

ARTnews

Sought-After Guggenheim Fellowships Go to Sanford Biggers, Zoe Leonard, Sky Hopinka, More

BY ALEX GREENBERGER April 9, 2020 1:57pm



Steffani Jemison, *Sensus Plenior*, 2017, installation view, at the 2019 Whitney Biennial. RON AMSTUTZ

Each year, the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation gives out a series of **Guggenheim Fellowships**, which are among the most sought-after arts grants in the world. To win one is typically a major achievement, placing

its fellows among the top artists working today, and now, the foundation has revealed the 2020 fellows.

Alongside some of the most important writers, musicians, scholars, and scientists right now, a number of artists appear on the list. Participants in major biennials, most notably last year's Whitney Biennial, have made the cut this year. They include Steffani Jemison, who showed a video focused on the leader of Harlem's Master Mime Ministry and Blitz Bazawule, whose work appeared in the film section. **Sky Hopinka**, who curated a film program for the biennial and was a participant in the 2017 edition, is also a fellow.

Artists who have been the subject of important traveling shows are also among the awardees. Zoe Leonard, whose photo-based installations and sculptures meditating on the passage of time and image circulation were the subject of a survey at the Whitney Museum in 2018, is a fellow this year, and **Sanford Biggers**, whose survey at the Bronx Museum of the Arts in New York was originally expected to open today, won alongside her.

Other artists who received fellowships this year include Leslie Hewitt, who is known for her conceptual works questioning the relationship between sculpture and photography; Eric Gottesman, the cofounder of the artist-run super PAC For Freedoms; A. L. Steiner, whose films, photographs, and performances explore the connection between bodies and their surrounding environments; Chris E. Vargas, the founder of the Museum of Transgender Hirstory and Art; Clifford Owens, whose performances consider the body and race; and Ellen Lesperance, whose show of textile-based works at the Baltimore Museum of Art was temporarily shuttered by a coronavirus closure.

A full list of the 2020 winners can be found on the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation's **website**.