

PRESS RELEASE

The Arts Foundation announce 2026 Futures Awards

- **£115,000 grant awarded to the most promising UK artists at a pivotal moment in their careers**
- **The Arts Foundation Futures Awards is one of the UK's largest unconditional funders of individual artists**
- **The 5 categories of the 2026 awards are film, literature, music, theatre and visual art**

[Images and Press Kits](#)

The Arts Foundation announced the five recipients of The Arts Foundation Futures Awards at an Awards Ceremony on Monday 2 February at Kings Place, London.

The annual Arts Foundation Futures Awards support the UK's most promising artists and creatives at a pivotal moment in their career, providing £115,000 in unconditional grant funding, awarding five transformative £20,000 fellowships, with all shortlisted artists receiving £1,000 towards the development of their practice.

The five recipients of the £20,000 fellowships are:

Theatre: Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu

Music: William Marsey

Visual Art: Zein Majali

Film: Dorothy Allen-Pickard

Literature: Fahad Al-Amoudi

The five winning fellows received their prizes from the judges at an awards ceremony, featuring a welcome address from renowned poet and novelist **Ben Okri** and a live performance from Festival Voices, conducted by Gregory Batsleer, the Arts Foundation's Choral Conductor Fellow of 2015.

The Arts Foundation doubled its grant-giving in 2025 to ensure its work continues to have the same life-changing impact and responds to inflation, the ongoing cost of living crisis and low artist income precarity experienced across the contemporary arts in the UK. The increase in the fellowship award saw the foundation become one of the UK's largest unconditional funders of individual artists, unique in its support across art forms - from Dance, Design, Film, Literature, Music, and Theatre to Visual Art.

Theatre Fellow: Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu

- Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu directs the UK premiere of Chadwick Boseman's [Deep Azure](#) at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, Shakespeare's Globe (7 February - 11 April 2026)

Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu is a British-Ghanaian theatremaker whose work stretches the imagination of his audiences with his unique brand of storytelling. He was nominated for an Olivier in 2022 for his work on *For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When The Hue Gets Too Heavy* by Ryan Calais Cameron. Tristan's awards include: 2019 JMK Young Director Award, 2022 Black British Theatre Award for Best Director, and 2025 UK Theatre Award for Best Children's Show. In 2026, Tristan will direct the UK premiere of [Deep Azure](#) by late Academy Award and BAFTA-nominated actor and writer Chadwick Boseman, opening 7 February - 11 April at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, Shakespeare's Globe.

The Theatre Award champions visionary theatre directors developing extraordinary theatrical productions across any genre. Jury member, theatre and film director, **Rufus Norris**, said:

"Tristan is a true one-off. His artistic clarity and connection with audiences made him a clear candidate for the Fellowship from the start— bold, authentic, and full of potential."

Music Fellow: William Marsey

- William Marsey's *Man with Limp Wrist* receives its US premiere by the LA Phil conducted by Thomas Adès at the Walt Disney Concert Hall (6-8 February 2026)

William Marsey is a UK-based composer. His music has been described as vivid, unsettling, distinctive and strangely touching. William's music has been commissioned and performed internationally, including by the LA Phil and BBC Arts, with performances by Royal Northern Sinfonia, The Hallé, and Thomas Adès. William was born in Hartlepool and studied composition at the University of Cambridge, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He was nominated for a British Composer Award in 2018 and an Ivor Novello Composers Award in 2023. He is currently showing a unique, generative soundtrack, which changes week to week as part of [Cicadian Bloom at Seoul Museum of Art, South Korea](#), open until 22 March 2026. William will present the US premiere of [Man with Limp Wrist at LA Phil](#) on 6-8 February 2026, followed by a presentation in Oslo, with Norwegian Radio Orchestra, cond. Finnegan Downie-Dear on 9 September 2026. He will also share a full concert of his piano works at 1901 Arts Club, with Joseph Havlat on 9 June 2026, and a concert of his songs with Shadwell Opera in Summer 2026.

