

# Large Print

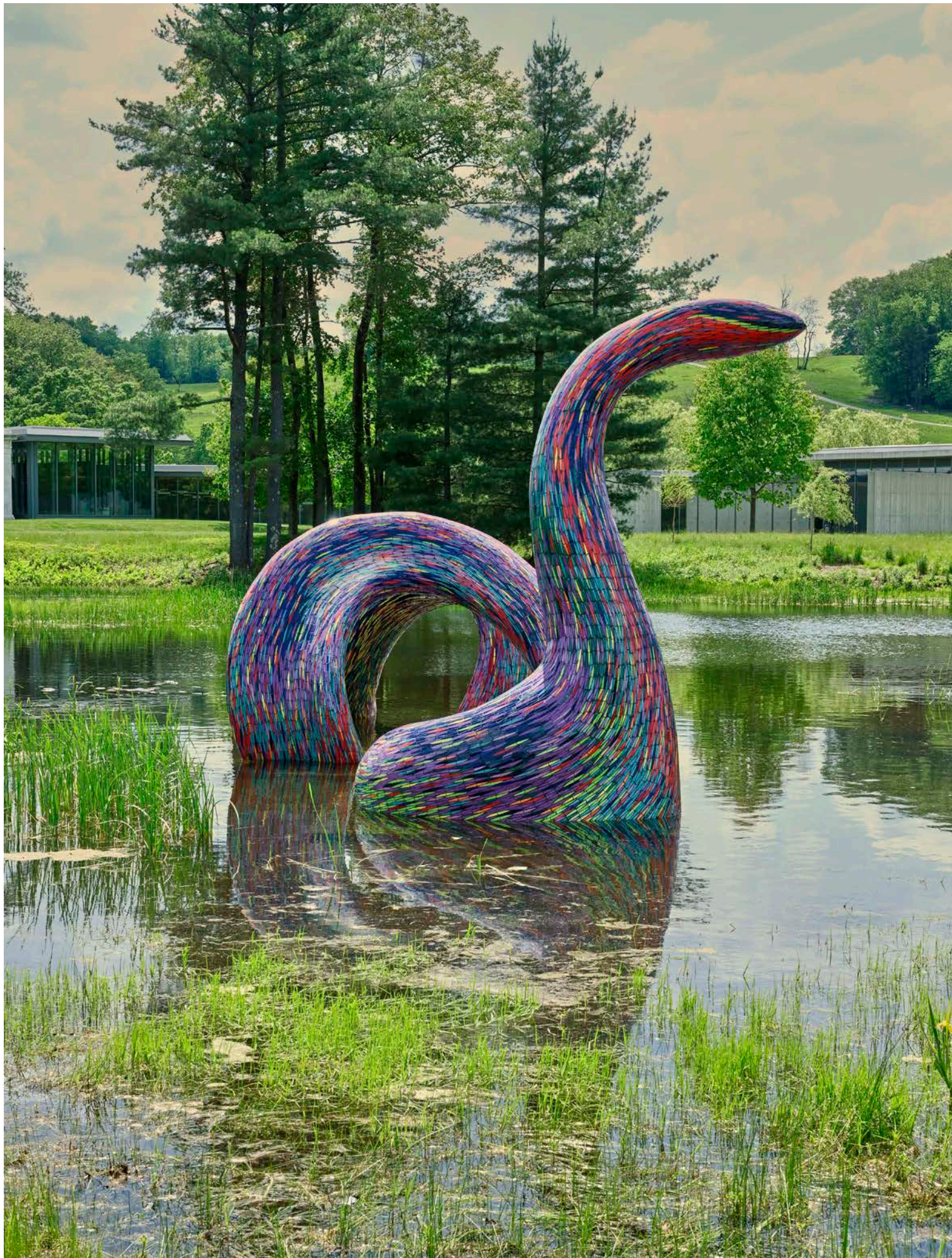
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# GROUND/WORK 2025

*Ground/work 2025* is organized by the Clark Art Institute and curated by independent scholar Glenn Adamson.

