



Office for the Arts at Harvard

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PRESS RELEASE

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Meet the 2023 Artist Development Fellowship Recipients

THE OFFICE FOR THE ARTS ANNOUNCES 12 UNDERGRADUATE ARTISTS TO RECEIVE ARTIST DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIPS

The Office for the Arts at Harvard and the Office of the Dean for the Arts and Humanities announce the 2023 recipients of the annual Artist Development Fellowships. The program supports the artistic development of students demonstrating unusual accomplishments and/or evidence of significant artistic promise. The program is administered by the OFA, the Office of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships, and the Office of Career Services, and is made possible with the support of the Office of the President at Harvard University.

Council on the Arts members at the time of selection were: Robin Kelsey (Chair), Shirley Carter Burden Professor of Photography, History of Photography and American Art, and Dean of Arts and Humanities; Alicia Anstead NF '08, Associate Director for Programming, Office for the Arts; Jack Megan, Director, Office for the Arts; Federico Cortese, Senior Lecturer on Music, Conductor of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra; Elizabeth Epsen, Interim Communications and Programs Manager for Dance; Jorie Graham, Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory; Phillip Howze, Associate Senior Lecturer on Playwriting, Theater, Dance & Media; Ruth Stella Lingford, Professor of the Practice of Animation, Film Study Center Fellow; Laura Rodriguez (LROD), Interim Head of Dance and Lecturer in Theater, Dance & Media; Matt Saunders '97, Professor of Arts, Film and Visual Studies; Elaine Scarry, Walter M. Cabot Professor of Aesthetics and the General Theory of Value and Senior Fellow of the Society of Fellows and Yosvany Terry, Senior Lecturer on Music, Director of Jazz Bands.

The program is open to sophomores and juniors currently enrolled in Harvard College. For further application information, visit the OFA at ofa.fas.harvard.edu or the Office of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships at uraf.harvard.edu.

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LITERATURE

Chase Melton '25, a resident of Adams House concentrating in English, is awarded a Fellowship to write a collection of Berlin-based short stories within the tradition of literary urban walking and engage in writing workshops at The Reader Berlin. Melton is the editorial chair of *The Harvard Wave*, a staff writer for *The Harvard Crimson*, and an executive board member of the Creative Writing Collective. He is also a tutor at the Harvard Writing Center, a finalist for *The Harvard Advocate's* Begley Prize for Short Fiction, and the recipient of an honorable mention for the Harvard Writing Program's Ecker Short Story Prize.

Vicki Xu '24, a resident of Currier House pursuing a joint concentration in Computer Science and Mathematics, is awarded a Fellowship to support the research and writing of a collection of Thailand-based short stories in the environmental literature genre. Xu was an editorial assistant for the *Los Angeles Review of Books* and currently serves as the features co-editor for *The Harvard Advocate* and a writer for *Fifteen Minutes*, the longform magazine of *The Harvard Crimson*. She is also a staff blogger for the OFA Harvard Arts Blog. She has been published in *Split Lip Magazine* and was a finalist for the 2022 *Passages North* Waasnode Short Story Prize.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY

Anne-Charlotte Gillard '25, a resident of Adams House pursuing a joint concentration in the History of Science and Art, Film, and Visual Studies, is awarded a Fellowship to research and create a multimedia book exploring the tangible and intangible impact of climate change in alpine Switzerland. As an intern for the Open Environmental Data Project, Gillard has conducted research on the accessibility of climate and environmental health data for use by governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and communities to support community resilience and inform local environmental decision-making. She has also done research for Stephanie Morain at Baylor College of Medicine, Center for Medical Ethics and Health Policy. Gillard is a member of Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard.

MUSIC

Mercedes Ferreira-Dias '24, a resident of Adams House enrolled in the Harvard/Berklee joint five-year program and concentrating in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, is awarded a Fellowship to support the composition of songs and soundscapes inspired through cultural immersion and interviews. A first-generation Venezuelan American singer-songwriter from Miami, Florida, Ferreira-Dias's artistic practice revolves around the use of songwriting as a poetic archival process. Her work explores themes of family, childhood, grief, spirituality, queerness, and love. Through songwriting and performance, Mercedes creates opportunities to peel back the layers of generational trauma and develop a more robust understanding of inherited histories and the present self. She has produced, directed, and performed in a series of exhibitions, concerts, and showcases, including performances in Los Angeles, Boston, and Miami.

Nico Vallenás '23, a resident of Eliot concentrating in Chemical & Physical Biology with a secondary in Music, is awarded a Fellowship to study Andean music at the Apulaya Center for Andean Culture in Cusco, Peru. A jazz and pop saxophonist, pianist, composer, and producer, Vallenás is the manager of the Harvard Jazz Band and a musician in the Harvard Jazz Combo Initiative, the Yard Bops, and Space Cafeteria. Notable performances include Yardfest 2022, Battle for Yardfest 2022 and 2023, and the 2022 Santo Domingo Jazz Festival. Vallenás has studied under Yosvany Terry, Don Braden '85, and Landon Morrison.

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THEATER

Kayla Bey '25, a resident of Mather House concentrating in Theater, Dance & Media, is awarded a Fellowship to write a play about the Great Migration, cultural differences between the American North and South, and queerness. Bey is a theater technical assistant at Agassiz Theatre and a lighting designer for Harvard BlackCAST, for which she also serves as vice president. An experienced playwright, she has written original plays for the Black Playwright's Festival and plans to make her directorial debut in the fall with a fully staged play.

