



**Pathways 2026: The Carlos Malamud Prize**  
**Opens at The Rollins Museum of Art on Thursday, May 28, 2026**



**PATHWAYS 2026**  
The Carlos Malamud Prize



The Rollins Museum of Art and the UCF Art Gallery at the University of Central Florida are pleased to present the third iteration of their collaborative exhibition and competition for emerging Florida artists, **Pathways 2026: The Carlos Malamud Prize**.

Juried by an external panel of three professionals from various areas of the art world, the exhibition features work by a select group of artists with diverse practices. The selection includes a variety of media, themes, scales, and approaches, showing a wide breadth of perspectives and experiences. Works by the finalists are shown at both venues, creating opportunities for engagement with two of the area’s major academic constituencies and their surrounding communities.

The winning artist of *Pathways 2026: The Carlos Malamud Prize* will receive a \$10,000 cash prize, a solo exhibition at the Rollins Museum of Art in 2027, and will participate as a juror for the following edition of the exhibition. The winner will also receive additional professional development and support. This consistent engagement over time makes *Pathways* unique and transformative among other art competitions. It hopes to nurture emerging artists and provide a pathway to success, which coincides with the core missions of both presenting institutions.

**Schedule of Events:**

- May 27 | 5:30-7pm** Opening Reception @ UCF Art Gallery
- May 28 | 5:30-7pm** Opening Reception/Winner Announcement @ Rollins Museum of Art
- June 23 | 6pm** Virtual Artist Panel **Register Now**
- August 25 | 11am** Exhibition Tour @ UCF Art Gallery
- August 27 | 6pm** Exhibition Tour @ Rollins Museum of Art

This year’s three *Pathways 2026: The Carlos Malamud Prize* jurors are: **Tenee’ Hart**, an educator at FSU, artist, and the winner of the *Pathways* prize in 2024; **Marcus Antonius Jansen**, a globally recognized artist based in Fort Myers; and **Sheldon Scott**, a Washington, D.C. based artist, philanthropist, and art professional.

Meet this year’s six *Pathways 2026: The Carlos Malamud Prize* finalists below: **Alex Awuku, Michael Cannata, Cruz Castillo, Shayla Marshall, Ebenezer Nketsiah Mensah, and Lucía Morales.**

**Find a selection of imagery here:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/gco7p4sgsp4b40imfajgk/AGqu5suOXAColvA3fJZyzic?rlkey=xjmzzzt17i6baxenfhljxvmus&st=r1mdhqb0&dl=0>

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Alex Awuku



*L: Portrait of Alex Awuku. Courtesy of the artist. R: Alex Awuku, 'Target,' stoneware, jute rope, metal, golf club, 4ft x 1ft, 2024.*

**ALEX AWUKU** is a contemporary ceramist and mixed-media artist from Kumasi, Ghana, whose practice bridges tradition and innovation. Since beginning his artistic journey in 2002, Awuku has cultivated a career that intertwines craft, education, and cultural research. He earned a BA in Industrial Art (Ceramics concentration) and a Diploma in Education from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), as well as a professional certificate in Self-Help Group Formation from the ITEC program in India. He is currently a Master of Fine Arts candidate in Ceramics at the University of Florida, College of Art. Awuku's research investigates the alienation of Ghanaian oral storytelling traditions, particularly Kwaku Ananse narratives, in the digital age. By combining clay, wood, metal, jute rope, and computer debris, he re-materializes these oral traditions as powerful tactile archives. His works embody a dialogue between ancestral memory and contemporary technological disruption, offering viewers spaces for reflection on resilience, identity, and cultural continuity. His practice has been showcased in multiple international exhibitions, with his artwork featured on the cover of International Journal of Education through Art 19.3 and cited in the NCECA Journal (Vol. 45, p. 95). Awuku's work continues to evolve as a compelling voice in contemporary ceramic practice, weaving together storytelling, materiality, and critical inquiry.

