

Arts/Industry John Michael Kohler Arts Center

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John Michael Kohler Arts Center Announces 2023 Arts/Industry Residents

Sheboygan, WI — The John Michael Kohler Arts Center has announced the selection of artists who will participate in its prestigious Arts/Industry residency program during 2023. Artists-in-residence spend three months creating new work in studios located in the pottery or foundry at the Kohler Co. factory in Kohler, Wis.

Artists-in-residence for 2023 include Sarah Blood, Ginger Brooks Takahashi, Alessia Cecchet, Ang Li, Cathy Lu, Dutes Miller, Jacob Olmedo, Nirmal Raja, Lee Emma Running, Stephanie H. Shih, and Erin Smith.

Now in its 49th year, Arts/Industry is administered by the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, WI. The program is made possible by major support from Kohler Co. Artists-in-residence are selected through a competitive jury process. Each receives 24-hour access to studio space, industrial materials, use of equipment, technical assistance, photographic services, housing, round-trip transportation, and a modest weekly stipend.

Artists need not have experience with clay or metal, just an interest in materials and the potential for the industrial environment and processes to influence their creative practice. Residencies typically last from two to four months. Upon completion of their residencies, artists are required to donate two pieces of their work, one for Kohler Co. and one for the John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

For more information about the program, contact Siara Berry, Arts/Industry program director, at sberry@jmkac.org or visit www.jmkac.org/arts-industry.

Artist Biographies

Sarah Blood



Born in the UK, Sarah Blood is an artist, independent curator, and educator. She has enjoyed an active studio practice since 1999, exhibiting her work internationally alongside contemporary artists, including Bruce Nauman, Agnes Denes, Glenn Ligon, Sarah Lucas, and Tracy Emin.

Blood's practice is concerned with light and phenomenology. She plays with the tension between material, form of object, and space. Light, often neon, is enriched by a counterpoint with conceptual, physical, and visual weight. Blood uses beauty to draw the viewer into the work, often employing metaphor or humor as an entry point. At first look, pieces can appear purely whimsical, a celebration of light and form, a joyful experience. With time and exploration, social and political themes are revealed. Most recent research explores themes of invisibility, structures of power and inequitable systems. The resulting works explore light, sound, and movement using contemporary and obsolete technologies with traditional and nontraditional art-making materials to create object-based sculpture, performative interventions, video, and immersive experiences.

Blood is associate professor of light in the Sculpture Dimensional Studies Program at Alfred University, New York, where she has been teaching since 2013.

Ginger Brooks Takahashi



Ginger Brooks Takahashi is a transdisciplinary artist and educator. Her performance, installation, and site-responsive works examine our relationships to the mediums that connect us. These public projects are platforms for intimate interaction, an extension of feminist and queer praxis.

She received her BA from Oberlin College in 1999 and attended the Whitney Independent Study Program in 2007. She has exhibited at institutions including Carnegie Museum of Art, 2020; Oakland Museum of California, 2019; Jewish Museum, 2016; Tensta Konsthall, 2015; Brooklyn Museum, 2013; Museo Tamayo, 2010; New Museum, 2009; among others. She is currently developing a permanent public artwork for Schenley Park in Pittsburgh and a collaboration with Dana Bishop-Root for Counterpublic 2023, St Louis.

Alessia Cecchet



Alessia Cecchet is a maker of moving images, interdisciplinary artist, and writer, originally from the Dolomite Mountains of Northern Italy. Her practice is situated at the intersection of studio and media arts. Grounded in historical and archival research, her work is invested in human and nonhuman histories of displacement, loss, and suffering.

In June 2022, Cecchet completed her Ph.D. in film and digital media at the University of California, Santa Cruz, successfully defending her dissertation "Eating and Resurrecting the Goats: Animal Bodies, Death, and Western Culture." She also holds an MFA in film from Syracuse University. Cecchet's work has been exhibited internationally at several film festivals and art venues, including Uppsala Short Film Festival (Uppsala, Sweden), Slamdance Film Festival (Park City, UT), Nashville Film Festival (Nashville, TN), Encounters Film Festival (Bristol, UK), Seattle Film Festival (Seattle, WA), Cork Film Festival (Cork, Ireland), Athens International Film and Video Festival (Athens, OH), Columbus Film and Animation Festival (Columbus, OH), and Torino Film Festival (Torino, Italy), among others. Her films have won several awards, including Honorable Mention at Festival de Cine Silente (Puebla, Mexico) and Best Fiction at the High Coast Film Festival (Sweden).