The exhibition is made possible by Denise Littlefield Sobel. Major funding is provided by the Edward and Maureen Fennessy Bousa Fund for Contemporary Projects, Karen and Robert Scott, and VIA Art Fund, with additional support from Thomas and Lily Beischer, Girlfriend Fund, and Agnes Gund.



## Javier Senosiain

b. 1948, Mexico city,  
where he lives and works

### *Coata III*

2025

Steel, reinforced concrete, pieces of hand-cut glass tile,  
and black cement grout

Javier Senosiain is the leading exponent of *Arquitectura Orgánica* (organic architecture), a movement that explores the kinship between buildings and living things. His buildings have a creature-like vitality and are often covered in skins of polychrome glass tile set into reinforced concrete. Similar mosaic techniques have been used to decorate Mexican architecture since the Spanish colonial era. For *Ground/work 2025*, Senosiain has created a giant snake whose coils dip in and out of Schow Pond, seeming to rise from the unseen depths of the water. The sculpture animates the landscape, summoning the spirit of the feathered serpent Quetzalcóatl: the Aztec god that presides over water and wind, agriculture and craft, and embodies the force of creation itself.

**Courtesy of Javier Senosiain and Friedman Benda**

## Aboubakar Fofana

b. 1967, Bamako; lives and works between Paris and Bamako

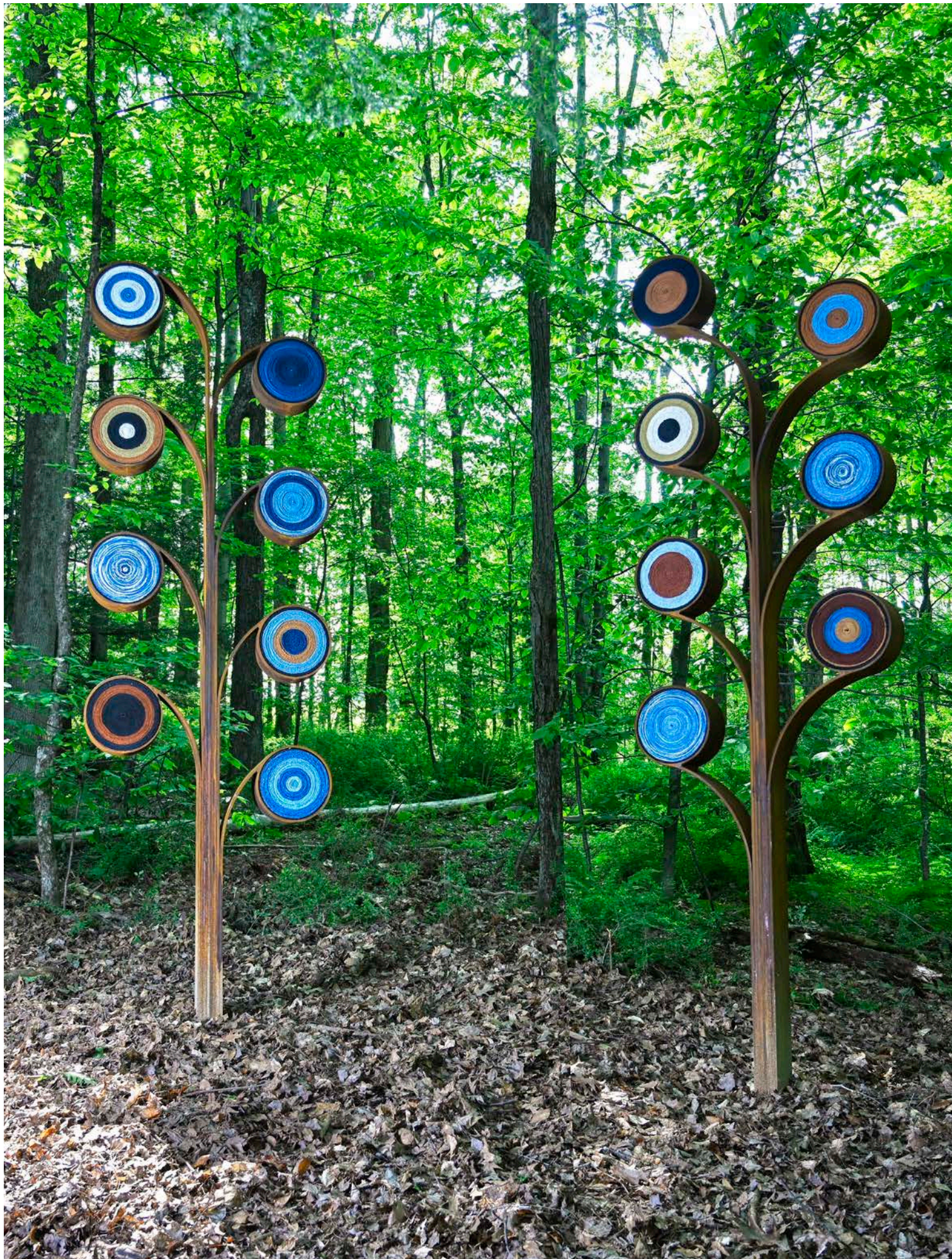
### *Bana Yiriw ni Shi Folow (Trees and Seeds of Life)*

