

Rowan University Art Gallery and Museum
in partnership with

New Jersey State Council on the Arts

Presents

The 2025 New Jersey Arts Annual Exhibition

ART

-IST

AS

EXHIBITION DATES

June 7- August 2, 2025

ACT-

IVIST

ART-IST AS ACTE- IVIST

Artist as Activist presents work that is an artistic response to the concept of activism. The selected artists use their creative practices to challenge societal norms, raise awareness, and inspire audiences to engage critically with the world around them. The works address a broad spectrum of urgent topics—including environmental stewardship, immigration, health and well-being, political engagement, and more. Rather than employing overt or reactionary tactics, these artists adopt a more nuanced approach. Their work invites viewers to engage with complex issues on their own terms, promoting personal reflection and dialogue rather than prescribing a singular viewpoint. Some artists use humor to disarm and draw in the viewer, while others use ambiguity or conceptual forms to allow multiple interpretations. Scale is also used deliberately, amplifying the urgency of the challenges we face collectively. Ultimately, this exhibition presents art as a vehicle for advocacy—illuminating injustices, proposing alternatives, and envisioning change. Through emotion, experience, and truth, these artists seek to cultivate empathy, spark conversation, and inspire action.

STATEMENT FROM THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

In this year’s New Jersey Arts Annual exhibition – *Artist as Activist* – we’re invited to ask the question: How is an artist an activist? Or: How can art be activism? Activists, like artists, come from all walks of life. And activism takes many forms. Voting is activism. Public service is activism. Making your community a better place to live is activism.

This exhibition illuminates the unique role that artists play in our society, as well as the power of an artist’s imagination and skill to vividly communicate different perspectives. Much like the State of New Jersey, this show – to borrow a phrase from Walt Whitman – “contains multitudes.” Visitors will encounter a collection of work by New Jersey artists that will inspire them to see things anew, and, hopefully, carry that inspiration with them back out into the world.

As the third Lieutenant Governor, and the 34th Secretary of State, I have the honor and privilege of working with my colleagues at the New Jersey State Council on the Arts to bring this special experience to audiences. Congratulations, and deep gratitude, to the State Arts Council board and staff, the team at Rowan University Art Gallery and Museum, and the twenty featured artists on this beautiful adventure of an exhibition.

Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way, Secretary of State

DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

We are honored to partner with the New Jersey State Council on the Arts to present *Artist as Activist* for the 2025 New Jersey Arts Annual Exhibition. This powerful exhibition features the work of twenty contemporary artists selected from over 300 submissions from across the state. Through diverse practices, these artists explore the urgent and resonant theme of activism in today’s social, political, and cultural landscape. At a time when creative voices are more vital than ever, their work reminds us of what is at stake and what must remain in the public consciousness. The exhibition aligns closely with the mission of Rowan University Art Gallery and Museum— to promote critical dialogue on contemporary art by professional artists, curators and scholars. As part of the largest university in South Jersey, the Museum is dedicated to building an inclusive environment that encourages this kind of engagement between artists and the public. We are proud to serve as a space where the university and community intersect to support meaningful artistic exchange. I would like to extend my deepest thanks to the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and its staff for the opportunity to produce and host the 2025 New Jersey Arts Annual. Special thanks to our guest jurors, Brittany Webb and Dejay Duckett, for their thoughtful and discerning review of submissions. I am also deeply grateful to Gallery Coordinator Kristin Qualls, and Project Coordinator Isabella Cristinziani, for their unwavering dedication and exemplary work in realizing this exhibition. And finally, to all the participating artists—thank you for sharing your voices, your vision, and your extraordinary work with us.

Mary Salvante
Director, Chief Curator, RUAGM

MESSAGE FROM THE NEW JERSEY STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

The New Jersey State Council on the Arts is proud to partner with Rowan University Art Gallery and Museum to present the 2025 New Jersey Arts Annual: *Artist as Activist*, featuring works by twenty New Jersey artists. In this show, visitors will find a diversity of takes on the theme: hope, fear, courage, patriotism, satire, justice, and dreams.

Through a variety of materials and aesthetic approaches, these artists make their unique voices heard, and inspire us to do the same. The State Arts Council is honored to support these New Jersey artists in sharing their creative visions and amazing talents. We believe that, where there is art, there is freedom of expression, empathy and understanding, and cultural and civic pride.

The New Jersey Arts Annual exhibition series, a tradition that started in 1985 to shine a light on artists living and working in New Jersey, would not be possible without our partners in New Jersey’s incredible arts community. On behalf of the board and staff of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, we’d like to offer our sincere thanks to Rowan University Art Gallery and Museum’s Director Mary Salvante and Gallery Coordinator Kristin Qualls, as well as exhibition jurors Brittany Webb and Dejay Duckett.

Congratulations to the artists selected for this year’s New Jersey Arts Annual, and to every person who contributed to bringing this work together for the world to see.

