

## **Art Launch and John Ross Palmer Initiate the 2018 Escapist Artists**

*Revolutionary, acclaimed artist John Ross Palmer doesn't believe in competition. He believes in elevating all artists to add power to the profession. Through his world-renown mentorship program, artists learn to thrive and not just survive.*

March 6, 2018 (FPRC) -- Art Launch and Palmer proudly announce the members of the 2018 Escapist Mentorship Program: Nabarupa Bhattacharjee (New Delhi, India), AVM Hawkins (Houston, TX), Paula Hawkins (Houston, TX) and Elena Sandovici (Houston, TX).

These four dedicated artists were initiated into the 2018 Escapist Class at an exclusive and inspiring ceremony at Palmer's Houston Heights Gallery on Sunday, February 4th. The highlight of the Initiation Ceremony was a rousing keynote address by Harris County District Attorney Kim Ogg as well as special, uplifting remarks by United States Congressman Al Green. The Escapist Artists were picked from dozens of applicants from around the world. Courageous artists submit a written application with art images and essays to a jury panel, and then, as a Finalist, they present themselves for a panel interview in Palmer's Heights Gallery. Non-Houston applicants appear via Skype. Scoring well in the Interview Phase was critical to advancing as 9 Finalists were interviewed with only 4 applicants earning the 2018 Escapist Artist honor. Panels for scoring are comprised of top Palmer patrons, including: Dee Scott, Shubhra Endley, Alicia Hinds, Elizabeth Poirrier, Rosa Pollard, Necole Irvin and Yvette Casares Willis. Read all about the history, mission and goals of this empowering program plus see first-class documentary videos by visiting [EscapistProgram.com](http://EscapistProgram.com).

"I cannot believe this is the 10th year of the program!" exclaims Palmer. "When I initially wanted to help artists share in success, we met over coffee and took notes in paper journals. I had no idea the idea would blossom into now having a state-of-the-art artist training ground with the Chrysalis...and fascinating applicants from around the globe." The Escapist Mentorship Program, founded in 2009, is now managed and funded by the 501(c)(3) nonprofit Art Launch. Palmer and his husband Ryan Lindsay founded Art Launch in 2016.

Palmer's Art Movement of Escapism is aimed to forever destroy the stereotype of the struggling artist. The only kind in the world, his mentorship program aims to teach artists how to sell on their own and not be tied to the traditional art gallery system. Artists are in the program for a year, have their own art studios and work alongside Palmer to learn by example. Palmer does this as a means of giving back to the art world--it is entirely free for the accepted artists and supported by the generous donors to Art Launch. The Escapist Artists will look forward to an out-of-this-world black tie Graduation Gala on Saturday, October 13, 2018.

If you have any questions about Art Launch, Artist John Ross Palmer or his Escapist Mentorship Program ([EscapistProgram.com](http://EscapistProgram.com)), please contact gallery co-owner Ryan Lindsay at 281-224-0968 or [Ryan@JohnPalmerArt.com](mailto:Ryan@JohnPalmerArt.com).

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