Ang Li



Ang Li is an assistant professor at the School of Architecture at Northeastern University. Her creative practice operates at the intersection of architecture, public art, and critical preservation practices to explore the maintenance rituals and material afterlives behind the built environment. Through fieldwork and physical installations, her most current work investigates the material ecologies of the construction and demolition waste stream, and how collective practices of repair and reuse could give rise to situated forms of architectural knowledge.

Li's work has been featured in numerous national and international exhibitions at Exhibit Columbus, the Now+There Accelerator Program, the Chicago Architecture Biennial, RAIR Philadelphia, and the Lisbon Architecture Triennial, among other venues. Her writing has been published in the *Journal of Architectural Education*, *Log*, *Clog*, *Manifest* and *Thresholds*. Before joining the faculty at Northeastern, Ang was a visiting artist at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the 2015–16 Peter Reyner Banham Fellow at the

University at Buffalo. She holds a BA from the University of Cambridge and a Master of Architecture from Princeton University.

Cathy Lu



Cathy Lu creates ceramics sculptures and installations that manipulate traditional Chinese art imagery and presentation as a way to deconstruct the assumptions we have about Chinese diasporic identity and cultural authenticity. Unpacking how experiences of immigration, cultural hybridity, and cultural assimilation become part of American identity is central to her work.

Lu was born in Miami, Florida. She received her MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute, and her BA and BFA from Tufts University. She has participated in artist in residence programs at Root Division, Bemis Center for the Arts, Recology SF, and the Archie Bray Foundation. Her work has been exhibited at Chinese Culture Center SF, Jessica Silverman Gallery SF, and A-B Projects, LA. She was a 2019 Asian Cultural Council/ Beijing Contemporary Art Foundation Fellow and was awarded a 2022 SFMOMA Seca Award. She teaches Ceramics and first-year 3-D classes at California

College of the Arts.

Dutes Miller



Dutes Miller's work has been written about on artforum.com, Hyperallergic, Huffington Post, *Chicago Reader*, *Time Out Chicago*, *New City*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. Miller's work has been included in exhibitions at several national venues including White Flag Projects in St. Louis and the Ukrainian Museum of Art in Chicago.

Miller's collaborative work with his husband Stan Shellabarger, as Miller & Shellabarger, won a 2008 Artadia Award and a 2007 Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation award and has been written about in *Art in America*, *Artform*, *Artforum.com*, *Art & Auction*, *Frieze*, *Artnet*, *The Art Newspaper*, *Flash Art*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. Miller received a BFA from Illinois State University. He is represented by Western Exhibitions in Chicago and lives and works in Chicago.

Jacob Olmedo



Jacob Olmedo (they/them) is a multidisciplinary artist who works with textiles and sculpture forms that blend certain craftwork, both traditional and contemporary, exploring deeply personal statements about being human. Often drawn to hybridizing materials and techniques that transform and critique the status quo, they ask for the meaning of the work to be about the dismantling of physical and societal structures to reveal the tenderness of body, skin, land, and soul. Their practice is a journey engaged in following a pulse entangled in emotional tense depictions of self and humanness.

Olmedo earned their MFA and BFA from the Parsons School of Design as well as studied textile making in Mirzapur, India, and Paris, France. Olmedo has exhibited in venues such as Mana Contemporary, Columbia University, NYC Design Week, San Francisco Museum of Craft and Design, and the Pratt Manhattan Gallery. They won the prestigious International Talking Textiles Waxman Prize in 2020, became the first CFDA Liz Claiborne Graduate Scholar in 2018, and have been recognized by press such as *Vogue Italia*, PBS, and L'Officiel Mexico.

Nirmal Raja



Nirmal Raja is an interdisciplinary artist living and working in Milwaukee. She lived in India, South Korea, and Hong Kong before immigrating to the United States thirty years ago. She holds a BA in English literature from St. Francis College in Hyderabad, India; a BFA from the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, and an MFA from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. She has participated in solo and group shows in the Midwest, nationally, and internationally.

