochelle Marrett (fiction); Donnevan Tolbert (playwriting); Ijanía Cortez (painting); Bakpak Durden (painting); Jessica Frelinghuysen (performance art); Cyrus Karimipour (photography); Cinnamon Triano (video art); and Neha Vedpathak (painting).

Kresge Arts in Detroit has awarded more than \$6.7 million in funding over the years, benefitting 283 artists.

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