



NAS

NATIONAL ARTS STRATEGIES



Megan Bullock  
Charleston, WV



David Burt  
Hapeville, GA



Marisa Carr  
Minneapolis, MN



Demone Carter  
San Jose, CA



Taneisha Duggan  
Hartford, CT



Naomi Even-Aberle  
Rapid City, SD



Laura Gisler  
Saint Paul, MN



Chris Horne  
Akron, OH



Cornetta Lane  
Detroit, MI



Mei Lum  
New York, NY



Gregory Milo  
Akron, OH



Kia Moore  
Kannapolis, NC



Jordan Reeves  
Brooklyn, NY



Jaclyn Roessel  
Bernalillo, NM



Lula Saleh  
Minneapolis, MN



Taraneh Sarrafzadeh  
San Jose, CA



Ben Sax  
Los Angeles, CA



Clinnesha Sibley  
McComb, MS



Kristianna Smith  
New Britain, CT



Quentin Turner  
Detroit, MI



Romain Vakilitabar  
Littleton, CO



Joan Vorderbruggen  
Minneapolis, MN



Ash Williams  
Charlotte, NC



Suzanne Wise  
Wahkon, MN



**Megan Bullock**  
Charleston, WV

Megan Bullock, a RISD grad, is the creative director at her design/tech studio, MESH Design. At MESH, Megan uses design and other participatory creative practices to build communication tools for socially-driven organizations. Offices in NY and WV, Megan has worked with clients like ACLU, CMANY, and UPENN. As a SAPPI 'Ideas That Matter' grant recipient, she is the designer of the Columbia University People Building Better Cities inclusive urban planning exhibition, which showed in 12 cities globally. Megan mentors, teaches workshops, and public speaks on design at colleges and conferences, as local as WV Farmers Gatherings and as global as the UN Habitat World Urban Forum.

Megan is currently revitalizing an abandoned Appalachian building, The Linn, in West Virginia. The Linn has become a personal creative place-making project- home to artists and makers, to her WV MESH studio, and to MAKESHOP, an experimental design/build education project.

Megan plans to explore the MAKESHOP project in this Fellowship.

David Burt is an urban planning professional with almost twenty years of experience in matters related to arts administration, economic development, and commercial and residential property development.

He has diverse experience in both the public and private sectors with a strong background in downtown redevelopment efforts. He has overseen adaptive re-use projects throughout the Southeast, managed the development of commercial and residential properties, and written market and planning studies for a variety of local governments.

In 2010, David was one of the founders of the Hapeville Arts Alliance, and he currently serves on the Board of Directors of Living Walls: The City Speaks. David has a Bachelor's degree in Building Construction and a Master's degree in City Planning, both from Georgia Tech.



**David Burt**  
Hapeville, GA





**Marisa Carr**  
Minneapolis, MN

Marisa Carr is a playwright/actor based in Minneapolis. She has appeared in numerous regional productions as an actor, and her work as a playwright has appeared on stages including Pillsbury House + Theatre, Intermedia Arts, and others. She was a 2015 Naked Stages fellows at Pillsbury House + Theatre, a 2016-17 Many Voices fellow at the Playwrights' Center, and a 2010-11 Creative Community Leadership Institute fellow at Intermedia Arts. She was also a 2010 delegate to the Man-Up Campaign's first international forum (in Johannesburg, South Africa) on using arts as a tool for community change to end violence against women and girls.

During the course of this fellowship, she will be working with members of the Twin Cities' American Indian community to create and present a community-created theatre piece addressing sexual violence in the community, which affects American Indian women at a disproportionately high rate.

Demone Carter is an award winning artist, educator and social entrepreneur from San Jose, California. Performing under the name DEM ONE, he has released several albums and was named a 2016 Silicon Valley Artist Laureate.

In 2004 Demone co-founded Unity Care's Hip Hop 360 after-school program. From 2004 to 2010, Hip Hop 360 provided over 1,000 youth the opportunity to express themselves through hip hop. Building on his experiences with Hip Hop 360, Demone started FutureArtsNow!, a for-profit venture that seeks to fill the void left by vanishing school arts programs.

More recently Demone has joined the staff of the The School of Arts and Culture at MHP (SOAC), serving as lead for two of the School's signature programs, The Multicultural Leadership Institute (MALI) and Celebrate Mayfair, a creative placemaking initiative designed to bring social cohesion to East San Jose's Mayfair community using arts and cultural strategies.



