

NEWCITY Art

Reviews, profiles and news about art in Chicago

March 2015

News: Chicago Collaboration Among 2015 Joyce Awards Recipients



From left to right; Sanford Biggers (photo credit Alex Freund), Sandra Delgado (photo credit Janna Giacoppo), Nari Ward (courtesy of the artist Lehmann Maupin New York and Hong Kong) and Roberto Carlos Lange (photo credit Molly Donahue).

The Joyce Foundation recently announced the four collaborative teams that are the recipients of the 2015 Joyce Awards, receiving an award in the sum of \$50,000 each. The four partnerships are between artists of color and prominent arts and cultural organizations within the Great Lakes region in order to present new work specifically designed to engage with the communities where the projects will take root, while also serving as a model for the rest of the country.

This year's awardees hail from boisterous art cities and include Helado Negro (moniker for musician and composer Roberto Carlos Lange) pairing with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra's Liquid Music Series from the Twin Cities, Jamaican-born artist Nari Ward and Detroit's Power House Productions, Colombian-American actress and playwright Sandra Delgado in collaboration with Chicago's Teatro Vista and interdisciplinary artist Sanford Biggers in partnership with the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD).

Regarding this year's recipients, Joyce's senior program officer for culture Angelique Power says in an email exchange, "This current crop of Joyce Awardees reflects the essence of the work we fund at Joyce and is a perfect microcosm of the art world at this moment. Electronica artists and symphonies, an actor/playwright creating an interactive theatrical experience. And Detroit—this amazing art-centric city on the rise—landed two awardees; one transforming a museum into a dynamic inter-disciplinary performance realm, the other taking spectacular sculpture out of the galleries and placing it instead in the heart of an outdoor skate park. The art world is all about this type of fusion, reimagining of space, blurring of boundaries and making art come to life in magnificent, moving ways."

moniquemeloche

451 N Paulina Street, Chicago 60622

312 243 2129 moniquemeloche.com

With the award, Negro will stage “Island Universe Story,” his electronica music experience at the new Ordway Concert Hall on March 21, 2015. Ward will create a dramatic sculpture for an unused lot that was freshly transformed into Ride It Sculpture Park. Sandra Delgado will stage an interactive theater experience based on La Habana Madrid, a 1960s Chicago nightclub. Biggers and MOCAD will create a multidisciplinary piece of work called “Subjective Cosmology.” Reflecting on her project and her recent award, in the press release Delgado says, “Ever since my father told me about the long gone nightclub La Habana Madrid, I knew I had to bring back this lost part of Chicago’s history and shed light on the Latinos who helped build and shape this great city. The Joyce Award allows me to create meaningful work in and about the city I love and provides Teatro Vista and me the time, space and artists to bring this musical, technicolor, politically charged era back to life.”

Going in depth to Joyce’s selection process, Power explains that they accept letters of inquiry first from six cities, which include Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Indianapolis, Milwaukee and Minneapolis/St. Paul. Out of the hundred or so letters they receive, they choose eighteen to twenty and invite them to submit complete proposals. A national review panel (the names of whom remain confidential so as they are not solicited/contacted) is then selected to narrow that number down further until selections have been made. Power elaborates on what they are looking for in an ideal Joyce Award candidate: “One, the artist’s idea needs to be one that is fresh, extremely relevant to the city where it’s proposed and give a sense that it needs to be done at this moment. It also has to somehow involve partners or the “community” (as defined by the artist) in the creative process. Audience can’t be an after-thought. Community engagement can’t be code for a marketing plan. And as for the organization, there has to be a reason why this organization is commissioning this work from this artist. What does it stand to gain? How will the artist be able to help lead the organization to new places?”

The Joyce Awards began in 2003 and has now been active for twelve years, commissioning over forty projects, investing more than \$2 million into artist projects. Learn more about the 2015 artists and their projects here. (Mahjabeen Syed)