

DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

THE DRIEHAUS MUSEUM LAUNCHES FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM IN ASSOCIATION WITH A TALE OF TODAY CONTEMPORARY ART INITIATIVE

Chicago, IL – June 07, 2019 - The Driehaus Museum has launched *A Tale of Today: Emerging Artists Fellowship* as a two-year pilot program that will engage with four Chicago-based ALAANA (African, Latino, Asian, Arab, and Native American) artists each year to promote their careers and expand their networks using the Museum's resources and its home, the Nickerson Mansion, as a springboard. Leveraging the Museum's new contemporary art series, *A Tale of Today*, as inspiration the Fellowship is designed as a series of professional experiences and artistic encounters. The program is made possible through a grant award from the Joyce Foundation.

The Fellowship is a means to return the historic Nickerson Mansion to one of its initial uses – a creative incubator that supported and inspired young artists. By employing the Nickerson Mansion—renowned as Gilded Age Chicago's "Marble Palace" – as an intimate space for discussion, debate, cultural immersion, and social change, the Fellowship initiative provides key programs to foster mentorship, meaningful interactions with art professionals, public programming experience, career development and opportunities to exhibit artwork through the museum.

"This initiative speaks to our commitment to deepen the conversation surrounding the representation of artists of color and strengthening our field's efforts to effect real change in this regard," said Executive Director, Richard P. Townsend. He continued, "I am grateful to the Joyce Foundation, especially Ellen S. Alberding and Tracie D. Hall, for making the Driehaus Museum's new curatorial and artistic fellowship possible."

The program is led by the Driehaus Museum's first curatorial fellow, Kekeli Sumah, himself an emerging curator, artist, and entrepreneur whose work explores cultural politics and globalization. A native of Ghana, Sumah's efforts have been complemented by formal and informal advice from established curators including Lowery Stokes Sims, former director, The Studio Museum in Harlem, as well as by the senior staff of the Driehaus Museum who will lend oversight and mentorship to Sumah and the Fellows.

The 2019 *A Tale of Today: Emerging Artists Fellows* are: [Darrell McKinney](#), [Jeffly Gabriela Molina](#), [Luis Rodríguez Rosario](#) and [Brittney Leanne Williams](#). Over the course of the year, these artists have access to the Driehaus Museum's space, partners, programs, and staff as they form an ongoing relationship with the Museum and explore the themes of home, housing, belonging, identity, family, and ornament.

"The Driehaus is making a real commitment to address the inequities within the art world and putting it at the forefront of what they are doing," said Curatorial Fellow,

DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

Kekeli Sumah. “It has been a privilege to work with the talented artists who make up the inaugural class of the *A Tale of Today: Emerging Artists Fellowship*. In so many ways, this is just the beginning...”

Broadly the goals of the Fellowship are to provide mentorship and increase access to the marketplace for emerging artists of color which will result in increased opportunities for each artist. In order to track the success of these goals closely, graduates of the Fellowship program will form an alumni network that will maintain close ties to the Museum. The Driehaus will routinely track alumni’s personal, professional, and artistic development and their progress will be used to evaluate the success of the program overall.

The Driehaus Museum will host two discussions featuring the *A Tale of Today: Emerging Artist Fellows*. Kekeli Sumah will be in conversation with the Fellows to discuss their art practice and how they address the questions of home, belonging, and identity through their work.

- Tuesday, June 11, 6 – 7:30 p.m., Brittney Leeanne Williams and Jeffly Gabriela Molina
- Thursday, July 25, 6 – 7:30 p.m., Darrell McKinney and Luis Rodríguez Rosario

The Fellowship will culminate with a pop-up exhibition featuring all four artists at EXPO Chicago at Navy Pier, September 19 – 22, 2019. The presentation will showcase how a Gilded Age mansion can inspire and shape the contemporary landscape.

The *A Tale of Today* initiative launched in March of this year with the opening of the Driehaus Museum’s inaugural contemporary art exhibition featuring the work of Yinka Shonibare CBE. *A Tale of Today* includes exhibitions and programs that explore the Gilded Age and the Museum’s opulent setting through thought provoking art experiences – comparing society, then and now. The exhibition continues through September 29, 2019.

About The Richard H. Driehaus Museum

The Richard H. Driehaus Museum explores the Gilded Age through the art, architecture, and design of the late nineteenth century to the present. The Museum was founded by Richard H. Driehaus, who oversaw the restoration of its home, the Nickerson Mansion. Mr. Driehaus—who has a long history of funding projects in the arts and culture, including historic and contemporary art, and with an emphasis on projects engaging Chicago institutions—subsequently gave the Museum its collection. Once known as Chicago’s “Marble Palace” and located just steps from the Magnificent Mile, the collection of period decorative arts is presented in an immersive experience within the Mansion. Temporary exhibitions organized by the

Driehaus and its partners place the Gilded Age in context, as do vibrant educational

DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

and cultural programs designed to appeal to diverse audiences and illuminate the history, culture, and urban fabric of Chicago.

Address: 40 East Erie Street, Chicago, IL 60611

Phone: (312) 482-8933

Website: driehausmuseum.org

Follow us on social media:

[Facebook.com/RHDriehausMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/RHDriehausMuseum)

[Twitter.com/driehausmuseum](https://twitter.com/driehausmuseum)

[Instagram.com/driehausmuseum](https://www.instagram.com/driehausmuseum)

For more information, please contact:

Liz Tillmanns

The Richard H. Driehaus Museum

tillmanns@driehausmuseum.org

312-874-5909