

NNEKA KAI

nnekakai.com

EDUCATION:

- 2019 M.F.A., Fiber & Material Studies, School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Chicago, IL
- 2017 B.F.A., Textiles, Georgia State University; Atlanta, GA

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS:

- 2023- Current **Adjunct Professor**
Pratt: Munson College of Art and Design
Sculpture Department
Utica, NY
- 2021- Current **Guest Co-Curator**
Loss & Absence: Textiles of Mourning and Survival
Sep 6, 2025 - March 15, 2026
Textile Department
Art Institute of Chicago; Chicago, IL
- Spring 2023 **Part-time Instructor**
Georgia State University
Welch's Art & Design Sculpture Department
Atlanta, GA
- 2022 **Winter Resident Assistant**
Winter Residency Program
Textiles
Penland School of Craft Pine Spruce, NC
- 2022 **Winter Resident Assistant**
Winter Residency Program
Textiles
Penland School of Craft Pine Spruce, NC
- 2021/22 **Substitute Teacher**
Atlanta Heights Charter School
Atlanta, GA
- 2019 **Graduate Teacher's Assistant**
Micro/Micro Research Seminar
Fiber & Material Studies
School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Chicago, IL
- 2018 **Graduate Teacher's Assistant**
Sewing for Beginners
Homan Square
School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Chicago, IL
- 2017/18 **Graduate Research Assistant**
Textiles Resource Center
Fiber & Material Studies
School of the Art Institute of Chicago; Chicago, IL
- 2017 **Teacher's Assistant**
Sculptural Fibers
Textiles
Penland School of Craft; Spruce Pine, NC

AWARDS:

- 2023 Artadia Grant Awardee Atlanta, GA
2021 Swan Coach Gallery Edge Award Finalist Atlanta, GA
2020 Jean Alexander Artist Grant Recipient Atlanta, GA
Atlanta Contemporary Nexus Award Recipient Atlanta, GA
2019 SAIC Graduate Fellowship Finalist Chicago, IL
2017 Marion Bower Davis Scholarship Recipient Atlanta, GA
2016 Windgate Fellowship Nominee Atlanta, GA
GSURC Nominee Atlanta, GA

RESIDENCIES:

- 2023- 2024 Sculpture Space Long-term Resident Utica, NY

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS:

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *On Unstable Grounds* (May 29 - June 28)
Day n Nights Projects Gallery Atlanta, GA
2024 *Collisions Might*
4 Elements Gallery Utica, NY
2019 *Material Sounding: The Dimensionality of A Thread*
Material Gallery Chicago, IL

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *Archives Yet to Come*, Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA
2024 *Emerging Movements: Tropes* NYC, NY
Blue Heron Nature Preserve: *Community Exhibition* Roswell, GA
2023 *Scrapbook*, Elsewhere Gallery Atlanta, GA
Blue Heron Nature Preserve: *Nesting Exhibition* Roswell, GA
Holding Pattern Exhibition KMAC & TSA Greenville
2022 *In the Fray: Feminist Fiber from Margin to Center* Louisville, KY
Highland Park Art Center, *Fiber Fashion Feminism* Highland Park, IL
Eyedrum Gallery, *Stars and Feelings* Atlanta, GA
Swan Coach House *Edge Award Exhibition* Atlanta, GA
Pathologies of the Margin Book Release Reading Chicago, IL
2021 Newport Museum, *Hair Stories Exhibition* Newport, RI
Guardian Gallery *Drop a Pin Show* Atlanta, Ga
2020 *Guerilla Transmission: Who Owns the Ether* Virtual
2019 *Re: Working Labor*: Chicago, IL

PERFORMANCE

- 2025 “Lasting Til Sunday” , *Loss & Absence: Textiles of Mourning & Survival*
Art Institute of Chicago Textiles Galleries, Chicago, IL, Nov.16, 2025
2024 *ODE IV: don’t take coming back* Utica, NY
2021 *Tender Ails* Atlanta, GA
2020 *ODE I, II, III* Atlanta, GA
2019 *Groundlevel Platform Gallery: Textured Translations*: Chicago, IL
2018 *New Blood X11*: Chicago, IL
The Happening: Pine Spruce, NC

TALKS:

- 2025 SAIC Fiber & Material Studies Mitchell Lecture Series
“Curatorial Roundtable, Loss and Absence Sep 18,
Fullerton Hall, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
Day n Night Projects, “*On Unstable Grounds*”, Instagram Live
- 2024 Colgate University, “*Hair as Praxis*,” Hamilton, NY
- 2023 Holding Pattern Exhibition, Louisville, KY
Kent State Visiting Artist Lecture, “*Hair as Praxis*” Kent, OH
- 2021 Hair Stories Exhibition Artist Talk with Nneka Kai and Anne Wilson
<https://vimeo.com/616083694/3cea89b1cc>, Zoom
Spelman University *Black Female Body in Visual Arts*, Lecture
- 2020 TSA 2019 Symposium: Hidden Stories, Human Lives, Zoom
- 2019 Oggi Gallery Artist Readings. Chicago, IL
- 2018 SAIC Graduate Fiber & Material Studies Department. Chicago, IL
SAIC Graduate Fiber & Material Studies Talk/Performance. Chicago, IL
Re: Workshop Symposium. Chicago, IL

SELECTED PRESS & PUBLICATIONS:

- 2025 ‘Lasting Til Sunday’, Nneka Kai, *Loss & Absence: Textiles of Mourning and Survival*
<https://yalebooks.yale.edu/book/9780300284089/on-loss-and-absence/>
[Archives Yet to Come’ at Berkeley Art Center reimagines family legacies](#)
- 2024 [AJC “Inspiration blooms in Blue Heron Preserve’s 10th ‘Art of Nature’ exhibit”](#)
- 2023 [_Saporta Report Blue Heron Nature Preserve](#)
[‘Hair as Praxis:’ Kai continues the conversation by sharing art with Kent State](#)
- 2022 [Fiber, Fashion, and Feminism](#)
- 2021 [WGBH “Hair Stories” Exhibition Talk with curator Francine Weiss](#)
- 2020 [Burnaway Magazine Interview with Susan Mackey](#)
[Living Monuments: Nneka Kai on Her Performance Series Odes](#)
- 2019 [Kai, Nneka. “Reflections” Catachesis Reader. print](#)
[Mackey, Susan: “IN A \(BLACK\) WAY // THREE CHICAGO ARTISTS](#)
[PUSH THE LIMITS OF BLACKNESS”, The Seen. web.](#)
- 2018 [Voyage Chicago: Local Story Interview. web.](#)