

The past
is
always
tense,
the future
perfect.



2021

Zadie Smith

Ayo Akingbade
Tanya Auclair
John Barber
Elissa Brunato
Nancy Campbell
Josie Dale-Jones
Sonya Dyer
Julian Ellis-Brown
Samantha Fernando
Matilda Ibini
Urielle Klein-Mekongo
Garry MacKenzie
Shneel Malik
Selina Nwulu
Joanna Pocock
Tanoa Sasraku
Jack Sheen
The Shellworks
Keisha Thompson
Rosa-Johan Uddoh



Welcome!

We are especially delighted to present the finalists for the 2021 Arts Foundation Futures Awards at a time when creatives from all walks of the Arts have been so hard hit by the global pandemic. We would like to thank the experts from around the country who took time out to consider their nominations, all of the artists who took up the challenge to apply, and the judges who this year had the difficult task of judging via online platforms.

The twenty featured artists come from five different areas of the arts. Two of these are repeated annually including the Visual Arts award which acknowledges the multidisciplinary practices of many of today's artists, and Materials Innovation, an award which, for the past seven years has highlighted some of the most ground-breaking developments by designers who are shaping the future. From packaging made from waste products to water purification projects, this years' finalists are no exception.

The decision to focus on Environmental Writing for our literary award outlines our commitment to support those artists who are articulating issues around the climate crisis in innovative ways, touching audiences that core environmental scientists often struggle to reach. With live events in the arts nearly at a standstill, we are delighted to have two performing arts award, including Theatre Making which highlights experimental practices based in the UK. This is the first in a series of three annual awards for theatre, supported by a trust honouring the work of revered designer Maria Björnson. The fifth award, Choral Composition, is a new category for the Foundation, looking at those composing new work for groups of voices from smaller ensemble to large choirs.

One artist in each of the five art forms will receive a £10,000 fellowship towards their practice, announced on the 27th January 2021 with each remaining finalist receiving £1,000.

Information on all our finalists can be found in the [Artist Directory](#).

To receive our news please sign up to our quarterly [newsletter](#).

Artisan with *Indus 1.0* tile for water purification,
India. Shneel Malik



Judges

Materials Innovation

Supported by The Clothworkers' Company

TF Chan, Thomas Duggan,
Priya Khanchandani

Choral Composition

Juliet Fraser, Orlando Gough,
Wasfi Kani OBE

Visual Arts

Supported by the David Collins Foundation

Andrew Durbin, Lubaina Himid,
Fatoş Üstek

Environmental Writing

Supported by the Yoma Sasburg Estate

Professor Jean McNeil,
Professor Annie Worsley,
Lucia Pietroiusti

Theatre Makers

Supported by the Maria Björnson Memorial Fund

Tarek Iskander, Bryony Kimmings,
John McGrath

Photograph taken on the set of *O'Pierrot*, 2019.
Tanoa Sasraku





The Finalists

The following artists were nominated by experts and practitioners across the UK. They were then selected as finalists from the long list of applicants by the relevant judging panel.

Materials Innovation

Supported by The Clothworkers' Company

Elissa Brunato
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Julian Ellis-Brown
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The Shellworks
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Shneel Malik
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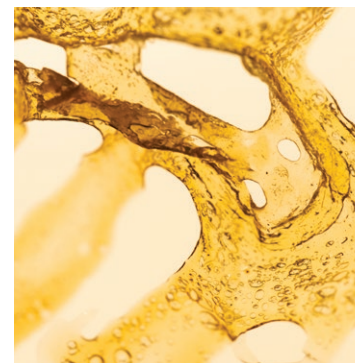
Choral Composition

Tanya Auclair
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John Barber
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Samantha Fernando
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Jack Sheen
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OPPOSITE
dressed., This Egg, 2018. Josie Dale-Jones

LEFT
Chitin, extract from crustacean shells. The
Shellworks

BELOW
Thigh House workshop, 2018.
Rosa-Johan Uddoh

Visual Arts

Supported by the David Collins Foundation

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Environmental Writing

Supported by the Yoma Sasburg Estate

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Theatre Makers

Supported by the Maria Björnson
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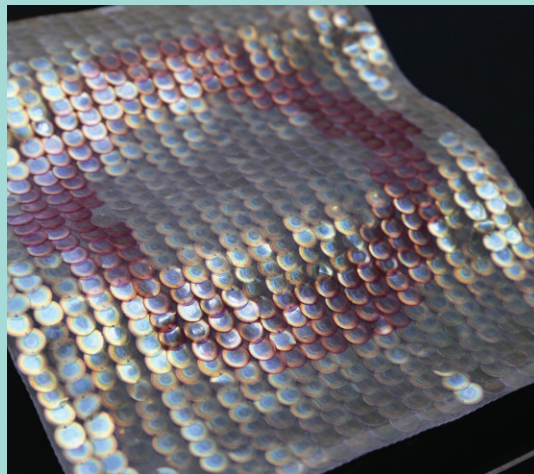
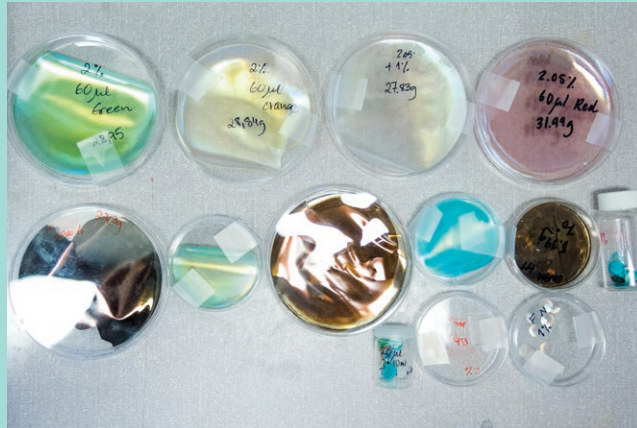
Keisha Thompson
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Finalists

Elissa Brunato

Materials Innovation

Supported by The Clothworkers' Company



Elissa Brunato previously worked in embroidery design and production, where she witnessed some of the global and environmental implications of distantly-made design choices. While overseeing production sites and artisanal workshops in India, China and Italy, she learnt that whilst design decisions are made primarily in regard to aesthetic and economic values, the consequences often create unnecessary waste at multiple stages of manufacture, damaging the environment and exposing workers to hazardous materials.