Felicia Grant, Chair
Allison Tratner, Executive Director
Danielle Bursk, Director of Community Partnerships & Artist Services
Stephanie Nerbak, Artist Services Manager

NEW JERSEY STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS MEMBERS

Felicia Grant, Chair
Elizabeth A. Mattson, 1st Vice Chair
Carol Ann Herbert, 2nd Vice Chair

ex officio members
Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way,
Secretary of State
Senator Holly T. Schepisi
Assemblyman James J. Kennedy

Sharon Burton Turner
Ofelia Garcia
Lana Gold Walder
Joyce C. Goore
Jeremy Grunin
Gina Hulings
Dolores A. Kirk
Ruth Lipper
Kevin M. O’Brien
Dr. Michael Penna
Vivian Scott Chew

JURORS

Dejay B. Duckett

Dejay B. Duckett is the Director of Curatorial Services at the African American Museum in Philadelphia. Over the last four years at AAMP she has organized 11 exhibitions including "Collective Conscious" and "Sonya Clark: Self Evident." Formerly, she was Associate Curator at The University of Pennsylvania's Arthur Ross Gallery where for 15 years she curated projects including "Henrique Oliverira: Adenocarcinoma Poliresidual" and "Darkwater Revival: After Terry Adkins." Duckett earned her B.A. in Art History from Spelman College in 1994, and an M.A. in Museum Studies from Seton Hall University in 2001, where she researched the evolving role of the culturally specific museum in the 21st Century. In 2019, Duckett was awarded the Distinguished Alumna Award from the College of Communication and Arts at Seton Hall University.



Brittany Webb

Brittany Webb is the Evelyn and Will Kaplan Curator of 20th Century Art and the John Rhoden Collection. Her most recent exhibition, Determined to Be: The Sculpture of John Rhoden, debuted at PAFA in October 2023 and is currently on view at the Birmingham Museum of Art. Webb's curatorial work at PAFA has been supported by grants from the Henry Luce Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, the Terra Foundation for American Art, the William Penn Foundation, and the Wyeth Foundation for American Art. She earned a PhD from Temple University and a BA from the University of Southern California.



FEATURED ARTISTS

Catherine Allen, Tuckerton

ShinYoung An, Passaic

Ellis Angel, Scotch Plains

Ylvia Asal, Haddonfield Borough

Donna Bassin, Montclair

Kristian Battell, Montclair

Michael DalCerro, Lyndhurst

Kirstin Demer, Milford

Laura Frazure, Glassboro

Adam Gustavson, West Orange

Ellen Hanauer, Livingston

Sam Horowitz, Sicklerville

Tony Khawam, East Hanover

Krystle Lemonias, Phillipsburg

Christopher Lopez, Pequannock Township

Jazlyne Sabree, Willingboro

Chanika Svetvilas, Princeton

Hui Tian, South Orange

Alan Willoughby, Deptford

and one artist who wishes to remain anonymous

Catherine Allen
Tuckerton



Family Values, 2025
Framed digital illustration
12 x 18 inches

“This series reimagines the nostalgic charm of early Disney cartoons to confront urgent environmental, political, and humanitarian crises. Mickey Mouse, a symbol of corporate power and childhood comfort, becomes an unsettling guide through the harsh realities we often ignore—polluted waters, nuclear devastation, humanitarian neglect, environmental destruction, and digital addiction. Each piece forces viewers to reconcile the contradiction of familiarity and discomfort, mirroring how we navigate the modern world’s chaos while clinging to illusory normalcy. By placing an icon of American innocence in these dystopian landscapes, my work challenges the viewer to question complicity and power structures. Disney, a media giant shaping cultural perception, serves as the perfect vehicle to explore these themes, exposing the uneasy intersection of entertainment, capitalism, and reality. This series is an invitation to acknowledge, reflect, and engage with the world’s pressing issues.”



Catherine Bontilao Allen is a senior pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with a concentration in Visual Communications and a minor in Art History at Stockton University. As a first-generation Filipino American and student, she brings a unique perspective to her work, using visual storytelling as a means to connect, inform, and inspire. Beyond her personal artistic pursuits, Catherine is committed to uplifting other creatives, particularly women and first-generation individuals seeking a path in the arts, envisioning a future where artists from all backgrounds have the tools, support, and representation needed to thrive.

ShinYoung An
Passaic

“Through my oil paintings, I transform frustration into impactful expressions. The backdrop of my work captures the unsettling realities that confront us daily. Amidst the annoyance and disillusionment, I also seek inspirational stories worth preserving and enlightening future generations. Engaging viewers with interactive elements, I depict portraits and hands doing mundane routines intertwined with the collages. At first glance, the figures may seem isolated, but upon closer inspection, the articles reveal themselves, urging viewers to delve deeper and confront uncomfortable truths. I intend to go beyond mere aesthetic appeal and create a unique approach to make a difference and ignite a spark within each viewer, encouraging them to question, reflect, raise awareness, and, ideally, become involved in societal change while being sympathetic.”