2025

Handwoven and hand-dyed long-staple African cotton, steel

As a child, Aboubakar Fofana learned from his grandmother, a skilled healer and herbalist, about the plants around him. For *Ground/work 2025*, he has created two *banangolos*, “trees of life,” placed along this path like way-markers. The branching steel forms hold rolls of handwoven African cotton, which he has dyed with natural materials: variations of indigo (blue), *n’galama* (ochre), and *tiangara* (bright yellow), all grown and processed on his farm in Mali; *bogo ni bassi* (riverbed mud and tannin, for the gray and black); and Indonesian *ceriops tagal* (terracotta red and brown). Fofana sees the resulting vibrant spirals as seeds transplanted from his land. It is significant that indigo and cotton were cash crops in the economy of enslavement; Fofana says, “I have in memory always that they have been symbols of oppression.” In planting his seeds here, he makes a powerful gesture of reconciliation.

Courtesy of the artist



**Laura Ellen Bacon**

b. 1976, Chesterfield, United Kingdom;  
lives and works in Derbyshire, United Kingdom

## ***Gathering My Thoughts***

2025

Ohio-grown willow

Laura Ellen Bacon weaves her sculptures from slender strands of willow. Gradually, twist by twist, she builds an enormous form with a complex interior structure. The technique is entirely original to her, but has affinities with rural English crafts like fences, baskets, and thatching, as well as the nests and burrows of birds and other animals. Bacon has conceived her work for the Clark as a record of its own making: each of the overlapping volumes represents one day of her skilled labor. Together, they accumulate into an organic shape, like an outgrowth of the woodland floor. She enjoys the fact that the sculpture may become a habitat for insects and other creatures. Because it is made entirely from natural materials, it will be disassembled and allowed to degrade into the forest floor following the conclusion of *Ground/work 2025*.

**Courtesy of the artist**





**Yō Akiyama 秋山陽**

b. 1953, Shimonoseki, Japan; lives and works in Kyoto

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## ***Oscillation: Vertical Garden***

2025

Unglazed stoneware with iron powder

Yō Akiyama took inspiration for his sculpture from the red oak trees surrounding this clearing, noticing how “their interaction between a deep affinity for the earth and a desire to fight against the pull of gravity dictates their shape.” His sculpture, likewise, reaches for the sky but is born of the earth, and seems shaped according to its rhythms. It was made of stoneware (a high-fire, durable ceramic) in Akiyama’s studio in Japan, brought to the Clark in pieces, and assembled on site. The surface is treated with iron powder, giving it a rusty yet lustrous finish. It looks something like an ancient spear point. Three fluid states of matter—clay, fire, and water—have been combined into something solid and eternal.