In 2019 Oxfam reported that 33 million sequined garments and accessories would be purchased (UK) over the festive period with 7 million ending up in landfill and ultimately contributing to micro-plastic pollution. In response to this, Brunato produced bio iridescent sequins made from wood-cellulose - the most abundant plant-based polymer.

Alongside her physical experimentation and collaborative approach to designing materials, Brunato finds it important to consider surrounding systems and the wider social, political and geological context of materials. She has also engaged with the issue of single use takeaway packaging by developing compostable alternatives out of waste bran from the baking industry, and proposed the manufacture of recyclable *Circular Socks*, in which different fibers are clearly distinguished from one another in order to be separated.

Bio Iridescent sequins

Finalists

Julian Ellis-Brown

Materials Innovation

Supported by The Clothworkers' Company

Julian Ellis-Brown is a systems thinker and design engineer specialising in novel sustainable materials. Based in London, he co-founded SaltyCo alongside fellow students Antonia Jara Contreras, Finlay Duncan and Neloufar Taheri when they met on an innovation programme at the Royal College of Art and Imperial College London. Julian's background in mechanical engineering, alongside his design Masters, enables him to have a holistic understanding of both the minutia and macro impact of designing materials that put nature first.

SaltyCo uses the hardiest and most adaptable parts of nature to build materials in a changing environment whilst actively healing it. Their flagship product is a plant-based fibre fill for apparel and other applications, made from salt-tolerant freshwater-free plants. Salt marshes are some of the most planet-healing spaces in the world, and farming salt-tolerant plants in these environments provides optimum sustainability, while reducing reliance on heavily freshwater-reliant plants such as cotton.

Julian's other projects include Ventnor Brickworks, creating a construction material from macro algal blooms. He devised a modular, mobile brick manufacturing centre using small amounts of renewable energy and local materials to turn a waste stream of kelp into low-carbon, recyclable bricks. Another of his projects, Aerium, is a new aircraft environment inspired by nature and harnessing photosynthesis to work as a natural and sustainable way of generating energy and cleaning the air.

TOP

A salt marsh in Scotland where SaltyCo sources raw material for their textiles

BOTTOM RIGHT

SaltyCo's fibre-fill alternative to goose-down or synthetic fills

BOTTOM LEFT

Ventnor Brickworks strength-test their building material



Finalists

The Shellworks

Materials Innovation

Supported by The Clothworkers' Company



The Shellworks began as a response to the plastic pollution crisis. Only 9% of all plastics are recycled globally, and this has led to 63 billion tonnes of plastic waste on our planet to date. The Shellworks' solution comes in the form of a biopolymer - chitin - extracted from fermented seafood waste. Chitin is the second most common polymer found in nature, and through this production method The Shellworks make use of the 6-8 million tonnes of crustacean waste produced each year. Chitin is also found in insect shells and the walls of fungi, and due to the natural composition of the base ingredients the materials created are compostable.

The Shellworks' practice started when the team were each studying at the Royal College of Art from 2017-2019, including team members Insiya Jafferjee, Amir Afshar and Ed Jones. Their materials are created with two key intentions: to educate the public and be a viable commercial product. They also explore how aesthetics can inform how consumers understand a material. The Shellworks are actively experimenting with their materials in order to incorporate additional natural waste substrates and natural dyes rather than petroleum based products.

Applications of chitin.



Finalists

Shneel Malik

Materials Innovation

Supported by The Clothworkers' Company

Architect and Bio designer Shneel Malik works at the intersection of design, biology, engineering and material sciences in the development of large-scale photosynthetic systems of living membranes for use within Architecture. As part of her research, she has developed *Indus* – a tiled wall designed to clean polluted water using the natural processes of micro-organisms, specifically microalgae; where it uses the passive ability of microalgae to absorb heavy metal present in the wastewater onto the surface of their cells. Malik developed *Indus* to empower small scale artisan workers in underdeveloped and developing countries to treat the contaminated wastewater for reuse within their manufacturing processes. At present, these industries release the contaminated water untreated into the environment, and WHO estimate up to 80% of the surface and ground waters are in turn polluted.

In gaining understanding of the composition, structure and processing of complex biological tissues and systems, Malik is able to explore large-scale 3D printing and robotic fabrication of these novel living materials. This research aims to create self sustaining biological scaffolds for architecture, with a range of energy-based uses such as the removal of pollutants from the environment, and the generation of energy through processes of photosynthesis.

Render of *Indus 1.0* tiles installed in the courtyard of a small-scale dyeing industry in India

Finalists

Tanya Auclair

Choral Composition

Tanya Auclair is a British-Rwandan music and sound artist. Her work explores rhythm, voice and electronica, treating everyday life like new mythologies and taking an embodied approach to exploring ideas with sound.

Auclair's versatility has led to a wide range of multi-disciplinary projects and collaborations including a live rework / scoring of Afro-Brazilian classic *Black Orpheus* with Charlie Dark, and *The Sensory Score*, a multi-sensory concert for blindfolded audience. Taking inspiration from the vibrations with which bees communicate, and the patterns created by their social organisation, *The Swarm* is a choral-sound piece that takes us on an intimate journey as a colony of bees take flight in search of a new home, while Auclair's *Four Points Talk* is a musique concrète series made from recordings of buildings.

Auclair composed *In Waves* for the Roundhouse Choir, and more recently is working with pioneering Rwandan drum ensemble Ingoma Nshya. She is a member of Deep Throat Choir and vocal ensembles The Quorum and Blood Moon Project. In 2020 she worked on a Zeitgeist commission for The Riot Ensemble; *Munganyinka is a Transformer*, which premiered at Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival.



OPPOSITE
Tanya Auclair

ABOVE
The Swarm - a collaboration with
Heloise Tunstall-Behrens.
Image Credit: Zora Kuettner

Finalists

John Barber

Choral Composition

John Barber is a composer from Bristol with a passion for voices, collaboration and storytelling. He has written several operas, including *We Are Shadows* for Spitalfields Music and *Mighty Oaks* for the Royal Opera House, as well as several large-scale oratorios, including *Consider the Lilies* - based on the stories of refugees in the UK. He also wrote *Seven Seeds*, a major retelling of the Persephone myth featuring 1500 singers, full orchestra and soloists.

