Annual Report

October 1, 2024–September 30, 2025

Oolite Arts

Between Here and Elsewhere, curated by Omar Lopez-Chahoud. Photo by Zachary Balber.

Contents

Our Mission 4

Welcome 5

Artist Support Programs
- Studio Residency 6
- Knight Housing Stipend 10
- Live.In.Art Residency 12
- Home + Away 14
- Cinematic Residency 16

Exhibitions and Public Programs
- Exhibitions and Miami Art Week . . 18
- Windows @ Walgreens 28

Education
- Education Programs 30
- Adult Art Classes 32
- Skills 34

Recognition and Investment
- The Ellies 35
- Alumni Impact 40

Financial Stewardship
- Supporters 42
- Financials 43
- Endowment 44

Collective Philanthropy
- Collective Circle 46
- SHE Collective 48

Looking Ahead
- New Campus 50

People
- Staff and Board of Directors 54

Our Mission

The mission of Oolite Arts is to support artists and advance the knowledge and practice of contemporary visual arts. Oolite Arts creates opportunities for experimentation and innovation and encourages the exchange of ideas across diverse cultures through residencies, exhibitions, public programs, education, and outreach.

Top: Painting with Acrylic art class.
Right: Resident artist Sepideh Kalani. Photo by Pedro Wazzan.

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to share highlights from the 2024–2025 fiscal year. This was a year of steady progress and thoughtful planning as Oolite Arts continued to fulfill its mission of supporting artists while preparing for an important new chapter in the organization's history.

Artists remain at the center of everything we do. Throughout the year, Oolite Arts sustained and strengthened its core programs, including the Studio Residency, which provides artists with studio space, professional guidance, and opportunities to engage with curators and arts leaders. Through exhibitions, public programs, and the Cinematic Residency, Oolite Arts continued to showcase the work of talented artists and filmmakers while bringing their work to broader audiences. Adult art classes and educational programs expanded opportunities for community engagement and artistic development. Through The Ellies, Miami's premier visual arts awards program, Oolite Arts continued to recognize excellence and provide meaningful support to artists through a rigorous and independent selection process.

The year was also marked by preparation for the future. In 2026, Oolite Arts will introduce important initiatives, including a Youth Artist Residency and the next phase of Home + Away, which will expand internationally with a residency in South Africa, deepening opportunities for artistic exchange and professional growth. These efforts reflect our commitment to supporting artists throughout their careers while remaining rooted in our local community.

We are energized by the continued progress toward Oolite Arts' new campus at the intersection of Little Haiti and Little River in the City of Miami. More than a new building, this project represents a bold investment in artists, the surrounding community, and South Florida's growing role as an international center for contemporary art.

As we prepare for this next chapter, we took a moment to honor the place where that future will unfold. Oolite Arts commissioned a local artist to create a temporary mural on one of the existing warehouse buildings slated for demolition, transforming the structure into a vibrant canvas for reflection and imagination. The mural celebrated the history embedded in the site while inviting the community to envision what lies ahead. It reflected a core belief of Oolite Arts: that artists help us understand where we have been and imagine what comes next.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the dedication of our staff, the guidance of our Board of Directors, the generosity of our supporters, and, above all, the artists whose work enriches our community. On behalf of the Board, I extend our sincere gratitude for your continued support and confidence in Oolite Arts and its mission. Your belief in our vision continues to inspire the work ahead.

With appreciation,

Marie Elena Angulo
Board Chair
Oolite Arts

Studio Residency:
Supporting Artists Across South Florida

The Studio Residency program remains central to Oolite Arts' mission to support artists and advance contemporary visual arts. During the 2024–2025 fiscal year, Oolite Arts continued to provide resident artists with free studio space, professional development, and opportunities for engagement in Miami-Dade County.

Resident artists worked within a dynamic community of peers and engaged with curators, arts professionals, and institutional partners throughout the year. The program emphasized sustained artistic practice, critical dialogue, and career development, while encouraging residents to participate in exhibitions, public programs, studio visits, and community-facing initiatives.

Through curated experiences and individualized support, the Studio Residency program fostered artistic growth and professional visibility. Residents participated in studio visits, critiques, institutional visits, and peer gatherings designed to support research, dialogue, and the development of contemporary practice.

Resident artists Ricardo Zulueta and Diana Larrea in thier studios. Photos by Pedro Wazzan and Diana Larrea.

Mark Delmont

Diego Gabaldon

Sepideh Kalani

Meet Our 2025 Studio Residents

Bex McCharen

Diana Larrea

Amanda Linares

Ana Mosquera

Sheherazade Thénard

Chire “VantaBlack” Regans

Lee Pivnik

Pangea Kali Virga

Carrington Ware

Ricardo E. Zulueta

2025 Studio Residents

Mark Delmont is a painter whose work blends abstraction and figuration, exploring symbolism, storytelling, and layered visual narratives.

Diego Gabaldon is an artist and designer influenced by the sporting culture of bodybuilding, organized sport, and biology. Gabaldon explores the intersections between the psychology of competition, hypermasculinity, and the obsession with physical transformation.

Sepideh Kalani is an Iranian-born ceramic artist. Her sculptural practice explores identity, memory, and cultural transformation through personal narratives and historical research, particularly the visual language of the Qajar era, often regarded as the beginning of modernity in Iran.

Diana Larrea is a multidisciplinary artist working in video, installation, and drawing, exploring migration, memory, and the complexities of cultural identity.

Amanda Linares creates sculptural installations and mixed-media works that explore architecture, domestic space, and the relationship between bodies and environments.

Bex McCharen (they/them) is an interdisciplinary artist who explores queer and trans community ritual and imagines new systems of belonging through art and design.

Ana Mosquera is a mixed-media artist whose work, through interactive installations and digital storytelling, engages with technology to explore how it shapes systems and reveals underlying social structures.

Lee Pivnik is an interdisciplinary artist whose work explores environmental systems, climate resilience, and the intersection of ecology and urban development.

Chire “VantaBlack” Regans is a multidisciplinary artist whose work engages themes of history, race, and personal narrative through painting, sculpture, and installation.

Sheherazade Thénard is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice explores Caribbean identity, diaspora, and the poetics of everyday life.

Pangea Kali Virga is a fiber and multidisciplinary artist whose work explores ancestral knowledge, ritual, and the healing potential of textile traditions.

Carrington Ware is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores leisure and mundanity within the Black experience. Using digital and traditional practices, Ware employs various mediums to serve as a lens for a softer perspective of Black life.

Ricardo E. Zulueta is a multidisciplinary artist working across sculpture, design, and conceptual art, exploring identity, consumer culture, and the language of objects.

