



June 30, 2023

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **GBCA ANNOUNCES THE 2023 BAKER ARTIST AWARDEES**

*Celebrating 15 years of Elevating the Creative Diversity and Vitality of the Baltimore Region*

BALTIMORE, MD – [The Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance \(GBCA\)](#) and the William G. Baker Jr. Memorial Fund are thrilled to announce the 2023 Baker Artist Awardees. [Abdu Ali](#) (Music), [Oletha DeVane](#), (Interdisciplinary Arts), [Elizabeth Dickinson](#) (Literary Arts), [Colette Krogol](#) (Performance), [Margaret Rorison](#) (Film/ Video), and [M. Jordan Tierney](#) (Visual Arts) were selected as this year's awardees following a six-week adjudication process.

One artist *per discipline* was adjudicated to receive a \$10,000 Mary Sawyers Baker Prize. From these six artists, **Elizabeth Dickinson** was selected to receive the 2023 Mary Sawyers Imboden Prize, which includes an additional \$30,000. At \$40,000, this is the largest art prize in the region and Dickinson is the first literary artist to receive the prize.

"Our authors should not have to leave this city to get full recognition for their hard-earned work," said Carla Du Pree, GBCA Board Member and Executive Director at [CityLit Project](#). "Thank you to GBCA, and the panelists of this major award, for recognizing one of our stellar, literary gems. Well done, Elizabeth, take your bow!"

Now in its 15th year, the Baker Artist Awards has recognized over 150 artists and awarded over \$1.3 million to artists in the Baltimore region.

"We are thrilled to celebrate the 2023 Baker Artist Awardees and 15 years of recognizing and supporting excellence in the arts," said Connie Imboden, President of the William G. Baker Jr. Memorial Fund. "This year's awardees embody some of the best of what the Baltimore region has to offer, and we could not be happier to celebrate their amazing accomplishments."

"GBCA is delighted to honor the amazing artists who have been selected as Baker Artist Awardees; the Portfolios and awards reflect the many ways that excellence is expressed through diverse practices and disciplines," said Jeannie Howe, Executive Director at GBCA. "We are particularly excited that this year, we are shining a bright light on the region's literary talents and history, and we are grateful to, and congratulate all of the 2023 awardees."

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The Awardees were selected by an anonymous jury from over 600 Baltimore-region artists who created a free, online Baker Artist Portfolio at [www.bakerartist.org](http://www.bakerartist.org). Selected artists exemplify a mastery of craft, depth of artistic exploration, and a unique vision.

The 2023 Awardees will be celebrated in a special episode [Maryland Public Television's \(MPT\) Artworks](#) program in the winter, which will include profiles of the six awardees, offering insight into their creative evolution and process.

## **\$40,000 Mary Sawyers Imboden Awardee**

### **Elizabeth Evitts Dickinson - Literary Arts**

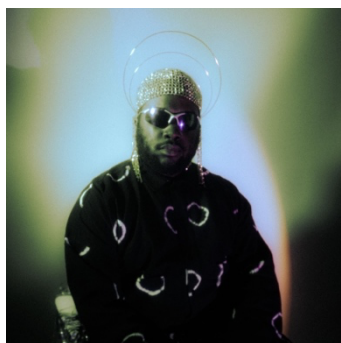


**Elizabeth Evitts Dickinson** is an award-winning writer whose work encompasses cultural criticism, narrative nonfiction, investigative journalism, short fiction, and memoir. Known for astute research coupled with incisive, literary prose, Elizabeth's work has been widely published in places like *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Harper's*, *The Washington Post Magazine*, *The Southern Review*, and *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*.

Her nonfiction has been optioned for film and television and has earned recognition in *The Best American Essays* anthology, among many accolades.

## **\$10,000 Mary Sawyers Baker Awardees**

### **Abdu Ali - Music**



**Abdu (Mongo) Ali** is a Baltimore-based musician, writer, and multidisciplinary artist who works in sound, collaboration, video, and performance. Described as a cosmic, punk, and soulful tempest on stage, Ali has performed their energetic and visceral shows at MoMa PS1, the Carnegie Museum of Art, and The Kennedy Center. Their work has been highlighted by *The New York Times*, *The Fader*, *Elephant Magazine*, and *Tracks* on Arte TV. In 2019, Ali founded as they lay, a curatorial platform that claims space for critical dialogue, collaboration, and radical envisioning for Black creative futures.

### **Oletha DeVane - Interdisciplinary Arts**



**Oletha DeVane** is a way finder and a storyteller. Over the last five decades as she has traveled in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean, she has been inspired by the stories and characters she encounters, bringing the unexpected to light, while finding new nuances in the old and familiar. Her aesthetic impulses are driven by what critic and curator Angela Carroll describes as "anticolonial liberation efforts, Juneteenth, the legacy of her father, and humanity's tireless existentialism."