Barber works extensively on projects that combine professional and non-professional voices. He ran Woven Gold for over 10 years- a choir made up of refugees and asylum seekers, and London-based musicians. Barber's practice is now developing into choral composition for professional singers, driven by a very personal engagement with what it means to write choral music. In particular he is concerned with creating choral music for atheists, thereby challenging the choral tradition of music-as-liturgy. Upcoming projects include *The Selfish Giant* for Garsington Opera and *Existence* - a major commission for the Arctic Light Choir/Gothenburg Opera Youth Choir.



ABOVE
Woven Gold Choir

OPPOSITE
John Barber with ORA Singers, 2017



Finalists

Samantha Fernando

Choral Composition

Samantha Fernando is focused on expanding the vocabulary of non-pitched sounds to create striking textures, utilising extended techniques from breath sounds and whispering to humming and percussive vocal sounds. She has built on previous explorations of the interplay between text and composition, as well as works for narrator and ensemble, to develop into her more recent music for sung voices.

Have It All (2020) was commissioned by BBC Radio 3 for the BBC Singers, and the text for the piece takes the form of a list for unaccompanied choir. Half of the words on the list chart the everyday activities of parenting a small child, while the other half are words pertaining to creativity, aspiration, and personal growth, evoking the fullness of life and the challenge of nurturing our multiple selves. *Look Up* (2014/15) is composed for four voices, bass viol and electronics, and comprises two texts, one by the composer, and the other by Emily Dickinson. The vocal ensemble act as a manifestation of an uplifting internal voice, while the Emily Dickinson text is a moment of reflection on past pain.

Fernando has recently been commissioned by the BBC Singers and is working on a hyper virtual reality opera. Whilst spatialisation of voices is a centuries-old technique in sacred choral music, Fernando is coupling this with amplification, where subtle and percussive vocal sounds can be added to the soundworld.

TOP

Samantha Fernando

BOTTOM

Silbersee Vocal Ensemble perform
Look Up, Gaudeamus Muziekweek,
Utrecht, 2016



Finalists

Jack Sheen

Choral Composition



ABOVE
Kantos Chamber Choir recording
Croon Harvest in a field near Wilmslow,
for *In the Field*, 2020

OPPOSITE
Jack Sheen

Jack Sheen is a composer and conductor from Manchester, who regularly works with the UK's most progressive groups. His choral and vocal music is concerned with evading linear narratives in favor of more sculptural and ecological forms, often using simple ideas such as repetition and stasis whilst questioning more elusive notions such as process, memory, and climax.

Fitzgerald Pirouette (2019) functions like an ecosystem, presenting a collection of musical organisms that exist autonomously within the composition, while *Long pan requiem* (2018) is a love letter to heterophony and the human voice. Split into two parts, the piece is a setting of an alphabeticalised list of every syllable used in the Introit of the Requiem Mass. The music functions like a sonic sculpture, in an attempt to grind to a halt, or at other times totally freeze, the development of the music as time unfolds. *Croon Harvest* (2020) was commissioned by Kantos choir whilst the UK was still in semi-lockdown. This piece was designed to be performed outdoors as a pop-up, open duration work that can be realised anywhere, anytime. It's premiere took place in a small field on the outskirts of Wilmslow.

Jack Sheen is one of the curators behind London Contemporary Music Festival, and is the Director of the experimental music group An Assembly.



Finalists

Ayo Akingbade

Visual Arts

Supported by The David Collins Foundation



TOP

Dear Babylon, still from 16mm and HD
video, colour, sound, 21 min, 2019

BOTTOM AND OPPOSITE

So They Say, stills from Super 16mm trans-
ferred to HD file, colour, sound, 11 min, 2019

Ayo Akingbade is a London-based artist, writer and director whose work is built upon working-class identity and the female gaze. She works predominantly with moving image to reflect on the people who live within socio-economic constraints that make them “other”, linking them through recurring concerns on representations of the past, present and future.

Akingbade engages with the fluid boundaries between the self and the other by gathering local and cultural experiences in intimate and playful interpretations. The artist and her protagonists move through concrete, urban and institutional spaces, reflecting on the influence of the environment on a personal sense of place and identity - in particular the constantly shifting landscape of London.

The physicality of analogue film is often intrinsic to Akingbade's filmmaking language, in which aesthetic and formal qualities are crucial to the development of narrative. She has exhibited and screened widely, including presentations at the ICA, South London Gallery, Birkbeck University, Walker Art Center, Somerset House Studios and Instituto Tomie Ohtake, amongst others.



Finalists

Sonya Dyer

Visual Arts

Supported by The David Collins Foundation

Sonya Dyer places Black women of myth and of science as active progenitors of the future, querying the construction of possible futures by asking in whose image the future is made. Working mainly across sculpture, moving image and text, Dyer explores how subjectivities and alliances are formed across cultures and temporalities.

Hailing Frequencies Open - her ongoing body of work - intersects Star Trek's Nichelle Nichols' astronaut recruitment activism, Andromeda the Ethiopian Princess of Greek mythology and the dubious legacy of the 'immortal' HeLa cells, taken from the body of Henrietta Lacks. These were the first human materials sent to space by the Soviet Union in 1960.

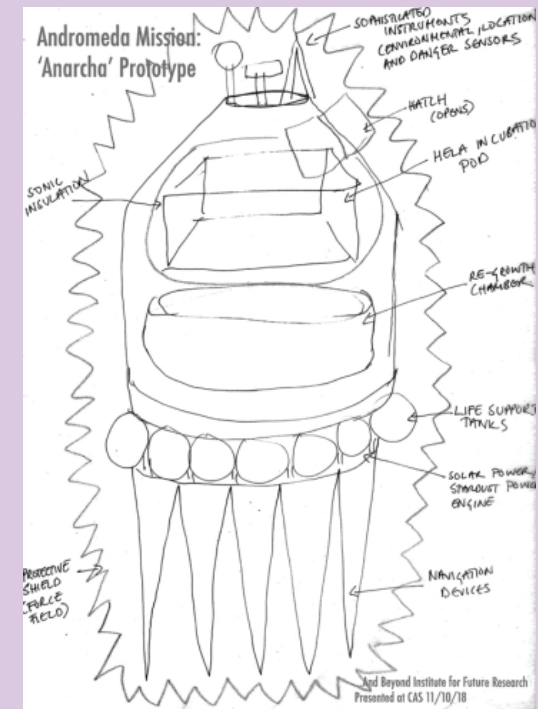
Dyer's work sits at the intersection of speculative fiction and science, creating a world in which this trilogy of influences combine as the genesis of new possibilities for Black female subjectivities within fictional narratives of the future. Dyer has exhibited internationally and was a 2020 UK Associate Artist at the Delfina Foundation as well as being an alum of Whitney Museum of American Art: Independent Study Program.