Knight Housing Stipend at a Glance

Stipend amount:
$1,000 per month x 13 studio residents

$156,000

per year

KNIGHT FOUNDATION

Knight Housing Stipend:

Supporting Artist Stability and Career Growth

Access to stable and affordable housing remains one of the most significant challenges facing artists in South Florida. Through the Knight Housing Stipend, Oolite Arts helps address this barrier by providing direct financial support that enables resident artists to remain rooted in the communities where they live and work.

With generous support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Knight Housing Stipend provides monthly assistance to Studio Residents, helping offset rising housing costs and reduce financial pressure during the residency period. In addition to housing support, Oolite Arts provides supplemental financial resources that allow artists to dedicate more time to their practice and professional development.

By easing their financial burden, Oolite Arts creates the conditions for artists to not only sustain their work but also to advance their careers. The residency program is designed to support artists at pivotal moments through access to exhibitions, professional networks, and critical visibility.

Resident artists are included in exhibitions at Oolite Arts and work closely with established curators, gaining experience presenting their work within a professional context.

The organization also brokers partnerships with cultural institutions, galleries, and collaborators across Miami, creating opportunities for artists to share their work outside Oolite Arts and expand their reach within the city and beyond.

The Knight Housing Stipend reflects Oolite Arts' commitment to artists' ability to sustain their practices and its recognition that a thriving cultural ecosystem depends on artists being able to live and work in the region they help shape.

Why Housing Support Matters

By providing direct housing and financial support, Oolite Arts addresses a critical obstacle to artistic production and retention in South Florida. The Knight Housing Stipend helps ensure that artists are not displaced from the communities they contribute to, reinforcing long-term investment in the region's creative future.

Through partnerships that prioritize stability and sustainability, Oolite Arts continues to support artists, recognizing that artists are better able to sustain their creative work when their basic needs are met.

Resident artist Bex McCharen in their studio. Photo by Pedro Wazzan.

Live.In.Art Residency: Supporting Artistic Experimentation and Growth

The Oolite Arts Live.In.Art Residency was a pilot program designed to give artists the time, space, and resources to advance their practice. Located in the heart of South Beach, the residency provided artists with a subsidized live/work studio, opportunities to connect with arts leaders, and access to exhibitions, funding, and a supportive community where they could experiment and grow.

2025 Live.In.Art Residents

Sue Beyer is an Australian interdisciplinary artist whose practice explores the question of what it means to be human. Through a fusion of traditional and emerging technologies, she creates Digital Combines: a hybrid form that integrates painting, electronics, digital media, and AI-generated hallucinations to craft layered autofictions.

Jevon Brown is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores Black masculine kindred spaces, drawing on fashion, painting, collaging, interior design, silkscreen printing, dyeing, embellishing, and photography.

Elaine Defibaugh is a mixed-media artist whose work is inspired by the transitional world we experience, particularly the relationship between natural and human-made environments.

Luna Palazzolo is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores themes of morality, identity, and the human condition. Her style could be described as iconoclastic, using resistance and subtle irony to critique society.

Edison Peñafiel is an interdisciplinary artist whose work investigates migration, displacement, and the global movement of people through immersive installations.

Jacoub Reyes is an artist and public academic. His artistic research centers on his Caribbean and Pakistani background as a point of departure, which he uses to expand on themes of colonialism, social response, and ecosystems.

Oscar Rieveling is a conceptual artist whose works address questions informed by his Mexican heritage and his investigations into ritual, folk tradition, and affect theory.

Zonia Zena is a visual artist and archivist who applies photography as a bridge to speak about personal journeys influenced by her migration experience.

Sue Beyer

Jevon Brown

Elaine Defibaugh

Luna Palazzolo

Edison Peñafiel

Jacoub Reyes

Oscar Rieveling

Zonia Zena

Studio and Live.In.Art Residency Highlights

Studio visits and critiques
Resident artists engaged in studio visits and conversations with curators, collectors, and arts leaders, including Amanda Baker-Hall, Gabi Di Giammarco, Omar Lopez-Chahoud, Kristina Newman-Scott and Ricardo Mor of the Knight Foundation, Amy Galpin, Fred Snitzer, and visiting professionals from Dot FiftyOne Gallery and homework gallery.

Institutional visits
Residents participated in organized visits to leading cultural institutions, including The Wolfsonian-FIU, fostering dialogue, research, and expanded perspectives on exhibition-making and collections.

Resident meetups and peer engagement
During the year, residents gathered through informal meetups and programmatic exchanges that reinforced community, collaboration, and shared learning.

Home + Away:
Expanding Artistic Exchange

The Home + Away program reflects Oolite Arts' commitment to providing immersive, off-site residencies that support artistic growth, critical dialogue, and cross-cultural exchange. Through national partnerships, the program provides artists with dedicated time and space to advance their practices while engaging with new environments and professional networks. Building on this foundation, Oolite Arts will launch its first international Home + Away residency in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2026.

artpace san antonio MASS MoCA

National Residency Experience
Oolite Arts continued its partnerships with nationally recognized residency organizations, including **ARTPACE** and **MASS MoCA**. Participating artists benefited from uninterrupted studio time, critical dialogue, and opportunities for exchange within creative communities.

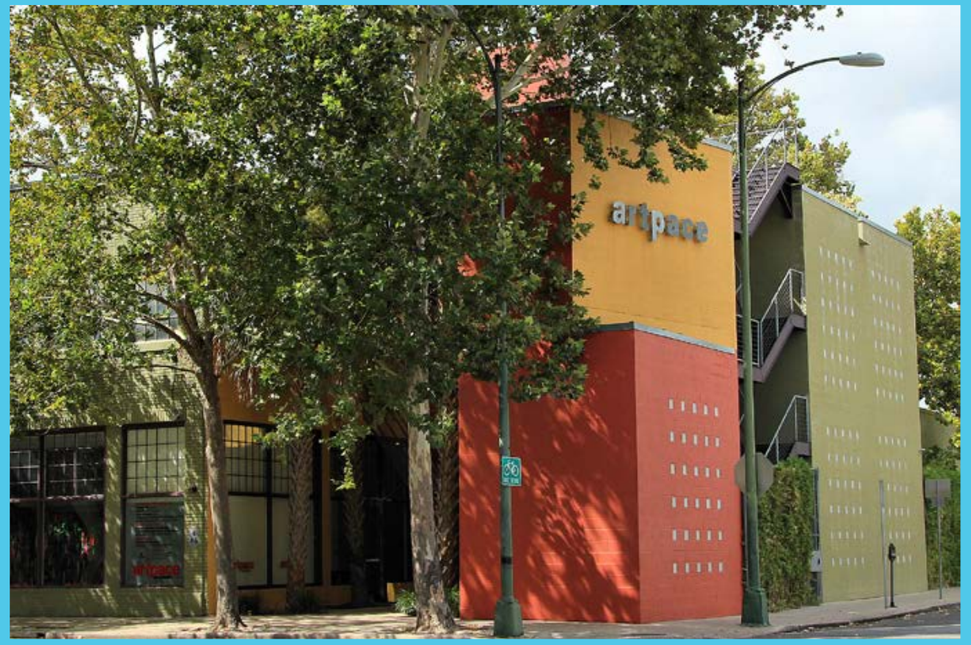
These residencies provided artists with the space to advance new work, develop research, and build connections beyond South Florida, reinforcing the value of sustained focus and immersion in the evolution of contemporary practice.

