

PRESS RELEASE

Jerome Foundation Announces the 2025 Jerome Hill Artist Fellows

ST. PAUL, MN, January 15, 2025 — Jerome Foundation is pleased to announce the 2025 Jerome Hill Artist Fellows, awarding 45 early career artists based in Minnesota and New York City. Fellows receive \$60,000 over three consecutive years (\$20,000 each year) in support of flexible, self-designed plans for their creative endeavors. The Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship supports artists working in and across multiple artistic fields, including dance; film; literature; music; technology centered arts; theater, performance, and spoken word; and visual arts.

Jerome Foundation seeks to serve artists who take creative risks in exploring, expanding, imagining, or re-imagining creative practices and experiences; reclaiming or reviving traditional forms in original ways; and/or questioning, challenging, or disrupting cultural norms. This three-year Fellowship supports artists who embrace their roles as part of a larger community of artists and citizens, and who consciously work with a sense of service and responsibility.

President and CEO Eleanor Savage shared, “This Fellowship recognizes the essential roles artists play in cultivating thriving and evolving communities and seeks to nurture their imaginative artistic pursuits. Jerome Foundation is honored to welcome this group of creative changemakers, and we are eager for the boundless possibilities that will emerge from their collective curiosity and risk-taking.”

Panels composed of artists, curators, artistic leaders, and arts administrators reviewed a total of 895 applicants, identifying 105 as finalists for fuller discussion in advance of recommending a slate of the 45 Fellows to the Jerome Board of Directors for approval. In their deliberations, panels considered applicants’ creative risk-taking and innovative approaches, clarity of purpose and vision, engagement with and impact on their creative community and artistic field, as well as their alignment with Jerome’s values of risk, innovation, and humility. In reaching the final roster of Fellows, panels were additionally charged with recommending to the Jerome Board a cohort that prioritizes equity and collectively captures the energy and diversity of their respective fields.

At their meeting on December 15, 2024, the Board unanimously and enthusiastically approved the panel-recommended 45 Fellowships supporting 17 artists from Minnesota and 28 artists based in New York City. This year’s cohort exemplifies Jerome Foundation’s commitment to diversity across all fields, with 93% of the Fellows identifying

as Black, Native American, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Arab American, or as multi-racial or multi-ethnic.

In addition to financial resources, Fellows are offered professional development opportunities, including one-on-one coaching and peer gathering opportunities through the MAP Fund's Scaffolding for Practicing Artists (SPA) program, designed to help artists individually and collectively consider, invent, and co-devise solutions tailored to their specific practice and aesthetic ambitions. Fellows also receive financial well-being workshops with artist and adviser Amy Elaine Smith.

"Approving the panel recommendations for the Fellowship grants is a highlight of the year for the Directors of the Jerome Foundation," said Jerome Board Chair Kate Barr. "During times of unrest and uncertainty, artists are powerful catalysts for healing, dialogue, and change. Jerome Foundation's flexible funding over the course of three years, in combination with the individualized professional development through the MAP Fund, offers artists the resources to be emergent and adaptive in their approaches to vibrant, sustainable careers and innovative in their cultural contributions." The Jerome Board of Directors also includes Salome Asega, Dr. Kate Beane, Sarah Bellamy, Helga Davis, Daniel Alexander Jones, Lori Pourier, Rick Scott, Sanjit Sethi, and Janet Wong.

Altogether, the Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship program is an investment of \$3.1 million in individual artists, including \$2.7 million in direct funds to artists plus additional support for the individualized professional and financial well-being support.

"Through its central support of artists at early stages in their careers, this Fellowship continues the legacy and practice of Jerome Hill himself in an exciting way," stated Jerome Members Chair Sara-Maud Lydiatt Vanier. The Jerome Members also include Linda Earle, Phyllis Goff, Libby Hlavka, and Nicholas Slade.

Please join us in celebrating these artists!

