



Meet the Amon Carter Museum's new community artists

Dan Jian immigrated from China when she was 19. Today, she teaches drawing at TCU — and was just appointed, along with three others, to the Carter Community Artists program of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth. The program aims to support local artists and — as the museum moves to more in-person programming — get their input on its offerings.



Installation of Jian's works in Moudy Gallery at TCU: "Flowers in the Mirror" (near) "And Dust to Mountains" (far).

Initially, Jian said, as an artist in America, she was captivated by what she called the “messiness” of abstract expressionist painters like Jackson Pollock and Cy Twombly. But now she uses charcoal dust to create landscapes and animations that recall the contemplative calm, the open spaces and isolated figures and animals often found in traditional, Chinese landscapes — specifically, a genre known as “literati painting.”

Jian said that good artists are all about connections. Her appointment by the Amon Carter is a kind of triangulation: She hopes to make connections between the museum's holdings, a wider audience and her own artistic pursuits.

“I think of this as an opportunity,” she said, “to both advance my research connecting Texas landscape to this tradition of Chinese painting and facilitating, like, a real-world connection between people from Texas and community members that are from different backgrounds.”

Jian said she hopes to develop workshops and other events that will bring people to the Carter — and bring them new insights into the art there.



The Amon Carter Community Artists for 2022: l to r: Dan Jian, Calder Kamin, Dr. Mary Nangah, and Rachel Nash

The four Carter Community Artists for 2022: Dan Jian

Dan Jian is a visual artist who works across painting, drawing, and animation. Originally from the mountain region of Hubei, China, Jian came to the United States at the age of nineteen and started her education as a math major in a community college. She received a BFA from Temple University in 2012 and an MFA from Ohio State University in 2016. Jian currently lives in Fort Worth, Texas, and is an assistant professor of art at Texas Christian University while maintaining an ongoing studio practice. Jian's solo and group shows have been exhibited nationally across the U.S. and internationally in China, Italy, and Korea. Her awards and endorsements include a recent RCAF project grant from Texas Christian University, Certificate of Merit from the Philadelphia Watercolor Society, and an Arts and Humanities Research Grant at Ohio State University. She is also a residency alumnus of Ragdale Foundation, Vermont Studio Center, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts, and was a finalist for the Don Bachardy Fellowship in London.

– Jerome Weeks