

# The Museum of Modern Art

## MoMA ANNOUNCES THE INAUGURAL COHORT OF FORD FOUNDATION SCHOLARS IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

### Brent Hayes Edwards, Joan Kee, and Robin Coste Lewis Will Join the Museum for a One-Year Residency in September 2022

**NEW YORK, NY, June 16, 2022**—The Museum of Modern Art announces the inaugural cohort of the Ford Foundation Scholars in Residence: **Brent Hayes Edwards, Joan Kee, and Robin Coste Lewis**. The program invites three acclaimed and inspiring thinkers to join the Museum for a one-year term to pursue independent research that contributes to new understandings of modern and contemporary art. In addition to conducting independent research, Edwards, Kee, and Lewis will participate in conversations and projects that shape acquisitions and programming.

The three Ford Foundation Scholars in Residence range in disciplines; each is highly respected as a thought leader and brings a distinctive perspective to the Museum. They were chosen by a review committee with external and internal members, including Elizabeth Alexander, Homi Bhabha, Huey Copeland, Leah Dickerman, Michelle Kuo, and Martino Stierli.

Brent Hayes Edwards, recognized as one of the foremost scholars of African diasporic literature, is the Peng Family Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, where he is also affiliated with the Center for Jazz Studies and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. Current projects include a bilingual edition of the collected interwar articles of the Martinican intellectual Paulette Nardal; the restoration of *Sweet Willie Rollbar's Orientation*, an experimental short film made in 1972 by Julius Hemphill and other members of the Black Artists' Group in St. Louis; "Black Radicalism and the Archive" (based on the Du Bois Lectures that Edwards presented at Harvard University in 2015); and a book-length cultural history of the "loft jazz" scene in downtown Manhattan in the 1970s. Edwards was a 2015 Guggenheim Fellow, and in 2020 he was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Joan Kee is a professor in the History of Art at the University of Michigan. Kee is especially interested in applied art history, where methods central to the discipline—such as close visual analysis—offer a framework for thinking about related cultural phenomena, from law to digital communication. Her forthcoming book, *The Geometries of Afro Asia: Art Beyond Solidarity* (University of California Press, 2023), maps a history of art that begins with the global majority, spanning Asia, Africa, North America, and Europe. The book centers the worlds Black and Asian artists initiate through their work from roughly 1960 to the present.

Robin Coste Lewis is a writer, artist, and scholar, and currently serves as a Writer-in-Residence at the University of Southern California. Her debut poetry collection, *Voyage of the Sable Venus*, won the National Book Award for Poetry in 2015—the first time any

debut had won the award since 1974. In 2018, MoMA commissioned both Lewis and Kevin Young to write a series of poems to accompany Robert Rauschenberg's drawings in *Thirty-Four Illustrations of Dante's Inferno* (MoMA, 2018). Her collaboration with the artist Julie Mehretu, an installation featuring a time-based visual poem, was recently on view at the Marian Goodman Gallery in Paris.

### **RESEARCH AT MoMA**

Research and scholarship on modern and contemporary art has been one of the Museum's core commitments since its founding in 1929. Today we are building on this history to explore and expand narratives of modern and contemporary art, to connect people across disciplines around the study of works of art, and to share insights and research resources through innovative, digital-forward strategies. [mom.org/research-and-learning/](https://mom.org/research-and-learning/)

### **ABOUT THE FORD FOUNDATION**

The Ford Foundation is an independent organization working to address inequality and build a future grounded in justice. For more than 85 years, it has supported visionaries on the frontlines of social change worldwide, guided by its mission to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement. Today, with an endowment of \$16 billion, the foundation has headquarters in New York and 10 regional offices across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. [fordfoundation.org](https://fordfoundation.org)

### **PRESS CONTACTS:**

Stephanie Katsias, [stephanie\\_katsias@moma.org](mailto:stephanie_katsias@moma.org)

Meg Montgoris, [meg\\_montgoris@moma.org](mailto:meg_montgoris@moma.org)

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