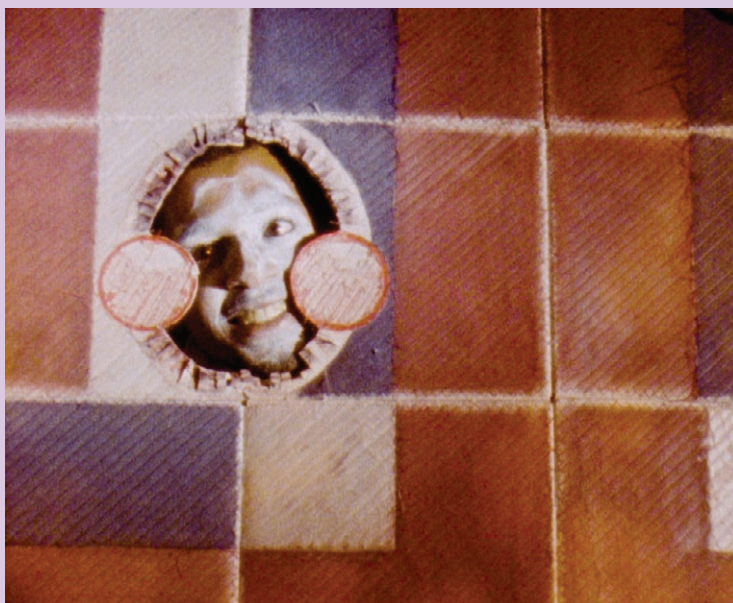
TOP

Or, Dark Fecundity (Poster featuring drawing of *Anarcha* prototype vessel), produced for Centre for Afrofuturist Studies, Iowa City USA, 2018

BOTTOM

Andromeda Mission: Anarcha II,
Image credit: Jules Lister. 2019





Finalists

Tanoa Sasraku

Visual Arts

Supported by The David Collins Foundation

Tanoa Sasraku examines the intersections of her identity as a young, mixed-race, gay woman raised in Plymouth, and the endeavors to draw these senses of self together as one in 21st century England. Her practice shifts between filmmaking, drawing and flag-making, juxtaposing and performing British, Black, Ghanaian and queer cultural histories in her navigation of self.

Sasraku's flags are inspired by the visual and material structure of the Fante Asafo war flags of coastal Ghana, which the artist's paternal ancestors fabricated in resistance to British colonial rule. Her own flags map the story of ecological cycles in Dartmoor. The presence of her figure - as a woman of colour - against the sublime Devon landscape throws into question ideas of "deep" England and what it means to claim ownership over the rural.

Her video works examine the presentation of black and brown people on stage and on camera throughout the past century, with a focus on the Harlem Renaissance and minstrel theatre - specifically the caricature of Jim Crow. Combined with her interest in Kenneth Anger, Jean Cocteau and Federica Fellini, Sasraku brings her sculptural works into the realm of costume, retelling the story of Pierrot the pantomime clown, this time telling her own story. This is the first in a canon of Black, fairytale-horror short films.

TOP

The artist with a flag from
Whop, Cawbaby, 2018

BOTTOM

O' Pierrot, 8mm Film Still, 2019

Finalists

Rosa-Johan Uddoh

Visual Arts

Supported by The David Collins Foundation

Rosa-Johan Uddoh is an interdisciplinary practitioner working towards radical self-love, inspired by Black feminist practice and writing. Using performance, installation and writing she explores an infatuation with places, objects or celebrities in British popular culture, and the effects of these on self-formation. Particularly, Uddoh is interested in Black performance in popular culture – how it can expand or constrict the way Black people move through space. Her experiences as a Black woman in Architecture and living in a former colonial centre, London, have generated her acute understanding of the way in which space is materially built and socially structured, and how this affects the way we relate through our bodies, behaviors and sense of self.

Uddoh's work utilises humor, appropriation and parody as tools used by diasporic subjects for creative resistance. Each of her performances appropriate a particular popular media format, working with people's preconceived ideas as a gesture towards taking ownership of mass-media. Her first book, *Practice Makes Perfect*, a collection of scripts and scores explores these themes, will be co-published by Focal Point Gallery and Bookworks in 2021.

Uddoh lectures in BA Performance at Central Saint Martins and has exhibited at the Tate, Jupiter Woods, Black Tower and Bluecoat amongst others.

TOP TWO

Studies for Impartiality, Mixed-media installation. Image Credit: Manuela Barczewski. 2019

BOTTOM

Performing Whiteness 3: Private Life Drama. Still courtesy of the artist and East London Cable, 2019



