



BAINBRIDGE ISLAND
MUSEUM OF ART

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Media Contact:

Korum Bischoff

Office: 206-451-4005 | Cell: 206-941-4163

korum@biartmuseum.org

**Applications Now Open for the BRAVA Awards –
Bainbridge Island Museum of Art's Biennial Program
Recognizes Excellence in Visual Arts with \$15,000
Unrestricted Prizes Across Four Categories**
Applications Close May 11, 2025

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WA — The Bainbridge Island Museum of Art (BIMA) is pleased to announce that **applications are now open** for the 2025 BRAVA Awards (BIMA Recognizes Achievement in the Visual Arts). This prestigious biennial program celebrates outstanding contemporary artists, craftspeople, and makers across four categories. Winners are selected by an independent jury committee, which looks to honor artists who demonstrate exceptional artistic merit, technical skill, contributions to the arts, and notable professional achievements.

The BRAVA Awards, inspired by the vision of BIMA founder Cynthia Sears, aim to recognize and support working artists while making a meaningful impact on the arts community both locally and beyond. Each awardee will receive an unrestricted \$15,000 prize, along with a promotional video, extensive publicity, and recognition at a live award ceremony.

“We believe it’s crucial for us to find ways to help artists directly,” said Sheila Hughes, BIMA’s Executive Director. “Our mission goes beyond showcasing art – we want to foster a thriving and supportive ecosystem for artists. Since announcing the BRAVA Awards, we’ve been thrilled to see how artists have embraced this opportunity.”

Artists selected in each of the four categories will be chosen by independent jury committees made up of working artists, educators, and leaders in the arts sector. The BRAVA Awards are made possible through a dedicated fund, established by a generous gift to BIMA.

Suquamish tribal master weaver Betty Pasco, a 2023 BRAVA Award recipient, reflected on her experience:

"My winning the BRAVA Award was a humbling experience, especially when I realized the incredible works of the other artists. It still is to this day. Artists are blessed with special gifts that allow us to find beauty in the simplest things. I thank BRAVA for honoring my effort."

To assist applicants with the submission process, BIMA will host a **Study Hall** on **April 18**. This session provides an opportunity for artists to ask questions, get advice, and gain support as they complete their applications.

Applications for the 2025 BRAVA Awards are **open now through May 11**. For full details on eligibility, application requirements, and the selection process, please visit the BIMA website at <https://www.biartmuseum.org/brava-awards-process/>.

Artists are encouraged to apply before the deadline to be considered for this transformative program.

CATEGORIES OF RECOGNITION

The inaugural BRAVA Awards will recognize excellence in four categories:

Native American & First Nations Artist Award

The BRAVA Award for Native American & First Nations Artist supports the work of contemporary visual artists and craftspeople who self-identify as Native American and/or First Nations. The award is open to artists working in multiple disciplines, including but not limited to painting, sculpture, weaving, textile, carving, printmaking, photography, video, performance art, beading, installation, pottery, and mixed media or collaborative projects. Artists may work in both contemporary and traditional styles and content. *The BRAVA Award for Native American & First Nations Artist is open to any Native American & First Nations artist who lives and works in the Salish Sea region territories.*

Artist's Books Artists Award

The BRAVA Award for Artists' Books Artists supports contemporary visual artists and craftspeople working in the genre of Artists' Books. These works of art incorporate the concept of the book in various ways, often inviting the user to engage with them over time through interpretation, manipulation, or storytelling. Artist's books can be small edition works or unique one-of-a-kind objects. The BRAVA Award for Artist's Books Artist is open to artists working in media including but not limited to fiber/textile, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, installation, ceramics, and mixed-media or collaborative projects. *Open to artists who live and work in the United States.*

Emerging Artist Award

The BRAVA Award for Emerging Artist recognizes the work of contemporary visual artists and craftspeople in the Puget Sound region who are early in their professional careers. This award is intended for artists who have gained initial recognition for their visual arts practice, demonstrate a serious commitment to pursuing a career in the arts, and whose work is considered promising by a jury. Eligible artists work in a variety of media, including but not limited to fiber/textile, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, video, performance art, installation, ceramics, and mixed-media or collaborative projects. *The BRAVA Award for Emerging Artist is open to artists who live and work in the Puget Sound Region, defined as within the counties of Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Jefferson, Whatcom, Clallam, Kitsap, Island, and San Juan Counties.*

2025 Special Choice Award: Children's Book Illustrator Award

The BRAVA Award for Children's Book Illustrator supports the work of contemporary visual artists from the Puget Sound region who specialize in children's book illustration. Eligible work may include original illustrations created for books aimed at readers 16 years or younger. This can encompass book covers, interior illustrations, and complete book designs, including but not limited to graphic novels, e-books, interactive books, picture books, chapter books, works of fiction and non-fiction, zines, reference books, artist books, and pop-up books. *The BRAVA Award for Children's Book Illustrator is open to artists who are residents of the Puget Sound Region, defined as within the counties of Skagit, Snohomish, King, Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Jefferson, Whatcom, Clallam, Kitsap, Island, and San Juan Counties. The Special Choice Award may switch between award years to highlight other categories of artists*

THE AWARD

Each of the four BRAVA awardees will receive an unrestricted award of **\$15,000**. In addition to the cash prize, the recipient of each award receives:

- Recognition in BIMA media, including website, print and online publications, and social media, and provided a template press release to distribute to their media outlets;
- Participation in an online or live event featuring the awardees;
- A short video to be produced about the recipient;
- Invitation to participate in an Award Ceremony held at the Bainbridge Island Museum of Art on September 20, 2025
- Invitation to serve as one of the jurors on the next biennial award process review panel.

The recipients of the first-ever BRAVA Awards in 2023 were Kamari Bright (Emerging Artist), Julie Chen (Artists' Books Artist), Julie Paschkis (Children's Book Illustrator), and Betty Pasco (Native American and First Nations Artist).

About Bainbridge Island Museum of Art:

Bainbridge Island Museum of Art inspires curiosity, wonder, and understanding by connecting people with the contemporary art and craft of the Puget Sound region. The art museum exhibits, interprets, preserves, collects, and promotes works of proven cultural value and new works by emerging artists and craftspeople.

The art museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission. BIMA is located in beautiful downtown Bainbridge Island, at the corner of Hwy 305 and Winslow Way, just steps away from the ferry terminal, with easy access via public transportation or by car from the Kitsap Peninsula.

BIMA is supported through contributions by members and donors like you, with ongoing support from Cogwheel Construction, The Klorfine Foundation, Leslie & Michael Lebeau, Chap & Eve Alvord, John & Ann Underwood, Kathy Alvord Gerlich, Gnarly Tree Foundation, Ames Family Foundation, Stoel Rives LLP, M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, Capital Group Private Client Services, BIMA PRISM, ArtsFund, CascadePBS, ArtsWA, Public Display Art.

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