Twenty-eight MacArthur Fellows selected for *Toward Common Cause*

Multi-site exhibition organized by the Smart Museum of Art to open in summer 2021

Twenty-eight MacArthur Fellows have been selected to participate in *Toward Common Cause: Art, Social Change, and the MacArthur Fellows Program at 40*, an expansive multi-venue exhibition organized by the Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago in collaboration with more than two dozen exhibition, programmatic, and research partner organizations across Chicago. The exhibition, which celebrates the 40th anniversary of the MacArthur Fellows Program, will encompass a broad spectrum of contemporary artistic practice, including community-based projects realized in public spaces as well as solo and group presentations in multiple museum, gallery, and community spaces. The full list of participating artists is below and online at the exhibition website, towardcommoncause.org.

“This project began three years ago with a sense of purpose that has only grown more urgent. Art is a vital social resource, especially in times defined by division, pandemic, and vitriol. In the midst of multiple calamities, I have been afforded the unimaginable privilege of working with this group of artists as they met and mentored youth, forged alliances to confront the disproportionate impacts of environmental pollution, and prepared to share their creative vision with all of us across Chicago. Their work has kept me from giving in to despair and offers a daily reminder that there is beauty and goodness in the world, that individual and collective action can change people’s lives,” said Abigail Winograd, MacArthur Fellows Program Fortieth Anniversary Exhibition Curator at the Smart Museum.

*Toward Common Cause* will open in summer 2021. The exhibition uses the idea of “the commons” to explore the current socio-political moment, in which questions of inclusion, exclusion, ownership, and rights of access are constantly being challenged across a wide array of human endeavors. It will be realized through collaboration with multiple exhibition sites as well as programmatic partners in neighborhoods across the city. The current list of partners is available below.
“The MacArthur Fellows Program is so pleased to support this ambitious exhibition as a way of connecting the work of MacArthur Fellows with local communities in the city of Chicago, MacArthur’s home city. Coinciding with the 40th anniversary of the MacArthur Fellows Program, which recognizes and supports creative pursuits across all fields and disciplines, the exhibition will address themes and issues that reach across disciplines and approaches. In the face of today’s unprecedented challenges, Toward Common Cause makes a strong case for the vital role of creative thinking in imagining a better, more equitable future,” said Marlies Carruth, MacArthur Fellows Program Director. “Toward Common Cause is a profoundly collaborative project and the Smart Museum is thrilled to move beyond its own walls in partnership with these exhibition, program, and research partners across Chicago. I hope that the exhibition will foster broader and deeper relationships between artists, institutions, and communities while creating a space for us to reflect on what it means to support a vibrant cultural community for all,” said Amina Dickerson, Co-Interim Director of the Smart Museum.

Additional details about Toward Common Cause—including exhibition dates, visitor information for each venue, related programs, and a full checklist of works and projects—will be made available at a later date through the full companion website, towardcommoncause.org.

### Participating artists

- **Njideka Akunyili Crosby**, b. 1983, Enugu, Nigeria; MacArthur Fellow, 2017
- **Ida Applebroog**, b. 1929, Bronx, New York, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 1998
- **Dawoud Bey**, b. 1953, Queens, New York, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 2017
- **Mark Bradford**, b. 1962, Los Angeles, California, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 2009
- **Mel Chin**, b. 1951, Houston, Texas; MacArthur Fellow, 2019
- **Nicole Eisenman**, b. 1965, Verdun, France; MacArthur Fellow, 2015
- **Wendy Ewald**, b. 1951, Detroit, Michigan, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 1992
- **Jeffrey Gibson**, b. 1972, Native American, Mississippi Band of Choctaw, Cherokee; MacArthur Fellow, 2019
- **Guillermo Gómez-Peña**, b. 1955, Mexico City, Mexico; MacArthur Fellow, 1991
- **David Hammons**, b. 1943, Springfield, Illinois, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 1991
- **Alfredo Jaar**, b. 1956, Santiago de Chile, Chile; MacArthur Fellow, 1998
- **Toba Khedoori**, b. 1964, Sydney, Australia; MacArthur Fellow, 2002
- **Whitfield Lovell**, b. 1959, New York, New York, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 2007
- **Rick Lowe**, b. 1961, Alabama, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 2014
- **Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle**, b. 1961, Madrid, Spain; MacArthur Fellow, 2001
- **Amalia Mesa-Bains**, b. 1943, Santa Clara, California, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 1992
- **Trevor Paglen**, b. 1974, Maryland, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 2017
- **Fazal Sheikh**, b. 1965, New York, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 2005
- **Shahzia Sikander**, b. 1969, Lahore, Pakistan; MacArthur Fellow, 2006
Kara Walker, b. 1969, California, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 1997  
Carrie Mae Weems, b. 1953, Oregon, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 2013  
Fred Wilson, b. 1954, New York, United States; MacArthur Fellow, 1999  
Xu Bing, b. 1955, Chongqing, China; MacArthur Fellow, 1999

**Partner organizations**

**Exhibition venues**
- Arts + Public Life
- BBF Family Services
- Chicago Housing Authority
- DuSable Museum of African American History
- Hyde Park Art Center
- Jane Addams Hull-House Museum
- Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts
- Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago
- Museum of Contemporary Photography
- National Museum of Mexican Art
- National Public Housing Museum
- Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society
- Newberry Library
- School of the Art Institute of Chicago
- Smart Museum of Art
- South Side Community Art Center
- Stony Island Arts Bank
- Sweet Water Foundation
- Weinberg/Newton Gallery

**Community and programmatic partners**
- Casa Michoacán
- Centro Romero
- Columbia College Chicago Diane Dammeyer Initiative
- Public Media Institute
- SkyART

**University of Chicago and research partners**
- Center for Latin American Studies
- Center for Native American and Indigenous Research, Northwestern University
- Department of Anthropology
- School of Freshwater Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry
- Harris School of Public Policy
- Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation
- D’Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies, Newberry Library
About Toward Common Cause

*Toward Common Cause: Art, Social Change, and the MacArthur Fellows Program at 40* is organized by the Smart Museum of Art in collaboration with exhibition, programmatic, and research partners across Chicago. It is supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

**MacArthur Foundation**

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**Allstate.**

*Toward Common Cause* is curated by Abigail Winograd, MacArthur Fellows Program Fortieth Anniversary Exhibition Curator, Smart Museum of Art.

**About the Smart Museum of Art**

The Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago is a site for rigorous inquiry and exchange that encourages the examination of complex issues through the lens of art objects and artistic practice. Through strong community and scholarly partnerships, the Museum incorporates diverse ideas, identities, and experiences into its exhibitions and collections, academic initiatives, and public programming. The Smart first opened in 1974. Admission is always free.

**Smart Museum of Art**

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