

UNTITLED ART, HOUSTON EXPANDS ITS CULTURAL FOOTPRINT THROUGH MAJOR NEW PRIZE PARTNERSHIPS IN ITS SECOND EDITION

UT MD Anderson, Public Art of the University of Houston System, Hotel Daphne, and Houston Grand Opera Join Untitled Art, Houston for New Artist Initiatives

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, May 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Untitled Art](#) returns to Houston in 2026 with an ambitious group of institutional and cultural partners, reaffirming the fair's role as both a market platform and a site of meaningful artistic investment. Building on the momentum of its inaugural edition, Untitled Art, Houston expands its 2026 Prize Partnership program through a dynamic suite of acquisitions, commissions, and residency initiatives developed with leading Houston institutions and organizations, including UT MD Anderson, [Public Art of the University of Houston System](#), Hotel Daphne, and Houston Grand Opera. The PAC Art and Casa Santa Ana residency prizes will also renew their engagements for the second edition.



John Alexander in Bar Daphne.jpg John Alexander Life on a Merry - Go - Round (2010) in newly opened Bar Daphne of Houston's Hotel Daphne , acquired from McClain Gallery at the 2025 inaugural Untitled Art, Houston

At a moment when regional cultural ecosystems are redefining their global relevance, Houston emerges not as an outpost but as a nexus where healthcare leaders, universities, hospitality brands, and performing arts organizations are increasingly investing in contemporary art as civic infrastructure. These 2026 prize partnerships reflect that shift and underscore Untitled Art's civic-minded leadership, future-facing programming, and investment in the city's cultural fabric.

"The evolution of our prize partnership program reflects a broader commitment to artists that

doesn't end when the fair closes," said Michael Slenske, Director of Untitled Art, Houston. "These partnerships create tangible pathways, whether through acquisition, institutional support, or residency opportunities, for artists to deepen their practices and engage new audiences. The city of Houston offers a uniquely expansive context for that dialogue, and this year's collaborators embody the kind of forward-thinking engagement that defines the city's cultural trajectory."



Untitled Art, Houston 2025 fair courtesy of Jacqueline Andrade / CKA Associates. Sicardi | Ayers | Bacino at Untitled Art, Houston

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center Acquisition Prize

Expanding the dialogue between art and the patient experience, [UT MD Anderson's Art Experience Program](#) will introduce an inaugural acquisition prize, committing a minimum of \$20,000 toward the purchase of one or more works from the fair. As the institution advances a renewed focus on integrating art into its clinical environments, this initiative positions contemporary art practices within spaces of care, research, and human experience. The prize not only enhances UT MD Anderson's evolving collection but also signals a broader understanding of art's role in healing and spatial transformation.

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*Michael Slenske, Director of
Untitled Art, Houston*

Public Art of the University of Houston System Acquisition Prize

The inaugural acquisition prize from Public Art at the University of Houston System reflects the organization's longstanding legacy as a pioneer in integrating art into campus and community life. Founded in 1969, Public Art at

the University of Houston System (Public Art UHS) has spent more than 55 years building and activating a collection of more than 800 works that expand contemporary artistic practices while reflecting the cultural fabric of both the university and the city of Houston.

The prize commits \$25,000 toward the acquisition of one or more works from exhibitors at Untitled Art, Houston 2026 for the collection, further advancing Public Art UHS's mission to ignite critical and creative thinking, deepen collaboration, and connect local communities with the world through art.

The Hotel Daphne Acquisition Prize

Marking its debut, The Hotel Daphne Acquisition Prize establishes a fresh model for hospitality-driven patronage. Ideally situated in Houston Heights and named one of Esquire's Best New Hotels of 2026, the property will commit between \$30,000 and \$50,000 to acquire up to three works from exhibiting galleries. With a collection already attuned to artists from Texas and beyond, the prize underscores a commitment to situating contemporary art within lived, architectural space.

Selected works will enter the hotel's collection and be installed on-site, extending visibility for artists while shaping the aesthetic identity of one of Houston's newest cultural destinations.

The Houston Grand Opera Artist Prize

Houston Grand Opera productions synthesize music, theater, dance, visual art, and design into one extraordinary whole. Reflecting that spirit of interdisciplinary collaboration, HGO will award a prize between \$7,500 and \$10,000 to an artist selected from the fair exhibitors, culminating in the commission and acquisition of a new work.

