

Creative Community Fellows

New England

2021-2022

Meet The
Fellows

NAS

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Meet the Cohort

Click on a cohort member to learn more



Salwa Abdussabur
New Haven, CT



Erik Andrade
New Bedford, MA



Ashley Betton
Whiting, VT



Christopher Croucher
Leominster, MA



Jinyi Duan
Cambridge, MA



Gabrielle Gibson
Providence, RI



Tycho Horan
Providence, RI



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Montpelier, VT



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Belchertown, MA



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Hartford, CT



Hernan Jourdan
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Zeph Lodestone
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Cailin Marcel Manson
Springfield, MA



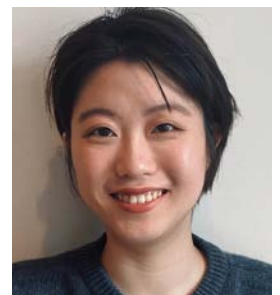
Fatema Maswood
Providence, RI



Camille Montano
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Salwa Abdussabur

New Haven, CT

She/They

Salwa Abdussabur (they them) is a Connecticut born singer, songwriter, actress, and poet who sung background for Childish Gambino during his historical host and performance on Saturday Night Live to debut the “This is America” and “Saturday” Singles. They are an up and coming artist with soul and consciousness that uses their voice and floetry to both uplift spirits and voices.

Salwa has performed in many events such as:

- Singing Background on Saturday Night Live for Childish Gambino New York City
- No More Water/ The Fire Next Time: The Gospel of James Baldwin at Park Avenue Armory in New York City
- (Be)longing at Long Wharf Theater as apart of The International Festival of Art and Ideas
- Open Studio Lituarey Happy Hour, Opened for A Job to Unwork at Artspace
- Opened for Ruby Sale at CEIO Deeper Change Forum as well as various community works and organizing.



When Salwa is not “spitting bars”, leading workshops, or on stage they are dedicating their time to arts inclusion, equity and equality. In 2020, Salwa founded Black Haven, a collective of creatives and admins who activate art justice through movement building events, initiatives and programming.

They, alongside their team, produced Black Haven Film Festival, the first of its kind annual black short film festival. Through Black Haven Film Festival, Salwa aim’s to sustain and build opportunities for our storytellers to be seen and celebrate them they rightfully deserve.

They hope that by being a part of these transformative spaces, they will be able to combine artistry & activism in order to inspire youth of color to enact change in communities across the country. For this reason, they know it starts within yourself and within your community.

Erik Andrade

New Bedford, MA

He/Him

Erik Andrade is a Cape Verdean & Irish American father, poet, fashion designer, recording artist, social and environmental justice program manager, leadership development and social justice trainer, community activist, national organizer, radio host, videographer, graphic designer, computer scientist, and founding member of La Soul Renaissance.

In 2012, Erik's "Amilcar Cabral Evolutionary Love" clothing design graced the front and centerfold of LOKuuRaz Cape Verdean Fashion Magazine in 2012. His designs were also shown at the 2013 "Back To The Roots" Cape Verde Expo. In 2016, the Minister of Culture of Cabo Verde invited him to showcase his clothing line at the Atlantic Music Expo in Praia, Cabo Verde. His shirts have been worn by artists and activists across the globe.



Erik was awarded the Trailblazer Award by the New Bedford NAACP in 2017 for his environmental and social justice activism. He was also a 2016 and 2014 nominee for the SouthCoast Emerging Leader Award. He was awarded the 2012 SouthCoast Music Awards Poet of the Year. Erik was awarded the 2001 Frederick Douglass Unity House Outstanding Leadership award for his tireless advocacy for social justice and 2018 Frederick Douglass Unity House Alumni Award.

As a spoken word poet, Erik has presented in Cuba, Canada, Cabo Verde, and throughout the United States. In 2016, he was a national organizer and featured performer at Hip Hop 4 Flint Water Filter Give-Away in Flint, Michigan and the Mni Wiconi Universal Benefit Concert in Standing Rock.