**Courtesy of the artist and Joan B Mirviss LTD**



**Hugh Hayden**

b. 1983, Dallas; lives and works in New York City

**305**

***the End***

2025

Hemlock

Hugh Hayden presents us with a strange sight: an enormous ribcage lying on its back. Are these the remains of some fairy-tale giant? Despite the deathly nature of the work, Hayden sees it as easy to relate to—a symbol of our shared humanity. “Unless you’re an orthopedist or an archaeologist,” he points out, “you cannot tell whether someone is Black or white, male or female, just by looking at their bones.” The massive ribs are carved from locally harvested hemlock trees, with branches left attached in their natural state, creating a sense of enclosure. Following the exhibition’s run, the work will be allowed to decompose, the substance of the trees returning to the earth.

**Courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery**



**Milena Naef**

b. 1990, Engen, Germany; lives and works in Freiburg

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## ***Three Times Spanning***

2025

Cristallina marble, sugar maple tree

The small hollow carved into this sculpture is a perfect fit for Milena Naef's body: a subtle trace of her fleeting presence here. Born to a lineage of Swiss stone carvers, she inserts herself into her family's story of craftsmanship. For *Ground/work 2025*, she has created her most ambitious work to date: two slabs intersecting one another and with a fallen tree salvaged from the Clark's grounds. The stone was sourced from Cristallina, Switzerland's only marble quarry, and the complex geometry of the sculpture—especially the angled joint that holds the work together—pays tribute to the traditional skills of masonry. The work is a conversation between the artist, her materials, and the site.

**Courtesy of the artist**

# Biographies

**Javier Senosiain** is the founder and principal of the architectural firm Arquitectura Orgánica in Mexico City. Senosiain was a student of the renowned artist Mathias Goeritz at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) and then became professor of architecture there. He is the leader of the second generation of Mexican organic architects and a principal practitioner, scholar, and proponent of what he calls “bio-architecture,” a movement inspired by the forms and animate spirits of nature.

**Aboubakar Fofana** was born in Mali and raised in France. A multidisciplinary artist and designer whose working mediums include calligraphy, textiles, and natural dyes, he is known for his work in reinvigorating and redefining West African indigo dyeing techniques, which he considers a form of spiritual practice. His raw materials come from the natural world, and his working practice revolves around the cycles of birth, decay, and change.

**Laura Ellen Bacon** is an artist based in Derbyshire, in the United Kingdom. Her work is typically monumental in scale, and built on-site using willow, reed, or other lightweight fibers. Though entirely abstract, it may feel strangely similar to organic growth and other natural phenomena. The sculptures give the impression of movement through space, often interacting with the installation surroundings. She describes the landscape as ‘feeding’ her forms, as if the host site were exhaling into the work.

**Yō Akiyama’s** major concerns revolve around the physical properties of clay as a material. Through the skilled manipulation of this ancient medium, he explores the tension between surface and form, the ordered and the organic. This direct relationship with his material, as well as his commitment to experimentation and reinvention, has made Akiyama one of Japan’s most important contemporary sculptors. He recently retired as the chairman of the ceramics department at Kyoto City University of Arts.

**Hugh Hayden** was raised in Texas and trained as an architect. His work arises from a deep connection to nature and its organic materials. Working primarily in wood—discarded trunks, rare indigenous timbers, Christmas trees and souvenir African sculptures—he transforms familiar typologies of material culture through a process of selection and juxtaposition. As metaphors for human existence and past experience, Hayden’s works challenge perceptions of ourselves, others, and the environment; they ask viewers to examine their own place within an ever-shifting cultural ecosystem.

**Milena Naef** is a visual artist mainly working with marble and glass. She is fascinated by the processual nature of these materials, as they require enormous precision, yet exert their own unpredictable will. Her work has a strong focus on exploring the physical and mental space of the human body, which is sometimes visibly and sometimes invisibly present. She treats her own body as a material itself, questioning the duality between subject and object. Naef’s approach has emerged from her background in a family with a multigenerational tradition in stonework, to which she responds not as a traditional sculptor but as a conceptual artist.