

## ARTnews

### Anonymous Was A Woman Names 2023 Winners, Including Artists Dindga McCannon, Carolina Caycedo, Barbara Kasten, Amanda Ross-Ho

BY MAXIMILIANO DURÓN | December 14, 2023 10:10am



Amanda Ross-Ho, *ALL THAT JAZZ (KNIFE EDGE/PLACES)*, 2023. PHOTO MARIO GALUCCI/COURTESY THE ARTIST; ILY2, PORTLAND, OREGON; AND MITCHELL-INNES AND NASH, NEW YORK

Anonymous Was A Woman, the grant-making nonprofit that has awarded over \$7 million to women-identifying artists since 1996, has named the 15 winners of its 2023 grants. Each recipient will receive an unrestricted prize of \$25,000 each.

This year's winners, who are nominated and then selected by a five-person jury (both anonymous), range in age from 42 (Brooklyn-based Steffani Jemison) to 87 (Chicago-based Barbara Kasten), with five artists being in their 40s. Typically, AWAW gives out ten awards annually, but this year three of the prizes were funded by Meraki Artist Award, an initiative by an anonymous Boston philanthropist, while the other two by anonymous donors.

The other winners include Carolina Caycedo, Liz Collins, Stanya Kahn, Athena LaTocha, Candice Lin, Suchitra Mattai, Dindga McCannon, linn meyers, Erika Rane, Amanda Ross-Ho, Drew Shiflett, Cauleen Smith, and Saya Woolfalk.

"This year's nominations were particularly impressive," artist and AWAW founder Susan Unterberg, who does not sit on the jury, told *ARTnews*. "Hopefully, the world will see more of their work in the coming years. The winners are a really exciting group, not completely unknown if you look at their resumes, but I would say they are unknown to most people—their names aren't getting big prizes and they aren't the ones we hear about, which seems to skew the idea that women aren't doing so well."

In addition to Kasten, only two artists are based outside of New York and California: Dindga McCannon (in Philadelphia) and linn Meyers (Washington, D.C.). In an interview with *ARTnews*, McCannon said that the prize will enable her to set up a studio in New York to continue work on her "Blues Queens" project, honoring female

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musicians, help support the careers of two younger artists, trips to India and Ghana next year, and “buy all the art supplies that I can imagine I need,” she said.

McCannon, who is 76 and whose work has become more visible in the art world since its inclusion in the 2017 exhibition “We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–85” at the Brooklyn Museum, continued, “Mentally, it’s an affirmation of my struggles for the last 55 years. It makes it even more worth after all this time, even though I didn’t really need anyone to tell me that, but it’s good to be recognized—while I’m still breathing. I’m closer to 80 than anything else.”

Los Angeles–based artist Carolina Caycedo, 45, said she will use the funds to focus on her current project “We Place Life at the Center,” which will be the focus of an exhibition and publication at the Vincent Price Art Museum in Monterey Park, California, next year as part of the Getty Foundation’s PST ART: Art & Science Collide exhibition initiative. The project, focusing on how communities across the Americas use art in their activism for environmental justice, will also include a number of virtual and in-person gatherings, which “this grant is going to allow me to redistribute funds to these communities.”

She continued, “I feel very honored to be in such a list. What really connects me to this grant is the feminine genealogy that has been constructed. That resonates a lot with some of my practice—the construction of very personal genealogies.”

The list of nearly 300 past recipients is a who’s who of today’s leading artists, many of whom received the award at critical points in their careers. Among them are Carrie Mae Weems (2007), Cecilia Vicuña (1999), Mickalene Thomas (2013), Joan Semmel (2007), Betye Saar (2004), Senga Nengudi (2005), Lynn Hershman Leeson (2014), and the late Laura Aguilar (2000).

“For any artist who’s out there applying for anything, don’t give up—keep trying,” McCannon said. “Sometimes, it might take us years, but you have to be in it to win it, and don’t get discouraged. I know that happens to myself and a lot of other artists: we apply for things and don’t get them. You constantly get a rejection notices, but you have to see beyond that.”

Unterberg, who revealed her identity in 2018, added, “Unfortunately, the need remains urgent for what we do because, unfortunately, gender inequality persists. And artists continue to be under increasingly deteriorating conditions, women, in particular. What we do, I think, is still urgent and necessary.”

The full list of recipients follows below. More information on each winner can be found on the AWAW website.

**Carolina Caycedo**, 45, California

**Liz Collins**, 55, New York

**Steffani Jemison**, 42, New York

**Stanya Kahn**, 55, California

**Barbara Kasten**, 87, Illinois

**Athena LaTocha**, 54, New York

**Candice Lin**, 44, California

**Suchitra Mattai**, 50, California

**Dindga McCannon**, 76, Pennsylvania

**linn meyers**, 55, Washington, D.C.

**Erika Rane**, 58, New York

**Amanda Ross-Ho**, 48, California

**Drew Shiflett**, 72, New York

**Cauleen Smith**, 56, California

**Saya Woolfalk**, 44, New York