

HERB ALPERT AWARD IN THE ARTS ANNOUNCES WINNERS FOR 2025

Celebrating 31 Years and 184 Awardees



"I've always loved the artists that travel the road less traveled...those are the artists that touch me."

-Herb Alpert

May 20, 2025 will mark the 31st anniversary of the Herb Alpert Award in the Arts (HAAIA) given to ten risk-taking, mid-career artists – experimenters - who are challenging and transforming art, their respective disciplines, and society. Fifteen highly regarded leaders in the arts made up the panels reviewing the candidates and selected two award recipients in each of five disciplines: dance, film/video, music, theatre and visual arts.

The 2025 Herb Alpert Award in the Arts winners

DANCE: Paloma McGregor, David Thomson

FILM/VIDEO: Nazli Dinçel, Ja'Tovia Gary

MUSIC: Mikel Patrick Avery, Yvette Janine Jackson

THEATRE: Becca Blackwell, Hansol Jung

VISUAL ARTS: Azza El Siddique, Sondra Perry

The awards were founded and conceived by **legendary musician, philanthropist and artist Herb Alpert**, and his **Grammy-winning vocalist wife, Lani Hall**. Now in its 31st year, the HAAIA has to date been awarded to 184 artists. Each award includes a \$75,000 unrestricted prize and residency at CalArts (California Institute of the Arts) which administers the prize on behalf of the Herb Alpert Foundation.

Herb Alpert and Lani Hall created the Herb Alpert Foundation in 1985 and over 40 years and more than \$200 million dollars in support, Herb Alpert continues to be one of America's most important and loyal advocates for the arts and arts education.

Among the past HAAIA winners are noted artists: Carrie Mae Weems, Taylor Mac, Suzan-Lori Parks, Julia Wolfe, Michelle Dorrance, Tania Bruguera, Kerry James Marshall, Lisa Kron, Sharon Lockhart, Ralph Lemon, Arthur Jafa, Cai Guo-Qiang, Okwui Okpokwasili and Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah to name a few.

Irene Borger, Director of HAAIA since its inception in 1994, reflects on the Award's continued importance in honoring experimental artists attentive to the turbulence of American life. "This year, for reasons you can imagine, we are that much more grateful to the Herb Alpert Awardees who boldly challenge received notions, see beneath the surface, refuse silence and obscurity, provoke, astonish, and wake us up."

Rona Sebastian, President of the Herb Alpert Foundation notes, "Herb and Lani Alpert have continued their commitment over three decades to honor and contribute to supremely dedicated, talented art makers and performing artists. The Herb Alpert Foundation understands that trusting artists with an unrestricted prize, as they go further and deeper into their art, is critical at this moment when artistic freedom and exploration are – once again - under assault."

"The generosity of Herb and Lani is legendary, and their work supporting artists to take risks, through The Alpert Awards, has propelled artmaking in this country for decades, " said **CalArts President Ravi Rajan**. "The list of past honorees is testament to how the award gives artists the space and time to create work that transforms the world."

The following summaries highlight why the 2025 panelists chose these ten extraordinary artists:

DANCE PANEL SUMMARY

"Deeply impressed and moved by the way she calls into question space, memory, and embodied experiences in her work," the Dance panel selected choreographer, performer, and cultural worker, **Paloma McGregor** for "her investment in creative community building, commitment to social transformation, and profound impact on the Black dance community."

The Dance panel honors interdisciplinary artist and advocate **David Thomson** for his "lush and provocative movement scores that balance playfulness with intellectual and physical rigor, his fearless interrogation of race, gender, and identity and the significant care and generosity of his mentorship and support for fellow dance practitioners."

DANCE PANELISTS

Yanira Castro, interdisciplinary artist, Herb Alpert Award Artist, Lenapehoking (Brooklyn, NY)

Joanna Haigood, choreographer, Artistic Director, Zaccho Dance Theatre, Herb Alpert Award Artist, San Francisco, CA

Gideon Lester, Artistic Director and Chief Executive, Fisher Center at Bard, Annandale- on-Hudson and Brooklyn, NY

FILM/VIDEO PANEL SUMMARY

The Film/Video panel recognizes artist and filmmaker **Nazli Dincel** for “their handmade analog filmmaking and textile practice bearing a deep sense of conviction and daring, their mesmerizing, unabashed voice, arresting vision, and, in a time of censorship, the willingness to be vulnerable while refusing to be silenced.”

Filmmaker and artist **Ja’Tovia Gary** was selected by the Film/Video panel for “her courageous, dignified work of exceptional beauty, connection to legacies and histories of Black women throughout the diaspora; for situating herself within the collective experience she is describing while maintaining her role and responsibility as witness.”

FILM/VIDEO PANELISTS

Christopher Harris, artist/filmmaker, Herb Alpert Award Artist, Professor of Visual Arts, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

Alexandra Juhasz, scholar, maker, and teacher of activist media, Distinguished Professor of Film, Brooklyn College, CUNY, Brooklyn, NY

Bani Khoshnoudi, artist/filmmaker, Herb Alpert Award Artist, Mexico City, Mexico and Paris, France

MUSIC PANEL SUMMARY

The Music panel honors multidisciplinary artist **Mikel Patrick Avery** for “the integrity, creativity, and open mind with which he creates a space of joy and fullness for his collaborators and the listeners who join him on his sonic journey, as well generously merging his musical practice with pedal building, helping other musicians realize the sounds they hear at the core of their musical personalities.”