This year's Music Award support exceptional composers scoring contemporary classical works of any genre. Jury member, writer, journalist and broadcaster, **Tom Service**, said:

"I just love William's music. It's wonderful music of such disarming directness. You stop listening, and the world's a different place. There is no doubt that William is someone who

absolutely has the potential to play a big role in cultural conversations for many years to come. I am thrilled to see William awarded the Arts Foundation Fellowship for Music. He is a hugely deserving recipient.”

Visual Art Fellow: Zein Majali

- Zein Majali will participate in the 2026 edition of the Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement in Tunis (14 October - 15 November 2026)

Zein Majali is a Jordanian-Palestinian sound and visual artist whose work explores the collision of technology with a rapidly evolving political landscape, with an interest in a post-colonial and globalised Middle East. Her work examines sense-making in the wake of narrative collapse, brought on by the disorienting effects of digital life. Her practice spans audiovisual performance, moving image, sound, sculpture, and computational processes. She works with found material, synthetic imagery, and live sound, often developing projects as modular systems that shift between installation, performance, and online circulation. Her work has been presented at institutions including the V&A, Somerset House Studios, Showroom, Ibraaz, and the ICA. Majali completed an MA in Contemporary Art Practice at the Royal College of Art in 2022 and holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Tufts University. Formerly an engineer, she turned to artistic practice out of an urgency to archive and examine accelerated cultural and political shifts in the Arab world.

The Visual Art Award supports groundbreaking artists working across a broad range of visual arts and interdisciplinary art form practices, including painting, drawing, sculpture, photography and artist moving image. Jury member and Director, Frieze London, **Eva Langret**, said:

“I’m deeply drawn to Zein Majali’s complex and assured work. She is an artist with extraordinary potential working across fields that are technically complex and conceptually ambitious. The kind of work she creates requires significant support to exist at all, so as a jury, we believe the opportunity afforded by the generous Arts Foundation Fellowship will be transformative. I am incredibly excited to see what she will go on to produce with the baseline that this unconditional grant provides. Zein is absolutely an artist at a pivotal moment, shaping the future of visual culture, and we are thrilled to propel her practice to the next level.”

Film Fellow: Dorothy Allen-Pickard

- Dorothy Allen-Pickard is currently developing her [debut feature](#), supported by Doc Society, due for release in Summer 2026.

Dorothy Allen-Pickard works across narrative, documentary and theatrical modes of filmmaking, and her collaborative approach is often inspired by her protagonists' lived experiences. Currently, her projects focus on state systems of control and the possibilities of collective resistance. She tackles complex subjects head-on, with an intimacy, warmth and an unflinching gaze. She has a particular interest in blurring the line between performance and

reality, and is a founding member of Breach Theatre, and an associate artist of Kestrel Theatre, who run theatre and film workshops in prisons. Dorothy's work has screened at festivals including London Film Festival, Hot Docs, Clermont Ferrand, Palm Springs, Doc NYC, and Sheffield DocFest, and on news and broadcast channels including PBS, Guardian Documentaries and BBC iPlayer. She has been awarded Best UK Short at Open City Doc Festival and 16 Days 16 Films, a Special Mention at Oberhausen, Grand Prix at Arts Convergence, shortlisted for a Grierson, and received many Vimeo Staff Picks.

The Film Award supports exceptional early-stage career filmmakers, and this year, we are highlighting emotive and inventive storytellers working in non-fiction. Jury member and director, writer, and producer, **Asif Kapadia**, said:

“At a moment when conversations about power, surveillance, and corruption are more urgent than ever, filmmakers are working in spaces that demand greater support. Their practices confront complex dynamics with honesty and political clarity, often operating outside the more straightforward terrain of financing and distribution of traditional documentary. There is a vital place for Dorothy Allen-Pickard’s approach to filmmaking; her work is deeply personal and pushes into underexplored territory and challenges the structures that govern how stories hidden from view are told. This is work that matters, and we are delighted to award her the Arts Foundation Fellowship for Film.”

Literature Fellow: Fahad Al-Amoudi

Fahad Al-Amoudi is a writer and editor. His work is published in POETRY, The Poetry Review, Wasafiri, The London Magazine, and Mizna. He is the winner of the White Review Poet's Prize 2022 and has been shortlisted for the Brunel International African Poets Prize 2022. Fahad is an alumnus of the Obsidian Foundation and a graduate of the Writing Squad. His debut pamphlet, *when the flies come* (ignitionpress, 2023), was selected as a Poetry Book Society Winter Choice 2023 and was shortlisted for the Michael Marks Award.

