

Anonymous Was A Woman

Anonymous Was A Woman awards \$250,000 to women artists over the age of 40

Ten artists receive unrestricted awards of \$25,000 apiece in recognition of their work



Virginia Jaramillo, *Site No. 15* 13.5099 S, 71.9817 W, 2018. Acrylic on canvas. Photo by Stan Narten. / Juana Valdés, *Colored China Rags*, 2017. Porcelain bone china.

November 18, 2020—Anonymous Was A Woman today announced the ten recipients of its 2020 awards, which recognize women-identifying artists over 40 years of age who have made significant contributions, while continuing to create new work, and who are each at a critical juncture in their practice. Each recipient receives an unrestricted award of \$25,000. This marks the award’s 25th year, with more than \$6 million awarded to 250 artists since 1996.

The 2020 award recipients are:

D.Y. Begay, 67
Linda Goode Bryant, 71
Barbara Chase-Riboud, 81
Elena Del Rivero, 71
Chitra Ganesh, 45
Karen Gunderson, 77
Virginia Jaramillo, 81
Claudia Joskowicz, 52
Karyn Olivier, 52
Juana Valdés, 56

Winners were chosen from among a competitive pool of applicants recommended by a group of distinguished art historians, curators, writers, and artists who serve as anonymous nominators. The 2020 award recipients range in age from 45 to 81, and work in mediums including painting, installation, performance, photography, film, and social practice. The “no strings-attached” award is intended to provide them freedom to continue development of their creative vision. *Bios of each recipient follow.*

Anonymous Was a Woman was founded by artist Susan Unterberg in 1996. In 2018, after more than two decades of anonymity, Unterberg revealed her identity as the founder and sole patron of the award program. That news elevated the profile of the award and led to a significant increase in nominations. In April of this year, Anonymous Was A

Woman introduced an emergency relief grant program to support women-identifying artists over the age of 40 impacted by the Covid-19 crisis. The program distributed \$250,000—the equivalent of AWA's total annual award—in grants up to \$2,500 apiece to 159 artists.

"I am delighted to congratulate this year's award recipients—a group of extraordinary artists who represent diversity across every axis, from age to geography to the mediums in which they work," said Unterberg. "I founded Anonymous Was A Woman to fill a void that I witnessed personally: support for women artists in the middle stages of their careers. This past year has brought into sharp focus the challenges faced by women in all professions, as they balance personal commitments with the time and space to make work, and by artists in particular, as the cultural sector has suffered disproportionately during the pandemic. We are honored to recognize these ten artists, who continue to make astonishing work regardless of headwinds."

While it is not need-based, the award has often had a transformative impact on the lives and work of the recipients, many of whom received the award at critical junctions in their careers or before they had received wider recognition. Award winners have gone on to present solo exhibitions at institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art, Museum of Modern Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Venice Biennale, among many others; to create important public art projects, performances, and installations; and to receive significant critical acclaim.

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Anonymous Was A Woman is an unrestricted award of \$25,000 that enables women artists over 40 years of age and at a significant junction in their lives or careers, to continue to grow and pursue their work. The Award is given to ten artists a year in recognition of an artist's accomplishments, artistic growth, originality, and potential. It is not need-based. The Award is by nomination only. The name of the award program, Anonymous Was A Woman, refers to a line in Virginia Woolf's "A Room of One's Own". As the name implies, nominators and those associated with the program have, until this point, been unnamed. Artist Susan Unterberg created the Award in 1996, partly in response to the decision of the National Endowment for the Arts to cease support of individual artists. Each year, an outstanding group of distinguished women—art historians, curators, writers, and previous winners from across the country—serve as nominators. To date, over 600 notable women have participated as nominators and panelists, and the Award has been given to 250 artists.

For more information on Anonymous Was A Woman, please visit anonymouswasawoman.org.

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2020 Anonymous Was A Woman Award Recipients

D.Y. Begay (b. 1953, Tselani, AZ) is a Navajo, and fifth-generation tapestry weaver. Begay's unique weaving style combines using the traditional, Navajo upright loom with her nontraditional interpretation of the landscape that surrounds her. Begay's passion is weaving, capturing intimate thoughts, and making colors from natural sources and fragments and threading forms and designs onto her loom. She collaborates with her weaving space every day, where she weaves beautiful impressions of undulating land and water formations. Begay's weavings are deeply personal, encapsulating memories, Navajo land, and beauty. Begay has been the recipient of several awards and grants including United States Artists Fellow (2017) and Native American Art Studies Association (2013). D.Y. has exhibited her weavings in institutions including the Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff; Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis; C.N. Gorman Museum University of California Davis; National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian Institute, New York City; Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Santa Fe; Kennedy Museum of Art, Ohio University, Athens; and the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh. Begay received her B.A. from Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona. She lives and works in Santa Fe.