The Music panel celebrates composer and sound artist **Yvette Janine Jackson** for “the imaginative ways she synthesizes ideas that give shape to lived human experience, for her cinematic dramaturgy, and the deep relationship between research and expression always beautifully troubling and passionately felt, providing a pathway for understanding the complexities of our nation’s history.”

MUSIC PANELISTS

Eve Beglarian, composer, performer, Herb Alpert Award Artist, New York and Vermont

Tomeka Reid, cellist, composer, improviser, Herb Alpert Award Artist, Chicago, IL

David Virelles, pianist, composer, record producer, Herb Alpert Award Artist, New York

THEATRE PANEL SUMMARY

Creator and performer **Becca Blackwell** was selected by the Theatre Panel for “their original, adventurous, entertaining work, connecting body and humor, chaos and order and a live space for audiences to confront and contemplate laughter, emotion, spirit, and the energies and potentials of non-conforming, shapeshifting and in-betweenness.”

Playwright **Hansol Jung** is being celebrated by the Theatre panel for “the sheer inventiveness of her writing, honoring legacies of dramatic form while extending them into new, disorienting spaces, her abundant humor and wondrous shifts revealing tectonic emotions--loneliness, desire, loss, cultural displacement and the anxieties produced by our dark time.”

THEATRE PANELISTS

Carra Martinez, Senior Director of Artistic Programs, YoungArts, Miami, FL
Tom Sellar, Editor, Theater magazine and Professor in the Practice of Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism, David Geffen School of Drama at Yale University, New Haven, CT and Brooklyn, NY
Seema Sueko-Low, theatre artist, director, consultant, co-curator DNAWORKS, Honolulu, HI

VISUAL ARTS PANEL SUMMARY

The Visual Arts panel recognizes interdisciplinary artist **Azza El Siddique** for “her distinctive voice, formal innovation, unique and enveloping visual language, honoring her heritage as well as engaging with modern-day questions of power and colonial legacies. Too, they appreciate her considerable production given that her complex and ephemeral projects position her outside the commercial art market.”

Artist **Sondra Perry** was named Visual Arts prizewinner for “her compelling vision, attentive to the artistic and social implications of the media through which stories are told, and, unafraid of contradiction, the ways she engages new technologies not merely as tools but also as modalities refiguring the material world.”

VISUAL ARTS PANELISTS

Katherine C. M. Adams, curator and writer; Associate Curator, Time-Based Visual Arts, The Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center, (EMPAC), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York
Tim Griffin, Executive Director, The Industry, Los Angeles, CA
Paul Ha, Director, Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, MA

For additional information on the 2025 Herb Alpert Award in the Arts winners please click [HERE](#)

[Short film on the Herb Alpert Award in the Arts](#)



Clockwise from L to R: Lani Hall Alpert, Herb Alpert, CalArts President Ravi Rajan, Herb Alpert Foundation President Rona Sebastian. Front: HAAIA Founding Director Irene Borger. Photo credit: Shawn Connell Studio

About Herb Alpert

Herb Alpert is a musician, record producer and executive, sculptor, painter and philanthropist. His albums have sold over 72 million copies, and 29 of his records have reached the Billboard 200. Billboard also listed Alpert as #7 on their "Greatest Of All Time Billboard 200 Artists." He co-founded A&M Records with Jerry Moss in 1962 turning it into one of the most successful independent record labels in history. In 2012 Alpert was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Barack Obama and inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2006.

About the Herb Alpert Award in the Arts

The **Herb Alpert Award in the Arts** is an unrestricted prize of \$75,000 given annually to risk-taking, mid-career artists working in the fields of dance, film/video, music, theatre and the visual arts. The prize was initiated and funded by the Herb Alpert Foundation and has been administered by the California Institute of the Arts since 1994. The Award honors and supports artists respected for their creativity, ingenuity, and bodies of work, at a moment in their lives when they are poised to propel their art in new and unpredictable directions. The Herb Alpert Award recognizes experimenters who are making something that matters within and beyond their field.

About The Herb Alpert Foundation

The **Herb Alpert Foundation** envisions a world in which all young

people are blessed with opportunities that allow them to reach their potential and lead productive and fulfilling lives. Since its inception, the Foundation is dedicated to championing and investing in the Arts, primarily arts education, a focus on jazz, and support to professionals. This includes programs that see access to arts education as an issue of social justice and that the work of artists in society is what helps us not only to appreciate our differences but also to celebrate them.

This work often dovetails with the Foundation's support in the area of Compassion and Well-Being, which invests in organizations that understand the importance of empathy and cooperation in our daily interactions with others and the positive effects inherent in restoring individuals' and families' abilities to stand independently. Please note: the Foundation does not accept unsolicited proposals.

For Herb Alpert and HAAIA media inquiries, please contact:
Caroline Graham / C4 Global Communications
caroline@c4global.com | [310.487.2881](tel:310.487.2881)

C4 Global | 363 17th Street | Santa Monica, CA 90402 US

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