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Midtown Alliance Announces New Artists-in-Residence

Seven artists will receive studio space in Midtown for 2023-2024, which includes a new partnership with Emory.

ATLANTA – January 26, 2023 – Midtown Alliance, Emory University and founding partners are pleased to announce the next class for the Midtown Heart of the Arts Residency Program.

The Heart of the Arts residency program accelerates continued professional development for practicing Atlanta-based artists. This latest phase will provide established visual artists with studio workspaces inside various commercial properties, from January 2023 through June 2024, a financial stipend, and the opportunity to increase visibility for their practice.

Midtown Alliance held an open call for artist applications last summer and received nearly 50 submissions. Seven artists were chosen for this cohort and have started moving into their studio spaces this month in Midtown:

- Demetri Burke – oil painting, mixed media and collage
- Darya Fard – printmaking, video and sound installations
- Sayma Hossain – textiles and mixed-media
- Kelly Taylor Mitchell — mixed media, installation, papermaking, printmaking, book arts and textiles
- Masud Olufani — sculpture with mixed media application
- Deanna Sirlin — canvas and large-scale installations, projections and other media
- Kristan Woolford — sound photo, video, film, projection, 360 video and VR

See artist bios [here](#).

“We are immensely proud of everything the residency program achieved in its first year and now are thrilled to welcome this latest class of artists to Midtown,” said Lauren Radman, project manager of urban design and placemaking at Midtown Alliance. “Extending the residency term to 18 months and expanding our footprint will create even more opportunities for collaboration with these artists and sponsoring partners on projects that make art a part of the daily experience in our district.”



Four of the seven residencies this year were made possible via a new partnership with Emory. Emory is creating three studio spaces in several of the midblock buildings across from Emory University Midtown Hospital, where Burke's, Hossain's, and Sirlin's studios will be located.

Emory is also reimagining part of the street-level space fronting its new Spring Street parking facility as an artist studio, where Mitchell's studio will be located. All of these spaces are positioned to host public events during the eighteen-month residency tenure.

"Emory is excited to support Atlanta artists through this innovative program," said David C. Payne, associate vice president of planning and engagement at Emory University. "This partnership is the latest example of our long-standing relationship with Midtown Alliance, and we embrace their efforts to nurture Atlanta's creative community."

Other property partners involved in the artist-in-residence program for this new term also include:

- Databank – hosting Darya Fard
- Dewberry Foundation — hosting Masud Olufani
- Perkins&Will / MODA – hosting Kristan Woolford

Midtown is widely recognized for its commitment to the arts. The district is home to more than 50 public art installations within one square mile and the largest concentration of arts and cultural venues in the Southeast. The Heart of the Arts initiative reinforced this commitment when it launched in 2020 with a series of temporary storefront installations, and Midtown Alliance introduced its artist residency program the following year.

At ground-level, along building facades and in the spaces between buildings, public art is an invitation for people to experience Midtown and a visual cue that Midtown is a place where art is both appreciated and created. One way the Heart of the Arts program enriches the experiences people have in the public realm is through collaboration with property owners that yield new art installations. Another way the program adds to the experience in Midtown is through events and workshops led by artists sharing their perspective. Seeing these works along streets and sidewalks and meeting artists in their studios helps connect people to place and to each other.

"The Midtown Heart of the Arts Residency is a critical component for a healthy, flourishing arts ecosystem in Atlanta," said Olufani. "Combining space, time and financial support creates the chemistry necessary to make great work. Artists are rarely afforded the means for all three. Fresh from my recent travels to West Africa, I am looking forward to exploring new directions in my practice, and building community with the talented cohort of artists who comprise this year's class."



About Midtown Alliance

[Midtown Alliance](#) is a non-profit membership organization and a coalition of leading business and community leaders – united in our commitment to Midtown as a premier destination for commerce, culture, education and living. Guided by a visionary master plan – Blueprint Midtown – and in partnership with the Midtown Improvement District, our mission is to improve and sustain the quality of life for those who live, work and play here. Midtown Alliance accomplishes this goal through a comprehensive approach to planning and development that includes initiatives to enhance public safety, improve the physical environment, and strengthen the urban amenities which give the area its unique character.

About Emory University

Guided by its mission to create, preserve, teach and apply knowledge in the service of humanity, [Emory University](#) is one of the world's leading research institutions. Emory is internationally recognized for its outstanding liberal arts colleges, its highly ranked graduate and professional schools, and its world-class health care system. Emory encompasses nine academic divisions as well as The Carter Center, the Emory National Primate Research Center, the Michael C. Carlos Museum, and Emory Healthcare.