STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM ANNOUNCES REMOTE ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE

New York’s Studio Museum in Harlem has announced its 2020–21 artists-in-residence, the New York Times reports. The prestigious program, which was established in 1968 and typically fosters rising talent, will take place remotely this year, and will for the first time include a mid-career artist, in an attempt to provide mentorship and cultivate generational exchange.

The four participating artists are photographers Widline Cadet and Texas Isaiah, painter Genesis Jerez, and established artist Jacolby Satterwhite, whose work combines video, performance, and animation.

Citing the effects of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic on Black and brown communities, as well as the energized Black Lives Matter movement, Legacy Russell, the museum’s associate curator for exhibitions noted that “it’s a year to experiment,” asking, “What does it look like to support artists right now?”
Though their practices are disparate, the newly anointed artists-in-residence are united by their exploration of identity. Isaiah, who is transgender, investigates masculinity through collaborative portraiture. Cadet also works in portraiture, concentrating on women and girls, and on themes of migration and family. Jerez examines the family too, but through textured paintings and mixed-media works depicting domestic interiors and vignettes. Satterwhite, initially known for his videos, has shifted toward sculpture and installation, but has retained his focus on science fiction and queer theory.

Though New York City museums were allowed to welcome visitors as of August 24, the Studio Museum in Harlem, which has been closed since 2018 to facilitate construction of its new home, has not yet said when it expects to open to the public. Russell is hopeful that the museum’s remote efforts, including studio visits and online public programs, can continue to attract and expand its audience.

“When we think of what a responsible and emotionally intelligent future should be for institutions,” she said, “I’m hopeful that this work can help get us there.”