**Demone Carter**  
San Jose, CA



**Taneisha Duggan**  
Hartford, CT

Taneisha Duggan, is an actor and arts administrator. She began her acting training at the Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts in Connecticut, and continued on to SUNY- Purchase College in The School of Theater Arts and Film. After college, Taneisha worked as a Marketing Coordinator at American Girl Place. She returned to acting full time in 2011 appearing on regional stages in Connecticut and New York, including TheaterWorks Hartford, Long Wharf, LaMama, and HartBeat Ensemble. She is currently Producing Associate at TheaterWorks in Hartford, CT. She sits on the Exploratory Committee of TheaterWorks' expansion, where she advocates for community engagement and partnership with local business and artists.

During the Fellowship she will be actively working on the development of the TheaterWorks District, a collaborative project with the theater at its center. She believes that focused attention and effort from the non-profit sector, primarily arts organizations in a community's development is key to innovation and visionary thinking in urban planning.

Black belt. Artist. Woman. Words not often seen in the same sentence, let alone in the same woman. Naomi Even-Aberle breaks boards with her body, trains with a sharp sword and advocates for youth education and community development through the martial arts.

As an active educator, Naomi has seen first hand the inequalities in her community, the education systems that impact her students, their families and community on a daily basis.

Naomi is on a mission; a mission to utilize her love of the martial arts to connect to her community.



**Naomi Even-Aberle**  
Rapid City, SD



**Laura Gisler**  
Saint Paul, MN

Laura Gisler is a multidisciplinary human and artist who brings her spirited creativity and empathy to all of her work. In her day job as an intellectual property attorney, she has honed her ability to zealously advocate for her clients, a skill that proves helpful in her pro bono asylum work.

A lifelong artist, she has explored countless mediums and landed most consistently within the world of visual arts. A vegan, world adventurer, and consistent disruptor, she is forever seeking out ways to engage artists and her community in the liberating, healing work of creative expression as a means of world-changing advocacy.

At any given time you can find a part of her spirit begging to be out in the uninhibited 'natural' world.

Chris Horne is the publisher of The Devil Strip, a nakedly pro-Akron arts and culture magazine that practices narrative placemaking to help foster connections around the people who make the area unique.

A native of Macon, Georgia, he and his family moved to Ohio in July 2013 after his wife was hired as an English professor at the University of Akron. For a year, he woke up at 2:30 am to work at a Cleveland TV station, posting stories online intended to poke early morning viewers in their lizard brain using fear or anger, and sometimes both. Before that, Chris was a news manager at a different TV station, a daily paper beat reporter and an alt-weekly editor. He's also sold pest control, delivered pizzas and been a youth minister. But it's the media experience that has convinced him to soon relinquish ownership of The Devil Strip and turn it into a community-owned journalism co-op.



**Chris Horne**  
Akron, OH



**Cornetta Lane**

Detroit, MI

Cornetta Lane is a storyteller. She courageously told her first story live on stage at the Secret Society of Twisted Storytellers. Cornetta shared an experience about grappling with the unfortunate passing of her father and realized that crafting her story facilitated her grieving and healing process.

Since then, she has been working to help communities craft and tell their own stories through her storytelling initiative.

Mei Lum is the 5th generation owner-in-training of her family's porcelain shop, Wing on Wo & Co (W.O.W) and founder and director of W.O.W's community initiative, The W.O.W Project.

Inspired by her family's pivotal moment in deciding whether or not to fold their 92-year-old porcelain ware small business, Mei founded The W.O.W Project to engage community members in conversation and innovative idea generation about the future of their neighborhood.



**Mei Lum**

New York, NY



**Gregory Milo**  
Akron, OH

Greg Milo taught high school social studies for 13 years, creating experiential learning opportunities locally and abroad for students, as well as new relevant and engaging courses, before taking his creative talents to the Knight Foundation, where he organizes and facilitates community events that bring people from different backgrounds together to learn about their town and each other.

Regarding this Fellowship, Milo ventures into the 20+ neighborhoods of Akron, gathering storytellers to participate in Common Threads Akron, where locals are invited to hear from and speak with experts in a particular field. Each monthly event takes place in a different Akron venue, be it a theatre or a bowling alley, and each event follows a different theme.

