

Plaskett

THE JOE PLASKETT FOUNDATION

Press Release

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Chantal Khoury wins \$65,000 Joseph Plaskett Award in Painting

Winner's work showcased at the Joe Plaskett Foundation Booth during Art Toronto (Oct. 26-29, 2023).



Painter Chantal Khoury in her studio. Photo credit: Ryan Park.

Painter Chantal Khoury is the 2023 recipient of the \$65,000 Joseph Plaskett postgraduate award in painting. Born in New Brunswick to Lebanese settlers, she recently completed her Master of Fine Arts at the University of Guelph. In her work, Khoury explores cultural loss and presence in a postcolonial condition while questioning the meaning of the mark in abstract painting. Drawing inspiration from a diversity of scholars and artists from the Global South, she uses traditional painting techniques to address the diaspora through a contemporary methodology, leveraging paint's versatility through the lens of abstraction.

The jury found the depiction of light in Khoury's paintings visually striking and beautiful, and they were captivated by the fluidity and variety of painting techniques. They appreciated the careful balancing act between the apparent simplicity of the compositions and the complex hints of representation, with traces of obliterated figures emerging from the works.

The award will allow Khoury to spend one year abroad, which she plans to divide equally across London, Paris, and Lebanon. During this period of great freedom, she plans to not only study great works and explore collections of cultural artifacts. She is also eager to reconnect with her family's heritage by visiting culturally and historically relevant places in Lebanon, as well as get involved in community and scholarly pursuits pertinent to her work: "I'm also eager to engage with other Arab diasporas who hold community-oriented workshops [...]". In London, she plans to meet with her former MFA external committee member, artist, and writer, Mandy Merzaban, to continue their exchange from a decolonial perspective.

Khoury's work is currently showing in Toronto (group exhibition at Hunt Gallery, Sept. 8 – Oct. 7), in Montreal (at Le Livart as part of Pictura Festival, Sept. 14 – Oct. 27), in Los Angeles (solo exhibition at Nicodim Gallery, Sept. 16 – Oct. 28), and in New York (forthcoming group exhibition at Nicodim New York, Oct 19 – Nov. 18). Her work will also be present at Art Toronto (Oct. 26-29) in the Joe Plaskett Foundation Booth (#A03) and the TAP Art Space Booth (#B72).

The Plaskett Award recipient was chosen by a pan-Canadian jury who met virtually in June 2023 to carefully assess the 32 exceptional applications that were received. In an effort to accurately represent the variety of viewpoints in Canadian painting, the jury members came from different regions: Jordan Bennett, a Mi'kmaw visual artist currently based in Halifax, Nova Scotia; Meera Sethi, a contemporary Canadian visual artist established in Toronto, Ontario; and M.E. Sparks, an artist and educator currently living in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

As the Joseph Plaskett Award transitions to a biennial schedule, the next call for applications is set to open in February 2025. Canadian artist Joseph Plaskett, who wished to give young Canadian painters the opportunity to discover Europe, created the Joe Plaskett Foundation in 2004. The award recipients are exceptional emerging Canadian artists in the field of painting who are admitted in a graduate program.

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