The initiative offers rare access to the operatic process: the selected artist will participate in a residency of up to three days during HGO's December 2026–January 2027 rehearsal period. Whether realized on-site or developed through this immersive engagement, the commissioned work signals an ongoing dialogue between disciplines, where scenography, narrative, and visual language converge. The prize winner will be announced during the fair.

Two residency prizes return for a second year with the fair, reflecting Houston's evolving position as a substantial force in the international art scene.

PAC Art Residency Prize

Rooted in Houston yet globally oriented, PAC Art will offer a residency prize designed to foster sustained artistic development. The award includes a four-plus-week residency in Fall 2027, aligned with the third edition of Untitled Art, Houston. Supporting an artist with accommodation, studio space, round-trip airfare, and a \$2,000 stipend, the program emphasizes mentorship and cross-cultural exchange. Developed in collaboration with the Creixell Collection, PAC Art continues to cultivate a platform where local and international practices intersect with intention and depth. In 2025, the prize was awarded to Teresa Serrano, presented by Barbara Davis Gallery (Houston, TX).

Casa Santa Ana Residency Prize

Returning for its second year, the Casa Santa Ana Residency Prize extends Untitled Art's geographic reach to Panama City, Panama. The selected artist will undertake a six-week residency that includes travel, accommodation, up to \$5,000 in materials support, and a \$1,200 stipend, culminating in an exhibition of newly developed work. Founded in 2015, Casa Santa Ana's interdisciplinary approach, which spans exhibitions, publications, and community programming, positions the residency as both a site of production and a conduit for cultural exchange. In 2025, the prize was awarded to Ana Villagomez, presented by NINO MIER (Brussels,

BE / New York, NY).

Collectively, the 2026 prize partnerships articulate a vision of the art fair as a model that does not end at the point of sale but continues through acquisition, institutional integration, and sustained artistic inquiry. From university campuses and hotel corridors to opera stages, hospital spaces, and international residencies, Untitled Art, Houston amplifies the conditions under which contemporary art is experienced, supported, and remembered. In doing so, the fair not only reflects Houston's evolving cultural identity, it actively participates in shaping it.

About Untitled Art

Founded in 2012, Untitled Art is a leading contemporary art fair held annually in December on the sands of Miami Beach, Florida, and in October in downtown Houston, Texas. Shaped by new curatorial voices and themes, each edition of Untitled Art addresses urgent cultural issues through dynamic programming and intentional design, and is responsive to the evolving needs of artists, galleries, collectors, and the broader art landscape.

Untitled Art serves as a curatorial platform for discovering contemporary art, spotlighting both emerging and established voices. Exhibitors are selected based on the strength of their programs and artistic vision, under the leadership of Founder Jeffrey Lawson, Executive Director Clara Andrade, and Houston Director Michael Slenske.

Through its Nest sector, an initiative designed to reduce traditional barriers to entry, Untitled Art provides vital support to new talent, emerging galleries, and nonprofit organizations. As the first fair to launch an online edition, Untitled Art remains at the forefront of technological innovation, expanding access to collecting contemporary art and championing a more inclusive and responsible culture by amplifying diverse voices within the contemporary art market, platforming artists and galleries from underrepresented backgrounds and regions.

Gallery presentations are complemented by creative programming that supports the broader arts ecosystem – through rotating guest curators, live performances, special projects, a robust talks and podcast series, as well as the advancement of arts criticism with the online platform Untitled Edit. The fair also hosts year-round events in cities around the world.

With each fair, Untitled Art celebrates the art scenes in which it operates through continued engagement and cultural partnerships with local galleries, artists, museums, nonprofits, and other community organizations to champion regional voices and support long-term growth. Untitled Art is committed to innovation to respond to the needs of artists, art professionals, galleries, and collectors, continuously adapting its architectural design and operating model to reshape the role of art fairs in an ever-evolving art landscape.

To reduce its environmental impact, Untitled Art is a proud founding member of the Gallery Climate Coalition and works to ensure zero environmental impact around each edition.

In 2026, Untitled Art, Houston will return to the George R. Brown Convention Center from October 2 to 4 (VIP and Press Preview October 1). The 15th edition of Untitled Art, Miami Beach will take place from December 2 to December 6 (VIP and Press Preview December 1).

For more information, visit Untitled Art's website or follow on Instagram and Facebook.
#UntitledArt #UntitledArtHouston.

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