Exhibitions and Programs

Facing Darkness
Building Networks of Empathy
To Protect and Serve? Five Decades of Posters Protesting Police Violence
BEATRIZ CORTEZ AND KANG SEUNG LEE Becoming Atmosphere
NUNG-HSIN HU Incurable Nostalgia
Recovery Justice: Being Well
PAUL CORNISH Community Music
ELANA MANN Year of Wonders, redux
COG•NATE COLLECTIVE Market Exchange
DAN KWONG AND PAULINA SAHAGUN We Were All Here
MAJ HASAGER AND THE QUINN RESEARCH CENTER Three Structures Touching
ARTS LEARNING LAB @ HOME

Local Artists and Organizations in Residence

Airport Campus

Melinda Smith Altshuler
M Susan Broussard
Gregg Chadwick
Rachel Chu
Claudia Concha
Julia Michelle Dawson
Lola del Fresno
Alexandra Dillon
Wendy Edlen
Judith Gandel-Golden
Rachel Grynberg
Deborah Lynn Irmas
Sara Issakharian
Sheila Karbassian
Susie McKay Krieser
Sally Lamb
Maddy LeMel
Luigia Gio Martelloni
Crystal Michaelson
Ameeta Nanji

Olympic Campus

Luciana Abait
Joan Abrahamson
Lila Albuquerque
Jeff Beall
Henriëtte Brouwers
Susanna Bixby Dakin
Dance Alive Center
Debra Dismay
Marina Day
Kate Johnson Memorial Media Lab [KJML] / EZTV
Yrneh Gabon
Yvette Gillis
Highways Performance Space & Gallery
Dyna Kau
Susan Kleinberg
Marcus Kuiland-Nazario
Dan Kwong
Leslie Labowitz-Starus
Suzanne Lacy
Doni Silver Simons
Christian Tint
David McDonald
Lionel Popkin
Post Mango FX
Susan Suntree
Christopher Tint
Dan S. Wang
Ni’Ja Whitson

Visiting Artists

ALEXANDMUSHI
P.S. ARTS
Paul Cornish
Sara Daleiden
Sylvie Fortin
Kathleen Henderson
Nung-Hsin Hu
Rashaad Newson
Benito Rangel de Maria
Sultan Sharrief
WangShui
Beth Davila Waldman
Cynthia Wick

Sabine Pearlman
Paula Rosen
Elham Sagharchi
Gwen Samuels
Daniela Schweitzer
Pamela Simon-Jensen
Doni Silver Simons
Sara Issakharian
Sheila Karbassian
Susie McKay Krieser
Sally Lamb
Maddy LeMel
Luigia Gio Martelloni
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Foreword
By Jan Williamson, Executive Director

The artist projects featured in this year’s catalogue are direct responses, prototypes, and experiments in collaboration and tending to our neighbors during the pandemic. How has 18th Street weathered and survived during this time? By caring for each other, planning for the worst but anticipating the best, and making the most of our tight budget and small team.

The demands on our programs during this time have never been so high. Not only do artists need us more than ever, people are hungry for art experiences. The pandemic has reinforced the benefits of partnering up and working together in caring for our community. Civic organizations are calling for our artists to work with their constituencies, while community groups who have seen the power of what our artists can do when they amplify their stories and elevate their concerns are reaching out also. We love saying yes to all these requests for care and tending! And yet, we are still a small team, and too often we have to say we are sorry, we don’t have the bandwidth to help you.

Earlier this year I was captivated by research on businesses that have been operating continuously for hundreds of years—they obviously had survived multiple pandemics and catastrophic events. I wondered, what was the secret to their longevity? First, the business often has an ongoing reciprocity with its community. Other key factors were a company culture that values continuity and innovation; leaders and successors that stay for decades; and two years of cash reserves. What? Egads! No wonder so many arts organizations are destined to fail—so much so that there are foundations who give grants to help organizations sunset or merge with other nonprofits. Why? Because the work of sustaining relationships with your community is too difficult when you have frequent leadership changes, no cash reserves, and you have to relocate because your lease is up. Clearly sustaining enduring synergistic relationships with your community, even under non-pandemic times, is extremely difficult.

Not every arts organization should exist in perpetuity. But imagine having a healthy arts center that is thriving for hundreds of years as opposed to the multiple ‘pop-ups’ that come and go before your household can form a relationship with them. Imagine the history made there, the generations of artists and community mentorships, the studios, workshops, and more. It’s nearly unheard of in the United States.

So much of our arts ecology is fragile and transient that we assume this is normal and inevitable—like saplings in a clear-cut forest with no memory of what it’s like to live in the magic of an old grove. Most people when asked would love to have ongoing arts experiences as a regular part of finding fulfillment in their lives. The pandemic further underscored this—that our most meaningful life moments are often deeply intertwined with arts and culture.

We need more arts organizations to stick around for longer than a few seasons and grow roots of reciprocity to tend to the souls of our communities. The ability to empathize, collaborate, play, learn, celebrate, mourn, and grow together are all part of the ‘tending-to’ skills that artists develop through artmaking—skills that we all need more than ever before to navigate the challenges of this century. We hope you are inspired by the artists’ efforts this year to cultivate caring with you and others.

We want to thank our Board of Directors for their leadership, commitment, generosity, and dedication to 18th Street Arts Center’s mission. Thank you Joan Abrahamson, Janine Arbelaez, Jonathan Aronson, Susan Baik, Andrew Beath, Damien Bigot, Jessica Cusick, Susanna Bixby Dakin (Emeritus), Malindi Davies, Dan Greeney, Judith Khneysser, Michael Ray, and Ted Schwab.

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The foundations, organizations, and governmental agencies that support 18th Street Arts Center are essential partners in helping advance our mission and continue our work. We gratefully acknowledge their generosity: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Annenberg Foundation and Metabolic Studio, Aronson Foundation, California Arts Council, California Community Foundation, Capital Group - Private Client Services, WeRise.LA and Cause Communications, Charles Sumner Bird Foundation, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Cultural Affairs Division City of Santa Monica, Danish Art Foundation, The Durfee Foundation, EarthWays Foundation, The Getty Foundation, The Herb Alpert Foundation, Institute of Museum and Library Services, Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Pasadena Community Foundation, Anthony & Jeanne Pritzker Family Foundation, The Rainbow Pineapple Foundation, Sam Francis Foundation, Sidney Stern Memorial Trust, Taiwan Academy, Los Angeles, and the Ministry of Culture, Taiwan.

As I reflect on the artistic responses to these ideas that have unfolded over the past year, they are inflected with sadness, nostalgia, and anger as much as they contain desires for collective action, a commitment to community, and dogged efforts to build power together, over Zoom, and from afar. ‘Recovery justice’ now feels more like a question than a prompt to explore. Is recovery ever going to be possible? Is justice possible? And how do we still live together and make positive change in our communities in the face of so much uncertainty? There is a jarring dissonance to this year’s projects; the need to stay apart but to be together, the need to express grief and despair but nonetheless to hope for something better, and the desire to rehabilitate the stories of the past in the face of an uncertain future.

Our programming kicked off in the depths of the pandemic, as our galleries lay empty, with an online exhibition featuring artistic responses to lockdown called Facing Darkness. From Joan Wulf’s melancholy charcoal tree rubbings from her neighborhood to the lonely single figures in the works of Ynneb Gabon, Leo Garcia, Sheila Karbassian, Marcus Quiñonesazor, Lionel Popkin, and Daniela Schweitzer, we saw the effects of isolation ripple through our artistic community. This body of work then culminated with an external gesture as artists were invited back to contribute to the show’s second iteration, installed in the physical galleries, called Building Networks of Empathy. Writer Jade Agua mediated on the simple gestures of touch, entanglement, and facial expressions spilling through the artists’ work: “Ameeta Nanji’s Entangled VIII conjures thoughts about the ties that bind us all, the networks of care and community that hold us, the blood in our veins, and the fragility of life. Sue McKee Krizer’s Hugging summoned feelings of love between family members, wearing masks as an act of love for others, and the pain of not being able to hold each other or see each other smile.”

This yearning gave way to anger as the George Floyd Uprising flooded the streets, and the timely exhibition To Protect and Serve? Five Decades of Posters Protecting Police Violence brought us to the Center for the Study of Political Graphics allowed a release valve for reckonings by sculpting the long history of racial injustice and police violence in this country. Elana Mann brought a visual language of protest and political expression to the galleries in Year of Wonders, redux, her sculptural instruments all the more resonant because they could not be played. As G. Douglas Barrett writes, “Mitha’s socio-scultpures compel us to imagine processes of sounding and audition that draw new, if only momentary, lines of physical and virtual togetherness.” Beatriz Cortez and Kang Seung Lee’s Becoming Atmosphere was a relatively hopeful series in a different way, comprising poetic gestures on grief, loss, invisibility, and regeneration. As curator Anuradha Vikram, who initiated the project at 18th Street, writes, “In the exhibition, ideas about grief, generational memory, propagation, and the infinite potential of human kind become ephemeral and intuitive. Ideas become atmosphere.”

Nhung-Hsin Hu also mediated on grief and the loss of home in Incurable Nostalgia, creating layered abstractions of the paint feelings from her childhood home videos and meditating on personal memory and nostalgia. This year we also saw major presentations of two multi-year projects from artists investigating the lesser-known histories of communities of color in our local Pico Neighborhood, and sites that have been almost entirely erased by gentrification and redevelopment. Dan Kwong and Paulina Sahagun researched, wrote, filmed, directed, edited, and produced a documentary/artist video/poetic storytelling project called We Were All Here: The Story of “La Veinte,” “la familia Casillas, and the Pico Neighborhood of Santa Monica about the expansive Casillas family and the Mexican immigrant community that once populated the city of Santa Monica. Artist Maj Hasager and the Santa Monica-based Black artist mage Tidow presented a series of new compositions called Community Music at a livestream performance from the World Stage. He developed this body of work out of an unprecedented year of lockdowns and restrictions that was evident in a project called Market Exchange, working to envision the role/function of a popular/community-led marketplace in Santa Monica. This expansive project has propagated online workshops, a pop-up exhibition in a rehabilitated storefront, an online marketplace, and the internal work of self-organizing an artisan vendor cooperative. Finally, the series of artist projects Recovery Justice: Being Well blossomed from months of collective work facilitated by artist Sara Daleden in an effort to knit together artist networks in Santa Monica to build voice and power in influencing neighborhood development. From monumental vinyl murals on 18th Street’s new exterior Glider Wall, artist performances, large-scale outdoor video projections, an interior exhibition that pushed artists’ individual practices in new and ambitious directions, mail art for frontline healthcare workers, and online sculptural workshops focused on community health and wellbeing, and a platform for outdoor performance in Marcus Quiñonesazor’s Sea Change Lab, artists at 18th Street Arts Center were activated in new and collaborative ways. From performances by funding provided by WeRise.LA and Santa Monica’s Art of Recovery program, artists pushed against their own boundaries and the spatial boundaries of the institution to spill out into public, digital, personal, and political space.

Survivance is a contradictory notion, intimating ongoing engagement and resistance but fuzzy on the endgame. And in that vein, many of the artist projects presented in this catalogue are ongoing. They endure and evolve because the work isn’t over yet, and cannot be contained within the format of a typical exhibition or series of engagements. Each of these projects threaten to break their bindings, to ripple beyond their containers, and perhaps that is the hope laden in the circularity of our pandemic.”
Exhibitions and Programs
Facing Darkness


Throughout history, artists have worked in isolation for a variety of reasons, both voluntary and not. In 2020, a year spent in lockdown and quarantine due to COVID-19 has also led to the confrontation of systemic racism and social injustice that has plagued our society. The artists of Facing Darkness confront these simultaneous crises, their selected works coming together in a collective effort to envision paths to move forward.

Artists have grappled with pandemics and illness for centuries, seeking refuge in art. In New Spain, for example, a group of Indigenous artists and writers worked together under the leadership of Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún (c. 1499–1590) on a twelve-volume manuscript documenting Nahua culture, now known as the Florentine Codex (c. 1575–77).

The artists continued to work on the manuscript amidst a small-pox epidemic in 1576. Cloistered in isolation, they illustrated texts, including those about the Spanish conquest for the twentieth and final book. In doing so, they created a historical testimony of the devastation of war and disease they experienced, but also their rich history, language, and culture. In Europe, ongoing outbreaks of plague beginning in the fourteenth century led to quarantined artists such as Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641) creating devotional portraits for patrons in the hopes that saints would intercede on their behalf.

Just two examples out of many, such works demonstrate the ongoing impetus to create art, especially in times of crisis.

A striking feature of many of the works in Facing Darkness is their representation of human subjects. In doing so, they invoke community through their works, whether a group of historical subjects or vulnerable yet resilient contemporaries, and provide a model for collectivity that is formed by Facing Darkness as a whole.

The art historical precedents for these so-called unprecedented times underscore the importance of art not only as a path to resilience and rebirth, as this exhibition poses, but as a visual record of a turbulent period. To experience this exhibition remotely, from the confines of our own homes, the viewers of Facing Darkness enter the virtual space created by the artists, both extending the experience of isolation and engaging with the communal aspirations of the art.


This exhibition was made possible with support from the City of Santa Monica, the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, and 18th Street Arts Center's generous community of donors.


3 Broussard and Dillon invoke community through their works, whether a group of historical subjects or vulnerable yet resilient contemporaries, and provide a model for collectivity that is formed by Facing Darkness as a whole.


5 See for example, Van Dyck’s Saint Rosalia Interceding for the Plague-stricken of Palermo, 1642, in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (71.41), and Saint Rosalia, c. 1625, in the collection of the Museo del Prado, Madrid (PO0146).

6 See for example, Van Dyck’s Saint Rosalia Interceding for the Plague-stricken of Palermo, 1642, in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (71.41), and Saint Rosalia, c. 1625, in the collection of the Museo del Prado, Madrid (PO0146).


Building Networks of Empathy

Left: Deborah Lynn Irmas, Send Me Your Gita, 2019. House paint, acrylic, tape, twine, plexiglass. 68 x 87 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Someone once asked me in a job interview, “If you had a magic wand and could change one thing in the world, what would it be?” And as a social justice educator in higher education at the time, my answer was, “More empathy.”

The challenge, of course, with empathy, is that we have to make ourselves vulnerable and potentially subject ourselves to feeling the pain of others. 2020 has brought so much collective loss, trauma, and grief upon us. In the United States, the lives of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and so many more were stolen by racism, both individual and systemic. Around the world, we have seen millions of lives lost to COVID-19. A natural coping mechanism may be to harden our hearts and steel ourselves against the utterly overwhelming and incomprehensible suffering happening worldwide.

And yet.

There are at least three lessons I was humbled by through the artwork in 18th Street Arts Center’s group exhibition Building Networks of Empathy. One lesson is that each piece is a learning exercise in empathy. The pieces allow us to open up our hearts to the perspective of the artist and recognize any feelings that may stir. Then we must ask ourselves: when a wave of emotion pours in, do we let it fill us up? Do we hold it and allow the capacity of our hearts to expand and grow heavy? And when we let go, do our hearts remember the uniqueness of each story and are we changed for the better because of it? My hope is that the answers are yes, yes, and yes.

The second lesson this exhibition offers is the ability to capture and hold both the beauty and the pain in the process of authentically connecting to others. Ameeta Nanji’s Entangled VIII conjures thoughts about the ties that bind us all, the networks of care and community that hold us, the blood in our veins, and the fragility of life. Susie McKay Krieser’s Hugging summoned feelings of love between family members, wearing masks as an act of love for others, and the pain of not being able to hold each other or see each other smile. And in Siru Wen’s Anchor, the longing for the simple, grounding, physical touch of another stirs in us a deep yearning. Every artwork holds so many juxtapositions and teaches us how to hold seemingly opposing feelings in our hearts at the same time.

The third lesson is that the whole spectrum of emotion is necessary for us to be able to connect with one another, build networks of empathy, and be inspired to be better people and enact change for a better world for all of us. Pain and suffering will always exist, but I truly believe that the pain and suffering rooted in injustice is something within our locus of control. The systems that were built to privilege some and oppress others were built by people, and thus can be dismantled by people, too.

More empathy, more action, more justice. We can all do our part. Start with empathy, an art of the heart.


This exhibition was made possible with support from the City of Santa Monica, the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, and 18th Street Arts Center’s generous community of donors.

Exhibitions and Programs


Before George Floyd there was:

Emmett Till
James Chaney
Andrew Goodman
Michael Schwerner
Fred Hampton
Manuel Ramos
Ruben Salazar
Eula Love
Arturo Jiménez
Anastasio Rojas
Andy López
Trayvon Martin
Tamir Rice
Kenneth Harding, Jr.
Oscar Grant
Michael Brown
Rekia Boyd
Sandra Bland
Joyce Curnell
Elijah McClain
Ronald Greene

…and too many more.

The murders of a succession of unarmed African Americans at the hands of police has catapulted the issue of racist police violence and state repression into the national and international spotlight. The shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson; the choking death of Eric Garner while he repeatedly cried, "I can’t breathe"; the brutal "rough ride" death of Freddie Gray, whose voice box was crushed and spine nearly severed while in the custody of Baltimore Police; the senseless killing of 12-year-old Tamir Rice on a Cleveland playground; and the mysterious "suicide" of Sandra Bland in a Texas jailhouse, have exposed the pervasive brutality and inhumanity faced by people of color at the hands of police in the United States. Too frequently, other targets include immigrants, political activists, the LGBTQIA+ community, and those experiencing poverty, homelessness, or mental health concerns. This is not a new problem. The list of documented abuse by law enforcement is long. The list of unrecorded examples would be much longer. Internationally, the story is often worse—in many instances as a result of US foreign policy support for governments that repress popular movements.

THIS MUST STOP.

By Carol Wells
Installation views of "To Protect and Serve? Five Decades of Posters Protesting Police Violence" presented by the Center for the Study of Political Graphics in 18th Street Arts Center’s Airport Campus Propeller Gallery. Photos by Frida Cano.
Beatriz Cortez and Kang Seung Lee

Becoming Atmosphere

Beatriz Cortez and Kang Seung Lee: Catching Breath
By Anuradha Vikram

Artists Beatriz Cortez and Kang Seung Lee’s collaboration begins where all life starts, with breath. Conversation between the two artists and friends had long been underway when I first approached Cortez to do a residency and exhibition at 18th Street Arts Center in 2018. She immediately proposed a joint residency that would allow the two artists to realize their longtime interest in working together. Even before COVID-19 taught us to be fearful of sharing air with one another, Cortez and Lee began an extended meditation on illness, cooperation, and breath.

Cortez is a sculptor—a medium of the body and of touch—and a philosopher whose practice is discursive, anchored in talking. She had been reading Emanuele Coccia’s The Life of Plants, which takes a microcosmic and metaphysical view of the biological world. Cortez understands continental philosophy through a worldview formed by dialogue with Indigenous people of the Americas. As such, she brought awareness of ancient cultivation practices to her engagement with Coccia’s ideas about plants’ central role in the ecosystem.

He writes, “To breathe means to be immersed in a medium that penetrates us with the same intensity as we penetrate it.” In the exhibition, ideas about grief, generational memory, propagation, and the infinite potential of humankind become ephemeral and intuitive. Ideas become atmosphere.

