

ARTnews

Frankenthaler Foundation, Asia Society to Launch Climate Art Awards for Emerging Artists

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An iceberg seen off Ammassalik Island in Eastern Greenland, 2007. AP PHOTO/JOHN MCCONNICO

As part of its larger focus on climate change, [the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation](#) is working with the [Asia Society](#) to launch the [Frankenthaler Climate Art Awards](#). The grants—organized in conjunction with the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the National Gallery of Art, and the Phillips Collection, all based in Washington, D.C.—will go to visual artists currently enrolled in or recently graduated from M.F.A. programs in the United States. Additionally, the U.S. Environmental Defense Fund will promote the award among the environmental advocacy community.

The award is intended to foster awareness among an emerging generation of artists, who will likely face its impact in their lifetimes. “I think it’s a really wonderful example of how urgent this topic is in the minds of art organizations, small and large. It is clearly one of the most pressing issues of our time, and that is reflected in how all these organizations have come together to cooperate around this

award,” András Szántó, whose company provided support in the award’s organization, said in an interview. “Artists should have a voice around the most consequential issues of our time—and certainly, climate change is one of them.”

This is the latest climate change–related initiative taken up by the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, which just this summer expanded its philanthropic initiatives to include a \$10 million donation to the nation’s visual arts institutions. “Building on the Foundation’s recent Frankenthaler Climate Initiative, which supports U.S. art museums in mitigating their own environmental impacts, the Frankenthaler Climate Art Awards seeks to raise further awareness by recognizing artists whose work sheds light on and responds to the climate crisis,” said Elizabeth Smith, executive director of the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, in a statement.

Starting in January, U.S.-based artists and collectives can submit their work on climate change on the (notably paperless) [affiliated website](#). Three recipients will be selected by a jury panel comprised of leaders from the four collaborating institutions, including directors of the institutions that helped launch the awards. The winners will receive a cash prize of \$15,000 each and will be honored at a ceremony at the Kennedy Center in April 2022. A shortlist of finalists will be released in February.

Orville Schell, director of the Center on U.S.-China Relations at Asia Society, said in a statement, “We look forward to discovering what young emerging artists, whose lives are inextricably enmeshed with the climate crisis, have to say about this pivotal issue for humanity.”