

ART OMI



*2023 resident Frederick Bamfo, Ghana, in his studio. Photo by Amanda Kruger, courtesy of Art Omi.*

## **OVERVIEW OF ART OMI INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS RESIDENCY**

The Art Omi: Artists residency was founded in 1992 with the mission of fostering a diverse creative environment where artists from around the globe could engage in meaningful cultural exchange and professional development. Situated in the rural Hudson Valley, the residency program takes place every June-July and provides two dozen artists and two critics/curators, often from 20 different countries, with studio space and living accommodations. By offering a rare communal living experience far away from daily routines and distractions, the residency provides uninterrupted time to deepen one's professional practice as well as opportunities to gain new insights about one's art through dynamic, stimulating exchanges with other artists as well as visiting curators, gallerists, and critics.

Over the course of the residency, participants create new work, develop discourse and collaborations with their peers, exhibit their work to the public, and advance their careers in New York City and internationally. Finally, through an Open Studios Day on the last Saturday of the residency, artists have the opportunity to show their work—finished or in progress—to hundreds of individuals invited to visit the center.



*2022 resident Maria Ibarrexe, Basque region of Spain, performing in the silo. Photo by Ross Willows.*

## **THE UNIQUENESS OF ART OMI**

Unique Professional Development Opportunities - Art Omi is conveniently located far away enough from New York City to provide a relaxing setting for creative production, but close enough to attract the most interesting art professionals to come participate in and/or visit the residency. A Critic-In-Residence lives at the center for the duration of the program, participating in the community and conducting frequent studio visits and one-on-one meetings with each resident, and mentoring the artists. In addition, a Critic Emeritus, a successful critic from previous years, returns for the first week in residence, providing guidance to the artists and to the current Critic-in-Residence.

Each year, two dozen arts professionals — independent curators, museum curators, established artists — visit Art Omi and conduct studio visits with the resident artists. While other residencies offer studio visits from professionals, none matches the quality of the Art Omi Visitors' Program. Not only are our visitors prestigious and well-connected, but they do not come for brief 2-hour visits as with other programs in the city. At Art Omi, visitors spend at least 24 hours at the center, conducting several studio visits, and engaging artists through follow-up discussions during relaxing gatherings in the evenings. This feature of our program greatly enhances the possibility that a simple studio visit may develop into a career opportunity for our artists-in-residence.





*2023 Art Omi: Artists Open Studios. Visitors in Lilian Garcia-Roig, Cuba/USA, studio. Photo by Sarah Wallach, Courtesy of Art Omi.*

## **COMPREHENSIVE WORK AND LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS**

Art Omi is located in the beautiful countryside of the Hudson River Valley, in New York state. The center comprises an historical house, where dinners and social gatherings are hosted; three residential buildings; and a huge barn converted into 23 studio spaces. During their stay, artists-in-residence also have access to Art Omi's Sculpture Park and the Charles B. Benenson Visitors Center, as well as 300 acres of rolling farmland with breathtaking views of the Catskill mountains. While many other residencies in the greater New York area offer either a studio space or housing, we offer both, as well as 3 meals a day prepared by excellent local chefs. While daylight hours are reserved for uninterrupted work, evenings at Art Omi offer a more communal experience, with guest speakers and group discussions, as well as a field trip to a nearby cultural institution such as Dia: Beacon or Mass MoCA. The artist's only responsibility is to arrive at Art Omi on a specific date in June. Once at Art Omi, the artists do not have to worry about anything, except organizing their ideas, setting up their work, and embracing what many participants describe as a life- and career-changing experience. Free from their usual commitments, chores, and daily distractions, the artists are given a chance to regenerate and refresh, and connect with other artists. As Francis Greenburger, our founder and chairman, often states, by the end of the residency each participating artist will have two new best friends from a different part of the world. This alone is a great reason for us to continue pursuing the great experiment of Art Omi. Staff is on location 7 days a week to support the artists in their research, locate the right materials and resources for their projects, and assist in the use of hazardous material and dangerous equipment to ensure the artists' safety. Our experienced Residency Director, Claudia Cannizzaro, also lives on

campus, providing expertise, advice, and ensuring that each artist has what they need to maximize the residency experience.



*2023 resident Dennis RedMoon Darkeem, USA, in his studio. Photo by Amanda Kruger, courtesy of Art Omi.*

## **TARGET AUDIENCE & EXPECTED IMPACT**

Every year, Art Omi runs an international open call for submissions from visual artists. Extensive outreach is done to make sure artists from far away countries learn about and apply for the program. The selection process is highly competitive, an average of 1,000 applications are received annually, with only 23 artists selected to attend each year. Residents are chosen because of the excellence of their work and the likelihood that they will be able to benefit from a residency near New York City. Artists selected to come to Art Omi are at various stages of their careers – some have yet to make their work public through publication or exhibition. The majority, however, would be considered emerging artists who simply need additional time to create work as well as cultivate new professional contacts that will push their careers to the next level and gain exposure for their work. The opportunity to participate in the residency also helps to advance the cultural recognition of the artists' home countries. We continue to work closely with institutions around the world to ensure that all regions are represented, and that artists from around the world have funding to participate in



the residency. One third of invited artists are sponsored by international organizations or institutions in their home countries.



*2023 Residents and staff. Photo by Sarah Wallach, courtesy of Art Omi.*

## **ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND**

Founded in 1991, Art Omi is a not-for-profit organization with residency programs for international visual artists, writers, translators, musicians, and dancers. Art Omi seeks to foster an environment of creative exploration and exchange, professional opportunity and exposure, and a stylistically and culturally diverse community for creative artists from around the world. Through our programs and resulting public events—including our Residency Programs, The Sculpture and Architecture Park, and Educational programs—Art Omi contributes to a vibrant arts culture locally, regionally, and internationally.

**The Residencies.** Through extensive outreach to cultural, diplomatic and arts organizations across the globe, Art Omi is able to offer five residency programs, hosting about one hundred qualified architects, artists, musicians, writers, translators, and dancers each year. These programs provide a unique opportunity for artists from diverse geographic and stylistic backgrounds to come together, share their work, engage in dialogue and create a new network of professional relationships. **Public Programming.** Art Omi also aims to garner support and recognition for artists through a lively public art and education program. Our Sculpture and Architecture Park entails public, outdoor space for viewing

contemporary sculpture by artists from around the world, many of whom have been residents at Art Omi. We also offer the public a free permanent exhibit and curated rotating exhibitions via the Charles B. Benenson Visitors Center and Gallery building, a 4,200 square foot LEED-certified green building. Lastly, we provide concurrent free lectures and art workshops. Over 13,000 people visit Omi every year. Art Omi solicits the assistance of individuals and institutions throughout the world that are interested in contributing to our programs, whether through general donations to the organization or through specific sponsorships of an artist from their own nation or region. Your support. We very much hope that the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation will join us again this coming year in sponsoring a visual artist in our program. A \$10,000 sponsorship of an artist in the program is an important investment that results in far-reaching artistic achievement and cultural exchange. Your support always makes a significant contribution to the cultural future of the participating artists as well as our own organization. As we move forward with continued success, Art Omi contributes not only to the works of an ever-expanding group of artists in residence, but to the experiences, perspectives and ideas they take back with them. We hope to work with you to continue this good work.



*Ledig House, the main guest house at Art Omi.*