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**Project Row Houses and UH's Center for Art & Social Engagement  
Announce 2018 Fellows**

Houston, TX – January 31, 2018 – Project Row Houses (PRH) and the Center for Art and Social Engagement (CASE) at the University of Houston's Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts are proud to announce the artists participating in the 2018 CASE-PRH Fellowship: Houston-based artist Regina Agu and Eyakem Gulilat, a PhD candidate at the University of Oklahoma.

The CASE-PRH Fellowship was created to invite artists and cultural practitioners to the Third Ward to work alongside urban planners, educators and policy makers. The fellows will engage in creative collaborations that involve the Third Ward community and address issues important to them.

Agu and Gulilat will receive mentorship from project administrators Sixto Wagan, director of the UH Center for Art and Social Engagement, and Ryan N. Dennis, PRH's Curator and Programs Director. Local artists, faculty members, community members and selected leaders will offer their support during this process.

"The pilot year of the fellowship was an incredible experience," said Dennis. "It was amazing to watch Carrie and Carol's research and projects develop over the course of 2017, and I'm eager to work with Eyakem and Regina in the year to come."

Upon completion of the fellowship's pilot year, applications were accepted from over 60 local, national, and international artists and collectives. The applications were reviewed by a panel consisting of Dennis and Wagan; Eureka Gilkey, PRH Executive Director; Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud, artist and UH lecturer; and Deidre Thomas, Grants + Capacity Building Coordinator at the Houston Arts Alliance.

"The first year of the fellowships and this last round of applications demonstrate a significant investment and excitement toward what artists bring to the equitable growth of our communities," stated Wagan. "We are thrilled that the partnership between PRH and CASE contributes to the growing reputation of Houston as an epicenter of responsive and responsible, community-centered creative practices."

At the conclusion of their fellowships, the two will also present lectures/performances that encapsulate their year of research. We hope you will join us at the Project Row Houses from 11:30 – 1 on February 21 for a pot-luck lunch and for artist talks at 6:30 as we introduce the fellows, their previous work, and questions that will guide their research in the upcoming year.



## About the Fellows

### Regina Agu

Regina Agu is an artist and writer based in Houston, TX. Her recent projects focus on the complex relationships between the landscape and communities of color. Agu produces photographs, texts, drawings, installations, performances, and collaborative public projects. Her work has been included in exhibitions, public readings, and performances nationally, including recent showings at The Drawing Center, New York; DiverseWorks, Houston; The American University Museum Katzen Arts Center in DC; Project Row Houses; and The Station Museum, Houston. She is a 2017-2018 Lawndale Artist Studio Program resident and a 2017 Artadia Houston awardee, and was a recent participant in Open Sessions at The Drawing Center.

From 2014-2017, Agu was the co-director of Alabama Song, a collaboratively-run art space in Third Ward, Houston, and received a SEED Grant for Alabama Song from The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. She was the co-organizer of Friends of Angela Davis Park, which received an Idea Fund grant, and is a co-founder of the Houston-based independent small press, *paratext*. Additionally, Agu is the founder of the WOC reading group, a series of private gatherings organized in Houston in 2014-2015 to examine critical texts and discuss contemporary issues from a womanist perspective; its members included women of color artists, writers, filmmakers, and anthropologists.

### Eyakem Gulilat

Originally from Ethiopia, Eyakem Gulilat's work is rooted in a quest for belonging. Gulilat focuses on the complexities of cross-cultural encounter, perceptions of time, memory, and place. His photography questions the differences between subject and photographer; the borders that distinguish us from one another; and the ways our perceptions shift when we view each other through the camera's lens. In addition, he uses photography to study place-making practices of marginalized communities in America.

Gulilat obtained a BA from Abilene Christian University and MFA from the University of Oklahoma, where he is currently finishing a PhD program in city planning. He was selected as an artist in residence at Light Work in Syracuse, New York; the Center for Photography in Woodstock, New York; Newspace Center for Photography in Portland, Oregon; and at Hardesty Art Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Gulilat has won several awards including the 2012 National Endowment for the Arts Grant in collaboration with the Arts and Humanities Council of Tulsa; the Oklahoma Visual Arts Fellowship; and the National Photography Fellowship Competition at Midwest Center for Photography. Gulilat was selected as a participant in State of the Art:



Discovering American Art Now curated by Crystal Bridges. His photography work has been exhibited throughout the U.S and has been acquired for public and private collections.

### Additional Quotes from Panelists

"I'm excited to have the CASE-PRH Fellowship continue in 2018 with two artists who are dedicated to working in communities like ours. While we are rooted in Third Ward, the PRH model for preserving cultural identity is one that can be applied to communities around the world, and I can't wait to see how Eyakem and Regina carry these lessons forward." - Eureka Gilkey

"It was a rewarding experience to participate as a panelist for the 2018 CASE-PRH Fellowship. The depth of artists who applied and are consciously prioritizing a social practice and community engagement as their scope of work is immensely encouraging. The CASE-PRH fellowship is an incredible experience for the artists, community, university and grantmakers like myself to learn from this year-long engagement. I'm excited to follow the work of Eyakem Gulilat and Regina Agu as they both beautifully demonstrated through their work a deep commitment to their artistic practice and a history of meaningful community engagement." - Deidre Thomas

"I am looking forward to seeing artists position creativity and poetics within larger spheres of mapping, planning, and policy." - Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud

### About Project Row Houses

Project Row Houses is a community platform that enriches lives through art with an emphasis on cultural identity and its impact on the urban landscape. We engage neighbors, artists, and enterprises in collective creative action to help materialize sustainable opportunities in marginalized communities. Learn more at [projectrowhouses.org](http://projectrowhouses.org).

### About the Center for Art & Social Engagement

The Center for Art & Social Engagement at the University of Houston builds on the wealth of experience in the local arts community, the research and best practices of national organizations, the resources of the University of Houston and the larger Houston community to bring together artists, community, faculty and professionals around policy, research and best practices in the arts. Center for Art and Social Engagement (CASE) reflects the refined focus on arts impact on audiences, communities, and contemporary society.

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COLLEGE OF THE ARTS  
Center for Art & Social Engagement



PROJECT ROW HOUSES

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