The Literature Award supports inventive independent writers who are pushing the boundaries of the medium of poetry. Jury member and poet, **Imtiaz Dharker**, said:

“Fahad Al-Amoudi’s poems carried a voice I had never heard before. His work is wonderfully fresh and full of excitement from the first reading. One of the things that also struck me was how musical the poetry is, which I found rather moving. It is truly a privilege to award the Literature Fellowship to Fahad. He is an exceptionally assured and formidable young poet.”

The awards mark over 30 years of the Arts Foundation's support for independent artists in the UK since it was founded in 1993, and whose alumni include eminent artistic practitioners, such as Wayne McGregor, Ali Smith, Asif Kapadia, Rufus Norris, Alice Oswald, Carol Morley and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye.

Mary Jane Edwards, Director of The Arts Foundation, said:

“From bold new cinematic voices and inventive poetic forms, to groundbreaking compositions, visionary theatre work and radical visual art, the Arts Foundation Futures Awards 2026 celebrate the extraordinary breadth of creative practice shaping our cultural landscape. The courage, curiosity and commitment of these Fellows and shortlisted artists remind us why independent creativity matters now more than ever. We’re proud to deepen our support for artists across film, literature, music, theatre and visual art, and to champion the vital contributions they make to our shared cultural life. There’s no doubt their work will resonate far beyond this moment.”

The Arts Foundation Futures Awards 2026 Shortlisted Artists included:

Film: Myrid Carten, Jessi Gutch, and Alice Russell

Literature: Yanita Georgieva, Lucy Mercer, and Camille Ralphs

Music: Nneka Cummins, Cassie Kinoshi, and Sasha Scott

Theatre: Annie Kershaw, Craig McCorquodale, and Hannah Noone

Visual Art: Mark Corfield-Moore, Jesse Pollock, and Shaquéelle Whyte

You can explore the work of all the Fellows and the Shortlisted Artists on The Arts Foundation website: artsfoundation.co.uk

Press Pack & Images

The Full Press Pack, Artist Bios and Images can be viewed [here](#).

Media Enquiries

For all enquiries and interviews, please contact:

press@artsfoundation.co.uk

Notes to Editors

FULL ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Theatre Fellow: Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu

Tristan Fynn-Aiduenu is a British-Ghanaian theatremaker whose work stretches the imagination of his audiences with his unique brand of storytelling. He was nominated for an Olivier in 2022 for his work on *For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When The Hue Gets Too Heavy* by Ryan Calais Cameron.

Theatre work includes; (as Director): *Pig Heart Boy* (Unicorn/Fiery Angel Tour), *For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy* (Nouveau Riche/Boundless/New Diorama & Royal Court Theatre), *Little Baby Jesus* (Orange Tree), *Twilight* (St. Mary's University), *The Spalding Suite* (LAMDA), *Gone Too Far!* (Guildhall), *Bootycandy* (Gate Theatre); (as Writer/Director): *Sweet Like Chocolate Boy* (Jack Studio/BAC/Tobacco Factory/Theatre Peckham), *Sundown Kiki* (Young Vic), *Divine* (Arts Ed), *Hyde & Seek* (Guildhall); (as Writer): *Rumble In The Jungle* (Rematch ltd).

Tristan's awards include: 2019 JMK Young Director Award, 2022 Black British Theatre Award for Best Director, and 2025 UK Theatre Award for Best Children's Show.

In 2026, Tristan will direct the UK premiere of [Deep Azure](#) by late Academy Award and BAFTA-nominated actor and writer Chadwick Boseman, opening 7 February - 11 April at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, Shakespeare's Globe. He will also direct a contemporary production of *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller at the Everyman, Liverpool (19 September - 10 October).

www.trisfa.com

Music Fellow: William Marsey

William Marsey is a UK-based composer. His music has been described as vivid, unsettling, distinctive and strangely touching.