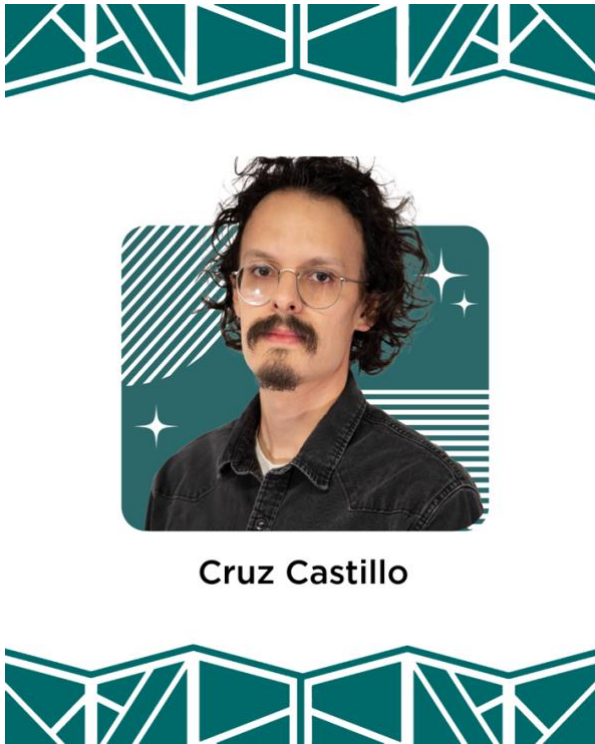


**Michael Cannata**



*L: Portrait of Michael Cannata. Courtesy of the artist. R: Michael Cannata, 'Surface Tension,' Clay, Glaze, 20 x 18 x 14 in., 2023.*

**MICHAEL CANNATA** is currently a Master of Fine Arts candidate at The University of South Florida (Tampa, FL). Cannata received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from The New York State School of Ceramics at Alfred University (Alfred, NY). In 2020, Cannata participated in two residency programs at Guldagergaard International Ceramic Research Center (Skaelskor, Denmark). From 2021 to 2023, Cannata took part in a long-term residency program at the Morean Center for Clay (St. Petersburg, FL). In 2021, Cannata took part in an online residency in collaboration with Indiana University to exhibit at the Museum of Nonconformist Art (St. Petersburg, Russia). Additionally, in 2023, Cannata took part in a month-long residency at Red Lodge Clay Center (Red Lodge, MT). Cannata has participated in group exhibitions throughout the U.S. and internationally in Denmark, Russia, South Korea, and Romania.



