



PRESS RELEASE

16 November 2022

The Arts Foundation announces the appointment of Saadi Soudavar as Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Saadi Soudavar has been appointed Chair of The Arts Foundation and takes over the role from Howell James CBE, as he comes to the end of his five-year term.

The coming year, 2023 will mark 30 years of the Arts Foundation's support for independent artists and creatives in the UK. The prestigious annual Arts Foundation Futures Awards have become an industry marker for future artistic excellence across wide-ranging art forms. The awards support the UK's most promising artists and creatives at a pivotal moment in their career with £10,000 unconditional fellowships.

The twenty artists shortlisted for the next Arts Foundation Futures Awards will be announced on 5 January 2023, and the five winning fellows receiving £10,000 will be revealed at a live award ceremony in late February 2023, with all shortlisted creatives receiving £1,000.

Saadi Soudavar is a Managing Director at Deutsche Bank where he runs European Equity Capital Markets. As a long-time supporter of arts organisations and avid art collector, Saadi's current and previous roles within the culture sector include being a member of the Tate Photography Acquisition Committee, and a trustee of the Soudavar Memorial Foundation, which supports exhibitions, publications and scholars of Persianate culture. He was also a producer of the feature film, *Frontier Blues*, which premiered in the International Competition at the Locarno Film Festival in 2009, and won the FIPRESCI award at the San Francisco International Film Festival.

Saadi Soudavar said, *"I feel immensely fortunate to be appointed to the role of Chair. The Arts Foundation has been a generous and patient funder of individual artists for nearly 30 years, and it's an incredibly exciting time to build on the foundation's phenomenal legacy. There has never been a more urgent moment to support creatives, and I look forward to supporting the Director, Mary Jane Edwards and working collaboratively with the Board to ensure we are truly a national charity serving the interests of artists across the UK."*

Jonathan Reekie, Director of Somerset House Trust, and trustee of The Arts Foundation said: *"Saadi is an ardent supporter of the arts and has long championed the work of UK artists and artist-led organisations. I and all the trustees are delighted to have Saadi's expertise and energy on the Board to support our future ambitions."*

Mary Jane Edwards, Director of The Arts Foundation says: *“With Saadi’s appointment, we enter the next phase of the charity’s development with renewed vigour to strengthen and develop new relationships and partnerships with other Trusts and Foundations and supporters. I don’t think we can overstate the precarity of this period, with artists adversely affected by the pandemic who are now facing the cost of living crisis. I look forward to working closely with Saadi and the Board to explore new ways to provide vital financial support for exceptional artists and creatives in the UK. We would also like to take the opportunity to thank Howell James for his commitment to the charity and generous stewardship to date.”*



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Notes to Editors

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, Material Innovation, 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).

www.artsfoundation.co.uk

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