William's music has been commissioned and performed internationally, including by the LA Phil and BBC Arts, with performances by Royal Northern Sinfonia, The Hallé, and Thomas Adès. His work has also been heard in galleries, theatres, and site-specific settings, often in collaboration with artists, choreographers, and filmmakers. Collaborators include photographer Torbjørn Rødland, director Antonia Luxem, film composer Cristobal Tapia de Veer, and artist Anna Ridler.

Recordings of William's music appear on his own albums, and on releases from Oliver Zeffman's Music x Museums, Solem Quartet, Delphian Records, and The Hallé.

William was born in Hartlepool and studied composition at the University of Cambridge, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He was nominated for a British Composer Award in 2018 and an Ivor Novello Composers Award in 2023.

William recently featured on This Classical Life, Radio 3, available on BBC Sounds. He is also showing a unique, generative soundtrack, which changes week to week as part of [Cicadian Bloom at Seoul Museum of Art, South Korea](#), open until 22 March 2026.

William will present the US premiere of [*Man with Limp Wrist at LA Phil*](#) on 6-8 February 2026, followed by a presentation in Oslo, with Norwegian Radio Orchestra, cond. Finnegan Downie-Dear on 9 September 2026.

William will also share a full concert of his piano works at 1901 Arts Club, with Joseph Havlat on 9 June 2026, and a concert of his songs with Shadwell Opera in Summer 2026.

www.wmarsey.com

Visual Art Fellow: Zein Majali

Zein Majali is a Jordanian-Palestinian sound and visual artist whose work explores the collision of technology with a rapidly evolving political landscape, with an interest in a post-colonial and globalised Middle East. Her work examines sense-making in the wake of narrative collapse, brought on by the disorienting effects of digital life.

Her practice spans audiovisual performance, moving image, sound, sculpture, and computational processes. She works with found material, synthetic imagery, and live sound, often developing projects as modular systems that shift between installation, performance, and online circulation. Her work has been presented at institutions including the V&A, Somerset House Studios, Showroom, Ibraaz, and the ICA.

Majali completed an MA in Contemporary Art Practice at the Royal College of Art in 2022 and holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Tufts University. Formerly an engineer, she turned to artistic practice out of an urgency to archive and examine accelerated cultural and political shifts in the Arab world.

She will participate in the 2026 edition of the Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement in Tunis from 14 October to 15 November.

zeinmajali.com

Film Fellow: Dorothy Allen-Pickard

Dorothy Allen-Pickard works across narrative, documentary and theatrical modes of filmmaking, and her collaborative approach is often inspired by her protagonists' lived experiences.

Currently, her projects focus on state systems of control and the possibilities of collective resistance. She tackles complex subjects head-on, with an intimacy, warmth and an unflinching gaze. She has a particular interest in blurring the line between performance and reality, and is a founding member of Breach Theatre, and an associate artist of Kestrel Theatre, who run theatre and film workshops in prisons.

Dorothy's work has screened at festivals including London Film Festival, Hot Docs, Clermont Ferrand, Palm Springs, Doc NYC, and Sheffield DocFest, and on news and broadcast channels including PBS, Guardian Documentaries and BBC iPlayer. She has been awarded Best UK Short at Open City Doc Festival and 16 Days 16 Films, a Special Mention at Oberhausen, Grand Prix at Arts Convergence, shortlisted for a Grierson, and received many Vimeo Staff Picks. She was director's assistant on *Kaos* (Netflix), directed 2nd Unit on *Rye Lane* (Searchlight), and was selected to take part in Network @LFF in 2022, and Union Docs in 2023.

Dorothy is currently developing her debut feature, [pending title](#), supported by Doc Society, due for release in Summer 2026.

dorothypickard.com

Literature Fellow: Fahad Al-Amoudi

Fahad Al-Amoudi is a writer and editor. His work is published in POETRY, The Poetry Review, Wasafiri, The London Magazine, and Mizna. He is the winner of the White Review Poet's Prize 2022 and has been shortlisted for the Brunel International African Poets Prize 2022.

Fahad is an alumnus of the Obsidian Foundation and a graduate of the Writing Squad. His debut pamphlet, *when the flies come* (ignitionpress, 2023), was selected as a Poetry Book Society Winter Choice 2023 and was shortlisted for the Michael Marks Award.

fahadalamoudi.co.uk

About The Arts Foundation

The Arts Foundation is a registered charity that supports individual artists and creatives in the UK with unconditional financial fellowships through the Arts Foundation Futures Awards.