Kia O. Moore is the founder of the social venture start-up Hip Hop Orchestrated and is the Creative Director of the mentorship-focused non-profit Hip Hop University.

Her love for all things Hip Hop Culture and her innate need to create harmony and understanding between people led her to the world of Hip Hop Philanthropy.

Prior to stepping into the non-profit sector, she worked in the publication industry in the advertising department. Moore has found her passion in the world of Hip Hop Philanthropy and is not looking back.



**Kia Moore**  
Kannapolis, NC





**Jordan Reeves**  
Brooklyn, NY

Jordan Reeves is a former science educator from Hueytown, Alabama who's passionate about several things: vegetarianism, the environment, animated Disney movies, Dolly Parton, and the LGBTQ community.

Forced to leave his job after the financial collapse of 2008, Reeves moved to New York City where he entered the world of creative digital media. He helped start TED's education initiative, TED-Ed, where he worked to grow the content library and build a community around lessons that can change the world. Today, there are hundreds of videos that have been viewed over 553,000,000 times.

After TED and a number of consulting jobs, Reeves started VideoOut, a nonprofit that amplifies the voices of the LGBTQ community by highlighting individual coming out stories, giving a voice to the underrepresented via a new editorial platform designed specifically for LGBTQ people, and hosting an annual summit that identifies and tackles the systemic challenges facing the LGBTQ community.

Jaclyn Roessel was born and raised on the Navajo Nation, between the communities of Kayenta, Round Rock and Lukachukai, Arizona. She holds a B.A. in Art History and a Master's in Public Administration from Arizona State University. She was the inaugural recipient of the Arizona Humanities Rising Star Award in 2013, which is given to young professionals whose work elevates the importance of humanities in the community.



**Jaclyn Roessel**  
Bernalillo, NM

She's been named one of Phoenix 100 Creatives You Should Know. She is the owner of the greeting card company Naaltsoos Project and co-founder of the blog, Presence 4.0. These projects focus on the power of identity and as well as share the visual resistance of Native style. She co-founded the project Schmooze: Lady Connected a platform dedicated to sharing women's stories in the southwest through multi-media streams.

Over the past decade as a museum professional at the Heard Museum, Roessel confirmed her belief in the power of utilizing cultural learning as a tool to engage and build stronger Native communities. She recently shifted her focus to pursuing her entrepreneurial role as the founder of the blog and online community, Grownup Navajo. From her new home base in New Mexico, she aims to use Navajo traditional knowledge as a catalyst to create change in our communities today. Her focus in Creative Community Fellows program is K'é Powered. It is a community-based arts project that will occur on the Navajo Nation and will engage mentor and emerging mentee artists. The groups of artists will work to build a program that will incorporate themes of Futurism by challenging youth mentee artists to envision the kind of world they want to live in. The scope of the project will share how traditional Navajo/Native American knowledge has a place in helping us create a more inclusive future while also displaying the ability of creativity to help us put these practices to work for the betterment of our communities.



**Lula Saleh**  
Minneapolis, MN

Lula Saleh is an Ethiopian-Eritrean American, multidisciplinary artist, singer-songwriter, poet, cultural worker, writer, organizer and Empath. She is the founder of the East African Diaspora Artists Initiative (EADAI), an intersectional creative and social platform for artists of that diaspora. Lula is a Givens Black Writers Fellowship alum, a NEXUS Music Artist, and an Intercultural Leadership Institute (ILI) Fellow. She works as an organizer, healer, and in creative placemaking with African immigrants in the Twin Cities, Minnesota.

Born and raised in Saudi Arabia, and living in both Ethiopia and the UK as a child, Lula identifies as a third culture kid. She writes and sings at the intersections of her multiethnic, transnational diaspora identity. Her poetry and music genre of electronic-acoustic-soul music reflect her eclectic heritage, touching upon themes of the East African diaspora, loss, culture, homelands, and (be)longing.

Lula has performed at, been featured in or received recognition from: The Loft Literary Center, the National Endowment for the Arts, Pillsbury House, Ananya Dance, and Pangea World Theaters, and more.

Taraneh Sarrafzadeh is the owner of Be the Change Yoga & Wellness, a donation-based yoga studio in downtown San Jose, which seeks to make yoga & wellness accessible to its entire community. Beyond the regular studio classes that Be the Change (BTC) offers, the organization also works to build community around health & wellness through wellness events and services offered in public spaces such as parks, community centers, local farms, and other community spaces.