Cortez has suspended a nomadic “space capsule” from the rafters of the 18th Street Airport Gallery. Made from welded, unsealed steel, the object’s many six-sided faces are each capped with a small plastic capsule filled with seeds. Three long tentacle-like legs protrude like tentacles from the bottom of the structure. The seeds are native to the Americas: used for centuries in Indigenous agricultural and medicinal practices. Beneath the capsule, Cortez’s 2019 sculpture The Infinite Mixture of All Things Past, Present, and Future pumps rhythmically up and down. Small sprouts of green sit atop the sculpture’s nine pistons, which express audible puffs of air as they move atop their mechanisms. Welded steel Roots (2020) sculptures, nebulous, could also be trees or clouds. Growth is breath is energy.
At the center of the gallery is another plant: a cactus, on loan from the artist Julie Tolentino. Tolentino propagated a cutting of a cactus belonging to Harvey Milk, an item she obtained from an archivist friend that had originally been collected from one of Milk’s former roommates. At the time of Milk’s assassination in 1978, his roommates inherited the plant, which they kept alive as a way of tending to his memory. Kang Seung Lee’s artistic practice resembles this multi-year project of tending to memory in loss. His work is concerned with inheritance, and with legacy. Working with the remnants of queer icons’ lives, he treats historical connections as personal, built through a combination of research and individual networks. In Becoming Atmosphere, Lee weaves together histories and objects associated with pioneering gay artists Tseng Kwong Chi, Oh Joon-soo, Derek Jarman, Peter Hujar, and Avram Finkelstein, each of whose lives and work were impacted or abbreviated by the HIV/AIDS crisis.

Lee’s graphite drawings are intimate and delicate, full of details rendered with a soft touch that reflects the artist’s gentle, contemplative manner. The drawings can be modest or monumental in scale. Intimate drawings of California poppies from Jarman’s garden at Prospect Cottage in Dungeness, UK, have been made from garden cuttings sent to Lee by Garry Clayton, husband of Keith Collins who cared for Jarman at the end of his life and maintained the cottage until his own death in 2018. Adjacent is a large-scale rendering that monumentalizes Finkelstein’s original notebook sketch working out the iconic SILENCE=DEATH pink triangle logo, which he developed along with Brian Howard, Oliver Johnston, Charles Kreloff, Chris Lione, and Jorge Socarrás and came to symbolize ACT UP activism in the late 1980s. A third group of drawings reinterprets Hong Kong-born American artist Tseng Kwong Chi’s iconic East Meets West Self-Portraits (1979–1989), in which the artist photographed himself at important landmarks in Western history including the Roman Coliseum, Notre Dame in Paris, Los Angeles’ iconic Hollywood sign, Sleeping Beauty’s castle at Disneyland, and the World Trade Center twin towers in New York. Lee’s renditions depict Tseng Kwong Chi’s severe, uniform-clad figure as a puff of smoke, with only the artist’s hands and the ID badge that hangs from his shirt pocket remaining solid. In an adjoining gallery there are drawings based on Peter Hujar’s photographs of waves breaking in the Hudson River off the now-demolished Christopher Street cruising piers.

Connecting places to one another is an important theme in Lee’s work, most prominently in the three-channel video work Garden (2018). Here, Lee has made several graphite drawings on animal vellum, which he has then cut apart and buried in separate pieces at two memorial sites. One frame shows the burial act at Prospect Cottage, where Lee pulls apart pebbles and soil to place the object. The other shows Lee scooping earth from NamSan Park, formerly a cruising spot in Seoul, into a piece of Korean sambe cloth that is made from hemp and used for rituals. Lee transposes stones from each site to the other as the video positions Derek Jarman’s life and death alongside that of Korean poet Oh Joon-soo. Both artists lived at the same time, both made work from their experiences as gay men, and both were lost to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Beatriz Cortez engages memory on another, geological scale. Her Glacial Pothole (2020) is a corollary to the Glacial Erratic that she installed in Rockefeller Center, New York, as recipient of the Frieze LIFEWTR Sculpture Prize. The sculpture references the rock masses that populate Manhattan island, remnants from the last Ice Age when glacial ice melted and left mineral deposits inside openings in the bedrock. These ancient forms are a reminder of the earth’s endurance through previous cataclysmic eras.

In the same small gallery with Pothole and Lee’s drawings of Hujar’s photos, there are two small Plexiglas boxes with large white buttons. Using a miniature thermal printer controlled by an Arduino, these boxes generate small printouts of images and texts collected and created by the artists. Titled The Future Perfect, this work builds on the construction of language by referencing a grammatical tense that expresses what is going to happen subsequent to events occurring at a later date in time. This mode of expression, which

Installation view of Becoming Atmosphere in 18th Street Arts Center's Airport Campus Propeller Gallery. Photo by Marc Walker.
When the future comes,” one reads, “we will have Becoming Atmosphere, cloth with 24-karat gold thread. ‘The little boy asylum made to US government officials under the Lápida (2020) made by Cortez bears the words outcomes of the present. Observations about ‘The Future Perfect’ collected from friends and loved ones and translated into Korean, English, and Spanish objects bring the exhibition narrative back to current events, injustice, and loss. A welded steel generates images of Lee’s Tseng Kwong Chi drawings. image will eventually dissipate as the thermal ink fades from the paper’s surface. ‘Future Perfect’ collected from friends and loved ones is common to many languages, reveals an awareness of the future as its own reality contingent on the outcomes of the present. Observations about ‘The Future Perfect’ collected from friends and loved ones and translated into Korean, English, and Spanish. The life of plants: a metaphysics of mixture (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019), 11. Justified by policy—some things just don’t change.

II, as Coccia suggests, plants make the world through the shadow, then as so do we human beings, as philosophers from Hegel to Deleuze have argued. Only by actualizing our potential to create, to love, and to live freely do we galvanize the atmosphere with the force of our immanence. Though violence and disease has struck down many in their prime, those of us who survive have a responsibility to propagate the memory of those we have lost. We owe it to them to live and to perpetuate the values that give life.


Andy Campbell: On that day I was wondering how I’d find garlic. On that day a colleague sent me a text message—a picture of a beautiful backyard, thick clouds scudding across a bright blue sky... within moments a second message from her: “Sorry, not for your eyes.” On that day I wondered how things were in Texas. On that day I was in Long Beach, California. On that day I meant to be recovering from an event the day before. On that day I received emails with subject headings like: ‘Our New Reality,’ ‘Deliciousness Matters,’ ‘Re: Fair Use?’—all went unopened. On that day I took a picture of our cat, curled up and sleeping. On that day I took a screenshot of a meeting I attended, thinking it would be important to remember what I was doing. This and the photograph of the cat are all I have of that day. On that day I made myself coffee and watched TV with my boyfriend until we fell asleep. On that day I was asked to remain in my home. Beatriz Cortez: On that day I got up at 3 in the morning. On that day we made a mural on the ground that said: DEFUND ICE. On that day many masked friends from all my worlds showed up at MacArthur Park in solidarity. On that day I met people from seven different Central American immigrant rights organizations that I had never met before. On that day I took a nap in the car while Douglas and Freya watched over my sleep. On that day I ran like a kid around the lake in MacArthur Park while the planes sky-typed our phrases in the sky. On that day I watched the atmosphere softly rock my phrase/our phrase in the sky: No Cages, No Jaulas. On that day I said to my friends: I want more days like today. Kang Seung Lee: On that day my partner Geoff dropped me off at the Huntington Hospital Emergency Room. He wasn’t allowed to come in. On that day I had a very sharp pain on my chest and every time I coughed it felt like someone was slicing my chest with a knife. “I need to go to the hospital but it’s so dangerous there,” I kept telling Geoff. On that day I talked to my doctor over the phone. “It’s probably from the coughing but could also be a blood clot, you need to go to the ER but it’s so dangerous to be there,” she sighed. On that day no one touched me at the ER except one nurse who drew blood from me and took samples. On that day I watched the atmosphere softly rock my phrase/our phrase in the sky: No Cages, No Jaulas. On that day I said to my friends: I want more days like today. Kang Seung Lee: On that day my partner Geoff dropped me off at the Huntington Hospital Emergency Room. He wasn’t allowed to come in. 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memes that begin, “I don’t know who needs to hear this but...” outlining all the ways in which the pandemic has been bad for mental health, bad for self-esteem, bad for work, bad for sex, bad for connecting, bad for inner work. I click my tongue because I needed to hear what these memes tell me, but I will likely not be able to heed their advice. The unending now has thrown into stark relief the tension between what Korean-German philosopher Byung-Chul Han has identified as the vita activa (the active life) and vita contemplativa (the contemplative life).

Hear and heed—a path between message and action. How to interrupt, or, at least, stem the flow? I don’t know.

So called strategies of deceleration do not overcome this temporal crisis,” writes Byung-Chul Han in The Scent of Time, disabusing us of romantic notions of “winding the clock back,” returning to a “simple life,” or getting too invested in “refusal.” Such strategies, he warns, “cover up the actual problem.” Instead, he urges for the investment and incorporation of the vita contemplativa within the vita activa, a knowing embrace of the demands of two temporal cadences; an arrhythmic do-si-do which might resuscitate destitute choreographies, bring new ones into being.

On that day the nurse explained how to quarantine at home. “But I don’t think I have COVID,” I asked. “It’s something else—called something else here. Amongst the charred and melted metal is a small container, holding even smaller containers, safeguarding DNA. Only one of these fragile emissaries has survived. Its genetic material, its most precious gift, has been tended and looked after for thousands of years. It has grown tall and lain fallow. It has fed families and left them wanting. It has been rotten and it has been sweet; sometimes both simultaneously. And though the people who nurtured it had many names for themselves; and that others had for them), they are entirely unknown to these inheritors. What will be done with this receipt? What will be done with this seed?

August, but it isn’t August. It’s something else—called something else here. Amongst the charred and melted metal is a small container, holding even smaller containers, safeguarding DNA. Only one of these fragile emissaries has survived. Its genetic material, its most precious gift, has been tended and looked after for thousands of years. It has grown tall and lain fallow. It has fed families and left them wanting. It has been rotten and it has been sweet; sometimes both simultaneously. And though the people who nurtured it had many names for themselves; and that others had for them, they are entirely unknown to these inheritors.

What will be done with this receipt? What will be done with this seed?

There is nothing about it, really, that demands to be planted. Nothing, really, that suggests its purpose. And so it is kept aloft, in some isolated place. Respected and admired, it is a thing to visit—a strange community from an elsewhere, from an othertime.

To see it is an honor, and not everyone is full of honor.

Sigh.

“Maybe I’m reading too much science fiction,” I tell my friend Laura. “Noooo!” she says and laughs. Through her gentle mocking I come to realize that everything during the pandemic seems carry the gloss of betterment—of being ‘good.’ We are told it’s okay to take a step away from a need to quantify and mark time with achievement. It’s a paradoxical position, and one which, according to Alaisan, has resulted in workers of all kinds working longer hours.1 On social media I see
Like our neglect. Pots, hoping that it will continue to nurture beyond up for it we broke up its soil and placed it into various unfortunately, this sapling didn’t make it. I am Guerrero, a derivation from the Spanish word for “war”). Nahuatl word meaning “place of the fishers”—and Guerrero and Michoacán, Mexico (Michoacán, from the in a geographical area that spans the current states of and colorful kernels that we know today. This happened and rattle a neat row of small saplings—in this case, sculptures, every so often this one comes to life, to lift. Project for the 2018 Made in LA biennial. Like that installed at the Hammer Museum and the Bowtie commonalities with previous sculptures like Guerrero's plant, which was Harvey’s plant, and is, for the time being, Kang and Beatriz’s plant, too, is a tuning fork to the roiling circuits of connection that instantiate the broader show. It is an affinitive organizational schema, to the rootages of the show, and the small, loose copse of metallic rattle. The pressure and pleasure here is: how to join a conversation already in progress?

Unfortunately, this sapling didn’t make it. I am embarrassed to admit this. Who kills a gift? To make up for it we broke up its soil and placed it into various pots, hoping that it will continue to nurture beyond our neglect. Like Tzolk’in and like The Archive in Dirt, The Infinite Mixture of All Things Past, Present, and Future is a portal—related spatially and conceptually to the intergalactic seed probe titled Generously I hanging in the rafters of the show, and the small, loose copse of Roots sculptures—silent accompaniments to Kang’s richly worked historical appropriations.

Kang Seung Lee: Today I woke up to an email from the landlord of my studio. My studio was broken into yesterday and they’re changing the locks of the building. No art was stolen. Today I think how ironic and unsurprising it is that my art is worthless to some people. Today I realize, actually, it would be okay if all of my works are stolen. Today I watched a YouTube video of a light cable TV show from 1982, in which Tseng Kwong Chi was interviewed by Kestuto Nakas. Pointing out the StuffForArt visitor’s badge, Nakas comments, “I see you are a visitor here.” “I am a permanent visitor here,” Tseng answers.

By focusing on the vertical, Beatriz puts the many violence of lateral expansion on notice. Julie’s plant, which was Harvey’s plant, and is, for the time being. Kang and Beatriz’s plant, too, is a tuning fork to the rolling circuits of connection that instantiate the broader show. It is an affinitive organizational schema, one which permits the drawing of genealogies without predestining or differentiating between kith and kin. The sculpture comes alive, its animation produces a metallic rattle. The pressure and pleasure here is: how to join a conversation already in progress?

Today I think I am a permanent visitor here, too. Today I wonder if I am still looking for a sense of belonging? Leslie once told me what I was looking for was probably connections, not belonging. Today I made captions for an upcoming show and wonder why Americans still don’t use the metric system? Today I talked to my friend Patricia, who is in Joshua Tree. She is about to give birth. Today I registered for a screening and conversation with Cecilia Vicuña. I’m not sure if I’ll be listening to the talk: the amount of online artist lectures is scary. I’ll never be able to watch all of them in my lifetime. Today in the middle of this talk I’m thinking I should call mom, but I know probably I won’t.

Andy Campbell: Today I woke up at 5am, even though my phone’s alarm is set for 6. Nerves. Today I made myself a cup of coffee, first by putting Sweet N’ Low in the cup, then coffee, then milk, I stirred it with my finger. Today I wore my best, cleanest shirt. Today I wondered how much longer my hair would get before getting the vaccine. Today I understand what is expected of me, and hope that Kang and Beatriz trust me. I know they do. Today I got an email from a friend of twenty years, the subject heading: “WHAT’S UP?” Today I did a tech check, a run-through of this text, pausing for Beatriz and Kang’s parts, imagining what they would say. Today I picked a scab on my shoulder, causing it to bleed a little. Today I put on my second best, cleanest shirt. Today I clicked the link, maybe the same link that you clicked, but different, one that made me a host, visible yet not.

Beatriz Cortez: Today we are here building things together, in spite of the isolation. Today it makes me happy to spend this time with the two of you. Today I received a gift in the mail even though it wasn’t my birthday. It was from Tati and it was a pair of David Bowie socks. They came with a note that read “Take your protein pills and put your helmet on.” It reminded me of the time when I used to spend my days welding in the shop. Today I listened to “Major Tom.” Today I made a batch of casamiento, or Salvadoran rice and black beans... comfort food.

Today I thought of the travels of stones. Today I received a gift in the mail even though it wasn’t my birthday. It was from Tati and it was a pair of David Bowie socks. They came with a note that read “Take your protein pills and put your helmet on.” It reminded me of the time when I used to spend my days welding in the shop. Today I listened to “Major Tom.” Today I made a batch of casamiento, or Salvadoran rice and black beans... comfort food.

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He runs to get away, to go through, to pass quickly. He runs because he is surveilled, because running communicates the stakes of this surveillance. He runs and a guard turns his head. He runs to be noticed... but not caught. It is one of the only photographs in this series where Tseng is moving as he presses the remote shutter release in his hand. He runs and a guard turns his head. He runs to be noticed... but not caught.

Kang Seung Lee, who over the course of the past few years, has rendered Tseng, and other photographic subjects such as Robert Mapplethorpe and polyamorous revelers in Sydney, as blurs, is, I would argue, acutely attuned to the ambivalences of Tseng Kwong Chi’s project. Wearing a silver Zhongshan suit and mirrored glasses, Tseng builds an somewhat inscrutable character. The photo-identification badge, usually attached to his shirt pocket (but missing or obscured in the Checkpoint Charlie photograph), reproduces the artist’s face wearing sunglasses and the words “SlutForArt” parenthetically, this fact in his title: “Checkpoint Charlie, IRunning! Berlin, Germany.”

February—look around, when else could it be? Beatriz’s sculpture, Glacial Pothole, has haunted me ever since I saw it in November. I was immediately taken back to an “Introduction to Glaciology” course I took when I was undergraduate student. The class was taught by the husband of my Gender and Women’s Studies professor, and the class had an unfortunate nickname (one that I have come to learn is shared by many an introductory geology course): “rocks for jocks.” I wasn’t a jock, but I was raised by a father who was deeply embedded in the natural sciences, first as an environmental chemist and then as a teacher, so I admit, and too tangential to the discussion at hand, but when my father became a teacher I think that is one of the moments in my life that I became more fully his son.

A suitcase is a partition is a need. A tree branch is a cradle is a claim. A ‘holy hole’ is an heirloom is an Uncle. A photograph is a warning is a stain. A receipt is a token is a plane. A prize is a border is a stone. A thread is a sound is a name. A photograph is an artistic statement. A prohibition... is atmosphere... a desire... is atmosphere. How time works on a seemingly immovable object is also at play in Beatriz’s earlier video work, Childhood Bedroom, in which the artist built a replica of her room and came back, day after day, to film a little of its changing. Over time the seeds planted in this miniature domicile grow, order is disturbed and then redistributed. Eventually the plants fall dormant or dead, I can’t tell which [... didn’t I tell you that I’m not the best plant person]? For Beatriz, who left El Salvador for the United States after living through the former’s civil war for a decade, the idea of leaving a place with the hope that what is left will change, is part of a profound and fluctuating equation of place, attachment, and becoming.

This change appears differently to everyone, just as the bright field of color of Derek Jarman’s film Blue appears differently to each that beholds it—each that tries to reproduce it. This inconstancy is the rule that Kang and Beatriz’s works are figured around.
As the Italian/Austrian philosopher Rosi Braidotti reminds us: “It is urgent to explore and experiment with more adequate forms of non-unitary, nomadic, and yet accountable modes of envisaging both subjectivity and democratic, ethical interaction.”

There is a political dimension to this non-unitary mode of being, as various embroidery projects by Kang and Beatriz attest. For example, a burial shroud bearing these gold-threaded words: “They took us away from our grandmother and now we don’t know yet. Before us. Before us.”

On that day we will have said each other’s names too many times to count, in languages we are only now imagining.

Beatriz Cortez:
On that day the children who are in the detention centers today will still be traumatized. On that day we will still be surviving our trauma. On that day we have understood that it is possible. On that day we will have built a time machine. It will be made of stone. On that day we will have built it together, even though we were apart. On that day we will have forgotten all about the time when we didn’t know each other. On that day we will have moved mountains. On that day we will have thought together of the meaning of planetary justice. On that day you will have figured out the equation. On that day we will have drafted a plan for the future distribution of seeds. On that day we will have survived.