The 2025–2028 Jerome Hill Artist Fellows are listed by field (and region) as follows:

DANCE

Sam Aros-Mitchell (MN)
Noelle Awadallah (MN)
Wendell Gray II (NYC)
Orlando Hernández (NYC)

Alys Ayumi Ogura (MN)
ms. z tye (NYC)
Ogemdi Ude (NYC)

FILM

Coleen Baik (NYC)
Jessica Beshir (NYC)
Elizabeth Chatelain (MN)
Tommy Franklin (MN)

Dickie Drew Hearts (NYC)
Mohammed Sheikh (MN)
Bren Wyona (NYC)

LITERATURE

Olákiítán Adéolá (NYC)
S. Erin Batiste (NYC)
Liana Mack (NYC)
Aurora Masum-Javed (MN)

sadé powell (NYC)
Jasmine Reid (NYC)
A. E. Wynter (MN)

MUSIC

Tarek Abdelqader (MN)
Melanie Dyer (NYC)
Kengchakaj Kengkarnka (NYC)
Charmaine Lee (NYC)

Taylor Ngiri Seaberg (MN)
Mary Prescott (MN and NYC)
Cleo Reed (NYC)

TECHNOLOGY CENTERED ARTS

Zainab Aliyu (NYC)
Caroline Garcia (NYC)
Or Zubalsky (NYC)

THEATER, PERFORMANCE AND SPOKEN WORD

Calley N. Anderson (NYC)
Anooj Bhandari (NYC)
Zola Dee (MN)
Blossom Johnson (MN)

JuCoby Johnson (NYC)
Nancy Ma (NYC)
Oanh Vu (MN)

VISUAL ARTS

Katayoun Amjadi (MN)
Pamela Council (NYC)
Roshan Ganu (MN)
Mo Kong (NYC)

Jeffrey Meris (NYC)
Asif Mian (NYC)
Amy Usdin (MN)

Photos, bios, and Fellowship statements are available at <https://www.jeromefdn.org/jerome-hill-artist-fellows-2025>

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**For downloadable images, go to <https://www.jeromefdn.org/logos>.
Individual artist images are available upon request.**

ABOUT JEROME FOUNDATION

Founded in 1964, Jerome Foundation’s grantmaking mission is to support diverse early career generative artists, culture bearers, and arts leaders who take creative risks, seek innovative approaches, and have a clear creative purpose and vision guided by service to their community. We support artists at this inflection point as a means of nurturing their creative development and production, and the profound and multi-dimensional influence this has on society. We value artists, culture bearers, and arts leaders and their essential roles in cultivating thriving and evolving communities. We center and invest in diverse artists and arts leaders across creative fields who are imaginative changemakers engaged in building an ecosystem of belonging and care for the arts, for its creators, and for the communities they serve.

As a Foundation, Jerome centers intersectional racial equity in our commitments and practices, acknowledging that our assets were derived from our founder, Jerome Hill’s family company, the Great Northern Railway. We are committed to eliminating disparities and improving access and outcomes to ensure the long-term viability of artists, culture bearers, and arts organizations, prioritizing those whose cultural narratives and practices have been historically, and currently are, excluded, underrepresented, and marginalized. Guided by our equity commitments and practices, the Foundation strives for values alignment in our grantmaking and the stewardship of our assets. The Foundation seeks to foster a diverse, loving, and nurturing culture informed by our values of risk, innovation, and humility.

Jerome Foundation honors the legacy, artistic interests, and humanistic concerns of its founder, Jerome Hill—an Academy Award-winning filmmaker, painter, photographer, composer, and supporter of the arts and artists in the United States and Europe. In 2024, as the Foundation crossed the threshold of our 60th anniversary, we celebrated grant support totaling \$138,503,910 to over 3,000 artists and arts organizations. Jerome Hill started the foundation with \$2.7 million.

ABOUT THE MAP FUND

[The MAP Fund](#) invests in contemporary performing arts as the critical foundation of imagining—and ultimately co-creating—a more equitable and vibrant society. Since 1989, MAP has championed cultural equity and formal innovation in performance practices with an investment of nearly \$40 million. Over three decades, thousands of artists have received grants and strategic support for groundbreaking projects that interrogate presumptive cultural norms, challenge entrenched ideologies, and remind us of our shared humanity. Activating a desire to support the inherent dignity, humanity, and worthiness of artists, MAP Fund created Scaffolding for Practicing Artists (SPA), which provides one-on-one coaching and peer gatherings. SPA takes an artist-centered approach that honors the sacredness of process in the often product-driven creative sectors—nonprofit and for-profit. In SPA, which is free of judgment and competition, artists can bring their full selves.

ABOUT AMY ELAINE SMITH

[Amy Smith](#) is a dance and theater artist, educator, and facilitator. She works to dismantle oppressive structures in non-profit organizations and other groups so that artists and low-income folks can achieve collective liberation. She does this through financial well-being workshops, one-on-one work with clients giving financial advice and doing tax preparation, consulting with arts organizations, co-facilitating anti-racism sessions with co-facilitators of color, and as a dance and theater educator.