Dividing a Burger, 2018
Oil and gesso on newspaper collages on canvas
36 x 36 x 1.5 inches



ShinYoung An is a Korean-American artist whose pieces juxtapose mundane, everyday tasks with a backdrop of current news stories covering social, political, and environmental issues. ShinYoung received her B.F.A. in South Korea and her M.F.A. from the Graduate School of Figurative Art of the New York Academy of Arts in 2001. Additionally, she refined her skills at the Art Students League of New York and the Cercle Artistic de Sant Lluc in Barcelona, Spain. Throughout her career, ShinYoung has been recognized with 33 awards in painting, including 2024 and 2011 fellowship grants from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and a 2003 Xavier Gonzalez & Edwards grant from the Artists League of NY. Her work has been shown at numerous exhibitions throughout the U.S., Italy, Spain, Japan, and South Korea.

Ellis Angel
Scotch Plains



In the Night Kitchen, 2024
Mixed media (banned book and caution tape)
20 x 20 x 1 inches

“I am an activist artist specializing in mixed-media weavings that bridge art and activism. My work examines governance, civil rights, and societal norms by recontextualizing impactful materials such as U.S. currency, the Constitution, recycled protest posters, and banned books to provoke thought and action. My recent works address government accountability, censorship, and intellectual freedom. My latest series confronts book banning. In collaboration with PEN America, pieces like *This Book is Gay* and *In the Night Kitchen* have been traveling to bookstores, amplifying the fight for the freedom to read. Blending traditional craft techniques with contemporary materials, my work transforms silenced voices into visible resistance. I seek to engage viewers to become more proactive activists and informed citizens.”

“*Love and Beauty* is an embroidery that explores gender through love, strength, and vulnerability. The intricate black-and-white stitching reflects the depth of emotion, resilience, and complexity of gender identity. Threads of gold weave through the design, symbolizing the sacred, radiant core of self, untouched by external judgment. This piece celebrates the quiet power and tenderness within, transcending societal expectations with grace and brilliance. My work is deeply rooted in Oya, the intricate lace tradition of Anatolia, a centuries-old handmade craft passed through generations. Each stitch is an act of remembrance, a tribute to ancestral knowledge, and an invitation to reimagine heritage in a modern context. Through my art, I celebrate the labor and artistry of women, revive forgotten techniques, and foster cross cultural connections ensuring that the threads of the past continue to weave a meaningful future.”



Love and Beauty, 2021
Mixed media (embroidery on paper)
13 x 15 x 1 inches

Ellis Angel is an activist artist specializing in mixed-media paper weavings and illustrations. Through bold, deconstructed works that blend art with activism, Ellis tackles themes of social justice, protest, and governance. With projects ranging from political paper weavings using U.S. currency and the Constitution, to protest art made from Women’s March posters, Ellis’s work challenges societal norms and invites viewers to engage with pressing contemporary issues. Exhibiting across the U.S., including collaborations with PEN America and Magic City Books, Ellis reclaims traditional forms to spark dialogue and inspire change.



Ylvia Asal was born in the Black sea area of Turkiye. Her formative education at the Girls’ traditional, technical, and Vocational Middle/ High School, was followed by an intensive arts program in Istanbul, focusing on technique and design, along with accounting. As a multidisciplinary visual teaching artist, she works with a wide array of mediums: clay, textiles, photography, and the traditional art of “Ebru” (marbling). Her greatest passion is using a centuries-old technique of creating handmade lace, the skill having been handed down from generation to generation.

Donna Bassin
Montclair



Environmental Melancholia.77, 2024
Archival Pigment paper, rice paper, embroidery thread
28 x 39 inches

“*Portraits of the Precarious Earth* is a series of photo-based landscapes, old-growth forests, and ancient trees that addresses environmental fragility and ecological grief. I am inspired by and critically engage with the works of 19th-century American landscape painters. Despite their problematic racist and colonialist perspectives, they celebrated nature and acted as conservationists during the industrial era. At first glance, my images resemble idyllic landscapes; however, closer inspection reveals disruptions that challenge assumptions about nature’s permanence. Each piece consists of two images from different locations, highlighting the need for global stewardship. I bind the layers with mending tape or embroidery thread, enacting loss and repair. Photographs of ancient trees held together with gold washi tape remind us of their precarious state in the face of climate change. These trees absorb significant amounts of carbon from the atmosphere, reducing fossil fuel emissions.”

Donna Bassin, Ph.D., is a photo-based artist, filmmaker, university professor, published author, and clinical psychologist specializing in post-traumatic stress. She has directed and produced two award-winning feature-length documentaries and received a 2024 Puffin Foundation Artist Grant and a 2021 New Jersey Council on the Arts Fellowship for photography. She was recognized as one of the Top 50 Photographers for *Critical Mass* 2022 and a finalist in *Critical Mass* 2023-2024. Her work has been featured in many art and culture publications, including *Tricycle*, *Fotonostrum*, *Grazia*, *Borderline Press’ Facsimile*, *Lens Magazine*, *FLOAT*, *LandEscape Art Review*, *Dodho Magazine*, *The Hand Magazine*, *Analog Forever*, *Vostok Magazine*, and Overlap’s *Stir the Pot*. Her multi-media photographs have been exhibited nationally and internationally in solo and group shows at museums and galleries and in public installations, book covers, and billboards. Her work is also held in private and museum collections.