Kang Seung Lee:
On that day we will have seen ‘others’ beyond fear. On that day we will have apologized to the children at the detention centers. On the day we will have seen their families reunited. On the day we will have defined family differently. On that day we will have known a world beyond division and confusion. On that day we will have understood we were able to share this moment from the people of the world who came before us.

On that day we will have given hugs to people who we don’t know yet. On that day we will have offered Harveylyettes, cuttings from the cactus Harvey, to people who we don’t know yet. On that day we will have seen Harvey flowering. On that day we will have understood better what it means to be archived in dirt.

On that day we will have imagined the past beyond what is archived.

Andy Campbell:
On that day we will have been cleverly disobedient. On that day we will have been together for most of an otherwise mundane afternoon. On that day we will have defined family differently. On that day we will have moved mountains. On that day we will have understood we were able to share this moment from the people of the world who came before us.

On that day we will have forgotten all about the time when we were apart. On that day we will have been somewhat unrecognizable to ourselves. To you. To both of you. On that day you will have teased me about me and my boyfriend’s failure as non-reproductive “plant daddies,” you will have said the word ‘necropolitics’ more than once in regards to this unfortunate fact. On that day we will have felt free, if only for a few moments. And it will have been because we were together.

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The exhibition Becoming Atmospheres and related programs were generously supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the City of Santa Monica’s Cultural Affairs Department, the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, and the 9th Street Arts Center’s generous community of donors.
Symptoms of Nostalgia
By Li-Ping Chen

Nung-Hsin Hu’s Incurable Nostalgia is a multimedia project that captures fragments of home(s) at the intersection of memory and reality. Born and raised in Taiwan, Hu is an interdisciplinary artist based in the United States and the recipient of various international residency fellowships for her works about unconsciousness, invisibility, and vulnerability. Her residency at 18th Street Arts Center in late 2020 was marked by difficult times in Los Angeles due to the coronavirus crisis, curfew orders, and devastating wildfires. In addition to challenges in her new place, Hu needed to confront the loss of her childhood home in Taiwan, which was to become a training center for real estate agents. In this dual trajectory, trying to make sense of both her new place and the bygone home, Hu explored the shapes, texture, and echoes of home through the lens of nostalgia.

Etymologically, “nostalgia” is the combination of the Greek word nostos (homecoming) and algos (ache) to describe the sadness of displacement and the pain of homesickness. Hu conceptualized its incurability with her reading of Svetlana Boym’s The Future of Nostalgia. Boym points out how nostalgia transforms from a curable disease in the 17th century to a cultural mourning for an impossible return to an original state of being in the modern era. “It feels similar for me to return to a home that no longer exists,” Hu said.

The loss of her childhood home anchors Hu’s homing desire—a longing for community in the process of home-making rather than in the journey of homecoming. Her 16mm film loop There is no longer such a place as home shows the artist wearing ruby slippers tapping at various sites she encountered during her residency in Los Angeles. Hu took inspiration from Salman Rushdie’s essay “Out of Kansas” on the film The Wizard of Oz. “The real secret of the ruby slippers is not that ‘there’s no place like home’ but rather that there is no longer such a place as home,” Rushdie wrote. “Except, of course, for the home we make, or the homes that are made for us, in Oz, which is anywhere, and everywhere, except the place from which we began.” That is, home is no longer given or determined by others, but one that is chosen and built by our own will.

Atrium Gallery (Olympic Campus)
November 18, 2020 – January 22, 2021

Nung-Hsin Hu
Incurable Nostalgia

‘The tensions and reasons that cause nostalgia are no longer there,’ but the agony remains poignant and thus incurable. Her sense of loss intensified as she bid farewell to the home that exists not in reality but in her memory. As poetically reflected in her drawing The Texture of Home, this farewell was an ongoing process of parting with her childhood home rather than a complete closure. With her stored childhood letters and cards devoured by termites, her record of the past was consumed, and her memories were reconfigured into the texture of home.

The loss of her childhood home anchors Hu’s homing desire—a longing for community in the process of home-making rather than in the journey of homecoming. Her 16mm film loop There is no longer such a place as home shows the artist wearing ruby slippers tapping at various sites she encountered during her residency in Los Angeles. Hu took inspiration from Salman Rushdie’s essay “Out of Kansas” on the film The Wizard of Oz. “The real secret of the ruby slippers is not that ‘there’s no place like home’ but rather that there is no longer such a place as home,” Rushdie wrote. “Except, of course, for the home we make, or the homes that are made for us, in Oz, which is anywhere, and everywhere, except the place from which we began.” That is, home is no longer given or determined by others, but one that is chosen and built by our own will.

Rushdie’s emphasis on home “anywhere and everywhere” also informs Hu’s mixed media installation Half Moons that examines various modalities of home and the process of adaptation. This work features a white planter box with edible plants growing on top and a storage space in the bottom—a system inspired by the Venice Beach-based community group, the “Venaissance,” that provides unhoused community members with similar planter boxes to secure a food source and store their belongings. Hu’s artistic rendition of the planter box is paired with a round mirror on the wall and two half-moon shaped plexiglass mirrors (each with half of the Chinese character 圓 “circle, togetherness”) installed on the ceiling beams. The round mirror is a site of reflection—both optical and meditative—where the viewers need to adjust their perspectives to a certain angle in order to see the reflection of the two halves connected and the Chinese character 圓 (“circle, togetherness”) completed. As such, Half Moons turns the stigmatized label of “homelessness” into an participatory “home-free” community where one can be free from home, free at home, and, most importantly, free to make home.

With the COVID crisis, the two conflicting dimensions of home—protection and confinement—are increasingly blurred and intertwined. Hu’s two-channel video project Pressure Test portrays red balloons “breathing” in and out against slightly open windows and a barely lifted roll up door. She explored how the pandemic lockdown “generated layers of mental pressure, threatened the basic act of breathing, and created the dilemma of feeling ‘sick of home’ and ‘homesick’ at the same time.”

While some of the balloons manage to break the confinement and flow freely in the air, others break down under pressure and eventually explode. Juxtaposing the hope and doom of liberation from home, Pressure Test documents the paradox of yearning to leave and needing to stay at home in the pandemic era.

Starting from Hu’s mourning for her lost childhood home, Incurable Nostalgia explores the tension and connection between belonging and confinement. In this process of working through grief, the loss is preserved in her memory and in her identity. It becomes a source of her artistic inspiration and a starting point of her quest for home(s).

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Getting Back to What Once and Never Was

By Dan S. Wang

The crisis of 2021 is this: that the bundled crises of the previous year, what Jelani Cobb called a “crisis cubed,” was no aberration but rather a dramatic introduction to a new generalized condition without definitive end. Instead of bottoming out and returning to a former state, the notion of “recovery” becomes something at once more concrete and more elusive; simply being well. Given that everything from classroom learning to supply chain management going forward builds on the unprecedented shifts of 2020, the conventional notion of, say, a quantifiable rebound must surrender to our rather more existential situation. The genesis and unfolding of the series of artists’ projects at 18th Street Arts Center called Recovery Justice: Being Well stands as an example of artists engaged in an organic process bearing the spirit of our take-nothing-for-granted times. The planning began with email and pandemic-necessitated Zoom meetings, followed by the joy and trepidation of our first in-person discussions. Come showtime in Spring of 2021, artists installed work under distanced precautions and in staggered time slots. For some weeks the show was accessible only by appointment under the conditions of a partial reopening. With restrictions lifted as COVID numbers fell, the return to in-person art life culminated in the July 10, 2021 event Left/Right/Here at the Airport campus, a night’s worth of related programming. Hundreds showed up for a classic 18th Street experience: galleries on view, committed performances by Recovery Justice artists, open Airport studios, food and wares on offer. Except for the continued masking and regulated attendance, the fête had the celebratory vibe of a pre-pandemic art party.

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Does this mean we are recovered? Hardly. It is noted frequently that the pandemic exposed—that is to say, uncovered—economic inequities, incompetent political leadership, a lack of popular science literacy, and many other failings in national preparedness and organization. And yet none of these afflictions are new. For example, the brutalities visited upon people simply for “living while Black” certainly predate the police killings of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd. Lola del Fresno addresses this unacceptably persistent and particularly terroristic form of racism in *RUN JONNY RUN*, a wall drawing of a ranch home layered with video projection of a lone male figure jogging on dark sidewalks, running away from the camera. While the work evokes the horrible 2020 murder of Ahmaud Arbery, a young unarmed Black man fatally criminalized for his presence in a residential neighborhood, the referent just as easily figures as the tale of teenager Trayvon Martin, whose murder was a key event in the rise of consciousness that eventually took form as the Black Lives Matter movement. That was nearly ten years ago. Moreover, given the styling of del Fresno’s line-drawn house, the work suggests that the arbitrary deadliness of “doing x while Black” is a problem as old as the advent of segregated suburban space and mid-century white flight. Putting the exhibition title in relation to this work means that “recovered justice” entails deep excavations surrounding patterns of injustice that are old but constantly—and tragically—refreshed.

Lola del Fresno’s is not the only contribution to spill over the eighteen months of the most recent crises. Luciana Abait’s craggy den-sized paper sculpture, *The maps that failed us*, was made of an oversized world
map crumpled so that the terrain of entire nations resemble the folds of an arctic glacier rapidly melting, brings into view a planetary challenge that exceeds the current crisis even as it constitutes it. Rebecca Youssef’s contributions, also motivated by ecological concern, include a work of an intimate presence, a simple photocopied palm-sized stapled booklet. Though physically small, the free ‘zine deals with a temporal scale closer to the durations of massive environmental change addressed by Abait: it contains illustrated instructions for harvesting, storing, and planting acorns, and tells the story of Youssef’s ongoing efforts (20k acorns planted so far) to propagate the regal native oaks of Southern California. Whether visceral like del Fresno’s, critical like Abait’s, or ameliorative like Youssef’s, these works tackle subjects for which there is no returning to an unseen state, no recovering in a literal sense.

That said, other artists certainly did take the acute crises of 2020 as a focal point. Perhaps most directly and one of the earliest of the proposed contributions, Board-Ups (2020), assembled by Nicola Goode and Sara Daleiden, treats the covering/re-covering dynamic at its most concretely material expression. The pair put together a selection of raw plywood sheets bearing expressions in aerosol, marker, wheatpaste, and other street techniques by artists named and unnamed. The sheets were scavenged from the cache of discarded protective boards that had been installed by retailers during the unrest of late May 2020, when the angry + radical + opportunistic hordes trashed stores in Santa Monica’s upscale shopping district in dramatically targeted looting. The plain plywood sheets were tagged almost immediately. Within days the boarded up streetscape of Santa Monica was decorated with tributes to those lost to police violence, calls for peace, inspirational quotations, and an endless assortment of tags, throwies, and sigs—the protective covers themselves got covered, as it were. Never intended as public space but nonetheless jammed by artists, Goode and Daleiden recognized the collectively embellished plywood as local documents of the national and international George Floyd Uprising, not to mention an explosion of pent-up pandemic creativity. By diverting these objects from the waste stream, the artists preserved a sampler of the grassroots mark-making that blossomed in concert with the assault on property and liberation of goods. Seen a year on, they serve as a poignant reminder that any meaningful recovery—any being well—must reckon with the post-gentrification city; that what happened in Santa Monica was not the self-destructively rageful inner-city rebellion of generations past but more like a critique by-the-deed of a bourgeois urban space that prioritizes the well-heeled consumer.

This is where the subtitle comes into full view: Being Well. The pandemic delivered extremes. People either had their workloads doubled or found themselves suddenly unemployed. In lockdown people were either isolated and lonely, or struggling for personal space in overcrowded quarters. Many put up with the lockdown even though they themselves knew no one with COVID while others had the virus rip through their whole family. Into the no-win circumstances of pandemic life came the language of care. Caring for each other and ourselves—and figuring out how to enact the will to care under unprecedented conditions—emerged as the most positive avenue for bearable pandemic life. Susie McKay Krieser and Yrneh Gabon perfectly caught this spirit of care with their collaboration One Mask, One Love, One Heart ❤️. With the titular phrase presented over a grid of twenty-four torso portraits, each one an 18th Street Arts Center artist or staff person holding an open self-hug stance, the composition is a picture
of the longing for human touch, and in its absence, the necessity of self-care. This healing image is delivered in three doses: a video, a central reproduction in the exhibition brochure, and, most grandly, as an oversized vinyl mural installed as part of the inaugural outdoor Glider Wall display. But for the overwhelming number of COVID deaths, not to mention an ugly rise of political extremism within the United States, this is a work that might be dismissed as sentimental. Surviving cinnabar “airpocalyptic” skies, an attempted fascist coup, and the seared-in fear of infection cures us of that interpretation. Instead, given the threats in the air, One Mask, One Love, One Heart ❤ operates as a balm for those exhausted by the pandemic-age struggle for bare life.

As it turns out, the external factors of mass vaccinations and a relative political calm let Recovery Justice: Being Well end its run under less stressful circumstances than it started. As such, the arc of the show benefited from the rounding of a public health corner. And yet, with a third surge underway as of this writing driven by the super aggressive Delta variant, we are reminded that our upended lives continue insofar as the realness of a recovery won’t be anything measurable, and the metrics of justice cannot be only about returning to what was sometimes a perfectly ghastly past. Simply being well, from moment to moment, beginning with the ability to express care, is our available recovery no matter the challenges to come. Which is to say, the artists are left with the question with which we began: what is a recovery?

Participating artists in Recovery Justice: Being Well included:

The artist projects as part of Recovery Justice: Being Well are generously supported by Art of Recovery, an initiative of the City of Santa Monica Cultural Affairs, santamonica.gov/arts/artofrecovery, with additional support from Los Angeles County’s WE RISE LA program. Sara Daleiden’s residency and facilitation work on these projects is generously supported by the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts. Bailiwik is also a supporting partner on this exhibition.

Partners included the Community Clinics Association of Los Angeles County (CCACLAC), St. John’s Well Child & Family Center, and the Community Corporation of Santa Monica.


Composing for Community
By Sue Bell Yank

The tenth year of 18th Street Arts Center’s Make Jazz Fellowship, an annual three-month residency program funded by the Herb Alpert Foundation and designed for emerging composers to write and perform a new body of work, began (like nearly everything else) under dark and unprecedented circumstances in February of 2021. Yet in many ways, LA-based pianist and composer Paul Cornish was perfectly positioned to take full advantage of this opportunity, to explore relentlessly and discover new pathways for musical expression, even under the most restrictive lockdown conditions. Originally from Houston, Cornish is one of the top rising jazz pianists and composers today, and is also a dedicated and accomplished jazz educator. His virtuoso piano improvisation and experimental looping sounds and sampling, as well as his commitment to social justice and interest in community participation as part of his composition process, came out in full force during his residency at 18th Street.

Cornish moved his upright piano into 18th Street’s Olympic campus cottage residency space, and began his residency by collecting information from the broader community, meeting with other artists on campus for sharing and inspiration, and processing that information through his compositions. He also presented a virtual Arts Learning Lab @ Home workshop titled “Your Musical Family Tree,” that took place on February 20, 2021. Participants sketched their own family trees, reflecting on their ancestors and where they came from, and composed new sounds based on that family history. Cornish was inspired by Black Arts Movement leader Larry Neal, who said he was “radically opposed to any concept of the artist that alienates him from his community.” As a result, Cornish wanted to organize his compositions around the question “how do we create community during a pandemic?”

2021 Make Jazz Fellow Paul Cornish performing outside of 18th Street Arts Center’s Airport Campus on March 5, 2021. Photo by Louise Royer.
To answer this, Cornish organized several experimental “pop-up” performances throughout the month of March. He performed in public at the Santa Monica Airport and the Santa Monica Third Street Promenade in late March, and did three Facebook Live mini-concerts on Fridays in April. These community interactions were bolstered by a “Community in a Pandemic” Google form he created that allowed a broad range of folks to contribute their answers for his central question.

Cornish ultimately composed 21 short songs (for the year 2021) and ended up presenting nine of those songs as part of his final culminating concert (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, and a final unnumbered piece). These songs riffed on ideas of how community forms, featuring solo instrumentation, instrument pairings, full ensemble pieces, and sampling throughout. He felt it fitting to premiere his new work at The World Stage in Leimert Park, in recognition of its longstanding importance as a home for jazz in the African-American heart of Los Angeles. His ensemble for the culminating concert, “Community Music,” included Jon Hatamiya on trombone, Aneesa Strings on bass, Lauren Elizabeth Baba on violin, and Malachi Whitson on drums.

Cornish spoke many times about how the residency had really allowed him to put his art on the forefront, to figure out how to express himself, and to connect with other artists on campus. “It’s really just been beautiful because this is my first opportunity having the space and time with no burden in terms of having to make money or figure out what I’m doing next, without my art having to take a backseat. Everyone here has just been so supportive and encouraging and that’s just been all love all around from the people who work here to the other artists here.” As a result, he completely changed his process of composing, and felt that he made immense growth in honing his artistic perspective during the fellowship. “My whole process has changed. It’s definitely been challenging but I enjoy it because that’s where growth and evolution comes from. So what you’ll see is definitely something that’s different for me. I think this project in a way has kind of just been something that’s been kind of building in me over time and I feel like this fellowship has just created the space for it to come to fruition.”

Sponsored by the Herb Alpert Foundation to honor and support jazz artists, 18th Street Arts Center annually hosts its Make Jazz Fellowship, awarded to a jazz composer for a three-month, fully funded residency. This opportunity is for an individual jazz artist to advance or complete a body of original compositions. For three months the Make Jazz Fellow lives and works among artists in sunny Santa Monica, California. The award supports the artist by providing a monthly stipend, a furnished live-in studio, and arranged opportunities to inspire jazz students in partnership with Los Angeles-area colleges and universities.
Wonder in the Wake of Crisis:
Elana Mann’s Year of Wonders, redux
By G. Douglas Barrett

Upon clicking the link to Elana Mann’s exhibition Year of Wonders, redux, an aerial gallery view fills the browser.Quickly, the perspective descends into the main viewing area of 18th Street Arts Center where we see Our work is never done (unfinished business) (2020–21), a ten-foot-long orange megaphone with six mouthpieces extruding from its sides. Surrounding this centerpiece are Mann’s Unidentified Bright Objects 11–60, a series of fifty individually crafted rattles spaced at regular intervals across three blue gallery walls. Wooden handles attach to hollow ceramic tops, each roughly resembling a cube, pyramid, tear drop, or eight-sided die. The sides of the rattle tops display hand-painted text fragments that, especially when performed, compose patterns that weave linguistic abstraction through recent activist slogans and chants. Click a small movie icon, and such a performance appears. A figure wearing a cloth COVID-19 mask demonstrates playful, poignant, sometimes contradictory pairings. “People Power” rattles against “Maybe.” One hand jingles “Equity, Dignity.” The other shakes “NOW,” which when rotated also reads “OWN.”

Zooming out a bit, Mann’s exhibition speaks to the at times shaky ground felt beneath socially engaged art during the pandemic. Since COVID’s start, art practices once defined by social gatherings and collective interaction suddenly found themselves lacking the very sites of presentation that, in many ways, had provided them with an important source of meaning. Prior to the pandemic, Mann used her unique instruments in political demonstrations and community organizing projects in southern California. She has also used these sound-making devices in collaboration with musicians, for instance, in the exhibition’s videos untitled, featuring composer Corey Fogel, and Into the Vortex with Kyrie All Alone with designer Jean-Paul Leonard and musician Emilý Æyer. Through this transdisciplinary body of work, Mann reflects on the desire for communication and community during a time that has unequally suspended many forms of physical togetherness.