Cas Li '25, a resident of Currier House joint concentrating in Computer Science and Theater, Dance & Media, is awarded a Fellowship for a two-week independent study to engage and investigate the New York City theater community as curated by singer-songwriter and playwright Stew Stewart. Currently vice president of the Asian Student Arts Project, Li co-wrote and co-directed *52! A Statistics Cabaret*, directed *ISCARIOT: The Musical*, and looks forward to co-directing *Footloose* and music directing *White House Princess* this fall. As a writer, Li has studied with Valeria Luiselli and Jamaica Kincaid and is currently working on book, lyrics, and music for *while True*, a contemporary pop-rock musical that examines what it means to be human in the face of world-changing artificial intelligence technologies.

Jonah Sorscher '25, a resident of Mather House enrolled in the Harvard/Berklee dual degree program and pursuing a joint concentration in History & Literature and Theater, Dance & Media, is awarded a Fellowship to intern with the investigative theater company The Civilians and study composition under the mentorship of musical theater composer Adam Guettel. Sorscher, who is an executive co-director of Harvard CityStep, has performed in productions since he was nine and continues to perform on campus. His play *Year of the Pig* was featured in the 2022 Harvard Playwrights' Festival, and he is currently writing his own musical which he plans to produce at Harvard next year. An original composition from the musical will be performed at CurtainUp, Berklee's 24th annual showcase of original musical theater this month.

VISUAL ARTS

Isabel Haro '24, a resident of Dudley Community concentrating in Art, Film, and Visual Studies with a secondary in Music, is awarded a Fellowship to create a series of abstract paintings exploring spiritual thought in the Buddhist tradition, while also taking courses at the Art Students League, studying sumi-e painting, and conducting research at the Rubin Museum of Art. Her painting thesis for the AFVS department investigates love and intimate relationships through the Buddhist lens. Haro works as a Ho Family student guide at the Harvard Art Museums and a studio arts proctor for the Harvard First-Year Arts Program. She previously worked as a research partner at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, with New Renaissance Artist Elizabeth A. Baker. Haro is also a musician and composer, and her most recent piece will be premiered by the collective Lovemusic in a concert organized by the Harvard Group for New Music.

Hannah Tsai Kim '24, a resident of Lowell House pursuing a joint concentration in Art, Film, and Visual Studies and History & Literature, is awarded a Fellowship to support research and development of a short film about two best friends experiencing the build-up of the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. Her art is oriented towards the experience of spirit and the creation of magic in her family lineages, cultural histories, and community collaborations. Created at the intersection of art and ethnic studies, her stories are deeply personal, research-informed, process-focused works about diaspora identity, local history, and kinship. She was awarded the Carol F. Pforzheimer Schlesinger Library Student Research Fellowship and the Jeffrey R. Gu Memorial Fund for Study in Taiwan. She is also an artist-in-residence for *The Harvard Advocate*.

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Micaela Rosen '23, a resident of Mather House concentrating in Art, Film, and Visual Studies, is awarded a Fellowship to attend large format and wet plate collodion photography workshops at Penland School of Craft in North Carolina. A multi-disciplinary (anti-disciplinary) artist, Rosen works in visual media and performance. Rosen has focused on making photographs, drawings, and prints. Her work relates to queerness, family, bodies, (dis)comfort, memory and forgetting, community and isolation, grief and love and wanting. In 2022, Rosen had a showing at the Static Arts Collective Summer Gallery in New York, and this year had an exhibit, *Contact Magic*, held in The Channel at the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts.

Tamar Sella '25, a resident of Adams House concentrating in Art, Film, and Visual Studies, is awarded a Fellowship to develop a project engaged in bookmaking, drawing, and writing to explore German-Jewish memory and imagination in Berlin and Nuremberg. Sella worked this spring as a student archivist and librarian in the Adams House archives and is a leader in design and carpentry for the Musical Chairs student art installation to be on display during Harvard's annual ARTS FIRST Festival (April 27-30). As a curator, Sella collaborated with the Judaica Division at Widener Library in creating the Harvard Haggadot Exhibit at the Loeb Music Library which explored the history and diversity of Jewish text. She also served as the 2022 First-Year Musical Set Designer and Tech Director.

The Office for the Arts at Harvard supports student engagement in the arts and integrates the arts into University life. Through its programs and services, the OFA teaches, mentors, and fosters student artmaking, connects students to accomplished artists, commissions new work, and partners with local, national, and international constituencies. By supporting the development of students as artists and cultural stewards, the OFA works to enrich society and shape communities in which the arts are a vital part of life. For more information about the OFA, call 617.495.8676, or visit ofa.fas.harvard.edu.

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships serves Harvard College undergraduates seeking to supplement their formal education with research and fellowship opportunities during term time, over the summer, or after graduation. For more information on research and fellowships at Harvard, call 617.495.5095 or visit uraf.harvard.edu.

The Office of Career Services is dedicated to educating, advising, and connecting students to opportunities for summer and post-graduation in order to foster their intellectual, social, and personal transformations. OCS serves students of Harvard College, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, and Harvard Extension School degree programs. For more information on research and fellowships at Harvard, call 617.495.2595 or visit ocs.fas.harvard.edu.

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