Kristian Battell
Montclair

“As a multidisciplinary artist, my work has a multitude of themes: from landscapes about shape and color, to installations about surveillance, and sculptures about a post-Anthropocene world. These works focus on climate change by upcycling the materials that surround me in everyday life. They portray a vision of future landscapes formed by the pressure of the buildup of waste and repercussions of a materialistic society. *Anthropocene Cavern* is a site-specific work that depicts stalactites forming a cave made out of plastic and other recycling. The water bottles for the original form of this piece were collected from one family over the course of one month. It has since grown and changed forms, taking on a new shape in each location. The viewer is invited to walk up to the installation to experience the consequences of single use plastics. It is intended to force the viewer to think about their own use, how quickly it accumulates and where it actually ends up.”



Anthropocene Cavern pt. 6, 2025
Plastic, wheat paste, silkscreen
Variable measurements

Kristian Battell is a multidisciplinary artist based in Jersey City, NJ. She received her MFA from SVA in 2021 and her BFA from Purchase College in 2014. She has an upcoming solo exhibition at Village One Art NYC in late spring/early summer 2025. Select group exhibitions include the International Print Center of New York, Local Projects, SlowBurn, Mana Contemporary, Art150, Arthouse Gallery, Ely Center of Contemporary Art, Ice Cream Social, Susan Eley Fine Art and the Montclair Art Museum (Montclair, NJ). She has been artist-in-residence at ChaNorth, Frans Masereel Centrum, Newark Print Shop and Index Art Center. She is a teaching artist at the Montclair Art Museum, Visual Art Center of New Jersey, and Frontline Arts.



Michael DalCerro

Lyndhurst



Rising Waters, 2024

Woodcut print
15 x 20 x 1 inches

“My recent work is a series of woodcut and linocut prints of imaginary transit stations. My fictitious urban spaces are portrayed with assertive colors, hard-edge geometric and biomorphic shapes in a dynamic multi-layered space. This series explores a range of issues: urban planning or lack thereof, overdevelopment and the commercialization and commodification of public space, what green rooftops might look like, and envisioning renewable energy in urban environments. The visual storytelling in this series is informed by my experience using public transportation both here and abroad. Seeing the ultra modern and architecturally stunning train stations in the Netherlands made a big impression on me. Futuristic train stations and classic, well preserved older train stations are an expression of civic pride.”

Michael Dal Cerro received a B.F.A. from Northern Illinois University and attended the Yale Summer School of Music and Art. Awards include a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, two New Jersey State Council on the Arts Fellowships and four artist’s printmaking residencies at Centrum in Port Townsend, WA. Dal Cerro was awarded residencies at Frans Masereel Center in Kasterlee, Belgium and received a New Jersey Printmaking Residency at The Brodsky Center for Innovative Prints at Rutgers University. Dal Cerro has been artist in residence at the Newark Printshop and AGALab in Amsterdam, Netherlands. His work is included in many public and private collections including The Achenbach Foundation For Graphic Arts in San Francisco, CA, University of Washington, Seattle, WA, Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, WA, University of Dallas, Irving, TX, University of Richmond Museums, Richmond, VA, New York Public Library and Hawai’i State Foundation for Culture and the Arts.



Kirstin Demer

Milford



The State of OUR Union, 2025

Vintage book, paper, linen thread, letterpress printed
35 x 40 x 74 inches

“*The State of OUR Union* is a reimagining of *The American Patriot’s Handbook*. The vintage book now has reams of penny coin wrappers streaming out of the interior of the book. The design of the penny symbolizes the importance of American values, national identity and unity. The very ideas which seem to be in jeopardy at the present moment. A simple statement asks, “A penny for your thoughts”, repeated over and over until becoming a chaotic disarray of confusion and entanglement. The words “thoughts” begin slowly disappearing at the end of the pages. The letterpress printed words reference the ability to reproduce text to allow information and ideas to spread easily throughout society. Our thoughts have value and contain power. Rejoining the conversation is crucial. Circulation and access to information is critical in the State of OUR Union.”



Kirstin Demer is a studio artist practicing sculptural handmade papermaking, letterpress printing and bookbinding. She earned her BFA in Sculpture from The Pennsylvania State University and her MFA in Interdisciplinary Book and Paper Arts from Columbia College Chicago. She was the recipient of the Aiko Fellowship Award which allowed her to continue her studies at Santa Reparata International School of Art in Florence, Italy. She worked as the AmeriCorps Papermaker at the Women’s Studio Workshop continuing to grow and develop their ArtFarm. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Her artists’ books are in numerous university special collection libraries and private collections. She has taught the art of papermaking and book arts at various art institutions including the Women’s Studio Workshop, school programs, museums and even demonstrating papermaking for more than a year inside a train car with Artrain USA.