To be sure, the online virtual tour wasn’t the show’s only presentation mode. Like many galleries during this time, 18th Street Arts offered in-person appointments to view the exhibition during preset time slots throughout the day. The maximum number of visitors for each time slot was six. This seems fitting, for one, given the number of mouthpieces available on Our work is never done. Mann explains that these openings function as listening ports as well, alluding to this dual use of megaphones that informed Thomas Edison’s experiments of the nineteenth century. In the context of the exhibition, one imagines an intricate choreography of utterance and audition shared by an intimate group of visitors. When all six are from the same family or “pod,” of course, this is a nonissue. But otherwise, the gallery’s standard social distancing protocol would strictly prohibit such an activity. Along these lines, Mann acknowledges how her collaborative instrument—which she initially conceived of prior to COVID—took on this kind of ethical complication in the context of the pandemic. At the time she worried, jokingly, that she’d inadvertently created a “super-spreader sculpture.”

Mann’s Unidentified Bright Objects share in some of this tension. She started creating these multimedia rattles in 2019 following a residency in which she learned clay casting techniques. Having previously created larger megaphone sculptures (though not all as large as Our work is never done), Mann wanted something more portable that she could more easily bring along to protests. There was no shortage of the latter as the residency occurred following the police murder of George Floyd and during the lead-up to the 2020 election. Mann’s Objects that read “Say his name” and “Say her name” speak to manifest intersections between police brutality and the pandemic’s ongoing intensification of systemic racial and economic inequality. In the gallery, visitors are invited to physically grasp such iconographic words and phrases emblazoned across each of the fifty rattles, all while made aware of the challenge the pandemic poses to the embodied sociability typically associated with such gestures. Zooming out further, Year of Wonders, redux understands this dynamic as integral to a year that has transformed life for so many.

Elana Mann, Installation view of Year of Wonders redux, on view in 18th Street Arts Center’s Airport Campus Propeller Gallery. Photo by Marc Walker.
Wonder may seem like an odd way to describe 2020. Given the uniqueness many associate with the COVID era, it might seem equally strange to suggest that our moment embodies a kind of return or repetition of the past. One meaning of Mann's titular addendum "redux" is the fact that a previous version of the exhibition was installed a few months earlier at Artpace in San Antonio. Yet another connotation refers to Mann's insistence on the non-uniqueness of the present. Mann borrows her exhibition title from Australian-American author Geraldine Brook’s 2001 historical fiction novel that tells the story of a housemaid who lives through one of the major recurrences of the bubonic plague in seventeenth-century England. Though separated by centuries, the pandemics are united by crisis and inequality. Domestic servants might be compared to essential workers, the aristocracy with big tech. When the landed gentry worked, it was mostly bureaucratic labor, not unlike some of today's remote workers. And racial oppression was there, too, as the projects of slavery and colonialism were already well underway. Through this comparison, Mann's point isn't that nothing really changes, but rather suggests that we understand the historical present as belonging to and defined by a longer continuity (if we want a periodizing concept, perhaps Cedric J. Robinson's racial capitalist modernity).

Still, wonder pushes us toward the possibility of imagining alternative ways of being. Wonder stands for the spark of curiosity and unknowing common to art, philosophy, and play. Mann's sono-sculptures compel us to imagine processes of sounding and audition that draw new, if only momentary, lines of physical and virtual togetherness. At the same time, inequalities—including, as we've seen, the kinds of work available to and/or forced upon certain parts of society—can pervade even the most utopian imaginaries. The title of Our work is never done reminds us that in an activist context, work can also refer to the substance upon which a political project acts, as in showing up for the work. Overall, Year of Wonders, redux implies that part of that work might be to remain open to the imaginal even in the most trying of times. If we can attune to possibility in such a year of crisis, Mann suggests, we may more readily hear wonder in its wake.
Dear Amy and Misael,

I wanted to get us started on ideas for the catalogue essay with this first email. I imagine us writing back and forth, to unpack some of the ideas, learnings, and processes you have uncovered in this ongoing project of Market Exchange. So we have been working together since Fall of 2020, with the idea of building a network of artisans in Santa Monica to collaboratively imagine new economic structures for marketplaces in the city, and I am hopeful that we can discuss the process you undertook with your collaborators to form a collective of artisans, even in the depth of the pandemic, and what has emerged.

I am struck by something you shared with me on one of our early zoom calls—you described the Q’eswachaka Bridge in Peru, which connects two Indigenous communities on either side of the Apurimac River Canyon using ancient Incan engineering techniques. Because the bridge is constructed of straw, every year the entire community comes out and weaves a new bridge, passing on this cultural knowledge in service of literally constructing the connective tissue between their geographies. This also brought up Gloria Anzaldua’s rendering in This Bridge Called My Back, which says, “Caminante, no hay puentes, se hace puentes al andar.” Which translates to, “Traveler, there are no bridges, we make the bridges as we walk.”

In many ways, there have been no bridges for the path we are all walking together in this project, especially having to rely on Zoom, text, individual phone calls, and email to build the kind of resilient relationships necessary for a collaborative art and organizing process. How do you feel this community of artisans have come together to begin building this bridge, so to speak? What has surprised or challenged you about this process?

Looking forward to your reply,
Sue
Thank you for starting us off with this initial reflection/question. When the pandemic began last year we found ourselves reflecting upon stories that our families and friends have shared about their migration journeys to the US, and the ways that they maintained and created connections back home or conversely were unable to, and so had to imagine new homescapes for themselves here. Even before Zoom, emails, text messages, or delivery of goods to our artists who do site-specific work, we rooted in place, land, neighborhood, and physical embodiment. Our relationships are formed across global borders, as we plan with artists THERE what they will do HERE. And we like to think when our artists return to their home countries or localities, they will bring some of HEREx THERE (and vice versa). We are entranced with ideas of this cultural diplomacy, interweaving our empathy and deepening our cultural understandings in a multidimensional way through the comings and goings of our international artists. This plays our dedication to the local: our audiences exist in many places throughout the region (many of whom refuse to ever cross the 405), we have two separate campus sites, and even our local Culture Mapping 90404 project has insisted on the relevance of our broader community, in all its multivalent complexity, to our physical location(s). So much of 18th Street’s work throughout its history has existed in tension between what happens on its physical site, and this bridge-work you are describing that unfolds in digital and imaginary space. As a residency program (and particularly one with a strong history of working with artists who do site-specific work), we are rooted in place, land, neighborhood, and physical embodiment. Yet our relationships are formed across global borders, as we plan with artists THERE what they will do HERE. And we like to think when our artists return to their home countries or localities, they will bring some of HEREx THERE (and vice versa). We are entranced with ideas of this cultural diplomacy, interweaving our empathy and deepening our cultural understandings in a multidimensional way through the comings and goings of our international artists. This plays out even in our dedication to the local: our audiences exist in many places throughout the region (many of whom refuse to ever cross the 405), we have two separate campus sites, and even our local Culture Mapping 90404 project has insisted on the relevance of our broader community, in all its multivalent complexity, to our physical location(s).

I think this may be why our values and ways of working aligned so naturally with this project, as we were able to leverage some momentum on the city level around making and supporting the work of artisans in our community.

In regards to replication and sustainability, that is something that we are always reflecting on. What happens when the grant money runs out? How do we set up the scaffolding so that a collective visioning process can take root and unfold without us and beyond us? I wonder how you are thinking about the challenges inherent in this kind of building as we move into the next phase of this project.

xo,
Sue

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xo,
Sue
Dear Sue,

We have felt very grateful for the work that 18th Street has done and the engagement with the vendors who have participated in the collaboration prior to our project and the offer to incubate further past our tenure. Our hope in this sort of work is that inviting community members to collaborate with us and truly co-producing the terms and the path for our collaboration will create a sense of ownership over collective processes that can be undertaken even if/when we/18th Street are not directly involved. This kind of process takes a lot of time, conversation, trust and capacity-building, and often these resources are as scarce as funding. Additionally, working on this process of collective-making can sometimes feel like a point of stagnation, or like we are not moving forward in a process because we don’t necessarily have tangible/material work to show for this.

With this in mind, we have tried to create a structure—by partnering with the Pico Pop Up for instance, and producing the parallel website around Manos a la Obra—to begin experimenting with questions of infrastructure. What can we anticipate that we will need physically to establish a community-driven marketplace in Santa Monica and what might that mean conceptually/formally? What forms can allow for the integration/participation of other community makers in the future?

Ultimately, how can we inhabit a process of visioning now that serves the future? I think we imagine building a skeleton for a future process that is flexible, mutable, and collective, and so there is often a kind of multi-temporal aspect to this process that is really exciting, nuanced, and difficult, but (we feel) rewarding to navigate. In the case of the exhibition, we are working on producing material infrastructure that we hope will eventually be activated regularly by the vendors in the community market in the future. So this production also feels like working in the direction of this community-determined futurity.

In the coming weeks we hope to be able to dialogue further with the vendors around how we activate the sculptural/structural installation we are imagining. We appreciate the ability to think about these outdoor vending infrastructures in the space of the gallery, their existence as aesthetic objects and how those aesthetics shift around different political potentialities of these objects.

Abrazo,
A+M
Dan Kwong and Paulina Sahagun poignantly document Mexican-American history in Santa Monica, California in We Were All Here: The Story of “La Veinte”, la familia Casillas, and the Pico Neighborhood of Santa Monica. Through the art of storytelling, historical documents, and a commitment to oral family histories taught through generations by la familia Casillas, the film details the chronicle of a pulsing artery in a twenty-first-century barrio nestled along Santa Monica’s 20th Street, or “La Veinte.” Once situated within a non-white mixed-race neighborhood, Mexicans who worked low-wage jobs and faced residential segregation forged the community within the developing urban landscape.

Crucial to the formation of the barrio were pioneering Mexican families who pulled together their resources to grow social and economic networks that combined transnational ties across the US-Mexico border into a prospering local Mexican-American community.

Unfortunately for some, discriminatory housing policies combined with urban highway development selectively displaced families and demolished their homes through the installation of the Interstate 10 freeway in the 1960s. Given the paucity of primary and secondary sources on Mexican-American history in Santa Monica, the documentary introduces viewers to a marginalized history rich in cultural identity, immigration, and community-building.

La familia Casillas were among the earliest pioneers to settle and play an enormous role in community-building in the city. They entered Santa Monica in 1918 from el Valle de Guadalupe, a small town in the highlands of Jalisco, Mexico, when Ruperto, the eldest, led an official family scouting excursion. They subsequently settled in today’s multiracial Pico Neighborhood in inland Santa Monica.
As the family grew, so did the racial makeup of the long narrow 38-acre land tract bounded by 14th Street on the west, Stewart Street on the east, Pico Boulevard on the south, and the Southern Pacific Railroad, or “the other side of the tracks,” to the north. Through restrictive covenants, federally sanctioned redlining, and outright racist practices of white supremacy and racial subordination, Mexican, Black, and Asian families, among others, were kept out of adjacent “white” neighborhoods and restricted to the Pico Neighborhood.

Before deciding to relocate the family from el Valle to “el Norte,” Ruperto had gained experience working and navigating US labor markets. He belonged to the unprecedented increase of Mexican workers recruited by US employers for railroad-track maintenance, crop harvesting, mining, meatpacking, and steelworking. According to family histories, Ruperto first entered the transnational US-Mexico workforce in 1902 to labor in the railroad industry.

Like many single and married men and women, Ruperto did not intend to remain permanently. Instead, he saved his earnings and returned to his family and home community to share his fortune. His descendants confidently recount how his interpersonal skills shaped the entrepreneurial skills he gained by traveling between home and jobs throughout states in the Southwest, including Kansas and Illinois. Once settled in Santa Monica shortly after the Mexican Revolution, his experiences allowed him to coordinate transportation, employment, and lodging opportunities between his kinfolk and local contractors from the 1920s until his passing in 1931.

Ruperto’s kind spirit, thoughtful disposition, and caring generosity towards community nurtured his family. For example, his son, Espiridion, continued to illustriously give to the growing barrio and enrich the lived experiences of an influx of Mexican workers now arriving from beyond el Valle. Before the Casillas established Santa Monica as their home, Espiridion and his older brother, Bernardo, accompanied Ruperto on sojourns into the US as young men.

Between 1908 to 1915, they traveled across the US-Mexico border as itinerant railroad workers for US companies until Espiridion decided to return home and start his own family. Three years later, he participated in the family’s scouting trip to Santa Monica and found employment in a brickyard located on the eastern end of the Pico Neighborhood. Due to an injury sustained on the job in the late 1930s, he began an entrepreneurial enterprise that continued Ruperto’s legacy.
Between the late 1930s and the early 1950s, Espiridion owned and managed a family grocery store west of 20th Street on 1920 Olympic Boulevard called La Cosmopolita. Over the years, the market underwent name variations, settling ultimately as Casillas Market. An early modification to the building’s structure included installing the city’s first tortilleria. Despite undergoing cursory changes, the family-driven enterprise remained a central chamber in the heart of la Veinte, pumping new blood into the prospering barrio.

Under Espiridion’s management, Casillas Market came to function in the community in two ways that nurtured growing working-class families. Undeniably, it served as a marketplace to purchase goods manufactured in Mexico, local fresh produce, and tortillas recién hechas. In addition, it nurtured a mutual aid type of fellowship where residents and recent arrivals from various Mexican states shared resources on housing, employment, immigration, and associations.

We Were All Here: The Story of “La Veinte,” la familia Casillas, and the Pico Neighborhood of Santa Monica brings fresh perspective to a local history obscured by dominant “official” narratives. Moreover, the documentary puts an overlooked saga front and center to recover the living experiences of historically marginalized non-white communities. The deployment of storytelling informs viewers, as much as it piques curiosity and an appeal to record more Mexican-American history.

The documentary ends by evocatively reminding viewers that the City of Santa Monica officially opened the Interstate 10 freeway on January 5th, 1966, marking the end of an era. For the Casillas family, the aftermath of bulldozers demolishing homes and displacing over fifteen hundred families, including Black Santa Monicans and Japanese-Americans, propelled members to fight racial discrimination directly. Among them, Ruth “Cuca” Casillas led local Mexican-American civil rights organizations and was a powerful advocate for students and their parents. Under her leadership, educational changes to meet the needs of US-born and immigrant students headed the new era’s front end to emerge from the old. The students whom Cuca mentored called this era the “Chicano Movement.”

This project is part of Culture Mapping 90404 (culturemapping90404.org), a community oral history project of 18th Street Arts Center in partnership with the Santa Monica Public Library. This project is generously supported by the California Arts Council.
Do You Know Broadway?
By Maria Rosario Jackson

Santa Monica is a place I love. It has always been a destination for me. I grew up in Los Angeles and have had a connection to the Santa Monica/Venice Bay area since I was a child. Like many other Angelenos, I enjoyed it with family on weekend visits, later as a teenager with friends, and as an adult. The Santa Monica Pier is the place where I said yes to a marriage proposal and it is the place where my parents would stroll at sunset in their retirement. The allure of the Santa Monica/Venice Bay area was always initially the beach. Over time, I came to know other parts of Santa Monica, but only superficially. When I learned about the Quinn Research Center and met Carolyne and Bill Edwards, who founded and lead the Center, Santa Monica became even more meaningful to me. A facet of its history was revealed and as an African American Angeleno, Santa Monica and specifically, its Broadway neighborhood, to me, stands as a too little-known testament to African American hard work, aspiration, resilience, and excellence.

On a sunny summer afternoon, I visited with Carolyne and Bill Edwards. Over tea, vintage photographs, hand drawn maps, and newspaper clippings, I learned about the Quinn Research Center and met Carolyne and Bill Edwards, who founded and lead the Center, Santa Monica became even more meaningful to me. A facet of its history was revealed and as an African American Angeleno, Santa Monica and specifically, its Broadway neighborhood, to me, stands as a too little-known testament to African American hard work, aspiration, resilience, and excellence.

Despite having traveled the street for many years, I felt I had not earned the right to say “yes.” I knew nothing of the history of the buildings or old majestic trees that have been witness to both the steady presence of the African American community as well as radical changes in the area. Mrs. Edwards’s casual and simple question was quite profound and prompted a cascade of questions that have to do with depth of connection, memory, power, control over narrative and the built environment, and the fight against erasure.

What does it take to really know a place? Who gets to narrate and make visible its history? What does it mean to be a steward of heritage? Specifically, what does celebration of one’s history mean for African Americans and other historically marginalized communities? What do we lose as a society when communities can’t commemorate their histories on their own terms? The quest to honor and make visible the accomplishments and contributions of African Americans in Santa Monica is something Carolyne and Bill Edwards take seriously and embrace joyfully with passion and a sense of urgency. They recognize that the work of the Quinn Research Center must advance quickly while they and others proximate to the history are still alive. They also recognize that it is work that must be handed off to the next generation. At the core of the work is the desire that African Americans be seen and documented as the fully human, resourceful, joyful, and accomplished community that they have been. As the area faces rapid demographic and economic changes, also pressing is the desire to not
be erased and forgotten. In recalling the history of their community—the buildings, landmarks, organizations, and individuals that hold deep meaning, Mr. and Mrs. Edwards drew attention to the community’s Southern roots, their experiences of racialized oppression, the fulfillment of their aspirations for land ownership and self-determination, a shared entrepreneurial spirit, cultural solidarity, faith, and a deep commitment to continued collective uplift. Without question, all of this is an important dimension of African American history and a crucial part of the cultural and historic landscape of the Santa Monica/Venice Bay area.

While the rationale for official designations, such as a “cultural district” or “landmark,” is clear and urgent to those affiliated with the Quinn Research Center, rules like the need for significant buildings to be contiguous, or the requirement that buildings must have architectural or historical relevance as defined by others are obstacles. Such rules can militate against efforts to bring visibility to places and communities that have endured disruption and oppression.

Too often the importance of historic preservation and control over narrative get short shrift when we think about characteristics of equitable and just communities. Indicators of equity often focus on issues like housing, access to jobs and educational attainment, which are, without question, critical. However, frequently, we overlook the very things that give places character and make them meaningful, including a community’s ability to transmit history and heritage from one generation to the next; and the ability to connect to newcomers in ways that they too can share in the stewardship of place as they add their own layers, and make their own contributions. In my opinion, in many instances, markers of an unjust society include evidence that communities do not have control over their own narratives, and evidence that the ability to transmit heritage from one generation to the next has been hampered. Around the world too can share in the stewardship of place as they add their own layers, and make their own contributions. In my opinion, in many instances, markers of an unjust society include evidence that communities do not have control over their own narratives, and evidence that the ability to transmit heritage from one generation to the next has been hampered. Around the world and throughout the ages, for historically marginalized groups, the reclamation of voice and the passing on of stories and memories; the preservation of selected physical artifacts and elements of the built environment; and the cultivation of stewardship among the current inhabitants of the place are all key. The work requires dedicated champions, allies, and policies that favor cultural self-determination as a dimension of equity and justice.