Finalists

Nancy Campbell

Environmental Writing

Supported by the Yoma Sasburg Estate

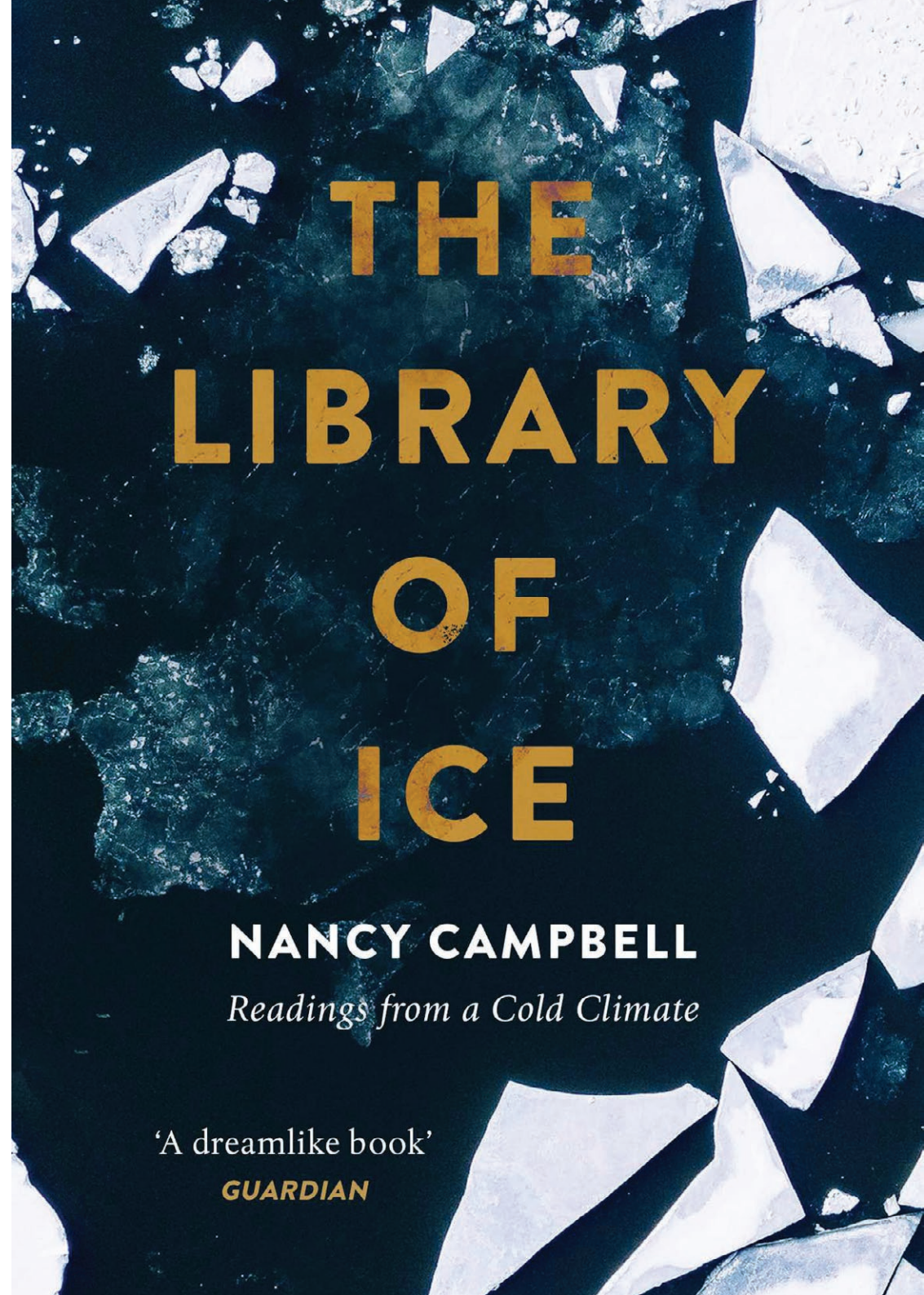
Nancy Campbell writes poetry, essays and non-fiction, as well as making artist's books. She is driven by empathy with the environment combined with a fascination for the material form of the book. Campbell grew up in the Scottish Borders and Northumberland - places where the culture of illuminated manuscripts such as the Lindisfarne Gospels and contemplative retreat to the wilderness still felt very present. She began her career as an apprentice to master craftsmen in letterpress studios in British Columbia and Brooklyn, and has written, designed and published a number of limited edition books including *How To Say 'I Love You' In Greenlandic: An Arctic Alphabet*.

A series of residencies with Arctic research institutions between 2010 and 2017 has resulted in numerous projects, including *The Library of Ice: Readings in a Cold Climate*. In 2018/19 she was appointed the UK's Canal Laureate by the Canal & River Trust and The Poetry Society; the resulting poems were published as a pamphlet, *Navigations*. Her latest book, *Fifty Words for Snow*, was released in 2020.



ABOVE
Nancy Campbell

OPPOSITE
The Library of Ice: Readings from a Cold Climate, pub. Scribner UK, 2018





Finalists

Garry MacKenzie

Environmental Writing

Supported by the Yoma Sasburg Estate

Garry MacKenzie explores contemporary ecological and philosophical understandings of landscapes in both their content and their form. He engages with the notion that landscapes are areas of multiple ecological and cultural interactions: animal populations, tourism, pollution, personal and group memories, migrations - a concept brought to the fore by the climate crisis and writing about the Anthropocene. MacKenzie experiments with how aspects of poetry such as voice, form, juxtapositions, lineation and pagination might highlight the aesthetic as well as the physical connections between these moving parts.

MacKenzie is the author of *Scotland: A Literary Guide for Travellers* (I.B. Tauris), an introduction to literature from and about Scotland, and his long poem, *Ben Dorain: a conversation with a mountain* is forthcoming from Irish Pages Press. Garry MacKenzie teaches undergraduate and community education courses in literature and creative writing for the University of St Andrews and Open College of the Arts.



ABOVE
Garry MacKenzie

OPPOSITE
Ben Dorain, Scotland

Finalists

Selina Nwulu

Environmental Writing

Supported by the Yoma Sasburg Estate

Selina Nwulu is a writer, poet and essayist, examining migration, race, climate change and social justice through a personal lens, linking these issues to notions of identity, (un)belonging and home. In a climate where we have access to a surplus of information, Nwulu is of the opinion that a lack of knowledge isn't the only issue; rather, she is concerned with a lack of empathy. Her creative writing, therefore, seeks to highlight different perspectives and ways of understanding social and climate justice issues, encouraging the reader to connect with this information differently, through emotion and human stories.

Selina Nwulu has worked extensively in schools teaching students to think about different ways to speak about climate change, as well as with numerous arts and cultural institutions discussing how they can broaden narratives around climate and weave this into their practice. Her debut collection, *The Secrets I Let Slip*, was published by Burning Eye Books in 2015. She has toured with her poetry both nationally and internationally, most notably at Glastonbury, Edinburgh Fringe and St Anza Poetry Festival, as well as a literary tour in Northern India with the British Council.



ABOVE
Selina Nwulu

OPPOSITE
Who's Full? pub. Wellcome Trust and
Free Word Centre, 2018



Who's Full?

By Selina Nwulu

“Candid and beautifully written . . . A necessary read for our times.”

