

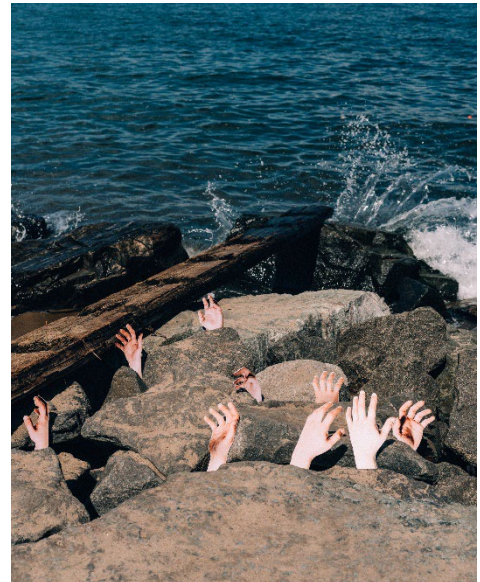


Photographer Tommy Kha Selected as Recipient of Addison Artist Council's 2025 Bartlett H. Hayes Jr. Prize

Addison Gallery of American Art to Organize Kha's First Solo Exhibition at a Collecting Museum with Accompanying Publication, Residency, and Acquisition of His Work



Tommy Kha, *Constellations (XVIII)*, Whitehaven, Memphis, 2019



Tommy Kha, *Stops (II)*, Marsha P. Johnson State Park, Brooklyn, 2020

Andover, MA (April 24, 2024) – The Addison Gallery of American Art announced today that Tommy Kha is the recipient of the Addison Artist Council's 2025 Bartlett H. Hayes Jr. Prize. The Addison Artist Council (AAC) launched the Hayes Prize in 2022 to provide important institutional support to American artists. Through this initiative, the Addison will organize Kha's first solo exhibition (to open in September 2025), with an accompanying publication, an artist's residency, and an acquisition of Kha's work for the museum's permanent collection.

Born in Memphis, Tennessee, Kha lives and works between Brooklyn, New York, and Memphis. With a humorous and poignant touch, Kha examines how we construct belonging and otherness through photography, inventing new models for self-portraiture with a critical eye toward the medium's long history of absences and erasure. Growing up as a queer Chinese-Vietnamese American in Memphis, Kha was made to feel othered; as an adult the artist claims a place for himself within both the American South and the tradition of photography. Critical

of the ways in which photography has been used to construct and perpetuate narratives that exclude or misrepresent, Kha has found a model of picture-making through which he maintains agency as a subject while simultaneously questioning the construction of the “self.” In his ongoing project *I’m Only Here to Leave* (2015–present), the artist creates cardboard cut-outs and prosthetic masks of his own face and photographs them, complicating and fracturing his representation.

“With his exploration of representation, identity, and the history of photography, Tommy Kha is an ideal choice to receive the Hayes Prize. His perspective and investigation of the American experience will resonate with many students and visitors. We are proud to support artists like Kha who are making exceptional contributions in the visual arts, at a moment in their career when such support can have a lasting impact.” said Allison Kemmerer, the Mary Stripp and R. Crosby Kemper Director of the Addison Gallery of American Art.

“I am so honored and grateful to have been selected for the Hayes Prize,” said Tommy Kha. “I look forward to collaborating with the Addison on the exhibition and catalogue, and I’m excited to work with the young people in and around the Andover community through the Addison’s residency program.”

“Tommy Kha’s vision is inspiring and we are honored that he will participate in this vital initiative that continues the Addison’s legacy of being at the vanguard of American art,” said Nick Olney, AAC steering committee member.

The Addison Artist Council awards the Hayes Prize every other year. The artist selection process includes nominations from the AAC Steering Committee, which consists of Phillips Academy alumni who are arts professionals and/or supporters of contemporary art, and the Addison’s curatorial department. AAC members then vote on the work to acquire.

In 2023, painter Reggie Burrows Hodges was the inaugural recipient of the Hayes Prize. Hodges’ exhibition *Turning a Big Ship*, which opened in September 2023, presented a new body of work in which the artist drew upon maritime motifs to explore the connections between past and future. Hodges also spent a week at the Addison, giving gallery tours and working with classes from Phillips Academy and local public schools. A publication related to the exhibition is forthcoming this spring.

About Tommy Kha

Tommy Kha (b. 1988 Memphis, TN) received a BFA from the Memphis College of Art in 2011 and an MFA from Yale University in 2013. He has taught at the New School and Rutgers, and recently was a visiting critic at Yale University and Pratt Institute. Kha recently has received recognition and awards from Aperture, Foam Talent, and the Center for Photography at Woodstock, and was a NYSCA/NYFA Photography Fellow. His work has been published in the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, *Harper’s Magazine*, *Artforum*, and *Hyperallergic*, and

appeared in Laurie Simmons' narrative feature film, *My Art* (2018). He has had solo shows at Higher Pictures Generation (NYC), the Baxter Street at the Camera Club of New York, and Blue Sky Gallery (Portland), and presented at Paris Photo in an installation curated by Holly Rousell. He also has been included in museum group shows at Ogden Museum of Southern Art (New Orleans), the High Museum (Atlanta), Leslie-Lohman Museum (NYC), and mostly recently, participated in the inaugural Tennessee Triennial at the Brooks Museum (Memphis). His first major publication, *Half, Full, Quarter* was published by *Aperture* in February 2023. Additionally, he is a Wu Mei Kung Fu student.

About the Addison's Tradition of Artist Support

The Addison Artist Council builds on the Addison Gallery's nearly century-long commitment to presenting, acquiring, and commissioning contemporary art and supporting living artists. In the 1930s, shortly after its founding, the Addison was the first U.S. museum to present an exhibition of Josef Albers' work, the first to organize a John Sloan retrospective, and one of the first to collect and present photography as fine art. In the 1940s, as a result of the visionary leadership of then director Bartlett H. Hayes Jr., the Addison was the first museum to exhibit works by Ruth Asawa, Kenneth Noland, and Andy Warhol, and presented the first full-scale U.S. retrospective ever given to an Abstract Expressionist artist, Hans Hofmann. In 1946, the Addison—located on the campus of Phillips Academy, Andover—began a residency program with artist Charles Sheeler, and in 1982 the program was endowed through the generosity of Andover alumnus Edward E. Elson. Since then, the Addison has brought to campus both established and emerging artists from diverse backgrounds, giving early support to Dawoud Bey and Kerry James Marshall, and bringing Robert Frank, Sheila Hicks, Lee Mingwei, Lorna Simpson, and Frank Stella (among many others) to the Addison to work with students from Phillips Academy as well as students from the surrounding region. The AAC grows out of this history and will extend it into the future.

About the Addison Gallery of American Art

Devoted exclusively to American art, the Addison opened in 1931 and holds one of the most important American art collections in the country. Its collection includes more than 25,000 works by artists such as John Singleton Copley, Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer, George Bellows, Georgia O'Keeffe, Jackson Pollock, Jennifer Bartlett, Kara Walker, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Kerry James Marshall, and Mark Bradford, as well as photographers Eadweard Muybridge, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Cindy Sherman, Laurie Simmons, Sally Mann, Dawoud Bey, Lorna Simpson, Carrie Mae Weems, and many others. The Addison Gallery, located in a stand-alone building on the campus of Phillips Academy—a residential school of grades 9 through 12 in Andover, Massachusetts—offers a continually rotating series of exhibitions and programs, all of which are free and open to the public. For more information on the Addison, visit www.addisongallery.org.

Press Contact

Rebecca Mongeon

Addison Gallery of American Art

978-749-4342

rmongeon@andover.edu