



The Arts Foundation Futures Awards

PRESS RELEASE

16 February 2023

The Arts Foundation will announce the five recipients of the Arts Foundation Futures Awards £10,000 Fellowships in Leeds on 23 February 2023.

The annual Arts Foundation Futures Awards support the UK's most promising artists and creatives at a pivotal moment in their career, providing £65,000 in unconditional grant funding, awarding five transformative £10,000 Fellowships, with all Shortlisted Artists receiving £1,000 towards the development of their practice.

The awards mark 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 CBE, Asif Kapadia, Ali Smith, Rufus Norris and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye.

With a special welcome address from the esteemed visual artist, [Claudette Johnson MBE](#) (b.1959, Manchester, UK), the Award Ceremony will take place on Thursday 23 February, presented in partnership with [Leeds 2023:Year of Culture](#), at the Howard Assembly Room, Opera North.

The ceremony will share the extraordinary and varied practices of the twenty Shortlisted Artists across this year's categories of Bio Design, Dance Theatre, Digital Art, Electronic Music and Place Writing. The recipients of the Arts Foundation Futures Awards will be announced by jury members: Music Artist, Fink, Nemone Metaxas, DJ & Broadcaster; Architect, Sarah Wigglesworth; Author, Eric Ngalle Charles; Head of Theatre and Dance at the Barbican, Toni Racklin; and Artist and Curator Antonio Roberts.

You can explore the work of all the Shortlisted Artists on the [Arts Foundation website](#) and watch the award announcements, including a live performance from music artist, [Love Ssega](#) (Arts Foundation Music for Change Fellow, 2022) via [Instagram Live](#) on Thursday 23 February 2023, from 6.30 pm.

Kully Thiarai, Creative Director and CEO of Leeds 2023 and Trustee of The Arts Foundation said: *"Leeds 2023 is thrilled to be hosting the prestigious Arts Foundation Futures Awards 2023, which has become an industry marker for future artistic excellence across wide-ranging*

art forms. We look forward to celebrating and welcoming extraordinary artists from across the UK to the city.”

The Bio Design Award Shortlist

Jesse Adler
Thora Arnardottir
Malu Luecking
Louise Lenborg Skajem

The Bio Design Award champions forward-looking designers and creative practitioners working with biomaterials, with the capacity to restore, renew or revitalise the environment, and is supported in partnership with The David Collins Foundation. The independent Jury members are Natsai Audrey Chieza, Founder and CEO of Faber Futures; Leonie Bell, Director of V&A Dundee; and Sarah Wigglesworth, Founder of Sarah Wigglesworth Architects, who said:

“All of the designers showed huge commitment and purpose in their research which is changing our response to the natural world. Often starting with a natural product or condition, these designers seek new uses and applications for these self-generating resources that could mean we touch the planet more lightly.”

Dance Theatre Award Shortlist

Mele Broomes
Maiya Leeke
Krystal S. Lowe
Akeim Toussaint Buck

The Dance Theatre Award focuses on dancers, dance-makers and choreographers, exploring movement and the body, and practitioners that push the boundaries of how dance is shared with audiences and a wider public. The award is supported in partnership with The Maria Björnson Memorial Fund. The Jury members are Florence Peake, Artist, Dancer, and Choreographer; Toni Racklin, Head of Theatre and Dance at The Barbican, and Cassa Pancho MBE, Founder and Artistic Director of Ballet Black, who said:

“I was so pleased to be asked to be on the panel for the Arts Foundation Futures Awards 2023 for Dance Theatre. It was a privilege to be able to see work from a really diverse group of artists. This kind of award is vital to those who aren't supported by a well-funded organisational infrastructure to get the time and space mentally and financially to be able to focus on their art.”

Digital Art Award Shortlist

Uma Breakdown
GLOR1A

Emily Mulenga
Nye Thompson

The Digital Art Award focuses on artists engaging critically with technology and digital infrastructure and interrogating their impact on society and is supported by the Yoma Sasburg Estate. The Jury members are Stephanie Hankey, Executive Director and Co-founder of Tactical Tech; Mark Leckey, Artist; and Antonio Roberts, Birmingham-based Artist & Curator, who said:

“It was an honour to be on the jury for the Digital Art Award. I was excited to see artists explore the many facets of screen-based digital art, with work ranging from interactive storytelling, and avatar-based fiction, to 3D virtual worlds. It is equally exciting to see artists exploring digital art beyond the screen, working with experimental hardware and code.”