Linda Goode Bryant (b. 1949, Columbus, OH) creates functional spaces that she calls "living installations" that involve people in collaborative activities and creative actions capable of changing conditions where they live—art that is meant to be discovered, experienced, and lived during daily life. Art with real life consequences. Just Above Midtown Gallery (JAM) was her first initial space. Started in 1974, it was the first gallery to showcase work by African-American and other artists of color in a major gallery district. After producing "The Business of Being an Artist" documentary, she shifted JAM's focus to provide artists with space and money to experiment and create freely, away from market pressures. She began making films in the 1990s, and in 2003 co-produced "Flag Wars" with Laura Poitras, which received an Emmy nomination and numerous awards, including a Peabody. In 2004, she created Active Citizen Project (ACP) to involve disenfranchised and non-voting youth and adults around the country in creating and campaigning for local and national platforms that addressed issues and solutions that they want implemented. Her current "living installation" is Project EATS, which joins with residents in New York City's low-income communities to create small plot, high-yield vegetable arms where fresh, healthy food is needed. Bryant has an M.B.A. from Columbia University and a B.A. from Spelman College.

Barbara Chase-Riboud (b. 1939, Philadelphia, PA) has created abstract art with a deep and nuanced understanding of history, identity, and a sense of place over five decades. Her work operates on several dichotomies that have become central to her practice: hard/soft, male/female, flat/three-dimensional, Western/non-Western, stable/ fluid, figurative/abstract, powerful/delicate, brutal/beautiful, violence/harmony. Her work has been exhibited at numerous institutions worldwide and collected by institutions include the Berkeley Art Museum, University of California; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Ministry of Culture, France; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Collections of France; the Newark Museum, New Jersey; the New Orleans Museum of Art, Louisiana; the New-York Historical Society Museum; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Smithsonian African American Museum, Washington, D.C.; The Studio Museum in Harlem; the Baltimore Museum of Art; the Ludwig Museum, Cologne; the Serpentine Museum, London; the Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.; and the Hermes Foundation, Brussels. Her work was featured in the new MoMA permanent collection exhibition in 2019. A recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees, Chase-Riboud is also a prolific author of several historical novels and poetry collections. She lives in Paris, Rome, and Milan.

Elena del Rivero (b. 1949, Valencia, Spain) has dedicated her work to studying diverse written and visual forms for communicating personal experiences. While primarily creating paintings and works on paper, she also produces large-scale installations, performances and analog photographs. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, Yale University Art Gallery, Fogg Art Museum, National Gallery of Art, Baltimore Art Museum, Colby College Museum of Art, Pollock Gallery at Southern Methodist

University, Birmingham Museum of Art, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, and the Reina Sofia, among other institutions. She has been the recipient of numerous awards and grants including the Prix de Rome (1988), Pollock-Krasner Foundation (1991, 1995), Creative Capital Foundation (2001), The New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship (2001, 2002), the Rockefeller Foundation at The Bellagio Center, Italy (2005), the Joan Mitchell Foundation (2015), and the John S. Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship Award (2019). She lives and works in New York City.

Chitra Ganesh (b. 1975, Brooklyn, NY) is an artist living and working in Brooklyn. For the past 20 years, Ganesh's drawing based practice has shed light on narrative representations of femininity, sexuality, and power typically absent from canons of literature and art. Ganesh's installations, comics, animation, sculpture, and mixed media works on paper often take historical and mythic texts as inspiration and points of departure to complicate received ideas of iconic female forms. Her studies in literature, semiotics, and social theory have been critical to a steady engagement with narrative and deconstruction that animates her work. Her work has been widely exhibited in the United States, Europe, and Asia, with solo exhibitions at MoMA P.S.1, The Warhol Museum, Göteborgs Konsthall, Brooklyn Museum, Rubin Museum, Kitchen, and the Leslie Lohman Museum of Art (currently on view through October 2021). Her work is held in prominent public collections including The Museum of Modern Art, The Smithsonian Museum of American Art, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, Berkeley Museum of Art, San Jose Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including grants from the New York Foundation for the Arts; Printed Matter; Art Matters Foundation; John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation; the Joan Mitchell Foundation; and the Hodder Fellowship at Princeton University, and the Pollock Krasner Foundation. She received her B.A. from Brown University and her M.F.A. from Columbia University.

Karen Gunderson (b. 1943 Racine, WI) is a painter who lives and works in the Village of Cossackie, on the Hudson River, after forty years living and working in New York City. Gunderson makes paintings using only black paint, with her brush tracing the surface of the volume of her images and feeling them in space. The multiple textures from the paint catch the light and make the forms interact with the movement of the viewer. Images range from water, mountains, moons, constellations, and royal historical figures. She has had over fifty solo exhibitions, including at the Circulo de Bellas Artes in Madrid in 2004, and has been included in over 150 group shows, including art historian Barbara Rose's 2016 exhibition "Painting After Postmodernism." Her work is in over forty public collections. In 2001, Gunderson won the second prize for painting at the Florence Biennale in Italy. In 2005, the documentary film, "The Black Paintings by Karen Gunderson" was released. In 2010, she became the first American woman to have a one person show at the National Museum of Bahrain. In 2016, Abbeville Press published a monograph on Gunderson's life's work by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Elizabeth Frank. Gunderson is proud that she was mentored by Elaine de Kooning and Grace Hartigan.

