

Rising Residents explore climate change through artistic vision

August 09, 2022 9:30 AM Jill Dorje
jdorje@tulane.edu



Located in eight forested acres on the Mississippi River, A Studio in the Woods provides artists a space to work on environmentally focused projects through their six-week artist residency program. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

A Studio in the Woods, a program of Tulane's ByWater Institute, recognizes the power of art to address the planet's environmental concerns and supports artists who are interested in engaging this issue through its artistic residency programs.

“Since Hurricane Katrina, thematic residencies at A Studio in the Woods have been focused on the relationship between human beings and the environment, which we see as the defining issue of our time. The current theme, Rising: Climate in Crisis, addresses the urgency of this moment of climatic shifts we find ourselves in,” said Grace Rennie, marketing and operations coordinator at A Studio in the Woods.

Artists are invited to examine the severity of the climate crisis and act as agents of change by guiding “our collective understanding and response and by assisting in shaping a vision for the future,” Rennie said.

The program runs from August 2022 to June 2023 and offers each artist six weeks of residency at A Studio in the Woods, located in a Mississippi River bottomland hardwood forest in Lower Coast Algiers.

Resident artists are selected by a jury of artists, art professionals and environmental leaders. A Studio in the Woods leaders say they are excited to introduce the artists who will participate in this year’s residency program.

The Artists

[Zeelie Brown](#) grew up in the pine woods of Alabama and has used this wildness to inform their artistic endeavors, creating “soulsapes,” a melding of sound, cello performance, installation, textile and performance art, that act as a refuge for Black and queer people. Brown will spend six weeks researching Gulf South visual and material culture and design *Little Creole Gardens* as their residency project.

[Niki Franco](#) is a Caribbean organizer, writer and facilitator. She will develop a short film project titled *Constellations Illuminating the Swamp*, which will serve as an educational and creative resource for community organizers, activists, researchers, artists and educators.

[Simi Kang](#), a multiracial Sikh American community advocate, educator, artist and scholar, will work with Louisiana’s Southeast Asian American fishing families and community-based organizations to create audio and physical story maps for the project *Mapping Shrimping Futures*.

[Quintron](#) and [Miss Pussycat](#) will produce a live puppet show about extreme weather events, relating specifically to living in Louisiana. The show will utilize a “Wildlife Organ” built and installed at A Studio in the Woods that will capture and process a

wide range of natural sounds and route them back to a musical keyboard. The [two artists](#) have been collaborating for over 20 years.

[Hye Sea's](#) residency project will focus on documenting the stories of those devoted to being stewards of the Earth, revealing their journeys into nature. Using portraiture and collage, she will highlight stewards identified as Black, Indigenous and people of color.

[Nailah Jefferson](#), a New Orleans-born filmmaker, and [Laurie Sumiye](#), a Hawaiian-born conceptual artist and storyteller, will explore the effects invasive species can have on fragile native ecosystems and relate them to the growing threat of gentrification in the tourist-driven economies of their homelands.

[Rachel Lin Weaver](#) is a multimedia artist who uses video, installation, sculpture and performance in their work. They will produce a two-part experimental short film and video/projection mapping installation titled *Mosquito Dance*, which looks closely at mosquitoes as vectors and cultural symbols.

Though individual artist's events are not yet scheduled, there will be many opportunities to engage with the artists over the coming year, including A Studio in the Woods' annual festival, FORESTival: A Celebration of Art and Nature, which will be held on Saturday, Nov. 12, 2022.

To learn more about A Studio in the Woods and their residency programs, [click here](#).