Cruz Castillo

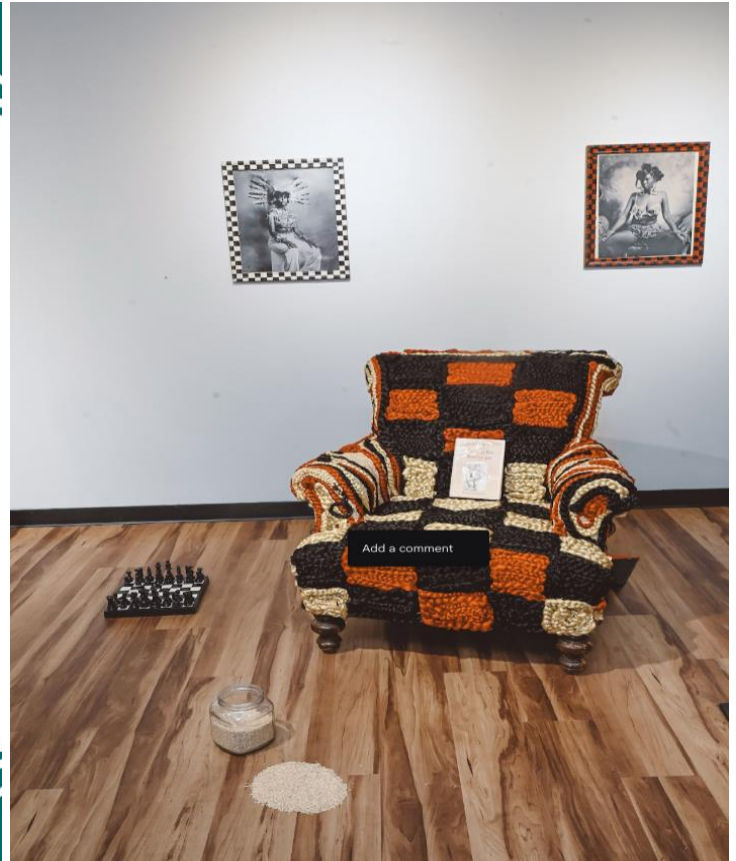


*L: Portrait of Cruz Castillo. Courtesy of the artist. R: Cruz Castillo, 'Feed the Sculpture,' Mudflap hanger, found polaroids, tape, hitch ring w/ screw eye, toy dinosaur, beer bottle caps, nails, tree stump, personal bandana, son's pacifier, rubber dock bumper, dolly, 51 ½ x 42 x 21" (130.81 x 106.68 x 53.34 cm), 2025*

**CRUZ CASTILLO** (b. 1992, Detroit; lives and works in Winter Park, Florida) is a multidisciplinary artist who works in sculpture, performance, and video art. Castillo's work reflects his interests in the labor process, the politics of production it brings, and his own relationship to the ritual of work that maintains the praxis of social being. Cruz Castillo's trajectory aims at interrogating the ways in which capitalism works upon the public's imagination and the impact of this mode of thinking on the reception of an artwork. To do so, Castillo strives to express a tussle between productive and unproductive labor within his work. Cruz Castillo received an MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2020 and a BS from the University of Oregon in 2015. A solo exhibition of his work has been held at the Lainer Family Gallery, Los Angeles (MFA Thesis, 2021). Selected group exhibitions have been held at Casino, Detroit, MI (2025 & 2024); the Orlando Museum of Art, Orlando, FL (2023); Pfent, Detroit, MI (2022 & 2020); Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA (2019); Godine Family Gallery, Boston, MA (2018); Annex Gallery, Detroit, MI (2017); 333 Midland, Highland Park, MI (2016); Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Eugene, OR (2015); LaVerne Krause Gallery, Eugene, OR (2014). Castillo is a recipient of the Graduate Art Department Scholarship, UCLA (2020); UCLA Regents Stipend Scholarship (2019); Juror's Choice Award, Cambridge Art Association (2018), and Best in Show, LaVerne Krause Gallery (2014).



Shayla Marshall



L: Portrait of Shayla Marshall. Photo by Christopher Auguste. R: Shayla Marshall, 'Relay (AURA),' Hair sculpture, installation, 2025

**SHAYLA MARSHALL** (b. 1999, Miami, FL) is a contemporary mixed-media artist now based between Miami and London, whose work uses world-building techniques to imagine new histories and futures, ones not prewritten for her. Raised in Miami's culturally rich and predominantly Black neighborhoods, her upbringing informs a celebration of identity and place. At 18 she moved to California, where living outside the familiarity of home exposed her to the broader complexities of being Black in environments not always safe or affirming. Now a full-time artist, Marshall holds her MA in Contemporary Art Practice from the Royal College of Art, the world's leading university for art & design according to the latest rankings. Her practice pulls disparate moments in time into layered, immersive worlds where storytelling is the foundation, inviting viewers to dwell in the flamboyance and depth of narratives often overlooked. Her work has been shown in institutions such as the Saatchi Gallery (London) and Greenspace Miami (2025). She has completed multiple residencies including at the Bakehouse Art Complex in Miami, and is a recipient of the Miami-Dade County Artist Grant.



Ebenezer Nketsiah Mensah



*L: Portrait of Ebenezer Nketsiah Mensah. Photo by Ross Owusu. R: Ebenezer Nketsiah Mensah, 'Sankofa' II (Going into the past to reclaim), 330 found construction and mining gloves, Two 6 x 2 ft and a 6.5 x 2 ft. 2025*