— EDWARD BURTYNSKY

surrender

THE CALL OF THE
AMERICAN WEST

Joanna Pocock

Finalists

Joanna Pocock

Environmental Writing

Supported by the Yoma Sasburg Estate

Joanna Pocock turned her attention to essay writing in 2014 while living in Missoula, Montana. Being in the American West, Pocock felt closer to the elemental, to the devastating wildfires and to the effects of mining and extraction on the landscape. Moved to document the environmental changes around her, she sought out rewilders, river reclaimers, ecosexuals, nomads and scavengers – people with a more balanced, and in some cases more extreme, relationship to the Earth.

This resulted in *Surrender*, a work of creative non-fiction, blending memoir with reportage and criticism with nature writing, which won the Fitzcarraldo Editions Essay Prize in 2018 before being published in the UK in 2019. Canadian and American editions of *Surrender* have been published by House of Anansi; and a French edition has been translated by Mémoire d'encrier. A Spanish translation will also be appearing in 2021 by Errata Naturae.

Pocock is a British-Canadian writer currently living in London. Her writing has appeared in numerous major news and culture publications, and she teaches creative writing at the University of the Arts, London.



ABOVE
Joanna Pocock

OPPOSITE
Surrender: The Call of the American West, pub. Fitzcarraldo
Editions 2019/ House of Anansi Press 2020

Finalists

Josie Dale-Jones

Theatre Makers

Supported by the Maria Björnson Memorial Fund

Josie Dale-Jones is a theatre maker working as multi-award winning collaborative theatre company ThisEgg, through which she produces, co-creates and performs. ThisEgg makes live theatre that is led by form and theme, not necessarily story. ThisEgg's work is firmly rooted in the hope that theatre can be a motivational force for social change.

ThisEgg's show, *dressed.* made in collaboration with Made My Wardrobe, is a true story told by four women who have been friends since school. After being stripped at gun point, Lydia set out to redress herself with a new healing set of armor. Lydia now only wears clothes she has made. Combining choreography, live sewing, comedy and original music, *dressed.* celebrates the power clothes have to define us, to liberate us, to hide us and to embellish us.

In the summer of 2020 ThisEgg with Philippa Hogg created *DISMANTLE*; an installation, pop up performance & film project behind the window of an empty shop front at The Koppel Project's Soho Studios building before it was torn down to make space for a luxury hotel. Dale-Jones is currently developing *The Family Sex Show* - designed to be seen by adults and children, the show explores sex, pleasure and relationships in a celebration of difference and equality.

DISMANTLE rehearsal, This Egg,
2020



Finalists

Matilda Ibini

Theatre Makers

Supported by the Maria Björnson Memorial Fund



ABOVE AND OPPOSITE

Little Miss Burden, Bunker Theatre, 2019

Matilda Ibini is a playwright and screenwriter from London, writing for stage, TV, film and audio. Her debut play *Muscovado* (2014) examined slavery and the sugar trade was produced by BurntOut Theatre, winning the Alfred Fagon Audience Award 2015. Ibini then went on to pen *Little Miss Burden*, a coming-of-age tale bringing together 90s nostalgia, Nigerian family, East London and Sailor Moon to tell the sometimes tricky, often funny truth about growing up with a physical impairment. The show premiered at the Bunker Theatre in 2019, and was a finalist for an OffWestEnd Award for Best New Play.

Recent works in Ibini's portfolio include *The Grape That Rolled Under The Fridge* (2019), a half hour audio drama produced by Naked Productions and BBC Radio 3, *Head Over Wheels* (2020), a romantic comedy about dating as a disabled person, and *Shielders* (2020), a digital play following three friends who spend Coronavirus lockdown searching for UFOs, until eased restrictions leave only one of the group still shielding indoors. Ibini's work has been staged at theatres such as Old Vic Theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, National Theatre Shed, Royal Exchange Manchester, Birmingham Rep and Soho Theatre.



Finalists

Urielle Klein-Mekongo

Theatre Makers

Supported by the Maria Björnson Memorial Fund

Urielle Klein-Mekongo is a writer, actress, singer and playwright from North West London. Her solo show *Yvette* premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2017 where it received 5-star reviews, and has since toured the UK. *Yvette* is an autobiographical, one-woman show that tells a powerful and moving story of surviving sexual abuse, fusing spoken word, original music and exceptional character performances to tell a story of survival, teenage angst and a stolen childhood.

Klein-Mekongo then went on to create *Black Power Desk*, a new musical which uses an original score of rap, reggae, soul and R&B to shine a light on a rarely explored part of Black British History through the stories of two sisters heading in different directions. Set in 1970s Notting Hill, the play follows the sisters as they navigate the threat of The Black Power Desk, a secret police unit designed to destroy black activism.

Urielle Klein-Mekongo is a resident artist at the Roundhouse and in 2018 became a member of the Bush Theatre's Emerging Writers Group and was named one of the Old Vic 12. She has also worked with the Soho Writer's group and BBC Writers London Voices. Other work in development includes *The Decameron Project* (a Stratford Circus, LikeMinds Amsterdam & The Albany co-production) and TV pilot *Adulting* (Shiny Button Productions).

Yvette, Bush Theatre, 2017





Finalists

Keisha Thompson

Theatre Makers

Supported by the Maria Björnson Memorial Fund

Keisha Thompson is a Manchester based writer, performance artist and producer, whose recent award-winning solo show *Man on the Moon* follows Thompson's communications with her reclusive dad through books, letters and symbols. When the letters stop coming she is forced to venture into his world, and this truth-infused narrative sees the protagonist follow a trail of breadcrumbs that lead her to a number of check-points: cultural displacement, religious confusions, political paranoia, misplaced masculinity and more.

Her debut show *I Wish I had a Mustache*, saw Thompson on a Socratic journey through the history of the female beauty regime. A comedic, and at times disturbing, journey saw the protagonist investigate if she had a problem with her gender, her culture or just herself.

In addition to writing and performance, Keisha also has a passion for education and mathematics. Her recent creative education initiative DeCipher merges mathematics with poetry, with the intention to deliver fun creative maths lessons that feel like poetry workshops, dance classes or baking parties. Keisha Thompson is chair of radical arts funding body, Future's Venture Foundation, is a fellow of the MOBO x London Theatre Consortium Fellowship.

