



Cynthia Talmadge Selected as the Next Recipient of Addison Artist Council's Bartlett H. Hayes Jr. Prize

**Addison Gallery of American Art to Organize
Talmadge's First Solo Museum Exhibition with Accompanying
Catalogue, Residency, and Acquisition of Her Work**



Cynthia Talmadge in her studio, photo by Charlie Rubin

Andover, MA (May 7, 2026) – The Addison Gallery of American Art, located on the campus of Phillips Academy in Andover, MA, is pleased to announce that Cynthia Talmadge will be the third recipient of the biannual Bartlett H. Hayes Jr. Prize, awarded by the Addison Artist Council (AAC). The AAC builds on the Addison's nearly century-long commitment to championing living artists by providing important institutional support to emerging and underrecognized American artists. Through the initiative, the Addison will organize the first solo museum exhibition of Talmadge's work, opening in fall 2027, with an accompanying publication, an artist's residency, and an acquisition of the artist's work for the museum's permanent collection.

ADDISON GALLERY OF AMERICAN ART

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Working in painting, photography, and installation, Talmadge (b. 1989, New York, NY) draws on tabloid culture and the darker undercurrents of contemporary Americana. Tinged with fantasy and desolation and born out of deep historical research, her work betrays a fascination with heightened emotional states, mediated portrayals of those states, and, particularly, the places where both converge.

Talmadge holds a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and currently lives and works in New York City. While primarily a painter, she works across several mediums, using a variety of techniques to bring to life a body of work that is simultaneously fact and fiction, dramatic and melodramatic, cerebral and kitschy. Whether depicting the interiors of famous psychiatric hospitals and celebrity rehab centers, high society funeral parlors, deserted liberal arts college campuses, or even Marilyn Monroe's imagined storage unit, Talmadge's shimmering pointillist paintings composed of sand or oil paint, as well as her room-sized installations, possess a visual and psychic tension and wit that keeps meaning evasive and viewers captivated. Transforming physical spaces into psychological ones and vice versa, Talmadge spins narratives that offer insight into the psychology of society at large and our current cultural moment.

"Cynthia Talmadge is an ideal choice to receive the Hayes Prize. The artist's conceptually layered practice, its rootedness in history and culture, and her enthralling storytelling will resonate with students and in the wider community. We are proud to support artists like Talmadge 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.

"Receiving the Hayes Prize is a dream come true. I am deeply honored and grateful for this vote of confidence in me as an artist. The Hayes Prize will give me the opportunity to explore one of my most ambitious and dear projects, something that I've been researching and conceptualizing for over a year now. I can't wait to get started at the Addison," said Talmadge.

About the Addison Artist Council and the Addison's Tradition of Artist Support

Presenting the biannual Bartlett H. Hayes Jr. Prize to an artist who has not yet had a solo museum show, the Addison Artist Council builds on the museum'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 began a residency program with artist Charles Sheeler, and in 1982 the program was endowed through the generosity of Phillips Academy 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 program grows out of this history and extends it into the future. The Hayes Prize continues this extraordinary tradition by providing an artist with their first-ever solo show at a collecting museum,

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along with a publication, acquisition of their work for the museum's collection, and an artist's residency on campus. The AAC artist selection process begins with nominations from the AAC Steering Committee, which consists of Phillips Academy alumni who are arts professionals and/or supporters of contemporary art, along with the Addison's curatorial department. In 2023, Reggie Burrows Hodges served as the inaugural recipient of the Hayes Prize, followed by Tommy Kha in 2025.

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 29,000 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.

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