**EBENEZER NKETSI AH M ENSAH** is a multidisciplinary artist who recently earned an MFA in Studio Arts from the University of Florida. He previously earned his BFA in Painting and Sculpture from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in 2018. Mensah's works serve as a powerful narrative exploring complex themes such as labor, identity, memory, sustainability, migration, and materiality through installations, paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photo documentaries. Mensah reflects on his personal experiences as a miner and construction worker in Tarkwa, Ghana. Through his art, he highlights critical issues related to these practices, examines the lives of those involved, and considers their impact on communities in Ghana and the U.S., where these activities occur, as well as the associated geopolitics of labor. His work has been exhibited in numerous shows both nationally and internationally, including in the USA and Ghana. He has received several awards and fellowships, including the Windgate Fellowship in 2024, the Grinter Fellowship (which was upgraded to 12 months of funding), the Dean's Award- First Runner-Up in 2025 at the University of Florida Juried Exhibition, and a recent publication in African Arts by MIT Press. His expanding career continues to make a significant impact on contemporary art.



**Lucía Morales**



*L: Portrait of Lucía Morales. Photo by Diana Larrea. R: Lucía Morales, 'Punku (with Painting)' Reclaimed wood door and metal gate, Painting with acrylic paint on reclaimed wood, 8' x 7' x 5,' 2025*

**LUCÍA MORALES** (b. 1986) was born in Lima, Perú and lives and works in Miami, Florida. Morales received a Master of Fine Arts Degree from Florida International University [2025]. Morales uses textiles, paintings, video and installation to create figurative works that speak to her migratory experience and the transformative moments of her past. Morales' intention is to make community visible by taking up and creating spaces to be shared. Selected solo exhibitions include "Kaypi, Chaypi, Wakpi" (2024), Miami Beach Visual Art Gallery-FIU (through Florida International University Graduate Program), Miami Beach, Florida and "MOAD Artist in Residence Exhibition" (2025), MDC Kendall Campus Gallery, Kendall, Florida. Selected group exhibitions include "Between Form and Being- 2025 MFA Exhibition" (2025), Frost Art Museum, Miami, Florida, "We Are the Places We Left Behind" (2023), Miami Beach Visual Art Gallery, Miami Beach, Florida, and "Threads & Veins" (2022), Laundromat Art Space, Little Haiti, Florida. Morales received a Locust Projects WaveMaker Grant (2025), an Associate Artist Residency with Bakehouse Art Complex (2025), MOAD (Museum of Art and Design MDC) Artist Residency at MDC Kendall (2025), an Oolite Arts Home + Away Residency at Mass MoCA (2025), and a Community Recognition from the City of North Miami Beach for entrepreneurial and creative service (2023).

## JURORS | PATHWAYS 2026: THE CARLOS MALAMUD PRIZE



### TENEE' HART

Tenee' Hart is an 'unconventional' fiber sculpture artist pursuing themes of feminism that delve into topics of beauty, anatomy, and the inequality of women. Wrapped fibers, gushing forms, and the manipulation of the 'everyday' are crucial components within Hart's works. Her abstract forms remain committed to an intriguing physicality that comes from palpable and intentional material usage. Hart hails from Virginia, where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Mary Washington in 2011. Later, Hart earned her Master of Fine Arts degree from Florida State University, where she has been teaching at the college level since the completion of her degree in 2015. Hart is currently the Lead Fibers Instructor and Co-Head of the Online Distance Learning (ODL) program for FSU | Department of Art. Beyond her role as an educator, Hart is the sole Graduate Advisor + Coordinator for the Department of Art at Florida State University.

*Portrait of Tenee' Hart. Photo by Jillian Browning.*



### MARCUS ANTONIUS JANSEN

b.1968, in New York City, was discovered by one of the major connoisseurs of Abstract Expressionism in America. Jerome A. Donson, director of traveling exhibitions at New York's Museum of Modern Art, compared Jansen's art to that of the socio-critical Ashcan School, and hailed him as the innovator of a modern expressionism. Jansen is best known for his faceless colonial portrait criticism and distorted landscape paintings. As his artistic idiom, Jansen has created a personal pictorial alphabet that repeatedly appears in his various paintings or installations. Jansen I is an internationally award winning artist and has held solo museum exhibitions internationally, including recently at La Triennale di Milano Museum, Milan, the Museum Zitadelle Berlin, the Kallmann Museum Ismaning, Munich, The Baker Museum, Naples, FL, and Rollins Museum of Art. He has participated in the 12th