Erik has shared the stage with Angela Davis, Sonia Sanchez, LaDonna Bravebull Allard, Pua Case, Winona LaDuke, Jessica Care Moore, Sa-Roc, Taboo of Black Eyed Peas, Immortal Technique, Van Jones, Amy Goodman, and many other artist, activist, and leaders.



Ashley Betton

Whiting, VT

She/Her

Ashley is a singer, actor, and creative with a broad range of interests based in rural Addison County, Vermont. She dedicates most of her time to developing programming that brings people from all walks of life, young and old, together through arts or arts-related activities and projects.

Alongside her performance career, Ashley developed a passion for creating programming for youth and adults when she assisted in opening a tabletop board game cafe in Brooklyn, New York, called The Brooklyn Strategist. During her seven-year tenure there, she created an accredited enrichment program that now serves over nine schools, 350 students each school year, and over 400 kids each summer.

Upon relocating to Vermont while remaining an active professional performer, Ashley developed Lacewing Kids Camp. This out-of-school enrichment program reinforces collaboration, leadership, and artistic curiosity through the artistic design process.

In the summer of 2021, she was welcomed as a Teaching Artist at The Town Hall Theater and the Middlebury Community Music Center in Middlebury, Vermont.

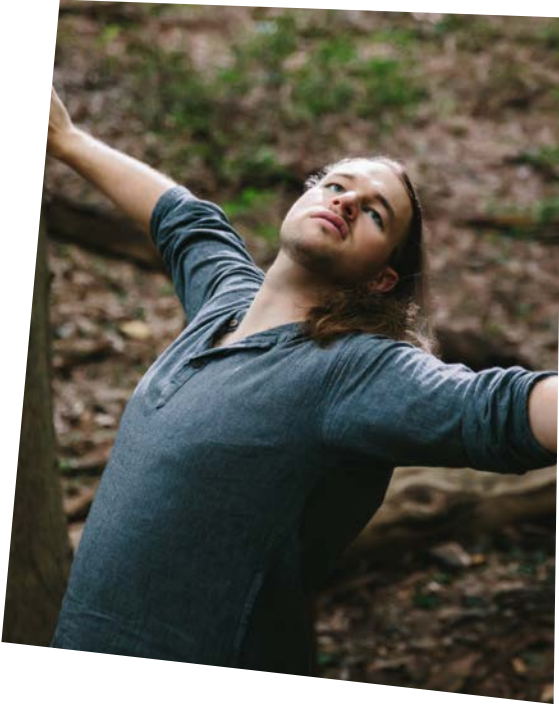
Most recently, Ashley has developed and currently directs a public art project called Find Your Wings to respond to the disheartening economic and spiritual impact that COVID-19 has had on many communities in Vermont. The project aims to show that communities can overcome economic and cultural devastation by uniting through the arts.