**Taraneh Sarrafzadeh**  
San Jose, CA

For the last 2.5 years Taraneh has been expanding and growing “Yoga for All” with Be the Change, after leaving 5 years of growth in her prior tech start-up work as a program manager. Before that Taraneh studied Environmental Studies at UC Santa Barbara, with an emphasis on Urban Planning and a minor in Global Peace & Security. In addition to running BTC, Taraneh teaches yoga to at-risk youth, including girls incarcerated in juvenile hall, in high schools, and in elementary schools.

With a longtime passion for working to uplift humanity and contribute to social and environmental justice, Taraneh is beginning to come full circle to a role beyond “yoga studio owner & teacher”, but also a community organizer who utilizes yoga and mindfulness as a platform to bring people together around authentic and compassionate living and action. For Taraneh and Be the Change, authentic and compassionate living means not only thriving individually, but collectively, including the need to uplift those who have been marginalized socio-culturally, economically, and systematically.

Taraneh truly believes that the path of uplift must include the cultivation of both personal clarity, awareness, and well-being as well as a community engagement and activism, and her work seeks to inspire both.



**Ben Sax**  
Los Angeles, CA

Ben Sax is a creative director, inventor and interactive artist based in Los Angeles.

He is the founder of Perceptoscope, a scalable public arts initiative devoted to engaging people with the places around them through mixed reality binocular viewers. It's an open-source movement for bridging the digital and physical worlds, as well an act of social practice art that brings together a diverse coalition of neighbors, artists, and storytellers.

Outside of the project, Ben leads teams in crafting creative for non-profits, brands, and social causes. His work as a filmmaker explores issues in the forces that transform communities and their built environment, and the relationship between image makers and their tools.

In 2016, Ben was the inaugural artist in residence at the SupplyFrame DesignLab, where he took Perceptoscope through a Design for Manufacturing sprint. Later that year he presented Perceptoscope in the Arts and Interaction category of SXSW Eco Place by Design. As part of the 2017 class of Cultural Policy Fellows through Arts for LA Activate, Ben is working with local leaders to implement Perceptoscope projects across the city.



**Clinnesha Sibley**  
McComb, MS

Clinnesha D. Sibley, a native of McComb, Mississippi, strives to advance the social consciousness of all people through her writing, teaching, community activism and arts endeavoring. Growing up a playwright, poet and performer/dancer, Clinnesha committed to training exclusively as a playwright while attending Tougaloo College in Jackson, Mississippi. As an Interdisciplinary Career Oriented Humanities major, she learned to focus inward: exploring identity, psyche, and the human condition. It was at this historically black college that Clinnesha also learned the connection between social activism and artistic practice.

A published author of plays, poetry, monologues and essays, she taught college courses before focusing on secondary education. In 2016, she moved back home to become a servant leader in the arts.

Her project is the Southwest Mississippi Multiplex of Early Innovative Intervention Studies. The purpose of this research center is to discover ways in which arts and culture reduce barriers to children's learning and give way to social cohesion.



**Kristianna Smith**  
New Britain, CT

Kristianna Smith is a theatre activist and educator. She has spent over a decade working with youth, educators, and the elderly reinvigorating the human experience through theatre arts.

Kristianna is the Founding Partner of the arts service company Via Arts LLC. She works with educators, community organizers, and student leaders to enhance their methods and practices with arts infusion. Through arts-based programming, Kristianna also collaborates with her partners to increase their accessibility to address the difficult topics of privilege, equity, oppression, and creativity within their communities.

Kristianna seeks to devise an arts integrated approach for community leaders and local politicians that utilizes theatre techniques at every stage of policy planning. This approach would incorporate civic engagement theatre techniques to build community, process data, and experientially test drive policy ideas before putting them into action.

Kristianna is known for her quick wit, can-do attitude, and love of purple.



**Quentin Turner**  
Detroit, MI

Quentin Turner is a Detroit native who has been involved in non-profit work his entire life. His mother was the director of her own community development organization while he was growing up and he would assist her during community clean ups and beautification.