Man on the Moon, 2018



Our Supporters

Due to the success of its longstanding fellowship program the Arts Foundation has attracted legacies from Artists' Estates, Corporations, and other Foundations. The following four organisations have supported the 2021 Awards for which we are deeply grateful particularly at this crucial time when support to artists is needed more than ever.

The Maria Björnson Memorial Fund

The Maria Björnson Memorial Fund is the latest supporter of the AFFAs and will be providing a theatre-related award for the next three years. The fund was set up to honour the brilliant theatre, ballet and opera designer Maria Björnson who died in 2002. Her best known design was for the *Phantom of the Opera* for which she received a plethora of awards, although she designed for many other organisations including the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre, the Royal Opera, the Royal Ballet, Glyndebourne Opera, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Sydney Opera, La Scala, in the West End and on Broadway. The fund also supports artistic enterprises, arts-related activities and individual artists in the UK.

'Maria would have been thrilled to be able to support the work of the Arts Foundation.'

Sir Richard Eyre, Trustee of the MBMT



The Clothworkers' Company

Established seven years ago with The Clothworkers' Company, the Materials Evolution Award aims to identify where the current shoots of enterprise are coming from in the UK, encouraging new ways of thinking and involving practitioners from different backgrounds involved in textiles and related material development.

The Clothworkers' Company directs its activity on supporting textiles research, innovation, skills and links with industry; and on fostering wider participation in trusteeship and charity governance. Its sister organisation, The Clothworkers' Foundation, supports charities which are set up to improve the lives of people and communities particularly those facing disadvantage.

'We were delighted to establish with the Arts Foundation this Materials Evolution Award which taps into the emerging talent working in this important area, and recognises and supports their contribution and achievements. The range of work produced by the nominees has been impressive, as has the quality of the selected finalists each year.'

Jocelyn Stuart-Grumbar, Clerk to The Clothworkers' Company

OPPOSITE
Maria Björnson

ABOVE
2020 Arts Foundation Fellow Bethany Williams



The David Collins Foundation

Launched in 2016 the Foundation has been set up in memory of the late designer David Collins in order to honour his legacy and celebrate his love and contribution to the Arts. The organisation has partnered with the Arts Foundation in order to award fellowships across multiple disciplines.

Established in 1985, the David Collins Studio is an architectural based consultancy which has redefined luxury interior design on a global scale.

'I am delighted that The David Collins Foundation has been given the opportunity to support the 2021 Visual Arts Award. David supported visual artists in all mediums over the course of his life, both professionally, through site-specific commissions and collaborations for David Collins Studio's projects, and in his personal life, as the collection at his home made clear. He loved working with visual artists and always found the creative interchange of ideas hugely inspiring and rewarding.'

Iain Watson, Trustee of the David Collins Foundation

ABOVE

*Until a thousand roses bloom (with Warsaw in the background). 2018 Arts Foundation Fellow
Alexander Baczynski-Jenkins*

OPPOSITE

Yoma Sasburgh in Sonatina

The Yoma Sasburg Estate

Gifted by her daughter Roselyn in 2010 the Yoma Sasburg legacy has already funded many different artists including sculptors, installation artists and live performance artists. 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.

'Giving such money to the Arts Foundation has benefited everyone. Roselyn Clifton Parker, Yoma's daughter has set up a permanent memorial for her mother while helping the best emerging talent in the UK today. A wonderful opportunity.'

Wendy Silk, Colemans; solicitors for the YSE



For more information about setting up your own award or giving a legacy please contact the director Shelley Warren by email: info@artsfoundation.com



Becoming a Friend of the AF

The Arts Foundation is a Registered Charity established 28 years ago. It gets no public funding yet has managed to award over £1.9m to artists by using the investment from an initial endowment plus support from donations and legacies from companies, trusts and individuals.

The charity remains unique in the UK for connecting people and practices in every area of the Arts, across Craft, Design, Film, Fine Art, Literature, Music, New Media and Performing Arts. Changing categories each year echoes the future with its mix of established, new and hybridising art forms. Its award scheme –the AFFA's– supports artists at a crucial point in their development, providing funds, recognition and encouragement when they are needed the most.

The results are clear to see. A generation of artists many of whom have been at the vanguard of their art form with a list of fellows that reads like a Who's Who of the arts.

However, our endowment is under pressure and we need to find new sources of support. Become a Friend of the Foundation and support the future generation of artists in the UK. Donations, however small, go straight to the artists and there are a range of benefits available to supporters.

Find out more and Become a Friend [here](#), or for more information about setting up your own award or giving a legacy please contact the director Shelley Warren on info@artsfoundation.co.uk.



Our Ambassadors & Friends

John Booth

Asif Kapadia

Siobhan Davies CBE

Wayne McGregor CBE

Tracey Emin

Rufus Norris

Sir Richard Eyre

Alexandra Shulman CBE

Sir Antony Gormley

Ali Smith

Howell James CBE



Tracey Emin at the 2019 AFFAs



About Us

Director

Shelley Warren

–

Chairman

Howell James CBE

–

Trustees

John Booth

Chairman, London Theatre Company and Tate Trustee

Dennis Chang

Director, Bolton & Quinn

Andrew Comben

Chief Executive, Brighton Dome and Brighton Festival

Jan Dalley

Arts Editor, Financial Times

Virginia Hodge

Creative Director, HodgeSellers

Frith Kerr

Founder, Studio Frith

Monika Parrinder

Writer, Educator and Consultant

Simon Prosser

Publishing Director, Hamish Hamilton

Jonathan Reekie CBE

Artistic Director, Somerset House

Matthew Slotover

Co-founder, Frieze. London

Kully Thiarai

Creative Director & CEO, Leeds 2023



Gavin Turk with the Visual Arts Finalists, 2020



Asif Kapadia and AF Fellow Klein, 2020



The Arts Foundation Fellows

2020

Klein *Experimental Music*
Onyeka Igwe *Experimental Film*
Esther McManus *Comics*
Ima-Abasi Okon *Visual Art*
Bethany Williams *Social Innovation in Materials Design*

2019

Kwame Asafo-Adjei *Hip Hop Dance*
Will Harris *Poetry*
Jamila Johnson-Small *Visual Arts*
Holly Hendry *Experimental Architecture*
Oscar Lhermitte *Designer Maker*

