Self-publishing is at the heart of our event and community, and supporting emerging artists and helping them grow is central to our mission. The Cupcake Award is a juried prize that supports the self-publishing of a new minicomic by any artist who has not yet had a solo work printed by a publisher. The winner of the award will receive $250 to print a new minicomic, a free half table at next year’s CAKE (where their minicomic will debut), and the mentor support of our special guest judge Annie Koyama. In addition, CAKE will promote the winning artist and their minicomic leading up to next year’s show.

Applications will open after CAKE 2014 concludes on June 1st and will close on August 31st. The CAKE organizers will narrow the application pool to the top 20, and our special guest judge will select the winner. The recipient of the Cupcake Award will be announced when CAKE 2015 applications open in mid-October.

ELIGIBILITY

 Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be at least 18 years of age at the time you apply
- Be available to attend CAKE 2015 to promote the minicomic supported by the Cupcake Award
- Be an artist who has not had a solo work published by a publisher.

Our intention is to support early career comic artists. This is an honor-code application: we will not hunt through your CV to try to disprove your eligibility, so please use your best discretion. If you have work in comics anthologies, have had small freelance comics published in larger publications/platforms or if you have had success with a widely distributed self-published comic, you are eligible; if you have had a book published as a single author by a publisher but you still regularly publish mini-comics, you are not eligible.

While applicants may re-apply every year, they are only eligible to receive the award once.

If you have questions about meeting eligibility, please email us at cupcake@cakechicago.com.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Please send the following to cupcake@cakechicago.com by August 31:

One-page artist statement and work plan: Please narrate the content and direction of the comics work you have made to date, and describe in detail the minicomic you plan to make with the support of the Cupcake Award.

One-page artist CV: Please include your most recent creative work and accomplishments to date. Be sure to include your name, address, preferred contact information (email, phone, twitter, etc), and website. (Don’t worry if your artist CV is light--this award is meant for emerging artists!)

Work samples: Please submit up to 8 examples of your art representing work done within the last 2-3 years. Be sure to highlight your sequential art, as this is an award specifically for comics. Send us clickable URLs. If you are unable to send us URLs, please get in touch with us.