International Print and Drawing Biennial in Taiwan at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art. Works by Jansen are included in international collections, from the United States, Russia, Europe and Asia and include the Bronx Museum of the Arts, the Moscow Museum of Modern Art (MMOMA), The Artistic Museum of Contemporary Art (AMOCA) Wales, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, FL, the Boca Raton Museum of Art, the University of Michigan Museum of Art, The New Britain Museum of American Art, The Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, The Rollins Museum of Art, Baker Museum, Florida, The National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art, The Housatonic Museum of Art, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C.

*Portrait of Marcus Antonius Jansen. Photo by Brian Tietz.*

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## **SHELDON SCOTT**

Artist Sheldon Scott mines his experiences growing up in the Gullah/Geechee South and his background in storytelling to examine the Black Male form with particular emphasis on biases of usability and expendability in relation to constructs of race, economics, and sexuality. Scott's works have been presented at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC; Katzen Museum of Art at American University, Perez Art Museum Miami, Kemper Museum of Art, St. Louis and others. He's in the permanent

collections of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, DC, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans, LA and Nasher Museum of Art, Durham NC and the Smithsonian American Art Museum. He is a former resident at the Headlands Center for the Arts Threshold Fellowship and the Aspen Institute's ESG Summit. He recently served as the Global Head of Purpose at Eaton Workshop and serves on the boards of Teaching for Change, Transformer, Solas Nua, and Woolly Mammoth Theatre. Scott is represented by ConnerSmith.

*Portrait of Sheldon Scott. Courtesy of Sheldon Scott.*

## **ABOUT THE ROLLINS MUSEUM OF ART**

The Rollins Museum of Art offers always-free admission to rotating exhibitions, dynamic public programs, and access to an extensive permanent collection of more than 6,000 objects spanning antiquity to the present. The collection includes a world-class global contemporary art collection, the only European Old Master paintings in the Orlando area, and a significant holding of American art. Contemporary works are also on view at The Alfond Inn at Rollins, a nearby philanthropic boutique hotel whose proceeds support student scholarships. In 1981, the museum became Florida's first accredited college museum and remains one of only four museums in greater Orlando accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. For additional information, call 407.646.2526 or visit [www.rollins.edu/rma](http://www.rollins.edu/rma). "Like" the RMA on Facebook and follow on Instagram @rollinsmuseum.

## **ABOUT UCF ART GALLERY**

The UCF Art Gallery serves as a catalyst for visual art experiences and education, culture, and community engagement. Our mission is to encourage dialogue and engagement between students, faculty, members of the community, and artists by providing a framework for intellectual and creative inquiry. The gallery hosts exhibitions and programming that examine cultural and social contexts and support contemporary art practices.

## **ABOUT ROLLINS COLLEGE**

Founded in 1885, Rollins College is Florida's oldest recognized college. Located in Winter Park, near Orlando, Rollins is consistently ranked as one of the top regional universities in the South by U.S. News & World Report. In addition to full-time undergraduate programs in the College of Liberal Arts, Rollins offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs for working adults through its evening program at the Hamilton Holt School and graduate business degree programs through its Crummer Graduate School of Business, which has been ranked a top MBA program by Forbes and Bloomberg BusinessWeek. Rollins serves approximately 3,127 degree-seeking students annually. For more information, visit [www.rollins.edu](http://www.rollins.edu). "Like" Rollins on Facebook and follow on X @RollinsCollege.

## **Museum Location**

Rollins Museum of Art, Rollins College  
1000 Holt Avenue, Winter Park, FL 32789  
407.646.2526

## **Museum Hours**

Tuesday and Thursday: 10am-7pm  
Wednesday and Friday: 10am-4pm  
Saturday-Sunday: 12-5pm (11am-4pm beginning May 30)  
Closed Mondays, major holidays, and during installation periods

## **Alfond Inn Location**

The Alfond Inn at Rollins College  
300 East New England Avenue  
Winter Park, FL 32789

## **Press Contact**

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