Laura Frazure Glassboro



Detroit 2021, 2022
Air dry clay, gold leaf, armature
18 x 10 x 14 inches

Frazure received her BFA from the Philadelphia College of Art and her MFA from the University of Pennsylvania. She is currently teaching at Rowan University, having taught at the University of the Arts, the University of Pennsylvania, The New York Academy of Art, the Central Academy of Fine Art, Beijing and the Tianjin Academy of Fine Art, Tianjin, China. Frazure is a nationally and internationally exhibiting artist with works shown in Asia, Europe and throughout the US. She has received two Pew Fellowship Disciplinary Awards, three Faculty Research Grants from the University of The Arts and the Robert Engman Award from the University of Pennsylvania. Her work is in notable collections, including Nader Tavakoli, New York, and Witold Rybczynski, Philadelphia. She is included in Reinhard Fuchs', *Women in Art, Volume 1, 520 Masterpieces of Visual Art, The Great Female Artists: From The Middle Ages to the Modern Era*.



"My primary focus is on the study and practice of sculptural figuration and human anatomy. As a modeler and inventor of human morphologies, inspiration or generative material for my work comes from a wide range of sources. These include literature, popular culture, corporate and social media, art history and the study of bodily rhetoric. My work's content is most typically directed toward the uses, commodification and modes of presentation of women as informed by cultural assumptions and imperatives. *Protesters 2022*, a series of five, emerged from my interest in anatomy and facial expressions and is drawn from images found in the media, in this case of women's faces during protests in Philadelphia, Austin and Detroit. I looked for images of expressions of rage, being deeply moved by their fierceness and intensity. The goal of these portraits is to amplify the voice of the speaker."

Adam Gustavson West Orange

"My *Feral Town* series of work consists of over 400 post-it drawings and 100 drypoint etchings, exploring human foibles and social conditions through the lens of humor and animal centered allegories, completed between 2015 and 2020."



Eowen, 2025
Hand colored drypoint etching
3 x 3 inches



Adam Gustavson is the illustrator of over 30 books for children, as well as the author/illustrator of *The Froggies Do NOT Want To Sleep* and *The Aliens Do NOT Want To Go Home*. His paintings and prints have appeared in galleries, museums, periodicals, advertising campaigns and public murals. He holds a Master's Degree from the School of Visual Arts in New York, serves on the faculty of Rowan University, and is the lead instructor at Renaissance Art Studio in Millburn, which he co-owns with his wife, Denise.

Ellen Hanauer Livingston



***I Remember Mama*, 2022**

Mixed media
10 x 7 x 4 inches

Ellen Hanauer is a sculptor and installation artist who has dedicated much of her career to depicting the emotive states of the world through visual storytelling. She utilizes mixed media to convey her personal history through object-based narratives, integrating social activism into her work. After a career in television and print, Hanauer transitioned to fine arts. She pursued a self-directed study in the cadaver labs at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, deepening her exploration of anatomy and form. She has exhibited her work nationally and internationally in museums, universities and galleries, including solo exhibitions both domestically and abroad. Her commissions are installed throughout the country and her work is featured in the collections of museums, corporations, townships, and private collectors.



“Six million Jews were murdered, yet we have not learned from history. Hate and fear fueled their extermination, and today, we see similar tactics used to divide and oppress. Again, governments and leaders rally the masses against scapegoats, turning communities against one another. Forty-six members of my family were murdered by Nazis who spread hate while ordinary people stood by. Back then, Jews were labeled as “others”—today, we see the same intolerance. Hate speech targets immigrants, the LGBTQ community, the disabled, Latinos, Black people, Muslims, Jews, women, the poor, the elderly, and liberals. These groups are demonized, treated as outsiders, cast aside, and many are deported or jailed. We must recognize these dangerous patterns before it’s too late. Silence enables hate, and history has shown the cost of indifference. If we do not stand up now, we risk allowing history’s darkest moments to repeat themselves.”

“My work explores the concept of Deep Time. In the studio, I build with cast and fabricated metal, stone, wood, glass, and co-opted natural processes to create sculpture-as-metaphor to purvey a sense of empathy and awareness, and to strengthen perceptions of our actions in an accelerating world. My work speaks in geologic metaphors to illuminate pathways to a more sustainable future. Bringing geologic processes into context encourages the consideration of longer durations of time, durations falling out of fashion in this “Buy Now” era. Through my work, my viewers are connected, or at the very least aware of a geologic frame of reference. This encourages empathy among my audience, between humans and with the world surrounding us. By developing empathy for those things human and non-human alike, together we build responsibility to help shepard in a slower, more kind frame of reference.”