Artists are uniquely suited to be essential allies in this kind of work given their ability to engage people fully—intellectually, emotionally, physically—as co-creators and/or audiences. An example of this is the collaboration of the Quinn Research Center and Maj Hasager, a Copenhagen-based artist in residence at 18th Street Arts Center. For four years Ms. Hasager worked with the Quinn Research Center to help advance work focused on the Broadway neighborhood. She collaborated with the Quinn Research Center as a thought partner, helping to deepen inquiry and devise new ways of demonstrating stewardship of the historic and present-day Broadway community, including the creation of the Three Structures Touching exhibition.

The exhibition is focused not only on the history of the Broadway community, but on the complex process of preservation and the crucial and passionate work of fighting erasure. The exhibition itself can be understood as a designation or validation of the place and the long labor to make it better known. It also serves as a way to educate and, most importantly, cultivate a humble curiosity about place, people, and diverse points of view.

To appreciate how artists can be allies in this often overlooked but critically important dimension of social change, one must embrace a comprehensive notion of community development, beyond just economic development, that includes consideration of heritage, narrative, and voice, particularly as these pertain to historically marginalized groups. One also must embrace an expansive understanding of the roles of artists and arts organizations in communities and the power of art to help us see differently, to cultivate that humble curiosity—the spark that can lead to deep understanding and action. The Quinn Research Center along with Maj Hasager, 18th Street Arts Center, and other collaborators is doing this foundational work and setting an important example for what it means to steward heritage in service of creating places where all can thrive.

The exhibition Three Structures Touching is generously supported by the Danish Arts Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and generous 18th Street Arts Center donors.

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Exhibitions and Programs 81
This year, 18th Street Arts Center has offered a wide selection of learning experiences in the virtual space through the Arts Learning Lab @ Home (ALL@Home) initiative. 18th Street is an international residency space hosting a changing roster of accomplished international artists. This diverse pool of teaching artists ensures engagement for 18th Street’s growing family audience with a range of worldviews, dialogues, and technical artmaking skills. Artists uniquely bring with them their lived experiences and practices from their communities and professions. This year, local artisan Carmela Morales guided participants in paper flower making, a skill she gained from her home state of Oaxaca, Mexico. Artist Elana Mann taught the science of sound and the importance of listening through her megaphone and noise maker workshop. Audrey Chan led young participants in an exploration of family and self through the practice of symbolic story drawing. Beck+Col helped participants develop an aptitude for bodily awareness and play through movement during lockdown. Performance artist Marcus Kuiland-Nazario demonstrated the importance of the experiences and sights in our immediate environment through his puppet making workshop. Paulina Sahagun articulated the meaning and process of building ofrendas as a way of connecting with family and showing gratitude to ancestors.

Not every participant that engages with ALL@Home becomes a professional international artist. Nevertheless, they do benefit from the experience in amazing ways. Often, participants build an aptitude for teamwork, practice collaboration, and develop manual or conceptual skills. The more a participant or student engages with others from different cultures and places, the more capable they will be in a drastically changing world. During difficult times, the arts have the potential to identify current challenges while imagining new ways to explore or address them. Arts education is an epistemology that generates complex connections across a broad range of disciplines. Through artmaking, participants are guided through time and space beyond the here and now. It is in the space of the art lesson that new realities and ideas difficult to express in words are explored. Therein lies the true benefit of arts education and international spaces. When a student learns how to build an ofrenda from home what they are really learning is a worldview beyond that of their own. A literal reframing of reality occurs and by extension, a reframing of ourselves occurs in relation to our particular place in the world.

From this standpoint, potential blossoms and expands within each of us.

One of the primary characteristics of ALL@Home is connection. For many, lockdown was a time of pause, reflection, and reassessing values. Without virtual spaces like ALL@Home, people’s ability to hold space together would have been drastically limited. Workshops provided space for collaboration, play, critical thinking, and a general catharsis from the stresses of everyday life in a pandemic. As vaccines facilitate a safe return to public spaces, the new global connections made in the ALL@Home space is a silver lining that will remain.

The ALL@Home workshops are generously supported by the City of Santa Monica, the WE RISE LA program, and our generous community of supporters. Partners include the Community Clinics Association of Los Angeles County (CACLAC), St. John’s Well Child & Family Center, and the Community Corporation of Santa Monica.
Above: Elana Mann at her virtual workshop “Arts Learning Lab @ Home: Let Suffering Speak” on May 22, 2021.

Below: Audrey Chan at her virtual workshop “Arts Learning Lab @ Home: Symbol Stories” on August 12, 2020.

Left: Austyn de Lugo at his virtual workshop “Arts Learning Lab @ Home: Family History Sewing & Collage” on October 31, 2020.

Below: Carmela Morales at her virtual workshop “Arts Learning Lab @ Home: Flores de Papel” on May 8, 2021.
Visiting Artists in Residence
ALEXANDMUSHI
San Francisco
ALEXANDMUSHI is a collaboration between Alex Nichols and Mushi Wooseong James. They are conceptual artists based in San Francisco examining humanity’s central theme: connection. Two names, two people, and in between all the bodies of work are thousands of conversations. Their work is a testing ground where projects become entry points into the boundaries of ourselves to see the ways in which two people can forge a connection. They believe that taking other realities into account is critical to challenging the constructs we are born into. As conceptual artists, their work exists in the realm of social practice, performance, and documentation of durational process.

ALEXANDMUSHI have exhibited their works in the US, Asia, and Europe. They have been awarded artist residencies in California, Taiwan, and Mexico. Nichols and James are also the executive director and co-director of Think Make Tank artist collective, an organization dedicated to building a community around collaboration, experimentation, and improvisation.

P.S. ARTS
Los Angeles
Serving children and families in Southern California for 30 years, P.S. ARTS contributes to building creative, civically, and economically robust public schools and neighborhoods through the arts. More than 25,000 youth and adults participate in free and subsidized P.S. ARTS programs that foster collaboration, critical thinking, innovation, and wellbeing every year.

Paul Cornish
Los Angeles
18th Street Arts Center’s tenth Make Jazz Fellow is Los Angeles-based pianist Paul Cornish. Hailing from Houston where he was a student at the prestigious Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Cornish was one of seven jazz prodigies worldwide selected to be awarded a full fellowship to attend the esteemed Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz at UCLA. Here, he completed his Master’s degree, and studied and performed with world-renowned artists. Paul Cornish is one of the top young jazz pianists and composers on the scene today. Besides being a gifted pianist and composer, Cornish is a dedicated jazz educator and enjoys teaching students of all levels and presenting jazz workshops around the world.

He was the recipient of the Los Angeles Jazz Society’s 2020 New Note Commission and was the winner of the 2018 American Jazz Piano Competition. Currently residing in Los Angeles, Cornish has performed extensively throughout Southern California and across the globe with such notable artists as Gary Bartz, David Binney, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Louis Cole, Theo Croker, Sara Gazarek, John Legend, Steve Lehman, Terrace Martin, Mary Stallings, Thumpasaurus, and Kanye West.

Sara Daleiden
Los Angeles and Milwaukee
Sara Daleiden facilitates civic engagement within developing landscapes, exercising arts and cultural exchange strategies. With bases in Los Angeles and Milwaukee through her initiative MKE->LAX, she encourages local cultures to value neighborhoods, public space, civic art, entrepreneurship, and racial and gender equity. Sara has an expertise in working with artists and other cultural entrepreneurs for civic engagement, creative placemaking, network development and small business development.

Her project at 18th Street Arts Center grows out of the placekeeping work that 18th Street has been engaged in over the past six years through their cultural asset mapping project (culturemapping.org) and their Commons Lab, which involves community voices to define, center, and connect cultural practices within their own neighborhoods. Her practice investigates the influence of location, scale, market, values, and other regional factors on the production of the arts and cultural identity. Through methodologies involving partnership mapping, network building, and the facilitation of self-organizing and advocacy, Daleiden aims to enhance the advocacy power of artists in influencing neighborhood development in the city.
Sylvie Fortin
Montréal, New York, and Omaha, NE

Sylvie Fortin is an independent curator, researcher, critic, and editor based between Montréal, New York, and Omaha, NE. She is currently the Curator-in-Residence at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts. She was Executive/Artistic Director of La Biennale de Montréal (2013–2017), Executive Director/Editor of ART PAPERS in Atlanta (2004–2012), and Curator of Manif 5 – the 5th Québec City Biennial (2010). She frequently contributes to numerous periodicals, including Artforum International, ART PAPERS, C Magazine, and Flash Art International, and her critical texts have been published in many catalogs, readers, and anthologies. She initiated PASS, the journal of the International Biennial Association in 2018. Her recent exhibition of new works by Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens (2019) at Bemis will be touring through 2023, radically reconfigured by Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens (2019) at Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha, NE. Photo by Colin Conces. Courtesy of Liv Schulman and Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts.

Kathleen Henderson
San Francisco

Kathleen Henderson is an artist living and working in California. In the recent LA Times review of her show Watch Me Make You Disappear at Track 16 gallery, Leah Ollman writes, “In scene after tragicomic scene, Henderson registers the dismaying state of the union and the planet,” as she, “toggles astutely between representing concealment and revelation, power and vulnerability; sometimes the conditions oppose each other, sometimes they reinforce.”

Her drawings and sculptures have been the subject of numerous solo shows in LA and San Francisco as well as the Drawing Center in New York. She has received a National Endowment for the Arts grant and is in the collections of the Hammer Museum and LACMA. She has been a staff artist for over ten years at the Creative Growth Art Center in Oakland, which is the country’s oldest and largest progressive art studio for artists with disabilities. She is the founding editor of the Creative Growth magazine as well as the studio’s special projects coordinator.


Liv Schulman and Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts.

Nung-Hsin Hu
Taiwan and New York City

Nung-Hsin Hu (胡農欣) is a Taiwanese born US-based interdisciplinary artist who interweaves video, sculpture, performance, and installation in her practice. Her work intends to reveal the invisible status, articulate the unconsciousness, and perform the vulnerability through a poetic and whimsical approach. Her current projects utilize analog film combining traditional film-making techniques to address a sense of loss, archive the ephemeral, and discuss the subjects of time and memory.

Hu has exhibited and screened widely both in the U.S. and abroad including, Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts in New York, Videofaces Festival in France, Museum of Modern Art in Buenos Aires, and Oil Street Art Space in Hong Kong. Hu has received various grants including, Jerome Foundation Travel and Study Grant, National Culture and Arts Foundation of Taiwan-International Exchange fellowship, and Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning - Van Lier Fellowship. She has also participated in international residencies, including, Casa das Caldeiras in São Paulo, the Lichtenberg Studios in Berlin, and the Arctic Circle Residency Program in Norway, SHIFT residency at EFA project space in New York, and SIM residency in Iceland.


Rashaad Newsome
Oakland and New York City

Rashaad Newsome’s work blends several practices, including assemblage, sculpture, film, photography, music, computer programming, software engineering, community organizing, and performance to create a new field that rejects classification. Using the diasporic traditions of improvisation, he pulls from the world of advertising, the internet, art history, and Black and Queer culture to produce counter-hegemonic work that walks the tightrope between creative computing, social practice, abstraction, and intersectionality. Assemblage acts as a theoretical, conceptual, and technical method to construct a new cultural framework of power that does not find others’ oppression necessary. Newsome’s work celebrates Black contributions to the art canon and creates innovative and inclusive forms of culture and media.

Newsome’s lives and works in Oakland, California and New York City. He was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he received a BFA in Art History at Tulane University in 2001. In 2004, he received a certificate of study in Digital Post Production from Film/Video Arts Inc. (NYC). In 2005 he studied MAX/MSP Programming at Harvestworks Digital Media Art Center (NYC). He has exhibited and performed in galleries, museums, institutions, and festivals throughout the world. Rashaad Newsome’s residency was supported by LACMA’s Art + Technology Lab program.

Rashaad Newsome, Parenting While Black, 2020. Assemblage on paper, custom mahogany and resin artist frame with automotive paint. 48 x 69 ⁷⁄₈ x 3 ⁵⁄₈ inches. Image courtesy of Rashaad Newsome Studio.

Nung-Hsin Hu, There is no longer such a place as home, 2020. 16mm film loop, 16mm analog projector. 1:10 minutes. Courtesy of the artist.

There is no longer such a place as home.
Visiting Artists in Residence

WangShui

New York City

WangShui is a New York-based artist and filmmaker that has exhibited and screened work internationally at venues including New York Film Festival, SculptureCenter, The Shed, JULIA STOCHSCHK COLLECTION, International Film Festival Rotterdam, EMPAC, Triple Canopy, Images Festival, The Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive, and The Jim Thompson Art Center, Bangkok.

Benito Rangel de Maria

Bay Area, California

Benito Rangel de Maria is a Michoacán-born, US-based artist. He grew up in Chicago, and this early exposure to a city of diverse ethnic cultures ultimately influenced his outlook on the world. Rangel de Maria is aware of the cross contemporary identities and rewards that come with embracing other cultures. His work focuses on printmaking and works on paper.

His work has been featured in solo and group exhibitions throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Rangel de Maria has recently completed artist residencies in Costa Rica and at Kala Art Institute in Berkeley, California. He has regularly exhibited at ArtMarket San Francisco and completed large-scale commissions for private collectors and corporate clients throughout California. He earned a Bachelor’s degree in Fine Art from Lake Forest College.


Sultan Sharrief

Los Angeles

Sultan Sharrief is a trans-media activist, filmmaker, educator and social entrepreneur. His interest lies at the intersection of art, business, and community impact. His directorial debut Bilal’s Stand premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and he has produced four other feature films. He is also the creator and showrunner for the Black Public Media program Street Cred.

In 2018, he founded the Quasar Lab, which focuses on data equity at MIT and it is now housed at USC in the Media Arts and Practice program Street Cred. In 2018, he founded the Quasar Lab, which focuses on data equity at MIT and it is now housed at USC in the Media Arts and Practice program Street Cred.


Sultan Sharrief, Logo for “When It All Changed,” an interactive Afro-futurist trans-media XR project. Courtesy of the artist.

Beth Davila Waldman

Los Angeles

Beth Davila Waldman is an artist whose practice has been influenced by borrowed symbols and landscapes from her maternal homeland Peru as well as other international sites such as Hong Kong and Vietnam. Waldman uses image, material, and architecture to speak about the impact of cultural transformations over time on the individual and society. Through landscape, Waldman examines how politics and economics create shifts in culture on macro and micro scales. Her work excavates the conceived idea of sanctuary, using the colonized and converted cultures of her Peruvian ancestors as a gateway for those dialogues.

Waldman has exhibited internationally and nationally including exhibitions in Hong Kong and San Francisco. Waldman has been awarded many residencies around the world including at Kala Art Institute in Berkeley, Playa Institute in Oregon, and at EditionBasel in Basel, Switzerland. Waldman earned her MFA (2005) from San Francisco Art Institute and BA (1997) from Wellesley College.


Sultan Sharrief, Logo for “When It All Changed,” an interactive Afro-futurist trans-media XR project. Courtesy of the artist.

Beth Davila Waldman, Inevitable Entails No. 6, 2020. Photo transfer and acrylic paint on canvas. 28 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist.


Sultan Sharrief, Logo for “When It All Changed,” an interactive Afro-futurist trans-media XR project. Courtesy of the artist.

Beth Davila Waldman, Inevitable Entails No. 6, 2020. Photo transfer and acrylic paint on canvas. 28 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist.


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Beth Davila Waldman, Inevitable Entails No. 6, 2020. Photo transfer and acrylic paint on canvas. 28 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist.
Cynthia Wick
Massachusetts

Cynthia Wick is a Los Angeles-born, Massachusetts-based artist. The Berkshires have affected her work in a profound way. Wick works in oil, acrylic, and gouache on board, canvas, painted-paper collage, and brown paper. Her main focus as a painter is to capture the emotion in what she sees.

She has exhibited at The Leonhardt Gallery BBG, Stockbridge, MA (2019); at the Geoffrey Young Gallery, MA (2018 and 2017); and Rumba, Santa Monica, CA (2021 and 2008). Her paintings have appeared in movies such as Spiderman (2011) and It’s Complicated (2009), as well as on the Op-Ed page of The New York Times. She worked for two decades in the movie business as Executive Vice President of Marketing at 20th Century Fox, and then as a partner at Aspect Ratio, a movie marketing company. Wick studied at UCLA and Parsons School of Design. She lives in the Berkshires with her husband.


Local Artists and Organizations in Residence
Local Artists and Organizations in Residence

M Susan Broussard

M Susan Broussard is a figurative oil painter and multi-disciplinary artist based in Santa Monica, CA. Aside from her studio work, Susan creates art installations to accompany her history website: ushistoryforgotten.com.

Upon completion of undergraduate work in painting and photography, Susan studied in Paris, and then moved to San Francisco, where she studied in the Master’s program at the Academy of Art College. You can learn more about her work at susanbroussard.com.

Gregg Chadwick

Gregg Chadwick is a fine artist with a studio in an old airplane hangar in Santa Monica, California. Painting for three decades, he is inspired not only by travel, but also his extensive readings of philosophy, psychology, politics, social science, mythology, and poetry. His broad curiosity is reflected in the various collections with a distinguished and intellectual touch.

Gregg has exhibited his artworks in galleries and museums both nationally and internationally. He has had notable solo exhibitions at the Manifesta Maastricht Gallery in the Netherlands; Space AD 2000 in Tokyo; the Julie Nester Gallery in Utah; the Lisa Coscino Gallery and Audis Husar Fine Arts in California; and the Sandra Lee Gallery in San Francisco, among others. He has also participated in over one hundred group exhibitions including the L Ross Gallery in Tennessee; the Andrea Schwartz Gallery in San Francisco; and the Arts Club of Washington in Washington DC. Chadwick’s art is notably included in the collections of the Adobe Corporation, the Gilpin Museum, the Kimpton Group’s headquarters in San Francisco, the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Nordstrom Company Headquarters, Winona State University, and many other diverse locations. He earned his BFA at the University of California, Los Angeles and his MFA at New York University.

Melinda Smith Altshuler

Los Angeles-based artist Melinda Smith Altshuler approaches her practice as a way of taking notes and communicating. She employs translucent materials such as stained tea bag papers and paint mediums, as well as appropriated objects, choreographed installations, and sculptural forms. The juxtaposition of materials and meaning echoes immigrant histories while calling into question our political and environmental climate.

Altshuler has had solo exhibitions internationally at Valerie Orres Gallery in San Francisco; Bandini Gallery in Culver City, California; Palazzo Dei Consoli Gubbio in Italy; and has participated in the Jerusalem Biennale. Altshuler’s work can be found in museums and private collections. She attended Cal State University Northridge, UCLA, and Art Center, studying both art and anthropology; worked in advertising; and has taught studio arts at middle, high school, and university levels. She has served on the boards of arts organizations such as SIFE, an artist-run non-profit organization; Jewish Artists Initiative (JAI); and is an associate at the Institute of Cultural Inquiry with founding director Lise Patt, PhD.


M Susan Broussard, Stars and Stripes, 2021. Oil on canvas triptych, granite, wood and hemp rope. 60 x 108 inches (152.4 x 274.32 cm). Installed at 18th Street Arts Center (Airport Campus) as part of the Recovery Justice: Be Well exhibition. Photo by Steve Hankins. Courtesy of the artist.