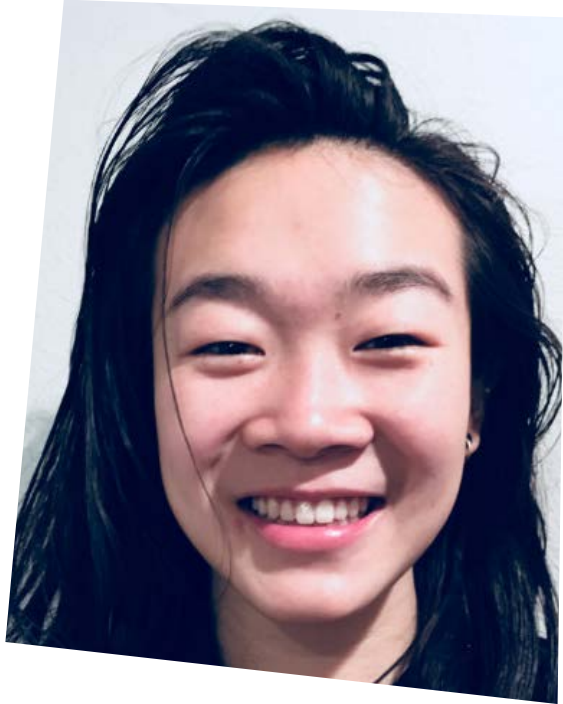
Christopher Croucher

Leominster, MA

He/Him

Christopher Croucher is an artist, dancer, and healer who combines his passion for all three into his work. A graduate of the Bard College Bachelor of Arts program in Dance Choreography and the Glasgow School of Art Master of Letters Program in Fine Art Performance, he has used his education in the arts as well as his training and experience as a massage therapist to build a business that focuses on healing for the earth and for people through artistic means. Through his practice of nature-based spirituality, Christopher has developed an ever-evolving appreciation of the way that both the land and the body speak and how listening to those voices can bring about healing and growth.





Jinyi Duan

Cambridge, MA

They/Them

Starting their dance journey in San Diego at the age of 20, Jinyi was originally involved in choreography before dedicating her time to various street and club dance forms. They found House, and fell in love with the culture, and decidedly started their journey of traveling, networking, and learning in 2016. They were the previous co-founder of FUSION Dance competition as well as an organizer of numerous events. As a dancer, they believes in the importance of culture within the art form, seeking to uphold history and knowledge within the practice. They currently operate as the Executive Director at The Flavor Continues, collaborating with others through education, science, technology, art, and leadership, with their number one priority being to serve the community. Jinyi received her Master's in Medical Biological Sciences, Bachelors of Arts in Music Performance and Neuroscience & Physiology.

Gabrielle Gibson

Providence, RI

She/Her

Dedicated to her craft, Gabrielle “Queen G” Gibson is a multi-faceted creative, educator, and public speaker. Utilizing her diverse background in the arts, she spent years performing and teaching all over the United States and around the world, engaging diverse audiences on various platforms. Her creative work investigates identity, challenges oppression, and reimagines community, culture, and faith as it reinforces her belief in the power of storytelling. As a professional spoken word artist, she won multiple titles; Button Poetry, Write About Now, Poets in Autumn national tour, and Bandaloop have featured her work. She uses her affinity for words on and off the stage as host of The Royal Room podcast and as a voice actor (for clients like Scholastic and Harvard). Her professionalism and passion present her as a skilled consultant and copywriter.

She has extensive experience in community development and education; this lends to engaging, enlightening, and culturally competent content when she creates curricula, cultivates programs, and consults for corporations and independent clients alike. She worked domestically and internationally, with over 17 years of experience in non-profits, workshop facilitation, public speaking, youth development, and leadership training. Currently, she manages Queen G Creative full-time, facilitates for Roger Williams University part-time, and continues to formulate programs and strategies that prioritize the pursuit of equity, empathy, and education through creativity and communication.



Tycho Horan

Providence, RI

She/They

Tycho Horan (she/they) is a printmaker, designer, educator, and arts organizer based in Providence, RI. Over the last 3 years, she and a collective of Queer/Trans artists founded Binch Press, a community printshop and cooperative design studio in Providence. Now she is the full-time studio manager of the printshop shared by Binch Press and Queer.Archive.Work. She has taught and worked at numerous arts organizations including AS220, CityArts, and New Urban Arts. In addition to her arts organizing practice, she makes prints, posters, books, videos, and websites for community organizations and social justice campaigns.

Tycho continually strives to build inclusive and intensional creative spaces for those who are underrepresented in print and media, and oppressed by our society and culture. Her passion is helping others bring their creative visions to life. She believes small gestures can have big impacts and that new and old technologies work better in concert than in opposition. She thinks prints and printing presses are time machines that link us to our revolutionary ancestors and to the liberated future we co-create everyday.





Eve Jacobs-Carnahan

Montpelier, VT

She/Her

Eve Jacobs-Carnahan makes mixed media knitted sculpture that starts conversations. She uses the familiarity of yarn and its domestic connotations to connect with viewers to raise serious issues. Her collaborative art project Knit Democracy Together is a craftivist take on historical knitting circles. She draws on her past work as an election lawyer to deepen participants' knowledge of the electoral system and increase their ability to strengthen democracy.

