



## Threewalls Announces New Grant Initiative Supporting 31 Artists and Collectives Nationwide

The artist support organization will select artists and collectives to be awarded \$372,000 in unrestricted funds in 2026



*Dr. Jeffreen Ash facilitates a special iteration of Breaking Bread at the Yellow House in Jacksonville, Florida. Photo courtesy Threewalls. Photo: Toni Smailagić*

**Chicago, IL, April 15, 2026** – Threewalls, a Black woman-led nonprofit organization providing support for contemporary visual artists and creatives, today announces a new artist grant initiative, RaDLOW 3.0, that will distribute \$372,000 in unrestricted funding to 31 artists, collectives, and collaborative projects across the United States this year. Awarded in three phases over the course of the year, the initiative grows from the organization’s former RaD Lab+Outside the Walls Fellowship, transitioning programmatic focus from a fellowship model to a model of direct and unrestricted artist grants. The first set of grants will be awarded to the following 10 artists:

- **Interdisciplinary artist Jared Brown (Chicago)** excavates fragments of Black American subculture, history, and technology, repurposing them across audio, performance, text, and video to investigate the relationship between history and digital, immaterial space.
- **Multimedia artist Carol Zou (Santa Monica, CA / Albuquerque, NM)** develops collaborative, community and process-based projects that center spatial justice, public pedagogy, and intercultural connection within multiracial communities.

- **Painter and mixed-media artist Ellington Robinson (Washington, DC and U.S. Virgin Islands)** draws on diasporic narratives and lived experience, contributing to a broader cultural dialogue around identity, place, and Caribbean heritage.
- **Multidisciplinary artist Betelhem Makonnen (Austin, Texas)** explores perception, memory, and place through anthropological and historical inquiry, linking personal experience to shared cultural histories through photography, video, and installation.
- **Multidisciplinary artist Chire Regans (VantaBlack) (Miami)** creates portraiture and woven sculpture that honor Black womanhood through themes of remembrance, resistance, and collective care.
- **Filmmaker Alexandria Bombach (Santa Fe, New Mexico)** centers deeply human, character-driven stories that foreground empathy, amplifying lived experiences and shared truths across communities.
- **Photographer, writer, and artist milo bosh (Chicago)** focuses on portraiture and Black visual culture, documenting and reflecting on artistic communities through image-making and critical writing.
- **Conceptual artist Shonna Pryor (Chicago)** uses food theory and interdisciplinary practice to examine identity, memory, and power, often engaging community through reclaimed objects, installation, painting and public programming.
- **Visual artist and cultural organizer Hope McMath (Jacksonville, Florida)** integrates printmaking, education, and social practice to advance community care, truth-telling, and collective action rooted in Southern histories.
- **Presa House Gallery (Rigoberto Luna and Jenelle Esparza) (San Antonio, Texas)** brings together curatorial and artistic practices rooted in community and place, supporting emerging and underrepresented artists while exploring histories of land, labor, and identity through exhibitions and interdisciplinary work that center Latinx perspectives and collective experience across Texas and the broader U.S. Southwest.

“This initiative is rooted in our belief that artists deserve support that meets the urgency of this political and cultural moment,” said **Jeffreen Ash, Ph.D., Executive Director of Threewalls**. “Threewalls is responding directly to what artists have named as most critical right now, support that honors their full humanity and sustains their ability to continue imagining and shaping more just futures. Artists play a critical role in sustaining our communities, helping us understand where we are, envision what is possible, and build collective pathways forward.”

The initiative reinforces Threewalls’ long-standing commitment to artist sustainability, autonomy, and collective care. All grants are unrestricted, allowing recipients the flexibility to apply funds toward creative production, research, rest, and personal or professional needs. The first grant phase awardees announced today will be awarded \$12,000 each, totaling \$120,000. The next grant phase of 21 grants totaling \$252,000 will be awarded and announced later this year. At the end of the award cycles, there will be a publication documenting the Fellows’ practice. Building on the RaD Lab + Outside the Walls Fellowship, this iteration shifts from a fellowship model to direct, unrestricted grants while keeping the publication component as documentation of the fellows’ practices. In addition to the financial award, the fellows have access to creative and personal development support through the Wellness Circle, which includes one-on-one

counseling sessions with a licensed therapist, financial planning sessions with a professional planner, disability justice workshops, and digital coaching sessions.

RaDLOW 3.0 will continue to support individuals across diverse racial, cultural, and gender identities, as well as projects, collectives, and artist-led spaces working in collaboration with their communities, grounded in research-based artistic and creative practices rooted in radical imagination and racial justice. For the first phase, grantees will be invited and selected by the Threewalls leadership team to ensure alignment with the organization's values and the objectives of the regranting program. For the following phase, a National Community Committee will nominate individual artists for consideration and Threewalls leadership will select collectives and projects from a pool of invited groups. The grantee profile for this iteration prioritizes mid-career artists, creatives, and culture bearers.

"RaDLOW 3.0 reflects our commitment to trusting artists and resourcing their autonomy in meaningful ways," said **Sharbreon Plummer, Ph.D., Artistic Director of Threewalls**. "By offering unrestricted support, we are responding to the realities artists are navigating personally, politically, and creatively, and creating space for them to determine what care and sustainability look like for their own lives and practices."

"Threewalls has been a field leader in flexibly and compassionately funding artists of color to imagine a more just society, work that we need now more than ever. We're proud to support the visionary work of Dr. Jeffreen Ash, her team, and the brilliant artists of RaDLOW 3.0." said **Robert Smith III, Senior Program Officer, Thriving Cultures for The Surdna Foundation**.

RaDLOW 3.0 represents a significant investment in artists working across a range of cultural and creative ecosystems within, alongside, and beyond traditional institutional frameworks. By prioritizing practices that are experimental, community-engaged, or not solely defined by commercial models, Threewalls reinforces its commitment to resourcing artists whose work sustains communities, fosters critical dialogue, and expands the conditions for collective care and imagination.

Threewalls' longstanding RaDLOW program began as an invitational, research-centered fellowship supporting Chicago-based artists whose practices prioritize archives, scholarship, and socio-political inquiry. Historically, over the course of a year, the program's fellows developed research-driven work and activated it through public exhibitions, installations, and community engagements across Chicago neighborhoods. Over the past decade, RaDLOW has become a model for how arts organizations can holistically and authentically support artists engaged in research-based and community-rooted practices, approaches that have historically received less institutional funding than traditional studio-based work.

**This initiative is supported by The Surdna Foundation**, an organization that supports social justice reform, healthy environments, inclusive economies, and thriving cultures across the United States.

Further details on award recipients and future program updates will be announced throughout the year.

## **About Threewalls**

Threewalls, an ever-evolving Blk art space, fosters contemporary art practices that respond to lived experiences, encouraging connections beyond art. Founded in 2003, the organization continues its purpose to support artists often marginalized because of their non-commercial and experimental practices. Over the past six years, Threewalls evolved to further fill a gap for Chicago-based ALAANA-identified artists, who have been historically excluded from financial, curatorial, and programmatic support. The program, developed within Blk feminist and diasporic traditions, foregrounds ALAANA artists, decentralizes artmaking and programming, and serves to cultivate visibility and engagement between artists and Chicago community members. Learn more about the organization at [www.three-walls.org](http://www.three-walls.org).

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