Once in college, Quentin joined and then led a student environmental oriented group in order to engage and educate his university's student body on climate issues. During his college career he traveled to New Zealand to perform habitat restoration, monitored butterfly populations in Michigan's national parks and engineered a myriad of fun and educational activities on his campus.

Currently he is serving on the board of a non-profit that engages and educates Detroit children and families in responsible recycling. The project he is proposing for this fellowship will be a pilot native plant nursery that will have its plants donated to community art and landscape designs within the neighborhood he serves at his current job.





**Romain Vakilitabar**  
Littleton, CO

After a bad accident where he was forced to contemplate life, Romain Vakilitabar decided he would pursue a journey worth living. Since then, he published his children's book communicating climate change to younger audiences, traveled the world with *Unreasonable at Sea*, a social entrepreneurship accelerator on a ship, helping 9 ventures scale globally, and helped build Watson University, a new university model for 25 of the world's most promising next generation leaders, as Vice President.

Romain is now founder of PathosVR, a virtual reality lab creating empathy-based and perception-changing experiences. He's written for Technori.com, is featured in the new books "2 Billion Under 20" and "Compassionate Careers", has spoken internationally, and was voluntarily homeless in the streets of Scandinavia to train his mental resilience and to test the dogma that "need is the mother of all invention."

Joan Vorderbruggen is the Director of Public Art and Placemaking for Hennepin Theatre Trust. An artist and organizer, Joan envisions possibilities for the most dejected spaces, connecting local and international artists with opportunities to activate Hennepin Avenue in the heart of downtown Minneapolis.

In spring of 2016, she was awarded a "Heart of the Community" grant from Southwest Airlines to work with Project for Public Spaces activating Hennepin Avenue with the project, "5 to 10 on Hennepin." In less than one year, Joan has evolved the project to include participatory conceptualizing, planning, and budgeting with adults and youth experiencing homelessness while increasing the capacity of human service partners in the area to provide paid opportunities to transient communities that depend on Hennepin Avenue as a place to belong. She is now poised to engage these communities to influence the reconstruction of Hennepin Avenue in 2020 at the city level.

Joan is a founding member of the Placemaking Leadership Council, serves on the Board of Directors for Forecast Public Art, and is a member of the Ethical Redevelopment Salon led by Place Lab and the University of Chicago.



**Joan Vorderbruggen**  
Minneapolis, MN



**Ash Williams**  
Charlotte, NC

Ash Williams is a trans non-binary femme from Fayetteville, NC. As a Black Lives Matter organizer, Ash has educated the NC community about state-sanctioned violence as it relates to trans and queer people of color.

Since 2013, this work has included leading rapid response/ guerilla actions, building solidarity and coalitions across differences, developing press strategies, designing campaigns, educating and mobilizing people on social media, and training other organizers.

As campaign manager for a NC Representative, Ash has also managed donations and calendars, facilitated training for volunteers and interns, supervised all campaign communications, conducted research, and planned and implemented campaign strategies. Ash is a 2016 Human Rights Advocacy Fellow in Residence and Ignite NC Fellow (working against voter suppression), and won the Cyrus M. Johnson Award for Peace and Social Justice in 2014 and the Charlotte Pride Young Catalyst Award in 2016. They hold a Master's in Ethics and Applied Philosophy and a Bachelor's in Philosophy from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Ash is also a dancer, choreographer, and dance teacher.



**Suzanne Wise**  
Wahkon, MN

Suzanne Wise is invested in her American Indian/Native American community. She is a strong advocate for Family Preservation, which is a voluntary case management program focusing on prevention work, advocacy, community action and cultural education through Mille Lacs Band Family Services where she is currently employed.

She has worked in Indian Education and the social work field most of her adult life. She was recently voted to be the Chairman of the Minnesota Indian Education Association for the second straight year by the Board of Directors.

The project she is proposing is to build a relationship based case management system utilizing Ojibwe culture and language which would entail classes that clients can choose from such as traditional arts of appliqué beading, ceremonial skirt making, powwow regalia projects, birchbark basket making and moving into contemporary art mediums such as acrylic painting classes, sketching, photography and other sources to choose from. These classes would be used to begin to build relationships and trust between the Family Services department and the families they work with who are in danger of out of home placements due to addiction issues, lack of parenting skills, truancy court interventions or who just need more support. These art mediums will be used to counsel, support, offer art as a healthy outlet and give these families hope in the midst of chaos.



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