Raja is the recipient of several awards including Graduate of The Decade from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She received the Mary L. Nohl Fellowship for individual artists for the year 2020 and the Mildred L. Harpole Artists of the Year 2022 award from the Milwaukee Arts Board. She collaborates with other artists and strongly believes in investing energy into her immediate community while also considering the global. She is a mentor for the Milwaukee Artists Resource Network's mentorship program. She periodically curates exhibitions that bring people from different cultures and backgrounds together.

Lee Running



Recognized for her arresting sculptures, Lee Emma Running's work directly engages our relationship with the natural world. Her sculptures made of roadkill animal bones, kiln-cast glass, and precious metals were the center of a solo exhibition, *Verge* at PACE in Council Bluffs IA in 2021/22.

In 2022/23 she is the artist-in-residence with Opera Omaha and was a 2022 speaker at TEDx Omaha. Her window installations using images of native plants are permanent fixtures in the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs; the Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest in Bernheim, Kentucky; and the Edgar Fine Arts Center at Upper Iowa University. Her work has been featured in recent exhibitions at St. Ambrose University, the Morris Graves Museum, Eureka, California, and the Western Carolina Museum of Fine Art, Cullowhee, North Carolina. She has been an artist-in-residence at Pine Meadow Ranch Center for Arts and Agriculture, Ucross, Santa Fe Art Institute, Jentel, and the Penland School of Crafts. Her sculptures, installations, and drawings are deeply connected to place.

Stephanie H. Shih



Stephanie H. Shih's painted ceramic sculptures explore the way cultural identities evolve as they migrate with a diaspora. She replicates everyday objects that reflect traces of colonization, emigration, assimilation, and cultural interchange within the lives of Asian immigrants and their children.

Shih has had solo exhibitions in New York, Los Angeles, Miami, and at the Syracuse University Art Museum. Her work has been reviewed by the *LA Times*, *Hyperallergic*, *Cultured*, and NPR, and received support from the American Museum of Ceramic Arts, Silver Art Projects, and Lighthouse Works. The next major presentation of her work will be at Berggruen Gallery in San Francisco in February 2023. Activism is central to the Shih's practice, and she has raised over \$100,000 for marginalized communities experiencing instability related to home through her art and platform.

Erin Smith



Erin Smith was raised in St. Paul, Minnesota. In 2003 she received her BFA in product design from Parsons School of Design and an MFA in ceramics from NYS College of Ceramics at Alfred University in 2021. Between degrees, Erin worked as a designer in Berlin, Germany; at Target Corporation in Minneapolis; and ran several small businesses while homing in on ceramics.

Today, using both technology and traditional building techniques, she explores how an object transforms in both its physicality and meaning through process and reinterpretation. Exhibitions include Walker Art Center and Soap Factory, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Concordia University, St. Paul, Minnesota; Rochester Art Center, Rochester, Minnesota; Cooler Gallery, Brooklyn, New York; The Center for Contemporary Crafts, Houston, Texas; and Mayten's, Ontario, Canada.

About the John Michael Kohler Arts Center

Founded in 1967, the John Michael Kohler Arts Center (JMKAC) is dedicated to generating creative exchanges between an international community of artists and a diverse public. Central to its mission is promoting understanding and appreciation of the work of self-taught and contemporary artists through original exhibitions, commissioned works of art, performing arts, community arts initiatives, and publications.

The Arts Center's collection focuses primarily on works by artist-environment builders, self-taught and folk artists, and works created in the Arts/Industry residency program. JMKAC is the world's leading center for research and presentation of artist-built environments.

In June 2021, the Arts Center opened the Art Preserve, a second campus highlighting its collection of 25,000 individual works of art by more than 30 art-environment builders. The Art Preserve features immersive displays of art environments and curated visible storage of environment components. It also serves as a resource for research on art environments and the artists who create them.

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center is located at 608 New York Avenue, Sheboygan, WI. The Art Preserve is located at 3636 Lower Falls Road, Sheboygan. Admission to both is free. For more information, call 920-458-6144, or visit jmkac.org, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#).

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center is supported by corporate and foundation donors, government grants, and its many members. The Arts Center is not an entity of Kohler Co. or its subsidiaries.

Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Thursday: 10:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

Saturday, Sunday: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Locations

John Michael Kohler Arts Center: 608 New York Avenue, Sheboygan, WI

Art Preserve: 3636 Lower Falls Road, Sheboygan, WI