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The Wexner Center for the Arts announces the recipients of its 2021–22 Artist Residency Awards and an expansion of institutional support for artists

June 29, 2021—Columbus, OH—The Wexner Center for the Arts, the contemporary art laboratory at The Ohio State University, is excited to announce the recipients of its 2021–22 Artist Residency Awards, including Carlos Motta, New Red Order, Sa'dia Rehman, and Abby Zbikowski.

For more than three decades, artist residencies have been at the core of the Wex's programs and its continuing mission to provide artists across disciplines with the funding and technical resources necessary to embrace both radical experimentation and community engagement with groundbreaking new projects. Each year's Artist Residency Award recipients in film/video, performing arts, and visual arts have represented a diverse group of artists and mediums. Among the many prominent artists to date who have participated in this singular initiative are Mark Bradford, Barbara Hammer, Zoe Leonard, and Bebe Miller.

[A complete list of past recipients is available here.](#)

In addition to new awards, the Wex has extended a number of last year's residencies in light of the pandemic, ensuring that artists retain access to time and funding regardless of the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. A number of performance residencies will take place remotely, with presentations of supported work being shared online.

The center is also proud to continue its adaptive and responsive approach to artist support by adding critical new levels of funding to its legendary **Film/Video Studio**; and through residency activities within the recently reconfigured **Department of Learning & Public Practice**. These moves come in response to the urgent need for cultural institutions to engage society's pressing issues.

Film/Video Studio residencies offer in-kind postproduction resources to artists and filmmakers and frequently involve work with Artist Residency Award recipients across disciplines. This year's expansion of Studio funding will develop new opportunities for artists, including the introduction of stipends and microgrants, commissions, and special projects.

The Wex's Department of Learning & Public Practice supports Artist Residency Award recipients through the creation of public and school programs. This year, the department expands this commitment to the awards program through collaborations with four Ohio-based artists. While producing new work and developing programs and relationships across disciplines, these artists wish to embed in local communities

and in various capacities, pursuing new realms for art activity, bridging the personal with the civic and the local with the global.

“The Wex’s strong history of offering support for artists during the ideation phase of projects has allowed for particularly intimate—and often longstanding—relationships,” says Johanna Burton, Executive Director of the Wex. “At this crucial juncture, we are delighted to deepen even further the center’s commitment to artists, whose work has the ability to inform and transform the world in real time.”

This year's recipients are:

Visual Arts

Carlos Motta is a Colombian-born multidisciplinary artist who collaborates with minority communities to challenge dominant narratives of past and present. For his residency project, Motta will create a new video that explores postcolonial subjectivity and democratic participation by examining the stakes of changing the name of the Wexner Center’s home city of Columbus. Can alternative historical memories be constructed, and what roles might different types of memorialization have in changing the terms of historical narration? Motta’s residency project will premiere at the Wex in fall 2022.

Performing Arts

Jaamil Olawale Kosoko is familiar to Wex audiences through the 2018 presentation of his work *Séancers* and a 2020 virtual watch party for *Chameleon*, a Wex-commissioned film work supported by the Film/Video Studio. Kosoko’s Artist Residency Award has been extended through summer 2022. Plans include an onsite visit to the center’s Film/Video Studio to work on the project *Syllabus for Black Love*. The new work will be presented at the Wex in spring 2022.

Abby Zbikowski, a choreographer and alumnus of Ohio State’s Department of Dance, will use a five-week residency this fall to continue work on *Radioactive Practice* in collaboration with dramaturge and Ohio State Assistant Professor Momar Ndiaye. The genre-bending performance draws on movement traditions such as hip-hop, modern dance, West African, tap, synchronized swimming, and soccer and is slated for a virtual public presentation in spring 2022.

Performing Arts: virtual residencies

James Dennen has adapted his highly physical practice for COVID-19 by creating work for a new “location”: virtual reality. Three virtual residencies with the improvisational theater artist are tentatively planned between summer 2021 and spring 2022, yielding material that will be shared with audiences online.

Jennifer Harge will begin production on *Steal. Still.* from her home base in Detroit. The experimental film will depict a gathering of real and imagined Black ancestries—positioning itself as another kind of physicality to history, spirit, and Black life. The movement artist will complete her work this fall, in collaboration with filmmaker Devin Drake.

Awilda Rodríguez Lora will work with filmmaker [Gisela Rosario](#) and Ohio State's Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design (ACCAD) to create a digital version of [her performative work *SUSTENTO*](#), which will premiere online in early 2022. The project attempts to evaluate and document the sustainability of the Puerto Rico-based artist's practice as a choreographer and cultural entrepreneur.

Norah Zuniga Shaw, a choreographer, vocalist, writer, and OSU Dance professor, will continue her ongoing project [Climate Gathering](#) with a series of experiments in digital performance that respond directly to planetary conditions of crisis and uncertainty. Related performance lectures and discussions currently scheduled for this October will be followed by a three-episode podcast series, *Livable Futures*, in February 2022.

Film/Video

Hope Ginsburg's relationship with the Wex goes back to her inclusion in the 2004 exhibition *Work Ethic*, and has continued through the Wex's Film/Video Studio, which most recently supported the completion of her 2019 installation *Swirling*. As part of her ongoing two-year residency, Ginsburg will build on *Swirling* with *Meditation Ocean*, a multi-channel immersive installation that expands her interest in climate change and marine ecology to include human health and well-being. Ginsburg will also work with the center's Department of Learning & Public Practice in anticipation of a Winter 2023 exhibition of the work at the Wex.

New Red Order (NRO) is a "public secret society" collaborating with self-described "informants," to interrogate individual and collective desires for indigeneity. Core contributors are Adam Khalil (Ojibway), Zack Khalil (Ojibway), and Jackson Polys (Tlingit). This two-year residency will provide production support for *Never Settle*, an artwork taking the form of a promotional initiation video that lures potential inductees with promises of decolonization and settler remediation. NRO also plans to work with departments at Ohio State to further its exploration of digital image manipulation, and to deepen the group's ongoing study of Ohio's Earthworks.

Learning & Public Practice

Kari Gunter-Seymour will be this year's artist-in-residence for the center's [Pages](#) literacy program, working closely with high school students and teachers from central Ohio. She is the Poet Laureate of Ohio and winner of the 2020 Ohio Poet of the Year Award. A ninth generation Appalachian, Gunter-Seymour is the founder and executive director of the Women of Appalachia Project ([WOAP](#)) and editor of its anthology series, *Women Speak*.

Tala Kanani is an interdisciplinary painter and educator whose work is rooted in neighborhoods, cross-cultural communities, and "under the radar" actions and art initiatives. Kanani's residency will focus on the development of new work and on multidisciplinary community-based artmaking and art education projects throughout central Ohio, in partnership with center staff.

Sa'dia Rehman, originally from Queens, New York, and now based in Columbus, explores how contemporary and historical images communicate, consolidate, and contest ideas about race, empire, and labor. Rehman's residency will include a series

of public programs, engagement with college and university students, and development of new work for an upcoming project which will exhibit at the Wex in 2023.

A multidisciplinary artist forging experiences of learning through making, **Jonna Twigg** uses books in her practice to blur boundaries between artmaking, community, and commerce. Twigg's residency will be devoted to creating new work and undertaking expansive, hands-on work with children and families.

Support

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