Sam Horowitz Sicklerville



***Index (08028)* (detail), 02025**

Compacted local clay, sand and marl, cast iron, soda lime glass, concrete cores from the Campbell Library renovation, ice core from Greenland (collected in 1974, melted and refrozen throughout the exhibition), Black Walnut, steel
48 x 16 x 62 inches



Sam Horowitz is a futurist, mad scientist and Assistant Professor and Sculpture Area Coordinator at Rowan University in New Jersey. Horowitz has exhibited in solo and group shows throughout the US, and earned degrees from Alfred University (MFA, ‘20) and Bard College (BA, ‘10). He serves as the Deputy Director of Exhibitions for the 2025 National Conference on Contemporary Cast Iron Art and Practices in Birmingham, Alabama, and is a member of the Artistic Committee of Franconia Sculpture Park in Franconia, Minnesota. Horowitz has held a number of artist residencies, including those at Salem Art Works (NY), on Governors Island (NYC), and at Sloss Furnaces (AL), where he also served as Union Shop Steward. Over the summer intersession, he teaches with RISD’s Continuing Education Department. Horowitz was named a 2025 Fellow in Sculpture by the New Jersey Council on the Arts and Mid Atlantic Arts.

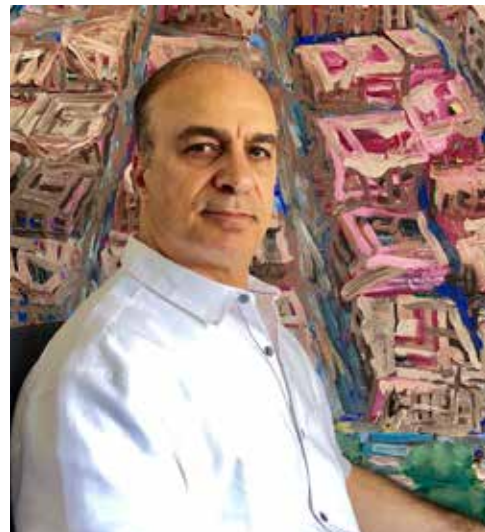
Tony Khawam East Hanover



***The Forgotten City of Aleppo*, 2020**

Acrylic impasto on canvas
24 x 26 x 2 inches

Tony Khawam, a Syrian-descended artist, has been exhibited nationally in galleries and museums including Morris Museum of Art, NJ; Montclair Museum of Art, NJ; O.K. Harris Works of Art, NY; Walter Wickiser gallery, NY; CS Schulte gallery, NJ; Simon gallery, NJ; ArtServe and Bailey Contemporary Art, FL, and he has been a participant in a number of art fairs including Art Miami Context; Red Dot Art Miami; Art Palm Beach; Art Boca Raton; and Artexpo New York. Khawam has been a recipient of recent awards including the “Artist Support Grant” Broward County Cultural Division, FL; the “American Rescue Cultural Grant” National Endowment for the Arts through Florida Division of Arts & Culture; “Individual Artist Award, Specific Cultural Project”, Florida Division of Cultural Affairs; the “Creative Investment Program Award” Broward County Cultural Division, FL.



“My artistic journey is a profound exploration of human emotions, heritage and social concerns. As an artist of Syrian descent, I am committed to fostering connection to diverse communities. My work delves into the cross-cultural dynamics striving for better cultural understanding and bridge-building. The work is steeped in iconic undertones, drawing from my fascination with my heritage, migration, and American culture. The canvases are democratic spaces devoid of illusion or perspective, depicting the imperfect world through my new American identity. I adeptly integrate elements into my daily artistic practices, reflecting my social concerns. The work has gestural figurative abstract motifs, blending references of conflicts from Aleppo to the Ukraine with urban scenes of collapsed buildings, and debris. The work reveals haunting and disturbing scenes painted with a palette of colorful and earth tones that emerge from the canvas with a vigorous life force.”

“My work centers on painting, sculpture, and drawing, highlighting diverse representations of Black people as multifaceted individuals with agency. These subjects, often Black immigrants and undocumented workers, are essential participants in America’s workforce, yet their contributions and stories of labor often go unseen and untold. Focusing on working-class labor, such as care work and construction, my practice weaves personal narratives with themes of class, gender, citizenship, and labor rights. I use interdisciplinary techniques, incorporating materials like used baby clothes from children my mother cared for, as well as my clothes and hers, to challenge stereotypes and power structures inherent to care work and construction. This reappropriation of materials becomes a form of resistance, guided by conversations with my mother and others in similar labor roles. Through these methods, I aim to destabilize oppressive narratives and honor the complexities of Black experiences.”



Krystle Lemonias Phillipsburg



***Founder and Lead Organizer*, 2022**

Woodblock relief print on scrap bed sheets
27 x 19 x 1 inches

Krystle Lemonias (Jamaican, b. 1989) is a visual artist, labor activist, and art educator, whose work addresses issues of social class, labor rights, and economic inequality, particularly within Black communities. Her pieces have been featured in notable exhibitions, including at the Andrew Rafacz Gallery, Blum and Poe, and the Hunterdon Art Museum. With a BFA in printmaking from New Jersey City University and an MFA from the University of South Florida, Lemonias is currently Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Art at Rowan University. Her work portrays Black individuals, particularly those in essential but often overlooked labor roles, as multifaceted individuals with agency and resilience. Using materials like repurposed baby clothes from her family and the families they have cared for, Lemonias creates a powerful dialogue on the intersection of care work, social identity, and systemic power structures.