Virginia Jaramillo (b. 1939, El Paso, TX) is an American artist who lives and works in New York. She studied at Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles from 1958 to 1961. Jaramillo's work has been featured in numerous institutional exhibitions including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; A.I.R. Gallery, New York; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; MoMA PS1, New York; and the Brooklyn Museum, New York. In 2020, Jaramillo's first solo museum exhibition, *The Curvilinear Paintings, 1969–1974* opened at The Menil Collection, Texas. Jaramillo's work has featured in recent group exhibitions, including Tate Modern's *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power* (toured to Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Arkansas; the Brooklyn Museum, New York; The Broad, Los Angeles; the De Young, San Francisco; and the MFA, Houston) and *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women 1965–85* at the Brooklyn Museum, New York (toured to California African American Museum, Los Angeles; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston). Her work was included in *Witness: Art and Civil Rights in the Sixties*, Brooklyn Museum (toured to the Hood Museum of Art, Hanover and the Blanton Museum of Art, Austin) and *Now Dig This! Art & Black Los*

Angeles, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (toured to MoMA PS1, New York and the Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown).

Claudia Joskowicz (b. 1968, Bolivia) received her MFA from New York University and lives and works between Brooklyn, New York, and Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. Her practice centers on history and its narrative, considering how popular media circulates and shapes collective memory, contemporary history, and social realities. Using long and slow video footage and oscillating between film and photography, she reproduces moments captured from global collective memories and personal stories (her own and others') that have a historical dimension and are anchored in her native Latin American landscape. She has exhibited widely in the United States and internationally. Her works are in the permanent collections of the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Kadist Foundation, San Francisco; the Cisneros Fontanals Foundation, Miami; and the Banco Central de la República, Bogotá. Joskowicz has been the recipient of numerous awards and grants including a NYFA Fellowship in film/video, a Cisneros Fontanals Foundation Mid Career Artist's Commission, a Guggenheim Fellowship in film/video, and a Fulbright Scholar award. She has been a fellow at Yaddo; the Latin American Roaming Art Project, Oaxaca, Mexico; the Sacatar Institute, Bahia, Brazil; the AIM program at the Bronx Museum of the Arts; and the LMCC's Workspace and Paris residencies.

Karyn Olivier (b. 1968, Trinidad and Tobago) is a Philadelphia-based artist who creates sculptures, installations and public art. Her work often intersects and collapses multiple histories and memories with present-day narratives. She has exhibited at the Gwangju and Busan Biennials, World Festival of Black Arts and Culture (Dakar, Senegal), The Studio Museum in Harlem, The Whitney Museum of Art, MoMA P.S.1, The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Contemporary Art Museum Houston, The Mattress Factory and Sculpture Center (New York), among others. Olivier has created large-scale commissioned work for Monument Lab, Creative Time, and New York City and Philadelphia's Percent for Art program. She received the 2018–19 Rome Prize and has been the recipient of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, the Joan Mitchell Foundation Award, the New York Foundation for the Arts Award, a Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant, the William H. Johnson Prize, a Pew Fellowship, the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Award and a Creative Capital Foundation grant. Olivier is currently an associate professor of sculpture at Tyler School of Art and Architecture.

Juana Valdés (b. 1963, Cuba) uses printmaking, photography, sculpture, ceramics, and site-specific video installations to explore issues of race, transnationalism, gender, labor, and class. Functioning as an archive, Valdes's work analyzes and decodes experiences of migration as a person of Afro-Cuban heritage. Born in Pinar del Rio, Cuba, Valdes migrated to the United States in 1971; she is now a U.S. citizen. She has been the subject of solo exhibitions at institutions including Locust Projects, Miami; the Legacy Gallery, Miami Dade College Special Collections; the Herter Gallery at UMass Amherst; the Center for Cultural Analysis, Rutgers University, New Jersey; and the Thomas Hunter Project Space, Hunter College, CUNY. Her exhibition *An Inherent View of the World* was acquired in full by the Pérez Art Museum, Miami and was featured in the exhibitions *Polyphonic: Celebrating PAMM's Fund for African American Art* and *Abstracting History, Second Chapter in On the Horizon: Contemporary Cuban Art from the Jorge M. Pérez Collection*. She has been featured in many group exhibitions, including *Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago*, at the Museum of Latin American Art, which was presented as part of the Getty Foundation's Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA, which traveled extensively throughout the U.S., and the Site Santa Fe Biennial "much wider than a line," SITELINE: 2016 New Perspectives on Art of the Americas. Her work has also been included in group exhibitions at institutions including El Museo del Barrio, New York; MoMA PS1, New York; Project Row Houses, Houston; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami; Garillo Gil Museum, Mexico; Galerie Verein Berliner Künstler, Berlin; Newark Museum, New Jersey; Galerie Binnen, Amsterdam; and FreeSpace, Sydney. She is the recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant, The Ellies Creator Award, The New York Foundation for the Arts, Sculpture/Craft, the National Association of Latinos Arts and Culture Visual Artists Grant and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant. She received her BFA

in Sculpture from the Parsons School of Design, her MFA in Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts, and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture. She is currently an Associate Professor in the Art Department at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.