By sustaining national partnerships and advancing opportunities, Home + Away continues to broaden artistic perspectives, deepen creative research, and position South Florida artists within a wider cultural landscape.

MASS MoCA photo by Douglas Mason.
Artpace San Antonio photo by Larry D. Moore.

The program is supported by The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation

crearte THE JORGE M. PÉREZ FAMILY FOUNDATION



2025 Home + Away Residents

ARTPACE
Gregory Dirr
Ọmọlará Williams McCallister
Marisabela Tellería

MASS MoCA
Beatriz Chachamovits
Carol Jazzar
Sepideh Kalani
Lucía Morales
Karen Rifas
Yomarie Silva-O'Neal

Cinematic Residency: Elevating Miami Stories on a National Stage

The Cinematic Residency at Oolite Arts supports independent filmmakers by helping them develop ambitious new work while advancing Miami's presence on the national and international film stage. Through funding, mentorship, and tailored production resources, the program enables filmmakers to develop projects while remaining rooted in South Florida.

Resident filmmakers have gone on to present their work at major festivals and platforms, including the Tribeca Festival, the BFI London Film Festival, streaming services, and public television, bringing Miami stories to audiences around the world.

Designed to support the development of debut feature films, the Cinematic Residency provides filmmakers with funding, mentorship, and individualized resources that allow them to advance their projects while building sustainable careers. This investment has increased the visibility of resident filmmakers and expanded opportunities for Miami voices within the independent film industry.

Program Milestones and Impact

A major milestone for the program came with *Mountains*, directed by 2019 Cinematic Resident Monica Sorelle, who received the Someone to Watch Award at the Film Independent Spirit Awards, presented by one of the world's leading independent film organizations. The award represented a significant achievement for both the filmmaker and the program, reflecting growing national recognition for Oolite Arts and its cinematic residents. The film later secured domestic distribution through Music Box Films; it is currently streaming on Mubi, a leading independent service with around 20 million registered users worldwide.

Additional program highlights included *Fallen Fruit*, directed by 2023 Cinematic Resident Chris Molina, which launched a theatrical run with screenings in New York, Miami, Los Angeles, and other cities. The film continued its festival success following its Audience Award win at the OUTshine LGBTQ+ Film Festival, one of the largest and most influential LGBTQ+ film festivals in the country. *Fallen Fruit* is currently available to stream on Tubi, which reaches over a million monthly active users worldwide.

Community-centered filmmaking remained a core focus of the program. Films created through Oolite Arts' original programs "Local Love Letters: Little Haiti" and "Pass the Mic" were broadcast on South Florida PBS, reaching 6.3 million viewers from the Keys up through the Treasure Coast. With such reach, Oolite Arts continues to demonstrate the impact of its work and its commitment to storytelling rooted in place, history, and lived experience.

Additionally, *The Old Man and the Parrot*, by 2024 Oolite Arts Cinematic Resident Gabriel de Varona, has completed production and is currently preparing for its world premiere in 2026.

During the year, the program also celebrated the national impact of film shorts. *Monarcas*, created by Oolite Arts Studio Resident Diana Larrea as part of Oolite Arts' "Pass the Mic" program, won the 2024 Suncoast Regional Emmy Award for Best Documentary in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion category.

New and Continuing Residents

In 2024–2025, Oolite Arts selected Michael Ruiz-Unger as a new Cinematic Resident through a jury of international filmmakers. Ruiz-Unger is currently in post-production on his debut feature film, *Wastelands*. Building on this momentum, the program continues to position Miami filmmakers for sustained success at major festivals, global film markets, and distribution platforms.

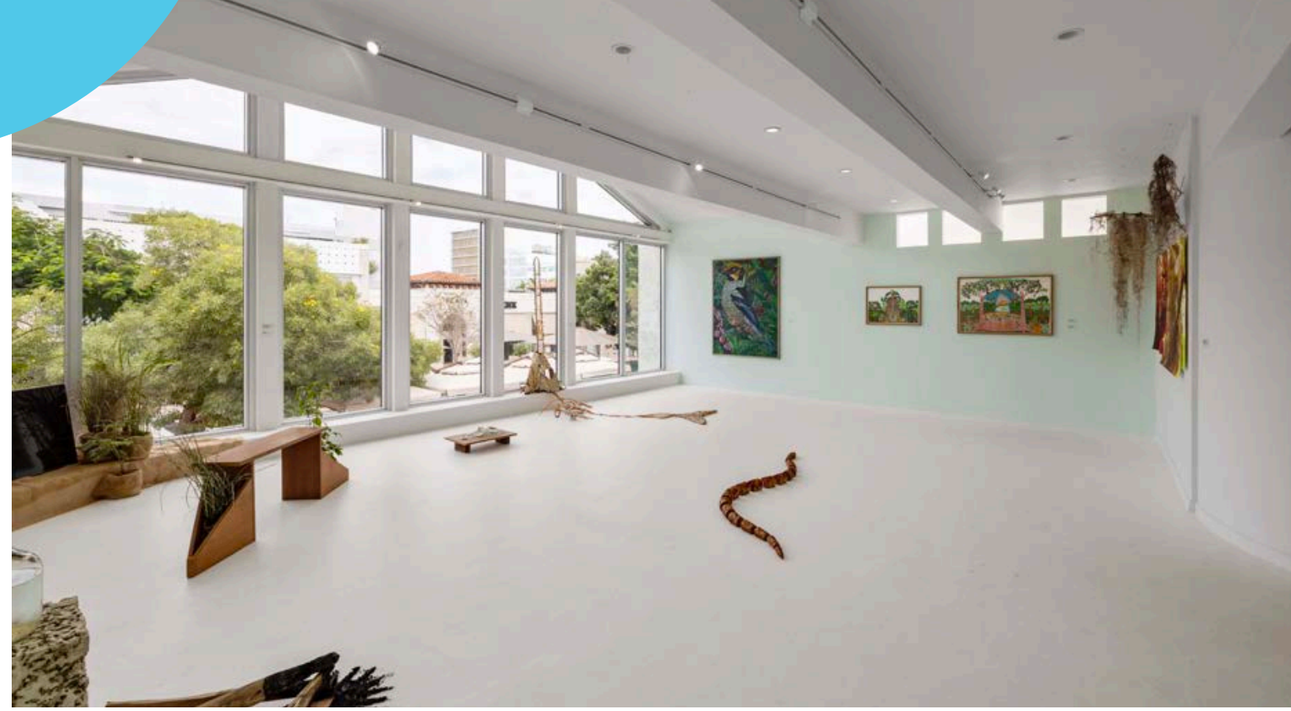
Through expanded resources, national recognition, and deep community engagement, the Cinematic Residency reflects Oolite Arts' commitment to investing in local storytellers and ensuring Miami's voices are represented at the highest levels of independent cinema.