Christopher Lopez
Pequannock Township



***She Used to Pick Oranges*, 2022**
Ed. 1/3. plus 2 artist's proofs
Inkjet Print
24 x 36 inches

“*The Fires* series is a visual and oral history project that addresses gentrification and arson in the city of Hoboken, New Jersey. The work aims to illuminate the experiences of vast minority groups who have endured the erasure of their histories through gentrification and the “arson for profit” epidemic that occurred in 1970’s and 80’s which killed 56 people, most of whom were children, and displaced hundreds of families. Through research, portraiture, and oral history the work attempts to use storytelling to bring greater awareness to this lesser known history. Gentrification remains a critical subject in our cities and on a global scale creating an epidemic of displacement and violence alongside “urban renewal”. This body of work is the first of its kind to offer a thorough analysis of the intersecting histories that transformed Hoboken from a working-class community to one of the most expensive and exclusive cities in the state.”

“I create large scale collages that include paint, paper, and found objects, elevating my subjects, members of the African diaspora, as spiritual messengers highlighting the whispers of hidden histories. In my practice, I explore environments, memory, and spirituality as it relates to African diasporic history and present-day existence joined to the capitalist economic system that relied on the labor of enslaved African people. I am interested in Africanisms, the evolution of African diasporic beliefs, and the syncretism and acculturation of African culture, spirituality, customs, traditions found absent from Africa and dispersed across the diaspora. My work explores themes of displacement, historical trauma, and juxtaposes ideas of resilience and fragility.”



***Stillness*, 2025**
Acrylic, tissue paper, vellum, glass
24 x 30 inches

Christopher López is a Puerto Rican Lens-Based Artist, Educator, and Public Historian. He has been awarded fellowships at The Laundromat Project and The Diaspora Solidarities Lab with support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Currently, he is a full member of Diversify Photo. His most recent publication, *The Afterlives of Ismael Rivera* has been collected by The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Library and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Thomas J. Watson Library. His most recent body of work, *The Fires*, received awards from The New Jersey Council for the Humanities and the New Jersey Historical Commission. Christopher has served on numerous panels and has lectured at institutions such as Cornell University, Michigan State University, and Barnard College among others. His artworks are currently in the permanent collections of El Museo Del Barrio, The World Trade Center Memorial Museum, and The Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery.



Jazlyne Sabree received her Bachelors in Art from Clark Atlanta University and her Masters in Art Education at Boston University. She received her Masters in Fine Art at Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art (PAFA). She is a recipient of the Clark Atlanta University Art Guild Award, the Linda Lora Pugliese Award for Excellence in Art Education, the PAFA Venture Fund Grant, MassMoCA Artist Residency, and the AACC Fellowship at the Montclair Art Museum. She has exhibited with many institutions such as the Montclair Art Museum of Montclair, NJ, The Newark Museum of Newark, NJ, and The Colored Girl’s Museum of Philadelphia, PA. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Waldemar Belisário Museum in Ilhabela, São Paulo, Brazil, and the PAFA Museum in Philadelphia along with many other private collections.

Chanika Svetvilas
Princeton



I'm Sorry (detail), 2020, 2025
Charcoal on pages from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) on paper roll with rice paste
48 x 216 inches

Chanika Svetvilas is an interdisciplinary artist and cultural worker whose practice focuses on mental health difference and the diversity of its lived experience. Born to Thai immigrant parents, Svetvilas earned her BS from Skidmore College and an MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Goddard College. She has exhibited nationally including the Denver International Airport, the Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning, the Brooklyn Public Library, the Asian Arts Initiative, and the Wexner Center for the Arts among others. She has presented her films at film festivals globally. Her work has been published in *Disability Studies Quarterly*, *Studying Disability, Arts, and Culture: An Introduction* by Petra Kupperts, and *A Body You Can Talk To: An Anthology of Contemporary Disability*, edited by Tennison S. Black. She was the Ida B. Wells Just Data Lab Artist-in-Residence at Princeton University (2022-23). She is a Visiting Scholar at Asian/Pacific/American Institute at New York University, (2024-2025), and artist-in-residence at the Mercer County Community College, (2025).



“My interdisciplinary practice focuses on mental health difference, intersectional identity, Mad Pride and stigma, discrimination endured. This work developed based on lived experience of bipolar diagnosis. It is an extension of continued interest to utilize narrative as a way to share experiences, disrupt stereotypes, reflect on contemporary issues, and create safe spaces through my art. I work in installation, sculpture, mixed-media, film, and performative actions to make the invisible visible. I use charcoal as a transformative material and as a tool that allows me to leave my mark including mistakes. Charcoal is used to absorb chemicals after a stomach is pumped. I use text layered and smeared over medical ones found in textbooks, research studies, and the DSM (*Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*) juxtaposed with images. I create performative interventions and participatory actions.”



“We live in an unprecedented global crisis—an interconnected web of environmental, economic, medical, political, and social challenges so vast they defy full description. Historically, artists have served as both witnesses and catalysts during times of upheaval, drawing inspiration from crises to reflect, critique, and inspire change. My art responds to the multifaceted breakdown of our world, capturing the urgency and complexity of these issues. With a particular focus on social injustices and the devastating consequences of climate change, my work seeks to provoke dialogue and reflection, serving as a call to action for a more just and sustainable future.”



