

Empowering Voices: Artist Bios

Represented Artists:



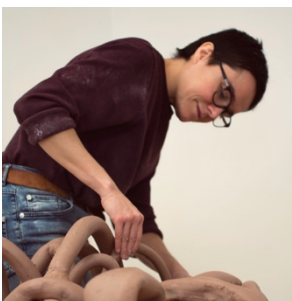
Natalia Arbelaez received her BFA from Florida International University and MFA from Ohio State University. Her work has been exhibited nationally at museums and galleries and is included in various collections such as the Everson Museum and the Frederick Meijer Gardens. She was the 2018-19 resident artist at Harvard University where she researched pre-Columbian art and history. She recently was Artist in Residence at the Museum of Art and Design in NYC where she continued her research in the work of historical and influential women ceramicists of color.



Ashwini Bhat Ashwini Bhat, an artist born in southern India, currently lives and works in the Bay Area, California. She holds an M.A degree in literature and had an earlier career in classical Indian dance. Bhat is awarded with McKnight Foundation Residency Fellowship for 2021 and was a recipient of Howard Foundation Award in 2014. Her work has been exhibited nationally & internationally and can be seen in collections at the Newport Art Museum, USA; Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park, Japan; FuLe International Ceramic Art Museum, China; the Watson Institute at Brown University, USA; New Bedford Historical Society, USA; Daugavpils Mark Rothko Centre, Latvia, and in many private collections. Bhat is the guest curator for the 77th Scripps Annual, Ruth Chandler Williamson Gallery, Claremont, CA, 2022. Her work will be shown in Objects USA, NY in 2021 and at American Museum of Ceramic Art, CA in 2022.



Paul S. Briggs, originally from New York state, earned an MFA from Mass College of Art; an MSED from Alfred University; and a PhD in Art Education from Penn State. Long interested in matters of race and spirituality, he is currently Artist in Residence at the Harvard Ceramics Program and an Associate Professor of Art Education at Mass Art.



Renata Cassiano Alvarez is a Mexican-Italian artist born in Mexico City and currently teaching at the University of Arkansas School of Art. Cassiano Alvarez works predominantly in the medium of clay but her background in painting and drawing takes a big part in her practice. She is interested in the power of the slow and quiet transformations happening around us, especially how adopting a different language can affect the physicality of the human body, and how this translates into material. Educated in Mexico, Italy, Denmark and the US, she has had the opportunity to work in different artistic environments, which has led to an intimate relationship with different materials and processes. Her work has been exhibited internationally and can be found in public collections in Estonia, Italy, Taiwan, Germany, Denmark, Latvia, China and Slovenia.

Invited Artist:



Gerald Brown is a Chicago Southside native and she received her BFA in Sculpture and Ceramics from Syracuse University. She currently resides in Philadelphia and is a member of the art collective Vox Populi, a teaching artist assistant with The Clay Studio's Clay Mobile outreach program, a member of the Board of Directors at Watershed Center for Ceramic Arts, and co-founder of the Clay Siblings' Project, a non-profit initiative providing free ceramic workshops around the country. Photo credit: Jesse DeFrancesco.



Aaron Caldwell was born and raised in Fresno, California. He graduated from Southern Illinois University Carbondale in 2019 with a BA in General Studio Art. He is currently in the MS in Art Education graduate program at Illinois State University. He was recently awarded the 2019 NCECA Multicultural Fellowship award, 2019-2020 Northern Clay Center Warren MacKenzie Advancement Award and showcasing a piece from his undergraduate body of work at the 2020 NCECA student show.



Anthony Kascak received his MFA in Studio Art at the University of Arkansas School of Art, and a BFA in Art Practices as well as a BA in Psychology from the University of Colorado, Boulder. He has attended residencies and exhibited in the US and abroad, in locations such as Germany, China, and South Korea.



Sydnie Jimenez was born in Orlando, FL and spent much of her childhood in Georgia. This cultural and geographical change added to the cognitive dissonance she experienced growing up with the white side of her family as a non white-presenting person; she was only reunited with the Dominican side of her family in adolescence. Most of her work is inadvertently informed by this feeling of cultural dysphoria. With her sculptures, she tries to invoke a sense of familiarity and security within community while expressing a suspicion, frustration, and/or anger towards societal ideals rooted in white supremacy and European colonization. She recently completed a bachelor's degree at School of the Art Institute of Chicago.