



## **Pratt Announces Scholarship and Award Recipients**

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### **Pratt Fine Arts Center Announces Scholarship and Awards Recipients**

SEATTLE, WA – Pratt Fine Arts Center welcomes 17 artists who join its creative community through the largest scholarship opportunity ever offered, with \$49,700 in total funding.

Reinforcing the organization's mission of arts education access for everyone, this year's scholarships invite artists working in glass; jewelry/metals; painting/drawing/printmaking/mixed media; and wood/stone/metal sculpture to continue their artistic careers at Pratt, supported by class fees, studio access, and a stipend for material expenses.

"We are grateful to work alongside our funders, jurors, and partners to support artists as they work towards their goals," said Natalia Torres, Director of Education and Programs at Pratt. "Our scholarship and award programs create opportunity and connection for artists of all backgrounds, and honor the legacy of Edwin T. Pratt, champion of equitable housing and education for all Seattle residents".

Special thanks to the community members who served as jurors for this year's scholarship cycle: LeLeita McKill, Scott Méxcal, Eileen Jimenez,

Elizabeth Belz, Lisa Geertsen, Leslie Tharp, Diane Davis, Tatiana Garmendia, Linda Pawson, Lynn Rosskamp, Victoria Melendez, and Madeline Smith.

These Pratt Fine Arts Center scholarships are made possible by generous donors and supporters of art education including the [Seattle Print Arts](#), [Society of Inclusive Blacksmiths](#), friends and family of Lillian Yeh, Mary & Gary Molyneaux, The Jon and Mary Shirley Foundation, and anonymous donors. Pratt's Artist-in-Residence program is supported by the [National Endowment of the Arts](#).

**Pratt Fine Arts Center's 2022/23 Scholarship and Awards recipients are:**

**The Bernie Funk Artist Explorations Scholarship:  
Miya Sukune, Yongqi Tang**

The Bernie Funk Artist Scholarship is a scholarship awarded on an annual basis for an artist aged 18 or older working in two-dimensional or three-dimensional media, excluding glass. The scholarship will include classes in the metal, wood, stone, drawing, painting, or printmaking studios, a membership to Pratt, studio access, a supply stipend, and professional development opportunities.

**Miya Sukune's** representational paintings and drawings are inspired by her close observations of objects, the landscape, and the figure. Her family's immigrant story (and the gaps of history) influences her current body of work. She has recently shown work at ARTS at King Street Station and the Serlachius Residency Gallery. Her work is part of Seattle's Public Art Collections and can be found at the Danny Woo Community Garden and Matsuda Farm on Vashon Island. She is based in the Puget Sound.

Born in China in 1997, **Yongqi Tang** attended the University of Washington and received a B.A. in painting and drawing in 2019 and an M.F.A in 2022. She is the recipient of the Bernie Funk Artist Scholarship, Boyer and Elizabeth Bole Gonzales Scholarship for Excellence, and the Puget Sound Group of Northwest Artists Scholarship Award. She also was the artist in residence of the Field Projects Gallery, NY.

**Edwin T. Pratt Scholarship:  
AJ Justice, Heidi Grace Acuña, Jennifer Fernandez**

Pratt Fine Arts Center is pleased to offer the Edwin T. Pratt Scholarship, providing opportunities for artists of color to advance their careers through education and

exposure. The Edwin T. Pratt Scholarship aims to amplify the work of historically underrepresented artists and equip them with the tools to progress to the next level in their professional journeys. These artists, in turn, will make powerful contributions to the cultural vitality of our region.

Pratt Fine Arts Center serves in tribute to Edwin T. Pratt, a man who relentlessly championed open and equal access to educational and housing opportunities for all of Seattle's residents. Pratt Fine Arts Center honors his memory by continuing to pursue its mission of making art accessible to everyone, for people of all ages, all skill levels, and all backgrounds. This scholarship is one way Pratt makes that mission a reality.

**AJ Justice** is a multidisciplinary artist creating work primarily in clay. First and foremost, they identify as a storyteller, using any medium that curiosity and functionality leads them to.

**Heidi Grace Acuña** (is a Filipina-American multidisciplinary artist from O'ahu, Hawai'i who grew up witnessing their parents' compassion for humankind as they cared for adults with intellectual disabilities as healthcare workers. Heidi creates dimensional works in ceramics, printmaking, photography, and textiles. They are a published artist and have exhibited in Seattle and Philadelphia. Heidi's work is in the North Seattle College Permanent Art Collection. They received their AA in English and Art from North Seattle College and BA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts from University of Washington with a minor in Art History. Heidi lives and works in Seattle.