Corps, Nordstrom Company Headquarters, Winona State University, and many other diverse locations. He earned his BFA at the University of California, Los Angeles and his MFA at New York University.
Rachel Chu

Rachel Chu was born and raised in London, and after spending the last decade training in computer graphics, is now undertaking a considerable shift off the screen and out into the physical world of sculpture and materials. In this journey she hopes to bring together and utilize practices from both fine arts and digital arts, to visualise old wisdoms and concepts in new and unique ways, always incorporating layers and depth to involve the 3rd dimension. In response to so many years behind a screen, she now aims to instead set a stage for the natural world and its processes. In doing so, she hopes to help guide attention back to the colossal and irreplaceable beauty of nature surrounding us at every moment, inherent even in the tiny and mundane.

Her professional digital career has brought her to work in feature films, video game cinematics, commercials, and virtual reality, with clients including Apple, Microsoft, Adobe, Activision, Tencent, Canon, BBC, Samsung, and the NFL.

Claudia Concha

Claudia Concha is a Colombian artist based in Los Angeles, whose practice includes paintings, installations, art performances, and workshops. Concha’s own language as an artist emerged by practicing automatic painting, giving a voice to what the body dictates through gestures, using the non-dominant hand with eyes closed. Her art is in a conversation between the Psyche and the Soma that uses unspoken language. It engages a symbolically action-based expression accessing the less articulated parts, the gap between feelings and expression.

Concha graduated as an architect from the University of Los Andes in Bogota, Colombia (1994), studied Arts and History of Architecture in Florence, Italy (1995), and received her MA in Spiritual Psychology at the University of Santa Monica (2014). She became a Soul Centered Professional Coach in 2015, where she created and developed ArThrough, a study based on combining the practices of both spiritual psychology and art.

Julia Michelle Dawson

Julia Michelle Dawson is an artist based in California, whose practice includes painting and writing. She uses strong brush strokes and vivid colors. Painterly exuberance flows throughout her works to bring bold and vibrant energy to the viewer.

Exuberance for life is also found in her literary achievements. She is the author of GENEVA – A Novel of International Intrigue, which can be found in print, digital, and audio versions. For three years, Dawson wrote a weekly column for the Sports Section of the Santa Barbara News Press called the “The Polo Set.” NAIROBI – A Novel of International Intrigue is soon to be published.

Julia studied fine art at the University of California, Los Angeles with Manny Cosentino and Suzanne Bothwell.

Lola del Fresno

Lola del Fresno is a Madrid-born artist based in Los Angeles, whose practices examine the myriad of meanings and references in the concept of home. HOME is a project that explores and articulates the vastness of a singular place and psyche. Through her ethereal and translucent works, del Fresno offers a real vision in the playback of an urban landscape, incorporating the human presence, and the footprint that the environment seals in our memory. She describes a world by combining fragmented images of landscapes, figures, and architectural spaces to create multiple life-size installations. Starting with a defragmentation of the structure of the city, del Fresno’s work comprises a study of spaces and social realities.

Del Fresno has exhibited internationally and nationally including exhibitions at galleries in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Shanghai, Milan, and New York. Her work is also shown in the permanent collection of the Ayllón Museum in Segovia, Spain. She studied at the University of Fine Arts in Madrid.

Rachel Chu


Claudia Concha


Julia Michelle Dawson


Lola del Fresno

**Alexandra Dillon**

Alexandra Dillon is a Los Angeles-based surrealist painter who creates art on found objects. Dillon employs European painting traditions, from Roman-Egyptian mummy paintings to Baroque portraiture, and she uses these techniques to contemplate the crossroads of character, psychology, selfhood, and the feminine persona. Faces, or pieces of faces, painted onto old tools such as axes, cleavers, and locks create juxtapositions that elicit new readings of femininity. With these characters, she hopes to display the inner realms of personal psychologies.

Dillon has exhibited in solo shows at the LAUNCH Gallery, Soapbox Gallery, and Onyx Café in California since 1996. She has also participated in numerous group exhibitions including the Oceanside Museum of Art, The Loft at Liz’s, GR2 Art, FAB Gallery, the Robert Berman Gallery in California; and the Appleton Museum of Art in Florida. Dillon received her BA in Motion Picture and Television from the University of California, Los Angeles (1984), and studied Old Master Realism at Studio Cecil Graves in Florence, Italy (1991) and at New Orleans Academy of Fine Art (1994).

**Rachel Grynberg**

Rachel Grynberg is an artist based in both Los Angeles and Denver who practices painting, sculpture, photography, and installation. Concealment and revelation is prominent in her work. What appears on the surface often veils an inner world that is not readily apparent. She is interested in uncovering stories, peeling away the layers of time and secrecy to catch a glimpse of what lies beneath the surface literally, historically, and unconsciously. She often begins her art process by writing and working with materials. The story serves as the seed from which the artwork grows, and the spirit and memory are inextricably woven into the fibers. Materials provide meaning, information, depth, and camouflage for what lies beneath.


**Wendy Edlen**

Wendy Edlen is a Los Angeles-based painter who creates art through layers. While exploring several traditional materials, she developed a technique of layering acrylic paint and medium. It is the process of multi-laying that creates the depth and textural environment into which images can appear. The spiritual figures that emerge often appear to be mute and dream-like through the layers. She believes in what Francis Bacon once said, "the job of the artist is to deepen the mystery." Her work has been shown in group shows at the Brentwood Art Center and at the Santa Monica Art Studios.

**Judith Gandel-Golden**

Judith Gandel-Golden is an artist based in Santa Monica whose practice includes painting and mixed media. She paints in acrylic and often uses collage as a base for her work. Her subjects are most often natural, including landscapes and seascapes inspired by the beauty of the Santa Monica Mountains and Bay. Living in New Hampshire for half of the year has awakened her to the wonder of seasonal beauty, and annual trips to Italy are a constant source of joy and inspiration.

She has exhibited at the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum in Santa Barbara, and has participated in juried shows including the Pacific Palisades Art Association. She has also been part of several philanthropic events including Inner City Arts at the Bobbie Greenfield Gallery, LA Family Housing, Center Theater Group, Oceana, Heal the Bay, Cheer for VietNam, and SCC-NMWA.


**Realism at Studio Cecil Graves in Florence, Italy (1991) and at New Orleans Academy of Fine Art (1994).**


Deborah Lynn Irmas

Deborah Lynn Irmas lives and works in Santa Monica, California. Her work originated from the simple act of noticing a piece of painter’s tape on her studio wall. Process, materials, and aesthetics all play a role in her Plexiglass creations. Her present work on paper is a reflection of the current times and the massive amounts of information and disinformation that she is bombarded with on a daily basis.

The artist’s work is part of MOLAA’s (Museum of Latin American Art) permanent collection and has been exhibited internationally and nationally including galleries in Los Angeles, Palm Springs, Pasadena, and Puglia, Italy. She has also exhibited at the Santa Monica Museum of Art and the Venice Art Walk. Irmas has received various awards such as the Award of Merit by the Society of Illustrators, the UCLA Clifton Webb Scholarship, and the Barnsdall Art Award. She completed her BFA in Painting, Sculpture, and Graphic Arts from UCLA and continued courses in Fashion Illustration, Graphic Design, Textile Design, Printmaking, and most notably has been a long time student of Tom Wudl, whom she thanks as her mentor.

Sara Issakharian

Sara Issakharian is currently an artist-in-residence at the Bethanien Art Institute in Berlin. She was raised in Tehran in a Jewish family and moved out of the country in 2001 to continue her education. She received the inaugural New York Academy of Art Residency in Moscow, Russia, in 2015. Most recently in 2017, she completed a residency at The Leipzig School of Art. Issakharian has exhibited her work in London, Tokyo, Tehran, and throughout the United States. Her work is included in private collections throughout Iran, Europe, and the United States. Issakharian completed her MFA in painting at The New York Academy of Art in 2015.

Sheila Karbassian

Sheila Karbassian is an artist based in Santa Monica, California. She was born in the United States but moved to Iran when she was 11 years old, two years into the Iran-Iraq War and shortly after the 1978 Islamic Revolution. This was a historic time when many Iranians were leaving the country. This journey has deeply influenced her expressive and diverse visual vocabulary, using color and form to investigate the duality of self-identity and existence in the uneasy tension between modernity and tradition. Her unique approach to art also reflects her experiences in her personal life, being a woman who has lived in both modern America and Shiite Iran, suffered both loss and war, and all other aspects of being a human.

She has exhibited widely including Silk Road Gallery in Brooklyn, New York (2002); Pacific Art Center (2013), Hope Heals Gallery and Auction (2016), and Arena One Gallery (2017) in California. She graduated with a BA in Communication Arts from Tehran’s Azad University and completed an MA in Spiritual Psychology at the University of Santa Monica.

Susie McKay Krieser

Susie McKay Krieser is an international artist based in Los Angeles, whose practice consists of figurative and abstract work, including drawing, painting, sculpture, and furniture design. Her formative years were spent in Mexico and California, which influenced her use of bright colors and light in her work. While acquiring her Bachelor of Arts degree, she concentrated on graphic design and photography, spurring on a love of lines, shapes, the vibrations of color, and the distillation of her work to the most minimal forms possible while still telling a rich and layered story.

She has exhibited her work at Red Dot Miami; Art Expo New York; The MAGMMA Museum of Graphic Art in Sardinia; the Artists for the Jubilee of Pope Francis, Rome; the Museum of Young Art, Vienna; and at various other venues in Los Angeles, Paris, Portugal, Palermo, Florence and Malta. Her permanent public art installations are at the American Embassy in Lisbon, Portugal; and at the Broad Stage in Santa Monica.
Luigia Gio Martelloni

Luigia Gio Martelloni is an Italian visual artist, curator, and filmmaker based in Los Angeles, California. Her work is influenced by the Arte Povera movement, paying particular attention to the natural world and its relationship to humanity. She works with multimedia installations, traces and fragments from nature, painting, found material, photography, and video.

Martelloni has exhibited nationally and internationally in venues such as the 54th International Art Exhibition Venice Biennale (Italian Pavilion/Arsenale) in 2011 and the 58th International Art Exhibition Venice Biennale; Santa Monica Museum of Art (2010); Torrance Art Museum, California (2016); Italian Cultural Institute, Los Angeles (2001–2011); American Academy of Rome; Quadriennale Nazionale d’Arte di Roma; Museo Laboratorio di Arte Contemporanea, La Sapienza Università di Roma (1996); and Vorpal Gallery New York (1986). Martelloni has also curated an international project between Italy and California, with three exhibitions called Between Two Seas. Recently she curated De-Fence Art (Art in the Time of Isolation), an outdoor exhibition, in response to the COVID-19 lockdown. Her artistic repertoire includes various productions and projects in film, TV, theater, and documentary.

Maddy LeMel

Maddy LeMel is an artist based in Santa Monica whose practice includes installations, sculpture, mixed media assemblage, and Japanese paper works. Her inspirations include the combination of the most ordinary objects that mysteriously morph into potent symbols and allegories of shifting human emotions, conditions, and situations.

LeMel has exhibited since 1989 in numerous galleries including George Billis Gallery, Barnsdall Gallery, and Louis Stern Gallery in Los Angeles. Her works have also been exhibited in New York, Chicago, and internationally in Italy for years. LeMel received her BFA from the University of Southern California.

Crystal Michaelson

Crystal Michaelson is a painter and mixed media artist based in Los Angeles. Raised in Washington, DC, her exposure to culture and history fostered a lifelong love of arts. She later moved to southern California where she would develop a great appreciation for the landscape surrounding her. Her mixed media art represents a mixture of the daily happenings around her along with the idyllic views in southern California. She investigates societal differences and the polarization that contributes to our volatile political climate through her work. She also recycles her own artwork, frequently tearing up old paintings and drawings and incorporating them into new work, repurposing the energy they once possessed in a new and exciting way. She uses this history to document her life’s journey, reworking it into a new narrative. Her mixed media art tells the tale of her conversation with the world around her.

Sally Lamb

Sally Lamb is a Santa Monica-based painter with a long and distinguished career as an artist. Her paintings are visual diaries that record her reactions to the events in her life. Her search for understanding through her work has led to the development of a personal dialogue about her past, present, and future.

Recently, Lamb’s work has focused on sublime and light-filled landscapes of her hometown of Santa Monica, where she was born and raised. The sky, ocean, trees, shadows, and local landmark buildings have become her personal icons for artistic explorations. The land has always been a favored subject because it recalls her earliest childhood years spent on a farm in Oregon. Her memories are filled with miles of open country and majestic ever-changing skies. Those enticing connections between expansive space and dramatic lighting left an indelible imprint on her creative spirit.

Lamb is an associate of Women Painters West and the National Watercolor Society, and is a founder and past president of The Artists’ Gallery (TAG) in Santa Monica, CA. Lamb received a BFA from the University of Southern California, and is a respected educator that has taught throughout the region. Her work can be seen at sallylamb.com.


Crystal Michaelson, Saisir le Jour no.5, 2021. Acrylic, house paint, oil pastel, crayon, colored pencil, graphite, charcoal, canvas on canvas. 72 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Sally Lamb, Ocean Park View. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of the artist.


Crystal Michaelson, Ocean Park View. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of the artist.

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Ameeta Nanji

Ameeta Nanji is an artist and human rights activist based in Los Angeles. Her practice includes creating collages, re-assembling, upcycling mixed media, text, textiles, and painting. Her most recent work is inspired by a trip to Lesvos Island, Greece in 2016, where she volunteered to assist refugees fleeing for their lives from war and violence in the Middle East. Nanji’s work synthesizes a critique about politics, technology, gender, and culture in the ongoing socio-economic struggle for the ownership of the future. Her intention is for her work to encourage and provoke the viewer to question contemporary circumstances. Nanji passionately shares 18th Street Arts Center’s mission and is excited to collaborate and participate with the institution and the community at large in enriching a vibrant, just, and healthy society through art.

Born in Nairobi of Gujarati origin, Nanji has exhibited in various solo and group exhibitions at Saray Gallery, London; Anne Laval Gallery, Venice; and Gallery ARTPop, Downtown Los Angeles. She has also worked in the film industry as a set-decorator, music advisor, costume consultant, and graphic designer. She has co-authored three books including *India Sublime, India Color, and South India: A Mosaic* (2008). Nanji has an Advanced Yoga Teacher’s Training Certificate, having studied at Krishnamacharya Mandiram, Chennai. Nanji holds a BA in Graphic Arts from Chelsea School of Art, London (1982).

Sabine Pearlman

Sabine Pearlman is an Austrian-born photographer who is currently based in Los Angeles, California. Her works investigate the stories behind objects and their deeper meaning, as shown in her widely exhibited series **AMMO**, in which she depicts the strangely alluring architecture of ammunition cross-sections. In her latest series, **TOTEM POLES**, she becomes the creator of the object. During the creation process, she meditates on and commemorates the stories of lost loved ones.

Pearlman has exhibited in museums and galleries extensively since 2008. She has had two solo exhibitions with PYO Gallery in Seoul and Orange Coast College Fine Art Gallery in California, and her works have been exhibited across the nation at Brattleboro Museum in Massachusetts, Griffin Museum of Photography in Vermont, Wall Space Gallery in New York, Houston Center for Photography in Texas, and Durden and Ray Gallery in California to name a few. Pearlman received the Lens Culture Emerging Photographer Award (2013), SMC Photography Excellence Award (2011), and SMC Global Citizenship Photography Award (2011).

She studied photography at Pratt Institute, Otis College of Art and Design, and Santa Monica College.

Paula Rosen

Paula Rosen is an artist and jewelry-maker based in Los Angeles. Her signature diamond padlocks, gold and silver tags, and unique chains have been coveted by celebrities, collectors, and stylists for years. A native Californian who calls both the East and West coasts home, Rosen travels the world with a restless and curious heart searching for gems, sourcing precious metals, and finding inspiration across the globe.

Because the collections build on themselves from year to year, Rosen has developed a loyal and enthusiastic following of fans and collectors across the country and around the world. Her timeless designs are featured in exclusive boutiques on several continents. Both a clothing designer and artist in mosaics, Rosen lives in California with her family.

Elham Sagharchi

Elham Sagharchi is a mixed media artist based in Los Angeles. Her work is intimate and at the same time explores greater feminine issues, examining the interactions and conflicts between a woman and her surroundings. Her mixed media pieces make use of material from the domestic sphere such as cloth, often juxtaposed with material from work and industry such as rebar. These elements are then woven together through the traditional medium of oil on canvas, with careful attention paid to texture and surface.

Sagharchi has been painting for more than 25 years. She studied painting at Tehran Azad University. Her work has been shown in several shows in Los Angeles and Tehran, including Arena One Gallery, BG Gallery, Tag Gallery, Golestan Gallery, the British Embassy, and Azad Gallery, among others. She has worked as a graphic artist for various magazines and newspapers.


Paula Rosen, DOUBLE-UP, from Paula Rosen Jewelry. (www.paularosen.com)


Sabine Pearlman, Totem Pole #9, 2019. Archival photograph, various sizes. Courtesy of the artist.

She studied photography at Pratt Institute, Otis College of Art and Design, and Santa Monica College.


Gwen Samuels

Gwen Samuels is an installation artist based in Los Angeles with a studio in Santa Monica. Inspired by close observations of nature, she selects the reformatted shapes of animals, insects, and plants with delicate hand-stitching and free hanging strings. She crafts repeating and irregular shapes, modeling forms that are inspired by the architecture of dresses, or sacred buildings from around the world.

Samuels has exhibited her work extensively internationally, including nine solo exhibitions across California and New Jersey. Her works were shown in Second Nature, Pitzhanger Manor at Walpole Park, London (2014), Network-C.A.R. Contemporary Art Ruhr, in Zaha Museum in Seoul (2013), and C.A.R. Contemporary Art Ruhr in Zollverein World Heritage Site, Essen, Germany (2013). She has been selected to be a two-year artist in Schiffer Publishing’s series. Samuels is originally from New York and completed a BFA in textile design at Syracuse University.

Daniela Schweitzer

Daniela Schweitzer is an artist currently residing in Santa Monica. She was born and raised in Argentina. Schweitzer, who has been classically trained since a young age, primarily paints figurative abstractions and non-representational abstracts. She is inspired to paint by people, human gestures, and the simple beauty of everyday events. Her art was influenced by many contemporary national and international artistic movements, as well as the energy, vibrancy, and colors of South America.


Rebecca Setareh

Iran-bom artist Rebecca Setareh is based in southern California and Miami, and has garnered international attention for her unique, graceful integration of rock and bronze. Her medium attempts to break through society’s illusory tendency to categorize and label while often segregating as a result. The smooth, fluid lines of the powerful bronze figures that Setareh sculpts and the rough, unrefined rock should create a stark contrast side by side; however, the effect is often one of harmony and balance. With each piece, the artist captures a figurative moment in time that communicates the burden of the human condition, at times drawing from several turning points of her own life. Setareh also uses constructed photographic images of driftwood in particular to capture the magnificent essence of nature and how it corresponds to her sculptures of the human body. Setareh received a BFA from the Instituto des Beaux-Arts St. Luc in Liege, Belgium, and has also won top tier prizes in competitions internationally. She has been featured in numerous exhibitions throughout the United States.