2018

Alexander Baczynski-Jenkins *Visual Arts*
Lydia Ourahmane *Visual Arts*
Alexander Zeldin *Theatre Directing*
Jochen Holz *Glass*
Nathaniel Mann *Composition*

2017

Evan Ifekoya *Live Art*
Lauren Kinsella *Jazz Composition*
Julian Melchiorri *Materials Innovation*
Samuel Stevens *Essay Films*
Joanna Walsh *Creative Non-Fiction*

2016

Ruth Ewan *Art in the Urban Space*
Deborah Smith *Literary Translation*
Carmen Hijosa *Materials Innovation*
Greg Sinclair *Children's Theatre*
Vann Kwok *Jewellery Design*
Laura Ducceschi *Producers of Live Music*

2015

Hollie McNish *Spoken Word*
Sarat Babu *Materials Innovation*
Alex Hartley *Art in the Elements*
Yoav Segal *Video & Digital for Performance*
Gregory Batsleer *Choral Conducting*
Angie Bual *Arts Producer*

2014

Rie Nakajima *Experimental Music*
Isobel Harbison *Arts Journalism*
Leah Capaldi *Sculpture*
Andrew Cranston *Painting*
Alice Birch *Playwriting*
Julia Lohmann *Materials Innovation*

2013

Euigenia Ivanissevich *Still Life Photography*
Isabel Rock *Printmaking*
Rachael Champion *Sculpture*
Regina Moriarty *Screenwriting*
Pippa Cleary *Composition for Musicals*
Chloe Lamford *Design for Performance*

2012

Wilkie Branson *Choreography*
Elspeth Brooke *Opera Composition*
Ahren Warner *Poetry*
Markus Kayser *Product Design*
Ruth Claxton *Sculpture*
Robert Morgan *Animation*



Vigil, 2014. 2015 AF Fellow Alex Hartley

2011

Dawn Youll *Ceramics*
Sam Lee *Folk Music*
Matt Golden *Sculpture*
Adam Marek *Short Story Writing*
Harminster Judge *Live Performance Art*

2010

Kate Brown *Graphic Novels*
Andrew Lamb *Jewellery Design*
Julie Cook *Textile Art*
Ole Birkland *Cinematography*
Mervyn Millar *Puppetry*

2009

Clare Lizzimore *Theatre Directing*
Emily Baker *Songwriting*
Cath Aran *Storytelling*
Veronique Rollande *Portraiture*
Simon Fujiwara *Interior Architecture*

2008

Sarah Staton *Sculpture in Wood*
Tomoaki Suzuki *Sculpture in Wood*
Ken Cockburn *Literary Translation*
Stephen Hurrell *Lighting Design*
Swava Harasymovicz *Illustration*
Nicholas Collon *Conducting*

2007

Mark McNay *New Fiction*
Leonie Purchas *Photojournalism*
Dan Wilson *Electro-Acoustic Composition*
Eleanor Long *Glass*
Belinda Chapman *Creators of Theatre for Children*

2006

Tim Turnbull *Performance Poetry*
Karen Laws *Comedy Writing*
Ingrid Laubrock *Jazz Composition*
Patrick Fredrikson *Furniture Design*
Lynette Yiadom-Boake *Painting*



The Arts Foundation Fellows

2005

Jeremy Millar *Curation*
Liv Lorent *Choreography*
Katrina Lindsay *Costume Design*
Matthias Tsaourides *Non Western Instrumentalist*
Thomson and Craighead *New Media Art*

2004

Brothers Quay *Animation*
Robert Bradbrook *Animation*
Simon Carroll *Ceramics*
Zinnie Harris *Playwriting*
Conor Mitchell *Composition for Musicals*

2003

Angela De Castro *Circus*
Frances Geesin *Textiles*
Frith Kerr *Graphic Design*
Carol Morley *Documentary Making*
Amelia Noble *Graphic Design*
Katrina Porteous *Poetry*

2002

John Frankland *Sculpture*
Sophia Kokosalaki *Fashion Design*
Rufus Norris *Theatre Directing*
Anne Seagrave *Live Performance Art*
Simon Vincenzi *Live Performance Art*

2001

Lin Cheung *Jewellery Design*
Michel Faber *Short Story Writing*
Susanna Heron *Landscape Design*
Asif Kapadia *Film Directing*
Lisa Lillywhite *Theatre Design*
Fred Meller *Theatre Design*
Ali Smith *Short Story Writing*

2000

Laia Gasch *Arts Producer*
David Harrison *Painting*
Belcea Quartet *Chamber Music*
Michael Simpson *Painting*
Hannah Starkey *Photography*

1998

Paul Clark *Opera Composition*
Ken Eastman *Ceramics*
Deirdre Gribbin *Opera Composition*
Sarah Kane *Playwriting*
Perminder Kaur *Sculpture*
Erika Tan *Digital Art*

1997

Lise Autogena *Glass*
Mateusz Farenholz *Printmaking*
Jeremy James *Choreography*
Neil Jeffries *Drawing*
Emma Woffenden *Glass*

1996

Martin Andre *Conducting*
Tanya Burns *Lighting Design*
Joy Gregory *Photography*
Alice Oswald *Poetry*
Mike Phillips *Thriller Writing*
Wales & Wales *Furniture Design*



2019 AF Fellow Jamila Johnson-Small

1995

Aldona Cunningham *Theatre Design*
Jane Harris *Painting*
Jeremy Herbert *Theatre Design*
Andrew Kotting *Scriptwriting*
Michael Lloyd *Metalwork*
Gavin Lockheart *Painting*
David Sawyer *General Composition*
Tommy Smith *Jazz Composition*
Matthew Tickle *Installation*
Ann Whitehurst *Painting*
Hermione Wiltshire *Installation*

1994

Melanie Counsell *Painting*
Susan Gritton *Singing*
Jane Harris *Textiles*
Wayne McGregor *Choreography*
Louisa Minkin *Painting*
Jocelyn West *Singing*
Mark Whitelaw *Mixed Media*
James Wood *Electro Acoustic Composition*

1993

Philip Eglin *Ceramics*
Linda France *Poetry*
Ken Grant *Photography*
Sara Radstone *Ceramics*
Ed Thomas *Playwriting*

For the full Artist Directory please click [here](#).

For current news on our AFFAs sign up to our [newsletter](#)

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The Family Sex Show, This Egg, 2020. Josie Dale-Jones



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