This page: Michael Ruiz-Unger on the set of *Wastelands*.
Opposite page: Director Gabriel de Varona with the cast and crew of *The Old Man and the Parrot* at Slamdance Film Festival.

Exhibitions:
Sites of Exchange

Exhibitions at Oolite Arts remain a vital extension of the organization's commitment to artists and South Florida's arts audiences. During the 2024–2025 fiscal year, Oolite Arts presented a slate of exhibitions showcasing resident artists, alumni, and invited creatives, while activating spaces across Miami Beach and partner locations.

Through solo exhibitions, group presentations, and artist-centered installations, Oolite Arts created platforms for experimentation, visibility, and dialogue, providing artists with opportunities to present new work, engage audiences, and situate their practices within broader cultural conversations. By presenting exhibitions in accessible and high-visibility settings, Oolite Arts continues to foster encounters between artists and the public, reinforcing its role as a connector between creative practice and community experience.



Healing Nature

Curated by Omar Lopez-Chahoud
Dates: December 2, 2024–March 1, 2025

Healing Nature brought together a diverse group of artists whose works explored the restorative relationship between people and the natural world. Through meditation and contemplation, the exhibition examined how nature can foster healing during times of conflict while encouraging reflection, resilience, and a deeper connection to the self.

The artists in the exhibition embraced the idea that humanity is part of a larger natural system. Through their varied practices, they drew inspiration from nature's restorative qualities, exploring its capacity to nurture personal healing, strengthen community, and deepen our understanding of the interconnected world we share.

Participating Artists:

Vanessa Albury
Kevin Arrow
Aycoobo (Wilson Rodríguez)
Matteo Calleari
Rev. Houston R. Cypress
Diana Eusebio
Guadalupe Maravilla
Lee Pivnik
Jean Sarmiento
Carrie Sieh

Opposite page: *Penumbras* exhibition opening. Photo by Through the Shutter. This page, top: *Healing Nature* exhibition. Right: Vanessa Albury, *Sea Coins*, 2022. Glazed stoneware unique. 5 × 1 inches. Photos by Pedro Wazzan.

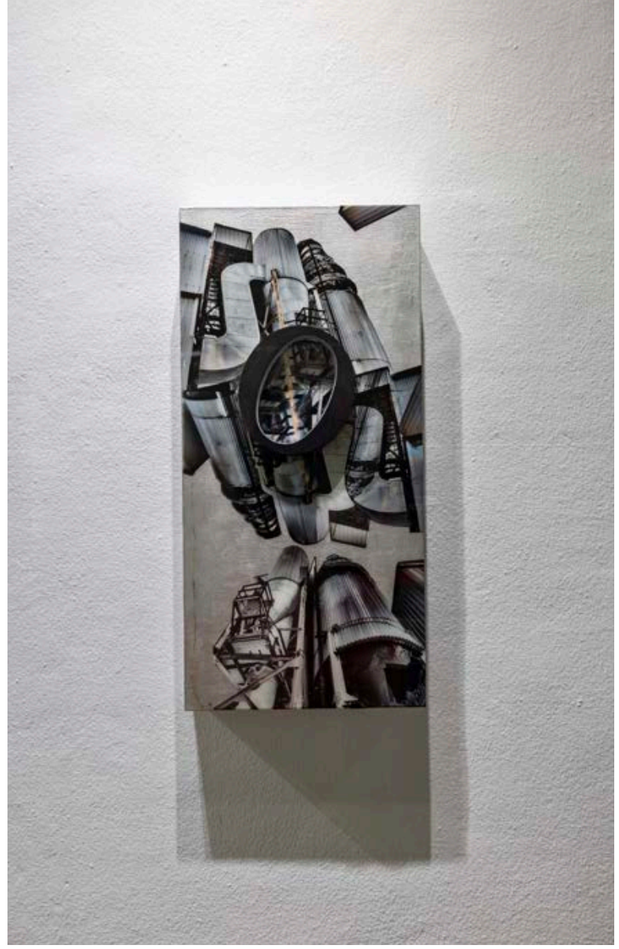
Factories: Old & New

By Kathy Kissik
Dates: December 2, 2024–February 23, 2025

Kathy Kissik incorporates imagery with repurposed objects, collage, and other materials to create works that challenge traditional notions of perception. Her artworks are dreamscapes, whether evoking the nostalgia of industrial landscapes or desire in the form of imaginary "factories" where intangible (and sometimes elusive) notions of love, hope, and peace can be made true.

Building on her career-long interest in architecture and industry, her recent "factory" works explore the idea that anything can be manufactured or mass-produced—even our deepest desires. In a similar spirit to Charles Sheeler (1883–1965), Kissik uses her own photography as the basis for conceptualizing these castles of industry. These factories are "secular fetishes," calling into question what it is we truly worship in our industrialized world.

Photos by Pedro Wazzan.



Emerging Voices

School partnerships exhibition
Dates: April 2–June 27, 2025

We were proud to present *Emerging Voices*, an exhibition showcasing works by young artists from Miami Arts Charter School. *Emerging Voices* celebrated a year of artistic growth, dedication, and exploration, offering a glimpse into the future of Miami's creative landscape.

This exhibition showcased not only the refinement of foundational skills but also the students' drive to challenge conventions, pose new questions, and propel the conversation. Each piece was a testament to their ability to synthesize technique with concept, demonstrating the confidence and critical thinking necessary to grow as artists in the 21st century.

Between Here and Elsewhere: Resident Show

Curated by Omar Lopez-Chahoud
Dates: April 2–June 27, 2025

Between Here and Elsewhere brought together the work of Oolite Arts' resident artists and filmmakers, considering each work as a point of entry into explorations of personal histories, collective memory, social structures, ecological terrains, or speculative worlds. Spanning lens-based media, material practices, spatial interventions, and digital forms, the exhibition considered how artworks open pathways into broader contexts. Each work offers a different perspective on the spaces between the familiar and the unknown.