Pamela Simon-Jensen

Pamela Simon-Jensen is an artist based in Santa Monica whose practice includes painting, photography, film, and drawing. She currently creates human-scale, intimate, catalytic color paintings. Inspiration is drawn from the grace and exaltation in dance, the passion and vulnerability in human emotion, and the contemplative expanse of the Pacific Ocean. These expressionistic gestural abstractions move rhythmically, with color, line, and texture ranging from delicate and soft to vigorous and exuberant.

Simon-Jensen’s childhood was equally divided between Paris and Los Angeles. She began painting at an early age, greatly influenced by Europe’s classical arts and Los Angeles’s contemporary culture. Simon-Jensen’s focus on painting is evolving from figurative work to energetic gestural abstraction. Her paintings have been exhibited in Arena One Gallery, the Other Art Fair, and other various galleries. Simon-Jensen received her BA from Brown University and studied filmmaking at UCLA.
Doni Silver Simons

Doni Silver Simons is a painter, installation, and performance artist who lives and works in Los Angeles, California. Time, memory, and identity have been the central subjects of Silver Simons’ art practice for the past 30 years. Her work has been exhibited at the Detroit Institute of Art; the Wolfson Museum, Jerusalem; MAAAC Museum, Cistermno, Puglia, Italy; Hechel Shlomo Museum, Jerusalem; Mishkan L’Omanut, Ein Harod, Israel; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and the Santa Monica Museum of Art. Silver Simons’ work was featured in multiple exhibitions at the Jerusalem Biennale in 2017, 2015, and 2013. Silver Simons has shown in galleries throughout the United States. She is the recipient of numerous grants, including the Santa Monica Art Projects Grant, and was a 2017 Inquiry Fellow. Silver Simons brought the collective voices of women in Darfur and Congo to the consciousness of the West Coast public as an artist-in-residence for the anti-genocide organization, Jewish World Watch.

Silver Simons' work was featured in multiple exhibitions including the Santa Monica Art Projects Grant, and was a 2017 Inquiry Fellow. Silver Simons brought the collective voices of women in Darfur and Congo to the consciousness of the West Coast public as an artist-in-residence for the anti-genocide organization, Jewish World Watch. She received her Bachelor’s Degree from the University of Pittsburgh and Masters of Fine Arts from Wayne State University, Detroit.

Siru Wen

Siru Wen is a Chinese-born visual artist based in Los Angeles. Her practice intersects between installation, film, and photography. She observes and questions the actions and reactions between emotional bodies and the specific architecture that holds them. She investigates how bodies occupy, navigate, linger, and escape through spaces. Conversely, Wen explores how the structures alienate, mediate, aggravate, and conspire to exclude and subjugate the bodies within. She limits the use of words/language, instead allowing honest responses to form instinctively with the use of shapes, lines, movement, silence, and disturbance.

Wen’s work has been published in the Aesthetica Art Prize and Ducato Prize, exhibited at the 18th Street Arts Center, Larnaca Biennale, and the Korean Cultural Center in Los Angeles. She participated in artist residency programs at 18th Street Arts Center, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, and MASS MoCA. She also works as a cinematographer. Her films have been screened at the Cannes Film Festival, Singapore

Rebecca Youssef

Rebecca Youssef is a Los Angeles-based mixed media artist who was raised on the north shore of O’ahu, Hawaii. Her work finds a home in the space where art and environmentalism collide, inspired by the sustainability movement to protect our planet.

Her paintings are heavily influenced by the Southwest’s raw, natural beauty—the desert, the coast, and the mountains. Rebecca is known for her use of bright, bold colors, and frenetic mark making on sustainable, often repurposed materials that push the boundaries of abstraction. She has a contemporary aesthetic rooted in mid-century modernism.

Following graduate school, Rebecca focused on teaching art at various schools across Los Angeles. In 2015, she returned to her art practice full-time and maintains an art studio at 18th Street Arts Center (Airport Campus) in Santa Monica, California. Rebecca received her BFA from the University of Arizona in Tucson and then moved to Los Angeles to pursue her MA in Art Education at Loyola Marymount University.

Joan Wulf

Joan Wulf is a painter and mixed media artist based in Los Angeles who explores the nexus of science and nature through reductive techniques. She focuses in particular on the five elements: water, wood, fire, earth, and metal, which are transformed into collaborators in Wulf’s studio practice. She has variously burned, torched, sprayed, oxidized, ripped, and bent materials in her quest to distill nature to its most basic state. The resulting forms reveal the brutal and entropic processes that mold our natural world and underscore our fraught relationship with its elemental forces.

Selected exhibitions include Themes+Projects Gallery in San Francisco; UCR Arts California Museum of Photography in Riverside; Quotidian Gallery and Jose Drudis-Biada Gallery in Los Angeles; 18th Street Arts Center, Arena One Gallery, and the Santa Monica Museum of Art in Santa Monica; and Villa Di Donato in Naples, Italy. Her work can be found in many public and private collections throughout the United States and Europe. She is a select member of the Los Angeles Art

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Find the Edges and Soften It


Like A Homing Pigeon


Obfuscate


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Local Artists and Organizations in Residence

Joan Abrahamson

Joan Abrahamson is a painter who lives and works in Los Angeles. She received her BA from Yale University and her Master’s degree from Stanford University. Her recent work is an intimate romance with the Martian landscape.

Luciana Abait

Luciana Abait was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and is currently based in Los Angeles where she is a resident artist of 18th Street Arts Center in Santa Monica. Her photo-based two- and three-dimensional works deal with climate change and environmental fragility, and their impacts on immigration in particular.

Abait's work has been shown internationally as well as extensively in Los Angeles. Selected exhibitions include A Letter to The Future at Los Angeles International Airport and Sur Biennial in California; Flow, Blue at Rockford College Art Museum and Luciana Abait at Jean Albano Gallery in Illinois; Nest at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania; and ARCO in Spain. She has also completed numerous corporate and public art commissions including Vistas, a 24-foot mural that was commissioned by Miami-Dade Art in Public Places for Crandon Park Golf Course in Key Biscayne, Florida in 2004.

In 2016, she was a recipient of the Santa Monica Individual Artist Fellowship Award.

Lita Albuquerque

Lita Albuquerque is an internationally renowned installation, environmental artist, painter, and sculptor. She has developed a visual language that brings the realities of time and space to a human scale and is acclaimed for her ephemeral and permanent art works executed in the landscape and public sites.

She is the recipient of numerous grants and awards including: A National Science Foundation Grant in the Artists and Writers Program; the Cairo Biennale Prize at the Sixth International Cairo Biennale; a National Endowment for the Arts Art in Public Places Award (1983, 1984, 1990) and Individual Fellowship Grant. Numerous solo exhibitions include: a career survey at Santa Monica Museum of Art; Mary Ryan Gallery, NY; Dorothy Goldien Gallery, Santa Monica; Marianne Deson Gallery, Chicago; Diane Brown Gallery, Washington, DC; Lerner Heller Gallery, NY; Robin Cronin Gallery, Houston; and Akhnaten Galleries, Cairo. Her museum exhibition history includes Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, DC; San Francisco Museum of Art; Musee d’Art Moderne, Paris; Asahi Shimbun, Tokyo; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; and National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Albuquerque is a noted educator and has been on the core faculty of the Fine Art Graduate Program at Art Center College of Design for the last twenty years.
Jeff Beall

Jeff Beall is an artist whose work has taken a variety of forms over the years. His work has been exhibited in an irregularly regular fashion since 1987. While formally varied, Beall’s conceptually driven work consistently uses techniques of veiling/revealing to heighten the experience of looking. The subject matter of his work in recent years has included a memorial to lives lost in the 1992 Los Angeles Uprising, watercolor flowers, and encryption technology. This Suspended Moment (These Are the Good Old Days) was exhibited in the Los Angeles edition of Warren Neidich’s Drive-By Art exhibition at 18th Street Arts Center in May 2020. The work commented upon the tenuousness of aesthetic experience in these uncertain, socially distanced times.


Henriëtte Brouwers

Henriëtte Brouwers is a performer, director, teacher, and Associate Director of the Los Angeles Poverty Department since 2000. Born in the Netherlands, Brouwers has a degree from the Academy for Expression by Word and Gesture in her native country; and studied corporeal mime with Etiènne Décroux and Theatre of the Oppressed with Augusto Boal in Paris. The New Compassionate Downtown (2021), Performed by Los Angeles Poverty Department at the Geffen Contemporary at MOCA. Photo by Monica Mouwens. Courtesy of Los Angeles Poverty Department.


Dance Alive Center

Dance Alive is a dynamic life training program founded by Mariane Karou. As an outgrowth of her almost 50 years of work, she has created the Dance Alive Center to build students, artists, teachers, musicians, and healers in our community. Dance Alive Center prides themselves on their warm and welcoming environment and all of the nourishing and engaging programs they have to offer. Workshops and classes include Dance Alive Dynamic Life Training, Inner Rhythms Deep Body Meditation, Dance Alive’s “Ride the Wave” Movement Classes, Take Charge Now - Embodied Leadership Training, Moving Into Action Intensives, Women’s Embodiment Practice, Human Connection Playshops, Fountain of Life, Contact Improv, Sound Healing, and AUM Meditation.

Susanna Bixby Dakin

Susanna Bixby Dakin is a founder of 18th Street Arts Center and a long time artist and social activist. She is a sculptor, performance artist, writer, educator, and former publisher of artists’ books, art magazines, and a community newspaper. She has regularly exhibited her work, taught sculpture and drawing, and has done unique durational performances, including her year-long campaign An Artist for President in 1983-84, which is the subject of her first book. The presidential campaign functioned as a work of art encompassing the breadth of Dakin’s practice, seeking a more enlightened path for American democracy by merging ideas about citizenship and humanity to create a monumental whole.

Dakin’s book An Artist for President, The Nation is the Artwork, We are the Artists was published in November 2011 by Hyphen Media. Aside from campaigning, yet again, around the country to promote the book in 2012 and 2013, Dakin is working on a novel and book of poems, and continues to develop new drawings and sculptural works.

For additional information, please refer to the images below.
Marina Day

Marina Day is a prolific artist in sculpture and mixed media collage with a body of work spanning over three decades. Day’s art making is a meditative form of experience and communication. She forms materials that are fragmentary yet familiar; old maps, prescriptions, ledgers, stamps, fabrics, children’s game pieces, journals. Her collages are missives documenting the precarious preciousness of life. Every scrap is used as evidence.

Day is represented by the Pavel Zoubok Gallery in New York. Her work is in the permanent collection at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, city municipalities, and others to deliver arts services across LA County.

Debra Disman

Debra Disman is a Los Angeles-based artist working in multidimensional forms inspired by the book, both as a solo practitioner and in the public sphere of community engagement. She creates widely exhibited works and projects which push the boundaries of the book as object and idea into new media and materials, inviting altered ways of viewing the world and how we inhabit it. She was a Studio Resident at the Camera Obscura Art Lab in Santa Monica in 2018, and has served as Artist-in-Residence for the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs since 2017. She is a 2021–22 Santa Monica Artist Project Fellow.

Disman was the featured artist for the 2016 Big Read in LA, and received a 2016 WORD: Artist Grant / Bruce Geller Memorial Prize to create The Sheltering Book, a life-sized book structure designed as a catalyst for community creativity. She has been commissioned by L.A.’s Craft Contemporary Museum and 18th Street Art Center to create interactive, collaborative, and participatory artist books which involve and support the community. An active teaching artist, she works with the community. Her collages are missives documenting the precarious preciousness of life. Every scrap is used as evidence.

Kate Johnson Memorial Media Lab (KJML) / EZTV

The Kate Johnson Memorial Media Lab (KJML) is the current evolution of EZTV, a pioneering LA-based media arts space whose roots date back 41 years. KJML/EZTV fosters creative experimentation between the arts and the sciences, recognizing that neither would exist in its fullest form without the other. Over the years, in addition to its acclaimed artistic collaborations, it has also collaborated with scientists and technologists, including Fermilab, SIGGRAPH, the Finnish government, as well as many other leading thinkers and innovators. For artists at KJML/EZTV, continuous technological change is a given, and is welcomed for the continuing challenges as well as possibilities that new horizons present to creatives.

EZTV collaborates with artists and thinkers from around the world, as well as produces in-house original productions for television, live events, art galleries, and site-specific installations. In 2019, the Kandinsky Library at Centre Pompidou, Paris, presented four events highlighting EZTV’s diverse and complex history. Selected venues that have presented EZTV works include Lincoln Center, the Institute of Contemporary Art, London; PBS stations throughout the nation; Anthology Film Archives, NY; Wire Factory, Helsinki; and the Museum of Modern Art, NY.

Yrneh Gabon

Yrneh Gabon is a Jamaican-born interdisciplinary artist and human rights activist whose work deals with social, political, and historical context. Seeing himself as a conduit, Gabon uses his art to agitate the viewer and unmask reality through object making, research, and performance-based art.

Gabon has exhibited internationally including Senegal, Jamaica, and Mexico; and nationally including New York, Miami, Ohio, Detroit, and New Orleans. A solo exhibition at the California African American Museum in Los Angeles (2014–2015) earned him an invitation to testify at the United Nations in New York where a bill for Albinism Day (June 13) was passed to protect people with albinism. Gabon has been awarded many residencies around the world, including the Fundación Sebastián Residency in Mexico City (2017).

Yrneh created “The Artistv Project” as an initiative that engages artists and social activism around the world. His first collaboration and upcoming residency in Kumasi, Ghana took place in summer 2021, as he continues to investigate how climate change affects salt production in Dakar, Senegal, and other parts of the world, including the Americas.

Local Artists and Organizations in Residence


Kate Johnson, CTO 50th, 2017. LA City Hall & Grand Park. 27-story tall digital projection on LA City Hall and accompanying multi-channel video and sound installation throughout Grand Park, commissioned by LA County in commemoration of the Center Theater Group’s 50th anniversary. Concept, production, direction, animation, photography, and staging by Kate Johnson. Courtesy of Michael J. Masucci and KJML/EZTV.

Yvette Gellis

Born and raised in the Chicago area, painter Yvette Gellis employs contrasts between vast open terrain and urban sprawl to set up structures for her painting that reiterate the mutable states depicted in her work. Her painting is not simply static, an illusion or picture of an event, but allows for participation in the event itself. Ever conscious of historical precedents, she strives to expand upon the boundaries of painting.

Gellis has exhibited nationally and internationally. Her current project created in response to the world-wide pandemic is a public art project for the City of Santa Monica; a 450 foot mural across the entire beach front of the Annenberg Community Beach House. Other notable projects include presentations at The Pasadena Museum of California Art; The Landesgalerie Museum for Modern and Contemporary Art, with Brunnhofer Galerie, Linz, Austria; Villenaux La Grande, St. Jacques Eglise, Divai, France; Soulangh Cultural Park and Museum, Tainan; The East-Gate Museum, Cao Shan Dong Men Art Museum, Yangmingshan, Taipei, Taiwan; The Torrance Art Museum, California; Los Angeles International Airport; Fellows of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; West Art Gallery, California State University, Northridge, CA; Cerritos College Art Gallery, CA; 18th Street Arts Center, Santa Monica; and Pasadena City College, California.

Highways Performance Space & Gallery

Highways Performance Space & Gallery is Southern California’s boldest center for new performance, film, and visual art. In its 33rd year, Highways continues to be an important alternative cultural center in Los Angeles that encourages radical artists from diverse communities to develop and present innovative new work. Described by the Los Angeles Times as, “a hub of experimental theater, dance, solo drama and other multimedia performance.” Highways promotes the development of contemporary socially involved artists and art forms.

Their mission is to develop and present innovative performance, film, and visual art; promote interaction among people of diverse cultural backgrounds; and engage artists and the communities they serve in cross-cultural dialogues about social, cultural, and artistic issues. Leo Garcia is the Executive Director, and Patrick Kennelly is the Artistic Director.

Susan Kleinberg

Susan Kleinberg is a Los Angeles and New York-based artist. Her newest video piece, LEAP! began with her happiness at hearing the rumor of dolphins in Venice, albeit untrue. “As an artist, my goal was to construct a leap in every way. As we go forward, how we go forward, how we must question, and the energy, the joy, the possibility of a leap. LEAP! is an offering of a moment of wonder.”

Kleinberg’s work has been shown in the Venice Biennale of 1995, 2001, 2011, 2015 and 2017—the last three at the Palazzo Fortuny in the exhibitions Tra in 2011, Proprto in 2015, and Intuition in 2017. Her work has been seen at PS1/MoMA; the Museum of Modern Art; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Buenos Aires; Akbank Istanbul Biennial; MAXXI Rome; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo; Pulkovo Observatory in St. Petersberg; Museum of Modern Art, Buenos Aires; Museo dal Chiostró dei Bramante, Rome; Total Museum in Seoul, Korea; Alliance Francaise, 2013; and NIMAC, Nicosia, Cyprus in 2011 and 2013. She has been a visiting assistant at the American Academy in Rome. A mid-career retrospective of her work was at the Arkeekran Museum, Istanbul, in 2017. Beginning in July 2021, her video piece HELIX, first shown at Manifesta in Palermo, will be playing throughout the Metro system in Milan, with print images in an accompanying exhibition.

Dyna Kau

Dyna Kau is the founder of Girl Of All Work, a company creating contemporary office stationery. Her past and current clients include: The Container Store, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, The Norton Simon Museum of Art, Barnes and Noble, Dick Blick Art Stores, Indigo, and several other domestic and international retail outlets.

Her work has been featured in InStyle Magazine, Lucky Magazine, Better Homes and Gardens, and other trade periodicals. Dyna was born in Taiwan and raised in Southern California. She graduated from Art Center College of Design with a BFA in graphic design and packaging. She was also a core instructor at Art Center in their graduate industrial design program from 2014-16.


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Marcus Kuiland-Nazario

Los Angeles native Marcus Kuiland-Nazario is an inter-disciplinary artist, performance curator, and producer. He is a founding artist of 18th Street Arts Center and Highways Performance Space and is the co-founder of Oficina de Proyectos Culturales, a contemporary art center in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, as well as the Community Health Project, a harm-reduction street-based needle exchange program. Kuiland-Nazario’s works are long-term research-based cross-genre projects exploring extreme states of emotion such as grief, anger, and loss influenced by the cultural and spiritual traditions of the African Diaspora.

Kuiland-Nazario’s performance works have been included in national and international festivals including the Rapture Festival at theICA London, the Rompefoma Festival in San Juan, Puerto Rico and PST: LA/LA. Kuiland-Nazario is the recipient of the 2020 Santa Monica Artist Fellowship award.
evorydaysayfithedead.com

Dan Kwong

Dan Kwong is an award-winning solo performance artist, playwright, director, and visual artist who has toured his ground-breaking work internationally since 1989. Over his career, Kwong has played a key role in the development of the Asian-American solo performance community. He has worked on numerous collaborative performance projects in Southeast and East Asia, where he continues to teach and lecture. The significance of his body of work is acknowledged in A History of Asian American Theater (ed. by Esther Kim Lee). His first book, FROM INNER WORLDS TO OUTER SPACE: The Multimedia Performances of Dan Kwong, was published by the University of Michigan Press.