Electronic Music Award Shortlist

Elizabeth Bernholz (Gazelle Twin)
Kate Carr
Gwen Siôn
Iceboy Violet

The Electronic Music Award supports conceptual and experimental music artists recasting the boundaries between music genres. The Jury members are Fink, Music Artist, Producer and Founder of R'COUP'D Records; Gaika, Artist; and Nemone Metaxas, DJ & Broadcaster, who said:

“It was an absolute privilege to be on the jury for this year's Arts Foundation Futures Awards. I was blown away by the creativity, diversity and talent across the award especially given the bleak landscape of the last few years. It has not been easy to be an independent electronic music producer in the UK with the COVID-19 pandemic hitting an industry hard through lockdowns, studio and venue closures and loss of income across the board. Emerging independent artists need support now more than ever. We felt our four shortlisted artists create new possibilities in electronic music through their conceptualisation, building of new instrumentation, production and performance leading to groundbreaking sounds which we feel will endure whilst pushing the boundaries of the genre even further. “

Place Writing Award Shortlist

Phoebe Boswell
Aida Edemariam
Gaia Holmes
Saira Niazi

The Place Writing Award supports writers with a practice focused on writing about the spirit of place. The independent Jury members are Eric Ngalle Charles, Author and PhD. Researcher, at King's College London, Anita Sethi, Writer, Broadcaster, and Journalist; and

Claire Armitstead, Author and Associate editor, culture, Guardian, who said:

“I read all the applications for the awards with both delight and surprise to find so many writers so lit up by the consideration of “place”; and so imaginative in their responses to the challenges it represents. Our shortlist reflects the strength and variety of those responses, and also offers a mouthwatering glimpse of the futures that all four promise.”

Press Pack & Images

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

Media Enquiries

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Notes to Editors

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 £1.8 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, provides five £10,000 fellowships, with all shortlisted artists receiving £1,000 towards the development of their artistic practice. Each year the awards focus on broad and innovative art forms across Craft, Design, Film, Literature, Music, New Media, Performing Arts, and Visual Arts.

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), Lynette Yiadom-Boakye (2006), and more recently, Simon Fujiwara (2009), 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 2023 are supported in partnership with: The David Collins Foundation, The Maria Björnson Memorial Fund and The Yoma Sasburg Estate.

www.artsfoundation.co.uk

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About Claudette Johnson

Claudette Johnson MBE (b. 1959, Manchester, UK) started her career as part of the newly formed BLK Art Group, which she joined in 1981 while she was a student at Wolverhampton University. In the 1980s Johnson showed her work in a number of significant shows including Five Black Women, Africa Centre, London, (1983); Black Women Time Now, Battersea Arts Centre, London, (1984); The Thin Black Line, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, (1985), and In This Skin: Drawings by Claudette Johnson, Black Art Gallery, London, (1992).

In March 2023, Johnson will present her first solo exhibition in the US at Ortuzar Projects, New York. Recent solo exhibitions include Still Here, Hollybush Gardens, London (2021); Claudette Johnson: I Came to Dance, Modern Art Oxford, (2019), and Claudette Johnson, Hollybush Gardens, London, (2017). Her work is held in numerous public collections, including Tate, British Council Collection, Arts Council Collection, Manchester Art Gallery, Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Rugby Museum, and Herbert Art Gallery & Museum.

www.hollybushgardens.co.uk/artists/claurette-johnson/

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About Love Ssega

Love Ssega is a musician, producer and performing artist, currently Artist In Residence with Royal Festival Hall's Philharmonia Orchestra. His environmentally-focussed artistic work was shown at United Nations COP26 and also featured by The New York Times for Climate Forward. This past year he has created site-specific performances and work for the National Gallery, Serpentine Pavillion and MoMA PS1, alongside starting an arts and air pollution awareness project, LIVE + BREATHE, in South London. Love Ssega was awarded Arts Foundation Music For Change Fellowship and is a Trustee of Shadwell Opera and Brian Eno-led climate charity EarthPercent.

www.lovessega.com/

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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-david-collins-foundation

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About The Maria Björnson Memorial Fund

The Maria Björnson Memorial 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.

www.mbmf.org.uk/

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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.

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About LEEDS 2023

LEEDS 2023's ambition is to deliver a transformational year of creative experiences connecting and benefiting people now and into the future.

The planned programme will celebrate and transform the City's identity locally, nationally and internationally – creating a lasting legacy of economic and social impact.

LEEDS 2023 is run by the [Leeds Culture Trust](#), an independent charity set up in 2019 by Leeds City Council as part of its Culture Strategy and as a response to the cancellation of the UK's participation in the [European Capital of Culture](#) competition.

Leeds City Council recognises in a number of its key strategies the difference culture and creativity can make to a city and its citizens, and is the principal funder of LEEDS 2023.

www.leeds2023.co.uk

LEEDS 2023 is supported by [Arts Council England](#) and [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#).



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LEEDS 2023 YEAR OF
CULTURE