Participating Artists:

Emma Cuba
Mark Delmont
Gabriel de Varona
Matthew Forehand
Diego Gabaldon
Sepideh Kalani
Pangea Kali Virga
Diana Larrea
Amanda Linares
Juan Luis Matos
Bex McCharen
Ana Mosquera
Lee Pivnik
Chire "VantaBlack" Regans
Michael Ruiz-Unger
Sheherazade Thénard
Carrington Ware
Ricardo E. Zulueta

Top left: *Between Here and Elsewhere* Resident Show. Photo by Zachary Balber.
Top right: Diego Gabaldon, *Speedframe #2*, 2025. ABS, polymer, rubber, aluminum, automotive paint, UV print on acrylic. 20 × 15 × 3 in. Unique. Photo by Zachary Balber.
Right: Ana Mosquera, *Breathing Exchange Temporium (B.E.T.)*, 2021. Fishing-float polyethylene tube, 1680 denier ballistic nylon, thermal gold blanket, medical-grade Latex rubbing, neodymium gold magnets, hand-printed poly satin, gold Lycra, security-grade textile ribbon, seatbelts, medical-grade respiratory tube. 80 × 106 × 12 in. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Works in Progress

Live.In.Art Residency pop-up exhibition
Curated by Luna Goldberg
Dates: August 6–September 15, 2025

Residencies offer artists space to create without pressure and room to experiment, to percolate, and to work through ideas in community. The eight artists in the Live.In.Art Residency lived and worked in the same building in the heart of South Beach. This merging of studio and home created opportunities for greater connections among artists, neighbors, the public, and the work itself.

Works in Progress marked the midpoint of the residency and brought together works in various stages of completion. Some were finished, while others were still evolving, offering insight into the different stages of creative practice.

Participating Artists:

Sue Beyer
Jevon A. Brown
Elaine Defibaugh
Luna Palazzolo-Daboul
Edison Peñafiel
Jacoub Reyes
Oscar Rieveling
Zonia Zena

Top: *Works in Progress* pop-up exhibition. Right: Live.In.Art resident Edison Peñafiel talks with a guest. Photos by Through the Shutter.

Penumbras: a narrative of Art Center/South Florida • Oolite Arts (1984–2014)

Curated by william cordova and Marie Vickles
Dates: August 6, 2025–October 19, 2025

Penumbras was a commemorative exhibition co-curated by cultural practitioner william cordova (Art Center/South Florida alum, 1998–2000) and Marie Vickles, Senior Director of Education at Pérez Art Museum Miami and Curator-in-Residence at the Little Haiti Cultural Center. The exhibition honored the foundational decades of Art Center/South Florida—now known as Oolite Arts—and the alumni artists who shaped its early legacy.

Spanning the years 1984 to 2014, *Penumbras* brought together works by a cross-generational group of alumni, including those who participated in the Career Artists in the Visual Arts residency, originally supported by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. The exhibition featured original artworks, archival materials, posters, slides, and ephemera drawn from the Oolite Arts archive and cordova's personal collection.

A memorial section honored the alumni who have passed over the past four decades. In addition, a video installation presented rarely seen interviews, artist films, home videos, and news footage, offering a time capsule of cultural and creative life during the institution's early years.

The exhibition also highlighted the essential presence and contributions of artists from the African diaspora, including Fenol Marcelin, Vickie Pierre, Michael Richards, Jodie Lyn-Kee Chow, Manuel Acevedo, Charo Oquet, and Edouard Duval-Carrié.

At its core, *Penumbras* celebrated the alumni community and its lasting legacy in South Florida's cultural landscape. As the curators shared: "We see the alumni as the lifeblood of this institution—a living archive of artistic experimentation, cultural resistance, and creative exchange."

Special thanks to artist and archivist Kevin Arrow, whose contributions helped recover pivotal early moments in the institution's history and enrich this collective narrative.

Participating Artists:

Manuel Acevedo
william cordova
Edouard Duval-Carrié
Jodie Lyn-Kee Chow
Fenol Marcelin
Charo Oquet
Vickie Pierre
Michael Richards

Photos by Zachary Balber.

Happy Birthday to Oolite Arts!

At the opening night of the *Penumbras* exhibition, we also celebrated the 40th anniversary of Oolite Arts by honoring the artists who have shaped our community. Over 400 people filled our galleries, including Miami Beach Mayor Steven Meiner, city commissioners, our Board of Directors, and alumni from our very first years. The evening united longtime members of the Oolite Arts community, along with new connections and shared creative history.

Miami Art Week: Conversations and Exchange

The *Healing Nature* exhibition opened during Miami Art Week in December and was part of Oolite Arts' contribution to the citywide dialogue through public programs and media engagement centered on artist-led practice, creative exchange, and the evolving role of arts organizations. Through its presence during Miami Art Week, Oolite Arts amplified conversations shaping contemporary practice while reinforcing South Florida's position as a site for critical discourse, collaboration, and creative innovation.

Opposite page: *Penumbras* and Oolite Arts 40th Anniversary Celebration. Photos by Through the Shutter.
This page, right: Adrienne Rose Gionta, *It Is What It Is*, 2024. Photo Courtesy of Ballyhoo Media.
Below: Artists talk during the Miami Art Week Exhibition, *Healing Nature*. Photo credit Miriam Kolker.

Windows @ Walgreens:
Public Art Beyond the Gallery

Thousands of pedestrians and drivers pass these installations along Collins Avenue in Miami Beach's North Beach district every day.

Through its partnership with Walgreens Company, Oolite Arts activated storefront windows along Collins Avenue as an exhibition platform, transforming everyday commercial space into a site for contemporary art. The Windows @ Walgreens program presented rotating installations by South Florida artists, offering artists expanded visibility while engaging passersby in unexpected encounters with art.

By presenting artwork in a public, street-facing context, Windows @ Walgreens broadened access to contemporary art beyond traditional gallery settings and reinforced Oolite Arts' commitment to integrating art into daily civic experience.

Artists in Community: Education Program Showcase.

Left, from top: *Fragments, Trances, and Improvised Architectures*: Charo Oquet; *All We Really Want To Do is Dance*: Yolanda Sanchez; *The Weight of Things*: Juana Meneses.

Right, from top: *Woman, Life, Freedom*: T.E.S.; *In the Breath of Remembering, the Future Calls to Our Refuge*: Carolina Cueva; *A Public Education*: Tom Virgin. *Invert/Retro*: Gavin Perry.

Education: Expanding Access and Artistic Development

Oolite Arts provides meaningful opportunities for artists and students at multiple stages of creative development. During the 2024–2025 fiscal year, Oolite Arts advanced a series of adult and youth programs designed to foster artistic experimentation, professional growth, and deeper engagement with the broader community.