**Jennifer Fernandez** is a Cuban-American artist currently based in the Seattle, Washington area. She is a painter, a potter, and a published author. Mostly self-taught, her paintings have been displayed throughout the region and feature dynamic and bold colors.

### **Jon and Mary Shirley Scholarship in Glass: Eric Pedersen, KJC Szwedzinski, Lila Westreich, Lily Gray**

Through the generous and enduring support of the Jon and Mary Shirley Foundation, Pratt Fine Arts Center is pleased to offer a project-based scholarship to support an emerging artist pursuing a career in the glass arts the opportunity to explore new or experimental directions in their practice, and leverage Pratt's valuable educational resources.

**Eric Pedersen** is a glass artist living and working in Seattle. His work is inspired by his time spent climbing and hiking in the mountains. He draws on the colors and textures of the natural world, the light of sunsets, the texture of stones and the constants of time shown in erosion and the movement of rivers. His works include glass techniques of traditional glass blowing as well as carving and manipulating the glass when it is cold. He has been a member of the Pratt community for the last 9 years and is grateful for its opportunities and community.

**KCJ Szwedzinski** is an interdisciplinary artist, educator and arts administrator. She received her undergrad degree from the University of North Florida and an MFA from the University of Louisville in KY. She is cofounder and executive director of Project Chance, a non-profit that raises and trains service dogs for children with autism and other disabilities. She has studied and assisted at Penland School of Craft, Tulsa Glassblowing School and Pilchuck Glass School. She has been an artist in residence at the Vermont Studio Center, the Chulitna Research Institute and upcoming, she will be an artist in residence at the Pierini International Glass Art Center in Biot, France and at Mini Mart City Park in Seattle, Washington. KCJ's joy is facilitating creative experiences for herself and others at the intersection of service, education and art.

**Lila Westreich** was born and raised in southeastern Minnesota, and currently resides in Seattle, Washington. She comes from a long line of glass artists; her father worked in kiln glass and glass jewelry, and her grandfather was a stained-glass artist. Lila has spent the last two years working in neon glassblowing and learning from some of the most prolific neon benders in Seattle. Her artistic focus is in 3D glass sculptures that serve as their own stands and supports while still embodying a fragile, delicate quality.

**Lily Gray** grew up in Eastern Washington, in a mixed culture family, whose backyard was sagebrush and a nuclear research facility. As a first-generation Hong Kong Chinese American, her work is an exploration of multiculturalism, diaspora, and fluidity of identity. She has over 8 years of professional teaching experience in ceramics and glass, privately and in studios, as well as managing a glass studio. She received her BA in Studio art from Western Washington University. As a practicing artist, she has exhibited in group shows across the states at Applied Contemporary, locally, and student exhibitions.

### **Lillian Yeh Scholarship for Lifelong Artists: Stella Christoforou, Torren Broussard-Boston**

Through the generous support of her family and friends, Pratt is pleased to offer this merit-based scholarship in memory of Lillian Yeh, who was a passionate and caring member of Pratt's community. Her love for the arts is honored at Pratt through the Lillian Yeh Scholarship for Lifelong Artists, which encourages young adults (aged 18-25) to pursue artmaking as a lifelong passion.

**Stella Christoforou** is an artist and retail worker who was born in Nicosia, Cyprus but has spent most of her life in Seattle. Primarily working in figurative painting and drawing, much of her work is centered on an OC (original character) named Stavros, a cartoon dog who is a cute and funny fine arts response to other contemporary media icons such as Jim Davis' Garfield.

**Torren Broussard-Boston** is a Seattle local and an African-American Artist, whose art journey has been filled with many trials and tribulations. After struggling with his own work, Torren was able to fall back in love with the craft and the arts. He eventually started meeting new goals, including creating his own comic and exploring all avenues with his art.

### **Mary and Gary Molyneaux Scholarship for Women: Crista Matteson**

Through the generous support of Mary and Gary Molyneaux, Pratt is pleased to offer a new scholarship supporting the continued advancement of professional women artists having 20 years of experience for the purpose of extending an artist's reach by exploring new frontiers in methods, media, and materials.

**Crista Matteson's** sculptures speak of her love for the wild spaces of the PNW. After receiving a BFA from CCA in San Francisco, she began her career in Costume Design. In 2018 after years of exploring other mediums at Pratt, Gage and Pilchuck she realized her passion for glass. Matteson exhibits in galleries, museums, and public art across the US. Her sculptures have been awarded Juror's Choice Awards at Habatat's International, Mesa Contemporary Art Museum, the Schack Art Center, and Pratt's Auction. Glass Art Magazine published a feature article about Matteson in 2021 and she was published in Flow in 2020/21.