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## Colette Krogol - Performance



**Colette Krogol** is a Cuban American artist originally from Miami, Florida. She is a choreographer, director, performer, filmmaker, and educator. Krogol is the Artistic Director and Founder of Orange Grove Dance (OGD), which she established alongside her partner, Matt Reeves. OGD is a dance, design, and film company that operates at the intersection of dance and immersive, performer-operated design. As OGD, Krogol's acclaimed works and commissions have been presented worldwide in museums, concert stages, film festivals, underground tunnels, city streets, black box theaters, public parks, botanic gardens, and high-end hotels.

## Margaret Rorison - Film & Video



**Margaret Rorison** is filmmaker, educator, and curator from Baltimore, MD. She currently works with 16mm motion picture film, alternative photographic processes, poetry, and sound to explore her interests in portraiture, memory, natural ecosystems, and urban landscapes. Her work has been exhibited at Miami PULSE Art Fair, Microscope Gallery, The Museum of The Moving Image, The National Gallery of Art, and The Walker Art Center. Her short films have shown at film festivals including Edinburgh International Film Festival, Images Festival, Open City Documentary Film Festival, & FICUNAM in Mexico City.

## M. Jordan Tierney - Visual Arts



**Jordan Tierney**, Symbiocene Epoch Shaman, is a catalyst for deep kinship with our planet. To encounter her practice is to be transported to a spiritual and timeless space, reminding us of our common humanity and our connection to powerful natural forces. Her concern for the environment leads her to create objects she imagines a shaman of the future might use to speak of the mysteries of the universe. With her woodworking skills and a little sorcery, she creates sculpture from things she collects while exploring Baltimore's urban streams and forest buffers.

To read the full artists' biographies or learn more about the Baker Artist Awards and Portfolios, please visit [www.bakerartist.org](http://www.bakerartist.org).

### **About the Baker Artist Portfolios**

The Baker Artist Portfolios were created to support artists and promote Greater Baltimore as a strong creative community. The online portfolios are open to artists working in all disciplines who live and work in Baltimore City and its five surrounding counties. The portfolios expose area artists' work to regional, national, and international audiences. The site has been viewed by hundreds of thousands of art lovers, critics, gallery owners, academics, and leaders in creative business in nearly every country around the globe.

### **About the Baker Artist Awards**

Artists who create a Baker Artist Portfolio are automatically eligible for one of six Baker Artist Awards, which include significant monetary prizes, exhibition and showcase opportunities, as well as a feature on Maryland Public Television's Artworks program. Each year, selected artists share a total of \$90,000 in prize money. Prizes are awarded to artists who demonstrate excellence in areas such as mastery of craft, depth of artistic exploration, and unique vision.

### **About Mary Sawyers Baker Prize**

Mary Sawyers Baker was one of Baltimore's early philanthropists, studied voice as a young girl in Paris and embraced the arts throughout her life. She established the William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund in 1964 to honor her husband, a well-known Baltimore civic leader.

### **About Mary Sawyers Imboden Prize**

Designed to be transformational to the life and career of one exemplary artist, the Mary Sawyers Imboden Prize was launched in 2016, when it was awarded to Joyce J. Scott. Mary Sawyers Imboden was the beloved niece of Mary Sawyers Baker and throughout her childhood traveled extensively with her aunt throughout Europe. Mary Sawyers Baker established The William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund in 1964 and upon her death in 1976, was succeeded by Mary S. Imboden on its Board of Governors on which she served until 1999. During her tenure on the board, she was instrumental in forming the Fund's guidelines and procedures to better reflect her aunt's wishes. In addition to making sure each dollar was granted wisely, Mary Imboden wanted to make sure the fund was innovative and specifically met the needs of the city of Baltimore.

### **About the William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund**

The William G. Baker Jr. Memorial Fund commits its resources to enhance the region's economy and quality of life by making investments in arts and culture. Its grants support artistic and cultural organizations and their partners through initiatives that enhance an individual's sense of self and pleasure and make Baltimore a more attractive place to live and work.

### **About the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance**

The Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance (GBCA) creates equity and opportunity In, Through, and For arts and culture in Greater Baltimore. A leading nonprofit provider of services to artists and cultural organizations in the region, GBCA believes in unifying and strengthening all members of the creative community. We do this through marketing, education, financial support, and developing innovative programs that increase equity in the cultural sector and beyond. To learn more about GBCA, please visit [www.baltimoreculture.org](http://www.baltimoreculture.org).

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