Kwong is one of the founding artists at 18th Street Arts Center, and part of the first wave of performers nurtured by Highways Performance Space under the leadership of Tim Miller and Linda Frye Burnham. He served on Highways’ Board from 1990 to 2007. Kwong currently serves as Associate Artistic Director of Great Leap Inc., the Los Angeles-based multicultural performing arts organization founded by Nobuko Miyamoto.

Leslie Labowitz-Starus

Leslie Labowitz-Starus, Los Angeles artist and entrepreneur, is best known for her public performance work on violence against women in collaboration with Suzanne Lacy from 1977–82. In 1972, she was a Fulbright scholar in Germany, where she worked with Joseph Beuys, and considers herself an Art/Life artist. Since 1980, her art work has shifted to ecological concerns, primarily focusing on food and agriculture. For over 30 years, Labowitz-Starus created performances and installations while building a business, called SPROUTIME. She began as an urban farmer, growing sprouts in her backyard in Venice and expanded her operation to a three-quarter acre agricultural site and food processing facility in the San Fernando Valley in LA County, growing, manufacturing and distributing organic products throughout Southern California. She is considered an expert in the field of sprouting and an authority on urban farming and farmers’ markets. In 2010, she received an “Innovation Leadership” award for Women In Business from the San Fernando Valley Economic Development Corporation.

Suzanne Lacy

Suzanne Lacy is a pioneer of socially engaged public performance art. Her installations, videos, and performances deal with sexual violence, rural and urban poverty, incarceration, labor, and aging. Lacy's large-scale projects span the globe, including England, Colombia, Ecuador, Spain, Ireland, and the US.

In 2019, she had a career retrospective at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and at Yerba Buena Art Center, and in 2020 at the Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporaneo, Seville, Spain. Her work has been reviewed in frieze magazine, Artforum, LA Times, New York Times, Art in America, and The Guardian. She has exhibited at Tate Modern, The Museum of Contemporary Art LA, the Whitney Museum, the New Museum, the Bilbao Museum, and Reina Sofia Museum. Currently she is working on projects in Moscow and Oslo and will premiere a new installation at the Whitworth Gallery in Manchester, England in 2021.

Also known for her writing, Lacy edited Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art and is author of Leaving Art: Writings on Performance, Politics, and Publics, 1974–2007. She is a professor at the Roski School of Art and Design at the University of Southern California and a resident artist at 18th Street Arts Center.
John Malpede

John Malpede is a Los Angeles-based artist who directs, performs, and engineers multi-event projects that have theatrical, installation, public art, and educational components. In 1985, he founded Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD), a performance group comprised primarily of people who are currently or formerly experiencing homelessness, who make art, live, and work on Skid Row. In 2015, LAPD started the Skid Row History Museum & Archive, a community cultural space dedicated to uplifting the compassionate history of Skid Row, a low-income residential neighborhood continually under threat of displacement. His 2004 work, RFK in EKY, sought to recreate Robert Kennedy’s 1968 “war on poverty” tour in the course of a four-day, 200-mile series of events focused on historic and current issues and social policy. He has produced projects internationally.

As a 2008–2009 fellow at MIT’s Center for Advanced Visual Studies, Malpede developed Bright Futures in response to the worldwide financial crisis. In 2013, John Malpede received the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award. In 2014, the Queens Museum of Art in New York City mounted the first retrospective gallery exhibition on the work of the LAPD, which traveled to the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena in 2016. John Malpede and Henriëtte Brouwers are co-recipients of the 2018 City of Santa Monica Visual Artist Fellowship.

David McDonald

David McDonald is an artist who works in both sculpture and painting. The visual qualities of his work vary, but they are connected through a belief in process and intuition as a way of developing work. He believes all things in the natural world are interdependent, and creates situations within his work where this is true. He is also a student of Zen Buddhism with 18 years of practice experience and is Abbot of the Dharma Zen Center in Los Angeles.

McDonald has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Pollock Krasner Foundation Fellowship, and a Fellowship from the City of Santa Monica. His work has been exhibited widely both nationally and internationally, and he has been written about in publications as diverse as the Los Angeles Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Boston Globe, Art in America, and the Santa Fean. McDonald has taught at various institutions, including the University of Southern California, California State University Long Beach, UCLA, and New Roads High School.

Lionel Popkin

Lionel Popkin is an artist born and raised in Indiana to an Indian mother and a Jewish father. His mixed-race and malleable identity markers place him in a continuously shifting position within the racial and social discourse created from the twin sins of genocide and slavery that formed the dominant power structures in America. His work questions how bodies, objects, and media are allowed to exist in time and space.

Popkin has been presented nationally and internationally at venues including REDCAT, Highways Performance Space, The Getty Center, and The Getty Villa in Los Angeles; Danspace Project, Abrons Arts Center, and Dance Theater Workshop in New York City; the Jacob’s Pillow Inside/Out Series in Massachusetts; The Painted Bride and Philadelphia Dance Projects in Philadelphia; ODC in San Francisco; The Place Theater in London; and the Guangdong Modern Dance Festival in Guangzhou, China. Popkin has been a dancer in the companies of Trisha Brown, Terry Creach, and Stephanie Skura. Popkin is currently a Professor of Choreography and Performance in the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for the School of Arts and Architecture at UCLA.

Post Mango FX

Post Mango FX is a collaborative boutique visual effects house that continues to deliver innovative visual effects and graphics to award-winning documentaries and art films. Some recent credits include The Dissident: The story of the murder of Jamal Khashoggi which premiered at Sundance and We Were All Here: The Story of "La Veinte", la familia Casillas, and the Pico Neighborhood of Santa Monica by Dan Kwong and Paulina Sahagun.


Cultures/Dance and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for the School of Arts and Architecture at UCLA.

Sean Findley and Stephen Siemens of Post Mango FX.
Christopher Tin

California-born, British-educated Christopher Tin is a two-time Grammy-winning composer of concert and media music who is currently based in Los Angeles. His music has premiered in many of the world’s most prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, and has been performed by ensembles as diverse as the Philharmonia Orchestra, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, and the Welsh National Opera Orchestra. Tin is the recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship, Sundance Institute Fellowship, and BMI Conducting Fellowship. His writings have been published internationally in book collections, museum catalogues, and in dozens of artists’ publications. He is currently co-editing Fathomers, a collection of essays, interviews, and portfolios about art and survival in the post-pandemic era, which will be published by Soberscove Press.

Susan Suntree

Susan Suntree is a Los Angeles-based poet, performer, and essayist whose work investigates the dynamics of science, art, and spiritual philosophies as they engage contemporary life. She has performed and presented her poetry both nationally and internationally, and has published books of poetry, biography, and creative nonfiction as well as essays about feminist and activist theatre, translations, and reviews. Suntree’s life-long engagement with environmental and community issues include creating performances presented outdoors and at other spaces open to all, often using puppets, poetry, and songs to awaken the creative spirit to action on behalf of what is wild, communal, and generous.

Sacred Sites: The Secret History of Southern California (University of Nebraska Press), won the Southern California Independent Booksellers Association Award for Nonfiction, the PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Award for Poetic Narrative, and a Mellon Foundation Award. It was released in an updated paperback edition by the University of Nebraska Press in 2020 and as an audiobook in 2021. Suntree adapted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a poem that was set as a choral work by award-winning composer Adrienne Albert and frequently performed as A Choral Quilt of Hope: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Suntree’s new book of poetry, Dear Traveler (Finishing Line Press), was released in Fall of 2021.

Dan S. Wang

Los Angeles-based artist Dan S. Wang makes drawings, sculptures, photographs, prints, and other kinds of art. Typography, histories of technology, the political aesthetics of ethno-liberation, the geographies of everyday life, the French Revolution, and Chinese-Korean cuisine are the stuff of his obsessions.

His works have been shown in more than fifty exhibitions, in spaces ranging from museums to restrooms. He has often worked in artist-run and collaborative situations, both as a founding keyholder of Mess Hall, an experimental cultural space in Chicago, and as an exhibiting artist with solo shows at Woodland Pattern (Milwaukee) and Compound Yellow (Oak Park). Recent projects include commissioned work for Station Museum (Houston) and a 2020 exhibition of A Ragbox of Overstood Grammars, a retrospective of eighty-plus letterpress prints, at Fonderie Darling (Montreal). His writings have been published internationally in book collections, museum catalogues, and in dozens of artists’ publications. He was a United States Artist Fellow, Creative Capital award-winning practice extends to choreography and directing in conventional and experimental theater and performance with their most recent commission from Yale Dance Lab. Whitson received an MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a second MFA in Creative Writing from Goddard College, receiving merit and artist awards at both. Their 18th Street Arts Center residency is supported by Fathomers.

Ni’Ja Whitson

Ni’Ja Whitson is a Queer Nonbinary Trans interdisciplinary artist based in California and New York. They are a United States Artist Fellow, Creative Capital and two-time ‘Bessie’ Award winner, wound and word worker, referred to as “majestic” by The New York Times, and recognized by Brooklyn Magazine as a culture influencer. Through a critical intersection of the sacred and conceptual in Black, Queer, and Trans-embodiedness, architectures, science, and spirit, they engage in a nexus of transdisciplinary and African Diasporic performance practices.

Whitson is the 2020–2021 Center for Performance Research technical artist in residence, 2018 and 2020 MAP Fund awardee, featured choreographer of the 2018 CCA Biennial, and invited presenter at the 2019 Tanzkongress international festival. Residencies and fellowships include Jerome/Camargo, Dance in Process at Gibney, Hedgebrook, Movement Research, and Bogliasco Fellowship with commissions including St. Mark’s Church at Danspace, American Realness and Vision festivals, ICA Philadelphia, and EMPAC. Their award-winning practice extends to choreography and directing in conventional and experimental theater and performance with their most recent commission from Yale Dance Lab. Whitson received an MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a second MFA in Creative Writing from Goddard College, receiving merit and artist awards at both. Their 18th Street Arts Center residency is supported by Fathomers.

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Local Artists and Organizations in Residence
Contributors

Jade K. Agua, MPA, is the Equity Institutes Director at the University of Southern California (USC) Race and Equity Center. Jade’s body of work focuses on strategic planning and change management from a racial justice framework. Prior to this role, she served as the Director of the Cross-Cultural Center at the University of California, Irvine where she also helped to establish the Women’s Hub. Before that, Jade served as Program Director of the Office for Multicultural Learning at Santa Clara University, where she oversaw the Multicultural Center and Rainbow Resource Center. Jade earned her BA in Sociology and Master’s in Public Administration from USC. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in Educational Leadership from the USC Rossier School of Education where she plans to focus her research on unlearning racist ideologies and institutional readiness for racial equity.


Andy Campbell is an art historian, critic, and curator living in Long Beach, California. He is the author of Bound Together: Leather, Sex, Archives, and Contemporary Art as well as Queer X Design, 50 Years of Signs, Symbols, Banners, Logos, and Graphic Art of LGBTQ. Together with Amelia Jones, Campbell has edited the recent catalogue Queer Communion. Ron Athey, which will accompany a career retrospective of the same name. He is Assistant Professor of Critical Studies at USC Roski School of Art and Design.

Li-Ping Chen is a scholar of East Asian Humanities and Comparative Literature from Taiwan. Her research focuses on colonial legacy, nativist movements, and cultural production in inter-Asia and Trans-Pacific contexts. Li-Ping is currently a postdoctoral scholar and teaching fellow in the East Asian Studies Center at the University of Southern California. She is also one of the hosts in the New Books Network, a consortium of author-interview podcast channels. lipingchen.com

Miguel M. Chavez was born and raised in the Pico Neighborhood of Santa Monica. His parents arrived in the 1970s and worked in local factory jobs in Santa Monica. He attended Santa Monica public schools and graduated from UC Berkeley with a BA in History. Chavez obtained his PhD at UCLA, specializing in Chicano History with a special focus on the Chicana/o Movement on the West Side. Mr. Chavez is an Assistant Professor in the History Department at Lamar University Beaumont in Texas.

Cog·nate Collective’s practice seeks to document and theorize markets as important nodes of exchange, facilitating—especially within immigrant, working-class communities—social, cultural and economic transactions that articulate individual and collective relationships to the communities we call home.

One thread of this research has explored how it is that objects/goods circulated within public/popular marketplaces (e.g. Swap Meets, tianguis, craft markets) mediate our relationships to place and to others. And, how such objects could be mobilized to interrogate and/or reconstitute these relationships: inviting us to reflect upon the ways we establish and express forms of affinity that link communities across borders (both physical and symbolic). In other words, they have been interested in how it is that they might critically amplify the political/dimension of public/popular marketplaces—and craft-made/mass-produced goods produced/consumed therein—as vehicles to generate, cultivate and/or express political exigencies and solidarity with/immigrant, working-class communities.

Dr. Maria Rosario Jackson’s expertise is in comprehensive community revitalization, systems change, dynamics of race and ethnicity, and roles of arts and culture in communities. She is Institute Professor at Arizona State University with appointments in the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts and the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions. At ASU she is also director of the Studio for Creativity, Place and Equitable Communities. She also has worked with national and regional foundations and government agencies on strategic planning, research, and evaluation. In 2013, President Obama appointed Dr. Jackson to the National Council on the Arts. She advises national and regional initiatives on cultural equity and changing demographics, and works at the intersection of arts and other areas of policy and practice such as community planning, development, and health. She is on the advisory boards of the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage and LA Commons, and on the boards of directors of The Music Center of Los Angeles County and the Association of Arts Administration Educators. Dr. Jackson also co-chairs the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative for Los Angeles County. Prior to working directly with foundations and in higher education, for almost 20 years, she was based at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C. where she led pioneering applied work on comprehensive community development, arts and culture in low-income and historically marginalized communities, support systems for artists and culture bearers, and indicators of cultural vitality. At Urban Institute, Dr. Jackson also contributed to initiatives on public housing desegregation, urban parks, handgun violence prevention and teacher training in urban communities. Dr. Jackson earned a PhD in Urban Planning from the University of California, Los Angeles and a Master of Public Administration degree with a concentration in community development from the University of Southern California.

Rachel Kaplan is assistant curator of Latin American art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Her research focuses on modern Latin American art, with additional interests in histories of collecting and display. She curated the exhibition Rufino Tamayo: Innovation and Experimentation (December 21, 2019–July 11, 2020) for LACMA’s satellite gallery at Charles White Elementary School and authored the accompanying publication, Rufino Tamayo: The Essential Figure (LACMA, 2019). She received her PhD from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University in 2015.

Anuradha Vikram is a Los Angeles-based writer, curator, and educator. Vikram is co-curator of the upcoming Pacific Standard Time: Art x Science x LA exhibition Atmosphere of Sound: Sonic Art in Times of Climate Disruption, and guest curator for The Craft Contemporary’s upcoming solo retrospective Jaishri Abichandani: Flower-Headed Children. Vikram’s book, Decolonizing Culture, is a collection of essays that address questions of cultural equity and identity in contemporary art spaces (Art Practical/Sming Sming Books, 2017). Vikram is faculty in the UCLA Department of Art and at USC Roski School of Art and Design. Her writing includes contributions to Los Angeles Review of Books, ARTnews, Leonardo, KCET Artbound, Artillery, Hyperallergic, Daily Serving, Art Practical, The Brooklyn Rail, and OPEN SPACE, and contributions to radical, as mother, as salad, as shelter: what should art institutions do now? She was guest editor (with Jaishri Abichandani and Santhi Kavuri Bauer) of the special issue ‘Challenging Hegemony Within the South Asian Diaspora’ (volume 5, issue 3, 2019) and has written catalogue essays on artists including Sandy Rodriguez, Young Joon Kwak, Kal Speltchich, Sonya Rapport, Chitra Ganesh, and Ana Mendieta. At present, she is an Editorial Board member for X-TRA, a consulting editor for MzU Curatist, and a book editor for X Topics, a subsidiary of X Artists’ Books. Vikram holds an MA in Curatorial Practice from California College of the Arts and a BS in Studio Art from NYU.
Jan Williamson is the Executive Director of 18th Street Arts Center since 1995. Under her leadership, the organization has evolved from a small, alternative artist-run space to Southern California’s largest artist residency center, working with diverse local and international artists who provoke public dialogue through their artmaking. Williamson holds a certificate from the Stanford University Graduate School of Business, Executive Program for Non-Profit Leaders, and a Bachelor’s degree in Fine Art from the University of California, Santa Cruz. In 2010, she was awarded a Durfee Foundation Sabbatical Fellowship for her work in book collections, museum catalogs and in dozens of artists publications. She currently serves on the board of Santa Monica Travel and Tourism and the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce. For nine years she served on the Santa Monica City’s Arts Commission. She currently serves on the board of Santa Monica Travel and Tourism and the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce.

Sue Bell Yank is an arts educator, producer, and writer. She has worked in arts, entertainment, and public schools for 15 years, and is currently Deputy Director at 18th Street Arts Center, the largest artist residency center in Southern California. Prior, she was Associate Director of Academic Programs at the Hammer Museum, working with students, artists, and forming city-wide partnerships triangulating communities, the arts, and schools. She teaches at UCLA and has written essays about socially engaged art practice and pedagogy in a number of publications and past catalogues. Her ongoing interests in art, land use, urban development, and housing manifested recently in a six-episode podcast series on housing in LA, Paved Paradise Podcast (pavedparadise podcast.com). She serves on the boards of the Brand Associates, Clockshop, and is an Arts and Culture Commissioner for the city of Glendale, CA. Yank holds an MA in Public Art Studies from the University of Southern California, and a BA in Art from Harvard University.

Anthony Zavala is an illustrator, video editor, and art educator living in Los Angeles, CA. Anthony has taught in the comprehensive and continuation high school settings supporting student development and visual literacy across several school districts in Los Angeles county. He has participated in programming for museums and organized artist panel talks. His Master’s thesis on the field of Creative Placekeeping was published with the ProQuest database, earning him a distinguished award with the College of the Arts at California State University, Long Beach. Anthony currently works in the Art Education department at CSULB where he dedicates his time to the development of future educators.

Contributors

Dan S. Wang is an artist and writer currently living in Los Angeles. His newest work was exhibited by the Torrance Art Museum in 2021. Recent projects include commissioned work for Station Museum (Houston) and Asian Arts Initiative (Philadelphia). A Ragbox of Overstood Grammars, a twenty-year retrospective of eighty-plus letterpress prints, was displayed in 2020 at Fonderie Darling (Montreal). He often has worked in collaborative situations, including his current collaborative vehicle, Now-Time Asian America. His critical writings have been published internationally in book collections, museum catalogs and in dozens of artists publications. He holds an undergraduate degree in Religion and an MFA in Printmaking.


Special thanks to the interns who helped edit and compile this catalogue:

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Exhibitions and Programs Image


Visiting Artists in Residence Image

Left to right: Lola del Fresno, The innocents (save a million lives), 2021. Printed vinyl mural installed on the Glider Wall of 18th Street Arts Center’s Airport Campus as part of Recovery Justice. (Gong Wall). 10 x 24 feet. Photo by Jenny Lü. Courtesy of the artist.

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La la del Fresno, Two innocence have a million lives, 2021. Printed vinyl mural installed on the Glider Wall of 18th Street Arts Center’s Airport Campus as part of Recovery Justice. (Gong Wall). 10 x 24 feet. Photo by Jenny Lü. Courtesy of the artist.