### **Professional Artist-in-Residence Program – Flameworking Focus: Eriko Kobayashi**

With support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Pratt Fine Arts Center provides the opportunity for a professional artist to explore new materials and processes during a month-long residency in Pratt's flameworking studio. The residency includes access to Pratt Fine Arts Center's flameworking studio and options to explore other disciplines at Pratt. The Professional Artist-in-Residence Program provides a working artist with a new venue for experimentation and assistance in creative advancement.

**Eriko Kobayashi** (b.Tokyo, Japan) fell in love with the color and texture of glass in 2014. This fascination led her to study at Toyama City Institute of Glass Art in Japan (2016), and later pursue her MFA in Glass at Southern Illinois University (2022). Kobayashi recently relocated to Seattle to continue her career in glass.

Kobayashi introduces playfulness to the technically demanding glass works that are positive, energetic, and playful to experience. She utilizes forms we encounter in our everyday lives to engage her viewer with the familiar, but also to challenge them to question and rethink these objects.

### **Pratt/Seattle Print Arts Partners Grant: Ken Coleman, Magda Baker, Patrick Connelly**

In partnership with Seattle Print Arts (SPA), and to nurture the development of our shared artist community, Pratt is pleased to offer this grant in printmaking specifically for Puget Sound printmakers who are members of Seattle Print Arts.

Before **Ken Coleman's** move to Seattle in 2014, he lived in Paris, France, for ten years where he took care of household duties and frequented museums and cafes. Before Paris Ken lived in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, for 20 years. Both places seem like a long, improbable way from where he grew up in West Virginia. Along the way he managed to earn several degrees and hold a variety of jobs, including worker in a West Virginia glass factory and director of the Craft Students League in NYC. Now Ken spends his time making art, reading, and walking around the neighborhood with his wife.

**Magda Baker** is drawn to the way prints can show gesture and reveal the process of printmaking. A life-long artist, she grew up in Charleston, South Carolina and has lived and worked in Seattle, Washington since graduating from Bennington College with a B.A. in printmaking in 1992. Magda has shown her prints at numerous galleries and universities. She has a print in the King County, Washington Portable Works Collection and has received a fellowship from Women's Studio Workshop and a grant from Allied Arts.

In 2007 **Patrick Connelly** completed a BFA in Film Studies at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. He was drawn toward the direct camera-less animation technique because of its tactile nature, and has been working in this medium ever since. He then discovered linocut printmaking, and fell in love with it for similar reasons. For over ten years now Patrick has combined his passion for these two mediums by making linocut shirts and prints that

explore the visual themes in film.

## **Society of Inclusive Blacksmiths Scholarship: Jam Sitti**

In partnership with Society of Inclusive Blacksmiths (SIBS), Pratt Fine Arts Center is pleased to offer the Society of Inclusive Blacksmiths Scholarship, an award that provides a variety of educational resources, professional development opportunities, and Pratt studio access to an emerging artist in Washington State. The SIBS Scholarship supports the creation of new work and equips the artist with the tools to advance to the next level in their professional journey. It is available to individuals from a historically marginalized group (e.g., BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, female, or disabled).

**Jam Sitti** is a queer, nonbinary, Thai metalworker, and avid tinkerer. Since they were young, they were curious about metalworking--Jam loved working with their hands and developing an intuition around tactile problem-solving. Jam's practice is shaped by their QTBIPOC community and a dream of collective liberation; to create and shape the world we want to live in by physically building the structures and spaces that inspire us to thrive--passing those skills onto future generations. Jam likes to play at the intersections of all the elements, and is interested in multidimensional forms encompassing metal, wood, glass, fire, and more.

## **About Pratt Fine Arts Center**

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Founded in 1976, Pratt Fine Art Center is an eclectic, hands-on learning and working environment serving students, hobbyists, and professional artists throughout the Pacific Northwest. Pratt Fine Arts Center serves in tribute to Edwin T. Pratt, a man who relentlessly championed open and equal access to educational and housing opportunities for all of Seattle's residents.

As a multidisciplinary visual arts resource, Pratt provides education and instruction, community programs, and professionally equipped art studios. Students build their skills and art practice in painting, drawing and printmaking, glass arts, jewelry, metalsmithing, sculpture, woodworking, and fabrication, choosing from over 600 classes for adults, youth, and teens annually.

As a nonprofit organization, Pratt Fine Arts Center makes arts education accessible to artists of all ages, skill levels and backgrounds, to encourage self-expression and personal transformation through creativity. Pratt is the only facility in the Pacific Northwest where beginners work side-by-side with established artists.

Pratt Fine Arts Center fosters a creative, inclusive art-making community, providing quality education, and professionally equipped studios for everyone. Pratt promotes the joy and transformative power of art and actively supports the development of visual artists.

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