

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith Receives Artists' Legacy Foundation 2023 Artist Award

Annual \$25,000 Award Honors Groundbreaking First Nation Artist, Activist, and Educator



Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, *I See Red: Going Forward, Looking Back*, 1996, mixed media on canvas, 50 x 120 inches. Image courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

Oakland, CA...The Artists' Legacy Foundation is pleased to announce Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (b. 1940, citizen of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation) as the recipient of the 2023 Artist Award. Smith's paintings, works on paper, and sculptures offer poignant and meaningful perspectives on contemporary social issues, politics, and the environment, and critically examine representations of Native Americans in pop culture and art. Smith is also a social activist and organizer, whose projects have encouraged a more holistic perspective on American art by advocating for the inclusion of Native American artists in the Western canon, and rallying for preservation of Native American artwork sites.

The Artist Award is an unrestricted merit award of \$25,000 given annually to a painter or sculptor who has made significant contributions to their field and whose work shows evidence of the hand. Each year, ten artists are proposed for the Award by five anonymous nominators. Like the nominators, the jury of three comprises art-world peers who make the final decision.

Board president Squeak Carnwath states, "I have long been a fan of Jaune Quick-to-See Smith's art. Her work is bold and brave, as she is as a person and artist. She is quick to call out injustice to women and the oppressed. She is a model citizen who cares for her community."

The 2023 Artist Award jury consisted of three artists: Brenda Goodman, Lewis deSoto, and Juan Sánchez.

“Her heart. Her spirit. Her emotions and of course her tremendous talent makes her a great artist,” says Brenda Goodman. “She takes risks - always searching for her truth. I love that. I’m thrilled that she has received this beautiful award.”

Lewis deSoto states, “Jaune Quick-to-See Smith is a formidable artist, capable of turning paint into a political tool, a semiotic text, a historical document, a vastly rich emotional landscape that embodies the desires, dreams of Native people in America.”

“Her art cuts through complexity and lies of colonialism, the governmental oppression of native peoples and the destruction of our natural environment,” adds Juan Sánchez. “With that visual intensity her art also embraces, celebrates, inspires, and elevates life. She is a generous spirit who has influenced generations of artists, me included. She is worthy of the Artist Award, and I am cheerfully celebrating.”

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith says, “I am so honored to be selected by such a prestigious group of peers--I have followed each of them, I have their work memorized in my head. I know how brilliant they are, which makes this so way over the top for me.”

Smith’s artwork layers familiar imagery - such as maps, animals, garments, and figures - with text and painterly abstractions that elicit multiple interpretations. Combining personal memories with stories of past generations, Smith connects her life story with the larger history of Native American ancestors. Her work explores and reveals injustices, triumphs, and the ongoing challenges that Native Americans face. Her artwork also highlights the interdependence of all living things, linking humans with the land, animals, and each other.

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith has played an important role as an educator, organizer, and activist, providing inspiration and mentorship to communities around the country. Her curatorial practice brings together artists from many Native American tribes, creating meaningful collaborations beyond the life of the exhibitions. She has curated and co-curated over 30 group exhibitions featuring Native American artists, often in a collaborative format, including *The Grey Canyon Artists* (1980); *Women of Sweetgrass, Cedar and Sage*; *Contemporary Art by Native American Women* (1985-87); *The Submuloc Show / Columbus Wobs: A Visual Commentary on the Columbus Quincentennial from the Perspective of America’s First People* (1992-94); and *The Land Carries Our Ancestors: Contemporary Art by Native Americans*, which is on view through January 15, 2024 at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Gallery of Art.

The Artists’ Legacy Foundation will host an online program in January 2024 featuring a conversation between Smith and Squeak Carnwath, Artists’ Legacy Foundation co-founder and board president.

Please visit artistslegacyfoundation.org for more information about this free event.



Left: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, *Montana Memories: Tierra Roja*, 1989, mixed media on canvas, 69 x 84 inches.
Right: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, *Waltz*, 2002, mixed media on canvas, 72 x 48 inches. Images courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

About Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

Born January 15, 1940 at the St. Ignatius Indian Mission on her reservation, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith is an enrolled Salish member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation, Montana. Smith received an Associate of Arts Degree at Olympic College in Bremerton, Washington in 1960, a BA in Art Education from Framingham State College, Massachusetts in 1976, and an MA in Visual Arts from the University of New Mexico in 1980.

Smith has received numerous awards such as the Academy of Arts and Letters Purchase Award, New York, 1987; the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters Grant, 1996; the Women's Caucus for the Arts Lifetime Achievement, 1997; the College Art Association Women's Award, 2002; Governor's Outstanding New Mexico Woman's Award, 2005; New Mexico Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, 2005; Art Table Artist Honoree, New York, 2011; Visionary Woman Award, Moore College, Pennsylvania, 2011; Living Artist of Distinction Award, Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, 2012; NAEA Ziegfeld Lecture Award, 2014; The Woodson Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award, 2015; and the Archives of American Art Medal, 2023.

She was elected to the National Academy of Art in 2011, and has received four honorary doctorates: Minneapolis College of Art and Design, 1992; Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, 1998; Massachusetts College of Art, 2003; University of New Mexico, Albuquerque 2009.

Smith's work is in the collections of the Cornell Fine Arts Museum, Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida; Museum of Modern Art, Quito, Ecuador; Museum of Mankind, Vienna, Austria; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.; Museum of Modern Art, Brooklyn Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and others.

Smith will be honored with the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art Medal at the 2023 gala on October 24, 2023. *Memory Map*, a traveling retrospective exhibition of Smith's work, originated at the Whitney Museum of American Art and will open at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth on October 15, 2023, and then the Seattle Art Museum on February 29, 2024. Visit the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. to see *The Land Carries Our Ancestors: Contemporary Art by Native Americans*, which Smith curated. It is on view through January 15, 2024.

<https://www.aaa.si.edu/news/recipient-of-the-archives-of-american-art-medal-and-the-lawrence-fleischman-award-announced-2023>

<https://www.themodern.org/exhibition/jaune-quick-see-smith-memory-map>

<https://www.seattleartmuseum.org/Exhibitions/Details?EventId=91241>

<https://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2023/ancestors-contemporary-art-native-americans.html>

About the Artist Award

The Artist Award was launched in 2007 to recognize and honor outstanding visual artists whose primary medium is painting or sculpture. Each year, ten artists are nominated by a selected group of anonymous arts professionals and reviewed by a three-member jury of peers. Since its inception, the Foundation has distributed over \$400,000.

To learn more about the Artist Award and its impact on recipients, watch this video:

<https://vimeo.com/187242534>

About Artists' Legacy Foundation

The Artists' Legacy Foundation stewards the work of Legacy Artists and facilitates their posthumous philanthropy; recognizes outstanding painters and sculptors through awards and grants; and serves as an educational resource for artists, scholars, and the general public.

For more information, please visit artistslegacyfoundation.org or Instagram (@artistslegacyfoundation).

Media Contacts

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