***Earthquake*, 2022**
Oil on canvas
48 x 74 x 2 inches

Hui Tian received an MFA from Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. His works have been shown nationally in museums including the San Diego Art Museum, New Britain Art Museum of America, Islip Art Museum, Monmouth Art Museum, Trenton City Museum, Bristol Art Museum, Mattatuck Museum, and Noyes Art Museum. He was featured in Frieze magazine in 2018 and was interviewed for the Hopper Prize in 2022. Tian's artwork *Andy Warhol with Skull* won the First Place Award in the Artists Guild 2022 Spring Exhibition of San Diego Art Museum Art.



DEI (Diversity/Equity/Inclusion) with amaryllis, a flower that symbolizes strength, beauty, pride, resilience and determination, 2025
Clay
14 x 12 x 12 inches

Alan Willoughby is an adjunct professor at Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ and from 1991-2016 served as the Executive Director of Perkins Center for the Arts in Moorestown & Collingswood, NJ. He has an MFA in Ceramics from Clemson University and in 2023 was awarded an Artist Fellowship by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, his third state fellowship award. His work and writings have appeared in *Ceramics Monthly*, *Ceramics Art & Perception*, *Ceramics Technical* and *Studio Potter*.

“I create work using a variety of clays, including a stoneware clay, porcelain and a “wild clay of South Jersey” which I prospect and prepare. My work is made on a potter’s wheel and includes handbuilt additions, altering and carving into the clay. The work is decorated with terra sigillatas, slips and glazes and fired in a Noborigama wood kiln to 2380 degrees Fahrenheit. Several years ago, I began my *Empowerment Series* combining my love of creating handmade pottery with a commitment to equal rights, social justice and environmental sustainability. Working within the relative isolation of my studio, I could no longer escape the violence, the inequality, the injustices taking place in the world around me. This led me to press words into the moist clay and carve them out of the clay, words that have the power to envision a better world.”



Medal of Isolationism, 2019
Brass, Photograph, Plastic Figure, Resin
3 x 1.5 x .5 inches

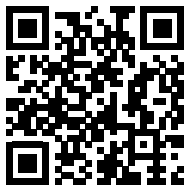
“My current body of work is about questioning establishments as well preconceived social perspectives that are frequently held. I work with humor to make my points and see it as a great tool to raise awareness. Satire can often make one see the absurdity in a given situation in a unique way and promote thought and discussion. I believe in critically examining issues relating to gun control, economics and equality.”

“I have requested that my work be displayed anonymously for this year’s Arts Annual. I have made this difficult decision based on the political environment in this country at this time in which retaliation is a commonplace occurrence. Free thought and free speech, once pillars of our democracy, have become threatening to some. I simply cannot allow my loved ones to be subjected to the harassment I am witnessing. My love of this country is as strong as my belief that democracy is the best political system ever invented. In the end, goodness and virtue will prevail over the desire to suppress.

There is nothing permanent except change —
Heraclitus”

ABOUT THE NEW JERSEY ARTS ANNUAL

The New Jersey Arts Annual is a unique series of exhibitions highlighting the State's visual and performing artists. In partnership with major museums around the state, one exhibition takes place each year, alternating between host institutions. These exhibitions are open to any artist currently living or working in New Jersey. The Arts Annual series is sponsored by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment of the Arts. Since 1984, the New Jersey State Arts Council has co-sponsored the prestigious Arts Annual in keeping with its mission to encourage and foster public interest in the arts, promote freedom of expression in the arts, and to facilitate the inclusion of art in every building in New Jersey. To learn more about the Council, please visit www.artscouncil.nj.gov.



ROWAN UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY & MUSEUM

A Museum Destination for Contemporary Art

Rowan University Art Gallery & Museum serves as a vibrant cultural destination for South Jersey, the Rowan community, and surrounding region. We are committed to cultivating an accessible and just environment that encourages dialogue and collaboration between exhibiting artists, students, faculty, and the general public through the presentation of interdisciplinary art exhibitions, artist talks and other public programming. Our mission is to present diverse forms of contemporary art by professional artists with content that is thought provoking, relevant, and timely. With our exhibitions and programming, we seek to engender curiosity and a passion for contemporary art, enrich the quality of life for area residents, and create a welcoming and inclusive cultural destination at Rowan University.



The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, created in 1966, is a division of the NJ Department of State. The Council was established to encourage and foster public interest in the arts; enlarge public and private resources devoted to the arts; promote freedom of expression in the arts; and facilitate the inclusion of art in every public building in New Jersey. The Council believes the arts are central to every element we value most in a modern society including: human understanding; cultural and civic pride; strong communities; excellent schools; lifelong learning; creative expression; and economic opportunity. To learn more about the Council, please visit www.artscouncil.nj.gov.



Made possible by funds from the
New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner
agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.