Adult Programs

Visiting Artists
In February 2025, Oolite Arts welcomed Chicago-based artist Claire Ashley as a visiting artist. Ashley presented a public artist talk, conducted one-on-one studio visits with resident artists, and led a full-day inflatable-sculpture workshop. Works developed during the workshop were later presented at Windows @ Walgreens, extending the impact of the residency into a public-facing context.

Critique Forum
Open Studio, originally conceived as a workspace initiative for artists without dedicated studios, evolved into Critique Forum in response to community interest and participation patterns. The reimagined program provided artists with focused, small-group feedback sessions led by established arts professionals.

Forum sessions were led by Aurelio Aguiló and Mayra Mejía of homework gallery, Nico Hough of Cernuda Arte, and Amanda Baker-Hall of Baker–Hall. Each session sold out upon announcement, reflecting strong demand for opportunities centered on dialogue, critique, and peer exchange. The program strengthened both professional development and community-building among participating artists.

Youth Programs

School Partnerships
The School Partnerships initiative brought Oolite Arts directly into K–12 schools through artist talks, hands-on workshops, and field trips. From December 2024 through June 2025, the program reached more than 300 students across institutions, including Miami Arts Charter School, New World School of the Arts, Design and Architecture Senior High, Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High School, North Miami Beach Elementary School, and Florida International University.

Oolite Arts Residents and alumni artists engaged students through classroom visits, while participating schools attended tailored field trips to Oolite Arts that included studio visits and creative career discussions. The initiative was designed to supplement existing arts education while helping students develop pathways toward creative practice and professional opportunities.

High School Internships
From July 1 through August 8, 2025, Oolite Arts hosted four high school interns through its Summer Internship Program. Interns Ash Lataczewski and Melina Walsh supported Oolite Arts artists working in the Oolite Arts PRINTshop, while interns Jenise Baquet and Luna Garay worked in Oolite Arts administration, supporting residents, alumni, and exhibitions.

Oolite Arts' interns gained hands-on experience in both studio practice and arts administration, participated in professional development workshops, and collaborated with artists through studio sessions and community gatherings. Each intern completed their work with Oolite Arts by giving a presentation during a gathering with staff, board members, and resident artists, reflecting on what they learned and sharing their experiences.

Art After School
Oolite Arts' Art After School introduced students from St. Mary's Cathedral School to new creative processes through a seven-week program led by Oolite Arts alumna Diana Eusebio. Sessions combined art historical context with hands-on projects.

Selected student artworks were later presented publicly at Windows @ Walgreens as an opportunity to share their creative explorations in a public setting.

This page: Students from St. Mary's Cathedral School participate in a hands-on workshop.
Opposite page: Chicago-based artist Claire Ashley presents at the Oolite Satellite Space in Little River.

Adult Art Classes:
Creative Practice and Skill Development

Adult Art Classes at Oolite Arts provide structured opportunities for creative exploration, technical development, and sustained engagement with contemporary artistic practice. During the 2024–2025 fiscal year, Oolite Arts offered a diverse range of courses designed to support artists and community members across experience levels.

Courses were led by practicing artists and industry professionals, creating environments that encouraged experimentation, skill-building, and dialogue. Participants engaged in disciplines spanning painting, drawing, printmaking, and mixed media, reflecting the breadth of creative practices within South Florida's artistic community.

Through day, evening, and weekend offerings, Adult Art Classes expanded access to hands-on learning while fostering connections among artists, instructors, and the public. The program continues to serve as an important entry point for creative practice, providing participants with opportunities to deepen their skills and develop new approaches to their work.

Together, Oolite Arts' education initiatives and Adult Art Classes strengthen pathways for artistic growth, supporting lifelong learning and reinforcing the organization's commitment to accessibility and community engagement.

This page: Students attend a printmaking workshop in the PRINTshop.
Opposite page: Painting with Acrylic or Oil, a four-week course offered as part of our Adult Art Class offerings.

300+
art classes offered by practicing artist instructors

Art Classes at a Glance:

- 300 Classes Offered
- 1,750+ attendees during 2024–2025
- Practicing Artist Instructors
- Day, Evening, and Weekend Sessions

Click here or scan the QR code for information and to register for our Adult Art Classes.

Skills:
Professional Development for Artists

Skills is Oolite Arts' flagship professional development series, addressing practical and career-centered challenges facing working artists. Oolite Arts presented two sessions ahead of Miami Art Week, designed to support artists preparing for increased visibility during the region's peak cultural season.

Sessions featured gallery owners Fred Snitzer and Jumaane N'Namdi, who shared insights on sustaining creative practices, navigating gallery relationships, and building viable artistic careers. The programs were well attended and reinforced Oolite Arts' commitment to supporting all of South Florida's artists beyond studios and exhibitions.

Fred Snitzer (above) and Jumaane N'Namdi (right) share their insights as part of the Skills artist professional development program.

The**Ellies**
Celebrating 40 Years of Artist Support

As part of Oolite Arts' 40th anniversary year, The Ellies continued to serve as one of the region's most significant investments in artists and educators. Award recipients are selected through a rigorous and independent jury process, and the program provides direct funding that supports creative production, research, education, and community-based projects across Miami's visual arts ecosystem.

The 2025 awards cycle marked a major milestone, with an additional $100,000 granted to artists working and living in Miami, bringing the total awards distributed this year to $600,000. This achievement contributes to a cumulative investment of $3.6 million in artists through The Ellies, reinforcing Oolite Arts' role as a leading champion of artistic practice in South Florida.

The awards ceremony took place April 16, 2025, at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, and honored Jorge M. Pérez and Darlene Pérez for their philanthropic leadership and sustained commitment to expanding opportunities for artists.

Michael Richards Award

Named in honor of the late artist Michael Richards, a former Oolite Arts resident whose work explored history, identity, and social justice, the Michael Richards Award recognizes an artist whose practice demonstrates exceptional artistic achievement and cultural impact.

The recipient of the prestigious $75,000 Michael Richards Award was José Bedia, an internationally recognized artist whose work bridges anthropology, spirituality, and visual storytelling. Born in Havana, Bedia emerged as a leading figure in the groundbreaking Volumen Uno exhibition of 1981, a pivotal moment in the development of contemporary Cuban art. A graduate of Havana's Instituto Superior de Arte, Bedia's practice draws on extensive research into Afro-Transatlantic and Indigenous American cultural traditions, integrating symbolism, ritual, and narrative imagery into his distinctive visual language.

Over the past four decades, Bedia has developed a body of work that explores themes of identity, migration, belief systems, and cultural memory. His drawings, paintings, sculptures, and installations are held in major international collections, including The Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Tate Modern, and Pérez Art Museum Miami. The Michael Richards Award recognizes Bedia's enduring artistic impact and his continued contributions to Miami's cultural landscape.