Since 1993, the Arts Foundation has awarded over £2 million to the most promising artists in the UK at a pivotal moment in their careers to enable them to concentrate on their creative development, experiment, and realise their artistic potential.

The annual Arts Foundation Futures Awards provide five transformative £20,000 Fellowships, with all Shortlisted Artists receiving £1,000 towards the development of their practice.

The vital contribution of the Arts Foundation Futures Awards to the arts in the UK is demonstrated by its past Fellows, many of whom are regarded as contemporary pioneers and have gone on to become leaders in their respective art forms, including: Wayne McGregor (1994), Alice Oswald (1996), Sarah Kane (1998), Asif Kapadia (2001), Ali Smith (2001), Rufus Norris (2002), Carol Morley (2003), Lynette Yiadom-Boakye (2006), and more recently, Simon

Fujiwara (2009), Sam Lee (2011), Alice Birch (2014), Hollie McNish (2015), Evan Ifekoya (2017), Holly Hendry (2019), Onyeka Igwe (2020), Klein (2020), and Bethany Williams (2020).

The Arts Foundation Futures Awards 2026 are generously supported in partnership with The David Collins Foundation, The Adrian Brinkerhoff Poetry Fund of the Sidney E. Frank Foundation, and The Yoma Sasburg Estate.

www.artsfoundation.co.uk

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AWARD CEREMONY BIOGRAPHIES

About Ben Okri

[Ben Okri](#) is the Nigerian-born poet, cultural activist, and author of thirteen novels, including the Booker Prize-winning *The Famished Road*, the first in a trilogy, and *Astonishing the Gods*, which was selected as one of the BBC's '100 novels that shaped our world', as well as collections of poetry, short stories, plays and essays. His work has been translated into more than 28 languages. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and has won numerous international prizes and been awarded many honorary doctorates. His poem following the Grenfell Tower tragedy was widely viewed on television and on social media. He was a Fellow Commoner in Creative Arts at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was awarded an OBE in 2001 and a Knighthood in 2023.

About Gregory Batsleer & Festival Voices

Gregory Batsleer is the Arts Foundation Choral Conducting Fellow 2015.

Festival Voices has rapidly built a reputation as one of the UK's most forward-thinking vocal ensembles. Under the co-artistic direction of founders Gregory Batsleer and Oskar McCarthy, the ensemble creates transformative choral experiences through bold, cross-genre collaboration, with performances at venues including Southbank Centre, Kings Place, the London Handel Festival and Bold Tendencies.

PARTNER BIOGRAPHIES

About The David Collins Foundation

The David Collins Foundation was set up in memory of the late designer David Collins to honour his legacy and celebrate his love of the Arts. Since its creation in 2016, the Foundation has partnered with the Arts Foundation to support artists across multiple disciplines, including furniture design, poetry and animation.

www.davidcollins.studio/foundation

About The Adrian Brinkerhoff Poetry Fund of the Sidney E. Frank Foundation

[The Sidney E. Frank Foundation](#) seeks to improve the lives of students, families, and the community through opportunities in art, theater, poetry, music, education, environmental conservation, and medical research and care. [The Adrian Brinkerhoff Poetry Fund](#) supports organizations that advance understanding and love of poetry and literature around the world, in collaboration with the [Adrian Brinkerhoff Poetry Foundation](#). The Adrian Brinkerhoff Foundation aims to expand access to poetry and educational poetry materials, gathering outstanding poems from across places, eras, and traditions for audiences worldwide to enjoy.

www.brinkerhoffpoetry.org

About The Yoma Sasburg Estate

Born in Amsterdam, Yoma Sasburg was a professional ballet dancer. She married the prolific film composer Edward Clifton Parker and later trained as a sculptor under David Weekes becoming a founder member of the Devon Guild of Craftsmen. Gifted by her daughter Roselyn in 2010, the Yoma Sasburg legacy has supported a variety of the Arts Foundation Futures Awards Fellowships for sculpture, installation art, live performance art and visual art.



The Yoma Sasburg Estate