



*** EMBARGOED UNTIL 8AM ET on SEPT. 5 ***

THE RABKIN FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES THE WINNERS OF THE 2024 RABKIN PRIZES

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PORTLAND, MAINE (Sept. 5, 2024) – Eight visual arts journalists have been awarded the Rabkin Prize, which celebrates the creative and intellectual contributions of arts writers and comes with a \$50,000 unrestricted award.

The 2024 Rabkin Prize winners are **Greg Allen**, of greg.org; **Holland Cotter**, chief art critic for The New York Times; **Robin Givhan**, senior critic-at-large for The Washington Post; **Thomas Lawson**, a Los Angeles-based artist and writer; **Siddhartha Mitter**, a freelance writer and critic; **Cassie Packard**, a writer, editor at *frieze*, and author of “Art Rules” (Frances Lincoln, 2023); **TK Smith**, a cultural historian and curator of the Arts of Africa and the African Diaspora at the Michael C. Carlos Museum at Emory University in Atlanta; and **Emily Watlington**, a writer and senior editor at *Art in America*.

At a time of profound precarity for the field of arts writing, the \$50,000 award can be stabilizing for some.

“I’m grateful ... this is going to help me continue to do the work for some period of time,” Siddhartha Mitter told us, adding that his greatest challenge as an arts writer is “survival.” “The broader problem is there’s no current path to sustaining a practice as an arts writer.”

Mitter’s comments echo those of other arts journalists. Earlier this year, the Dorothea and Leo Rabkin Foundation conducted a survey of past winners and nominees and learned that many experience financial insecurity. Many also lack opportunities for sustained focus for their work, and are craving a greater sense of community among their peers in the field, we learned.

This year, for the first time in the history of the prize, the Rabkin Foundation has commissioned portraits of the prize winners in the spaces where they work and interviewed them about their lives and ideas. The project, called the [Rabkin Interviews](#), features portraits by artist-photographer Kevin J. Miyazaki and interviews conducted by Mary Louise Schumacher, the Rabkin Foundation’s new executive director. The interviews will be published in the weeks after the initial announcement on [Substack](#), social media, our new website and podcasting platforms.

“We wanted to humanize the labors of these essential writers,” says Schumacher, who is also a longtime journalist. “We believe arts writers are in the center of our most essential conversations, help us think together in public, create the original field research for art history, and bear witness to the value of what artists do.”

This is the eighth cycle of the Rabkin Prize, which has now awarded \$3.5 million since it was inaugurated in 2017. Nominators working in the visual arts across the country provided the list of potential winners, and candidates for the prize submitted recent work samples and a resume. An independent jury selects the winners. This year’s jury included Dennis Lim, artistic director of the New York Film Festival; rashid shabazz, executive director of Critical Minded; and Alexandra Grant, a Los Angeles and Berlin-based artist. Writers can be renominated and are eligible until they win a Rabkin Prize.

The Rabkin Prize is the central initiative of the Dorothea and Leo Rabkin Foundation, an artist-endowed foundation based in Portland, Maine. Leo Rabkin was an artist who worked and exhibited for decades in New York. He and his wife, Dorothea, valued art discussion and had a wide circle of friends, including artists, writers, journalists, and curators. They created a landmark collection of what has historically been termed folk and outsider art. Our headquarters is home to a destination gallery, where all are welcome to explore Leo Rabkin’s work.

Trustees of the Dorothea and Leo Rabkin Foundation are: Edgar Allen Beem, a former journalist, from Brunswick, Maine; Deborah Irmas, a philanthropist, curator and writer from Los Angeles, California; Nancy Karlins Thoman, Ph.D., an art historian and writer from New York and New Jersey; and two new members: AX Mina, an arts writer, media expert, nonprofit consultant, and filmmaker; and rashid shabazz, of Critical Minded.

Here is our [2024 RABKIN PRIZE MEDIA KIT](#), where you will have access to the commissioned portraits of this year’s Rabkin Prize winners, a sheet with credit and caption information, and other assets.

If you have questions or would like to be put in touch with one of this year’s winners, please contact Cindy Eggert Johnson, at cindy@rabkinfoundation.org.

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