Social Justice Award

The $25,000 Social Justice Award was presented to T. Eliott Mansa, a Miami-based visual artist whose interdisciplinary practice examines memory, ritual, and social justice through assemblage and material intervention. Mansa's work incorporates objects sourced from roadside memorials and other sites of remembrance, drawing on ritual practices rooted in West African, Caribbean, and Southern spiritual traditions.

Through sculpture and installation, Mansa reflects on the complex intersections of history, community, and state violence while creating spaces for reflection, mourning, and protection. His work asks critical questions about the role of art in confronting injustice and honoring lives lost to systemic inequities. The Social Justice Award recognizes artists whose work advances dialogue and collective healing, and Mansa's practice exemplifies the power of art to engage urgent social issues while fostering deeper community awareness.

Creator Awards

The Creator Awards support ambitious projects by Miami-based artists, collectives, and cultural organizations. These awards provide direct funding for new work, research, exhibitions, and community-based initiatives that contribute to the cultural life of South Florida.

In 2025, Creator Awards supported a diverse range of projects spanning visual art, interdisciplinary practice, public art, publishing, performance, and socially engaged work. These projects reflect the depth of Miami's creative community and Oolite Arts' commitment to investing in artistic experimentation, cultural dialogue, and community impact.

2025 Creator Award Winners:

- Liene Bosquê
- Jevon Brown
- Lujan Candria
- Gregory Clark
- Yanira Collado
- Nicole Combeau
- Cynthia Cruz
- Cara Despain
- Arisela Diaz
- Morel Doucet
- Aqua Etefia
- Fernanda Froes
- Gabriela Gamboa
- Rosa Naday Garmendia
- Isabella Marie Garcia
- Amanda Keeley
- Sydney Rose Maubert
- MyFi Studio (Aimee Rubensteen & Dr. Josh Eisenberg)
- Melanie Oliva
- Karen Rifas
- Lissette Schaeffler
- Gabriel Soomar
- Marisabela Tellería
- Sheherazade Thénard
- Clara Toro
- Denise Treizman
- Frances Trombly
- Cornelius Tulloch
- Angela Valella
- Clara Varas

Cinematic Awards

The Ellies continued to advance time-based and moving image practices through Cinematic Awards supporting short films, documentaries, and experimental media projects. Funded works explored themes of memory, identity, environment, migration, and community histories, reflecting the diversity and critical perspectives of Miami's film community.

2025 Cinematic Award Winners:

- Berenicé Brino
- Karla Caprali
- Robert Colom
- Francess Dunbar
- Jayme Kaye Gershen
- Rachelle Salnave
- Kareem Tabsch
- Julia Zurilla

Art Teacher Travel Awards

The Art Teacher Travel Awards support arts educators in expanding their knowledge through international research and cultural immersion. In 2025, five educators each received a $5,000 grant to pursue independent travel and study that enriches their teaching and artistic practice.

Destinations included Austria, Peru, Scotland, Brazil, and the Baltic States, where educators explored art history, architecture, printmaking, and cultural traditions. These experiences allowed educators to deepen their understanding of global artistic practices and bring new perspectives, techniques, and cultural insights back to classrooms in South Florida.

By investing in educators, the Art Teacher Travel Awards strengthen arts education throughout the region while fostering connections between Miami's classrooms and the broader international art community.

2025 Art Teacher Travel Award Winners:

- Carolina Cueva
- Jennifer Gifford
- Stephanie Hurst
- Mary Larsen
- Silvana Soriano

$500,000
shared among artists and art teachers

Alumni Impact:
40 Years of Artists

For four decades, Oolite Arts has supported artists at pivotal moments in their careers. Since its founding in 1984 as Art Center/South Florida, the organization has served about 1,000 artists through residencies, awards, professional development programs, and exhibitions.

The alumni community reflects the depth and diversity of Miami's creative landscape. Oolite Arts alumni have gone on to exhibit in museums, galleries, biennials, and public spaces throughout the United States and internationally, contributing to conversations that shape contemporary art today.

As Oolite Arts celebrates its 40th anniversary, this report recognizes the extraordinary community of artists whose work continues to expand the cultural impact of the organization. Their practices span disciplines, generations, and geographies, yet they share a common foundation in the support, experimentation, and dialogue fostered through Oolite Arts programs.

Oolite Arts has supported about 1,000 artists in its 40-year history. Each year, Oolite Arts alumni continue to break ground and achieve remarkable things, many of which are listed here.

- Anastasia Samoylova: *Floridas: Anastasia Samoylova and Walker Evans*, Metropolitan Museum of Art
- Edouard Duval-Carrié: *Spirit & Strength: Modern Art from Haiti*, National Gallery of Art
- Aimee Rubensteen and Dr. Josh Eisenberg of MyFi Studio: *Look Over Here*, and *tie the knot: the twilight years connect us*, Phillip & Patricia Frost Museum of Science
- Alba Triana: *Dialogue with the Primordial Sea*, Locust Projects
- Carola Bravo: *Theater of Spaces*, Miami Dade College Kendall Campus Art Gallery
- Elliot & Erick Jiménez: *El Monte*, Perez Art Museum Miami
- Jen Clay: *Blasted Belonging*, Girls' Club
- Jillian Mayer: *SLUMPIES*, Sarasota Art Museum
- Onajide Shabaka: *Murmur*, Dimensions Variable
- Rose Marie Cromwell: *Rose Marie Cromwell: A Geological Survey*, ICA Miami
- Smita Sen: *Embodied*, MOCA NoMi
- Sue Beyer: *Personality Test: An Autofiction*, NARS Foundation Project Space
- Vickie Pierre: *The Maiden is The Warrior*, MOCA NoMi
- Wendy Wischer: *Open Water*, Locust Projects
- william cordova: *algo•ritmos (2 tienes santo pero no eres babalao)*, Locust Projects
- Yessica Gispert: *Susurro*, Patricia and Phillip Frost Frost Art Museum
- Nathalie Alfonso: 2025 Florida Prize in Contemporary Art Winner
- Leo Castañeda, Amanda Linares, Troy Simmons, Cornelius Tulloch: 2025 Florida Prize in Contemporary Art Finalists
- Angelica Clyman, william cordova, Rose Marie Cromwell, Jean-Paul Mallozzi, Jillian Mayer, Ania Moussawel, Greko Sklavounos, Roscoe B. Thicke III, Denise Treizman: 2023-2024 South Florida Cultural Consortium Grant Recipients, Florida Atlantic University, Dorothy F. Schmidt Galleries

Thank You to our 2024–2025 supporters!

