

The 2023 recipients of the ICA’s James and Audrey Foster Prize have distinct, multidisciplinary practices

By [Abigail Lee](#) Globe Correspondent, Updated March 29, 2023, 5:00 a.m.



Cicely Carew (left), Venetia Dale (center), and Yu-Wen Wu (right) are recipients of the 2023 James and Audrey Foster Prize. CICELY CAREW, ADAM KRAUTH PHOTOGRAPHY, EDWARD BOCHES

The Institute of Contemporary Art Boston announced Cicely Carew, Venetia Dale, and Yu-Wen Wu as the recipients of the 2023 James and Audrey Foster Prize on Wednesday.

The biennial prize recognizes “the most interesting art being made in Boston today,” said ICA curatorial assistant Anni A. Pullagura, who selected the recipients. The prize was

established in 1999 to provide artists a monetary award and the opportunity to exhibit their work in the ICA's Fotene Demoulas Gallery.

"I'm really excited about giving each artist a platform, a space to show the range of their practice," Pullagura said. Of the more than 30 artists who were in consideration, each of the three artists work in multiple distinctive disciplines.

Carew is primarily a painter but also works in sculpture, installation, and printmaking to create abstract and vibrant pieces with spiritual undertones. Dale, a trained metalsmith, fashions pewter sculptures and fiber pieces to comment on domesticity and care. Wu uses drawing, sculpture, public art, and other mediums to reflect on immigration, identity, and assimilation.

"This cross-generational trio of artists brings a spectrum of perspectives to this year's exhibition, and we look forward to sharing their vision with all our audiences," Jill Medvedow, the Ellen Matilda Poss Director of the ICA, said in a statement.

The artists will show recent work as well as work created specifically for the exhibit, according to Pullagura. In selecting the artists, Pullagura noticed that each expressed themes of change, in their own lives and in the materials they used, in response to the instability of current times.

For Dale, the prize connects her personal and creative lives. Dale often focuses on her pieces in between tending to her children, and much of her work explores the merging of parenthood and art. "To be recognized by the ICA for this quiet and tender conversation that I've been having with my work, it's such a gift," Dale said.

As each artist prepares for the exhibit, they are experimenting with what they want to display.

"The language of my expression is very broad, so I have a lot of great ideas going through my head, and they're still developing at this point," Wu said.

Carew said she looks forward to being involved in the installation process. She likes to approach installation spontaneously, deciding how to present her works according to what she sees and feels about the space.

“I like to highlight spaces like corners or ceilings and inject new life into the space,” Carew said.

Creating the exhibit will be a collaborative endeavor, said Pullagura. The installation and presentation of the works can vary each prize year. “In previous years, artists have had small galleries devoted to their individual works. In other iterations, it’s been more of a group presentation,” Pullagura said.

Pullagura emphasized that the exhibit allows the artists to gain exposure to new audiences in Boston and ICA visitors from across the country and the world.

“It’s a fantastic way for us to be able to showcase artists who are here in our community,” Pullagura said.

The exhibit will open Aug. 24 and run through Jan. 2.

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