Knight Foundation
Miami-Dade County
Culture Builds Florida
Florida Department of State Division of Arts & Culture
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The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
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Tito's Handmade Vodka
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She Collective
See Hear Engage
Collective Circle

Exhibitions and programs at Oolite Arts are made possible with support from the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Affairs Council, and the Miami-Dade Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; the City of Miami Beach Department of Tourism and Cultural Development, Office of Cultural Affairs, and the Miami Beach Mayor and City Commissioners; the Florida Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, and the Florida Arts Council; The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation at The Miami Foundation; and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Additional support is provided by Walgreens Company, She Collective and Collective Circle members.

Oolite Arts is a registered 501(c)(3) organization and all donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Financials

Fiscal Year October 1, 2024–September 30, 2025

Income:

- Earned Income **$620,884**
- Grant Income (Foundations and Government) **$422,174**
- Contributions and Membership **$74,244**
- Other Income (Misc.) **$209,098**
- Appropriation of Endowment **$3,998,762**

Total Income: $5,325,162

Expenses:

- Artists and Studio Programs **$1,752,218**
- Education and Outreach Programs **$379,139**
- Galleries and Exhibition Programs **$1,143,055**
- Fundraising and Public Relations **$326,143**
- Management and General **$1,387,227**

Total Expenses: $4,987,782

The information provided above is derived from the 2024–2025 audited financial statements. The expenses include allocated indirect costs.

Our Endowment:
A Long-Term Commitment to Artists

The endowment of Oolite Arts is a cornerstone of the organization's long-term stability and a lasting commitment to artists. Built to support Oolite Arts in perpetuity, the endowment helps ensure that artists thrive and programs continue regardless of economic cycles.

Oolite Arts' endowment is carefully and conservatively invested, with only a portion of annual returns allocated to support operations and programs. This disciplined approach protects the principal while generating ongoing resources that advance the organization's mission.

Why the Endowment Matters

Because the endowment contributes to core operating support, philanthropic dollars raised through annual giving and special initiatives can be directed more fully toward artist-centered programs. This structure allows Oolite Arts to invest deeply in residencies, exhibitions, education, and community engagement, while maintaining financial resilience.

As Oolite Arts prepares for its next chapter, including the development of its new campus at the crossroads of Little Haiti and Little River in the City of Miami, the endowment plays a critical role in sustaining growth and ensuring long-term impact.

Through thoughtful stewardship and long-term planning, the endowment enables Oolite Arts to remain focused on what matters most: supporting artists and strengthening South Florida's creative ecosystem for generations to come.

To learn more about Oolite Arts' endowment, contact Chief Development Officer, Megan Braasch at mbraasch@oolitearts.org or 917-572-0045.

Clockwise from above: Resident artist Amanda Linares. Photo by Diana Larrea. Resident artist Mark Delmont. Photo by Diana Larrea; Art student in LED Arts class. Resident artist Ana Mosquera. Photo by Pedro Wazzan.

This page, clockwise from above: La Mar Chef Diego Oka, studio visit. Tony Ulloa Private Collection visit. Members' dinner at La Mar Mandarin Oriental before demolition. Karen Rifas, Michael Richards Award recipient. Studio visit.
Opposite page: Edouard Duval-Carrié, Season Closing.

Collective Circle:
Building Community Through Art Experiences

Collective Circle provides members with curated engagement with artists, collectors, and cultural spaces. The program fosters deep connections to contemporary art through studio visits, collection tours, and artist-centered gatherings.

Events throughout 2025 offered members access to creative practices and conversations shaping the region's cultural landscape.

This program remains an important channel for community-building, philanthropy, and sustained support for Oolite Arts' programs, while providing opportunities for South Floridians to connect through art and creativity.

To learn more about how to become a member, contact Chief Development Officer, Megan Braasch at mbraasch@oolitearts.org or 917-572-0045.

SHE Collective:
Investing in Artists Through Collective Action

SHE Collective was established in September 2025 as a new donor initiative centered on community, empowerment, and direct investment in artists. The program brings together arts-engaged women from diverse backgrounds who share a commitment to strengthening South Florida's creative ecosystem.

Designed as a long-term philanthropic and engagement platform, SHE Collective supports the acquisition of artworks for the Oolite Arts Collection Program while fostering connections among members and artists.

To learn more about how to become a member, contact Chief Development Officer, Megan Braasch at mbraasch@oolitearts.org or 917-572-0045.

New Campus: Building the Future of Artist Support

Oolite Arts is preparing for a transformative next chapter. In 2026, we will break ground on a new 26,850-square-foot campus in Miami's Little River neighborhood, designed by the acclaimed Barcelona-based architects Barozzi Veiga. Envisioned as a welcoming civic landmark, the environmentally conscious building reflects both the needs of our artists and the vitality of the community we serve.

This purpose-built campus will nearly double our studio capacity, expanding access to affordable, stable workspace for working artists in a city where such space is increasingly scarce. Enlarged galleries will create new opportunities for exhibition and public engagement, while expanded classrooms, fabrication facilities, and media labs will provide the tools and technical support artists need to experiment boldly and realize complex ideas.

Flexible indoor and outdoor spaces will host performances, talks, screenings, youth education programs, and artist-led workshops—deepening community partnerships and inviting the public into direct dialogue with the creative process. Designed for openness and exchange, the campus will serve not only as a home for artists but also as an active cultural gathering place for Miami.

More than just a new building, the Little River campus represents a lasting investment in creative infrastructure—strengthening Oolite Arts' role as a center for creative excellence and a hub for the next generation of artists working in and from South Florida.

As part of this transition, Oolite Arts commissioned a temporary mural by Douglas Hoekzema, known professionally as HOXXOH, on the existing warehouse structures at the site, which will be demolished to make room for the new construction. The mural serves as a visual countdown and a public marker of change, honoring the site's history while signaling the beginning of a new chapter for the organization and the surrounding community.

By establishing a permanent campus in the City of Miami, Oolite Arts is building a foundation for long-term impact, ensuring that artists remain at the center of the organization's mission and that the community continues to benefit from access to contemporary art.

To learn more about the new campus or available naming opportunities, contact Chief Development Officer, Megan Braasch at mbraasch@oolitearts.org or 917-572-0045.

OoliteArts.org/our-new-home

Oolite Arts' new campus in the City of Miami

We are looking forward to building South Florida's next creative chapter at our new state-of-the-art facility, designed by internationally renowned architects Barozzi Veiga.

To learn more about the new campus or available naming opportunities, contact Chief Development Officer, Megan Braasch at mbraasch@oolitearts.org or 917-572-0045.

OoliteArts.org/our-new-home

Oolite Arts

Renderings by Azeez Bakare of the Barozzi Veiga-designed campus.

2024–2025
Oolite Arts Staff

The work of Oolite Arts is made possible by a dedicated team committed to supporting artists and advancing contemporary visual arts across South Florida.

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Catalina Aguayo
Education Program Manager

Megan Braasch
Chief Development Officer

Cherese Crockett
Interim Director of Programs

Claudia DoCampo
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