She has exhibited throughout the United States, receiving regional and national awards. Her work appears in Lela Nargi's survey of knitted art, *Astounding Knits! 101 Spectacular Knitted Creations and Daring Feats*. Eve attended a residency at the Vermont Studio Center in 2017 and received a Public Art Learning Fund grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts in 2020. She holds a BA with Honors in History from Swarthmore College and a JD from the University of Chicago. She lives in Montpelier, Vermont.

April Jasak-Bangs

Belchertown, MA

She/Her

April is a proud small business owner and photographer, as well as a co-founder of the Belchertown Community Alliance, a Western Mass nonprofit.

The BCA is focused on creative placemaking specifically by reactivating underutilized landscapes and historic buildings in town. They are working towards creating accessible spaces for artistic, technical, and educational pursuits for the community as a whole, but with a specific focus on creating vocational opportunities for students and adults with disabilities. The BCA seeks to acknowledge and preserve Belchertown's history through engaging in restorative justice practices and community inclusion.

April co-founded the Belchertown Community Alliance because she truly believes arts and culture in all forms can be both exciting community-building vehicles and the economic drive Belchertown needs for appropriate strategic growth. When she met her fellow co-founders and learned more about Belchertown history, the autism and behavior program at the local high school, and all the artists and makers in her rural town, she was inspired by the potential of what could be.

In 2007 April graduated from the Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University with a BFA in Photography. More recently she served on her local municipally appointed Cultural Council for three years both as a member and Chair and is very active in community planning in Belchertown. In her free time April loves adventuring with her family, visiting Maine, and creating.



Faithlyn Johnson

Hartford, CT

She/Her

Faithlyn Johnson is a Presidential Award-Winning Senior Executive in Arts Administration and Youth Program development. She is Jamaican-born and well-traveled and has lived and taught overseas in Europe and the Middle East for numerous years. She received her Master's in Education Leadership with her undergrad in Theatre/Management. Faithlyn has over 20 years in education and nonprofit management dedicated to promoting arts integration into the core curriculum. Her most recent award being the 2021, June Archer 100 Women of Color award. Her other noted recognitions have been the Governor Award for Youth Programming, Wesleyan University Center for Creative Youth Honoree, UConn Community Leadership Award, Workforce Development Award, etc.



She was the Education Director at the Greater Hartford Arts Council for several years. She is the founder of Hartford Arts Council, Presidential Recognized Neighborhood Studios & Visiting Series. During that time she worked closely with local, national, and international artists to provide apprentice training for youth in the Greater Hartford Region. She was also the Executive Director at Opus Inc, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting literacy through the arts. With Opus, Faithlyn led performance productions for K-12 grade schools throughout the Greater Hartford Area.

Faithlyn has been blessed with life story adventures, to do what she loves, the arts. Her drama clubs, summer theater programs, and the University of Miami sharpen her pursuit as a performing arts teacher and scriptwriter. These opportunities to learn her craft have affected her knowledge tremendously and given her the drive to teach creative art skills to others. Her time abroad teaching wealthy, gifted, and talented students, fueled her passion to teach her skills in an inner-city environment and to use social justice themes in the arts to be a catalyst for change.

As a CT Master Teaching Artist in Theatre, Faithlyn's original musical productions have appeared in numerous schools and local theatres. Currently, she is the founder of a nonprofit theater called ActUp Theater, Inc. and a member of the Mental Health Creative Therapy team at St. Francis Hospital. She is an active member of the Hartford, CT community. When Faithlyn isn't teaching or consulting, she enjoys family, music, dancing, home design and playing her guitar.

Hernan Jourdan

Providence, RI

He/Him/They/Them

Hernan Dario Jourdan is an Argentinean artist, producer and writer living in Providence, RI. Through his practice he creates live performances, gatherings, and visual interventions. In 2010 he hitchhiked across South America documenting the process of his arrival in the US through the chronicles “North By South” –which continues to grow as a collection of stories from the Americas.

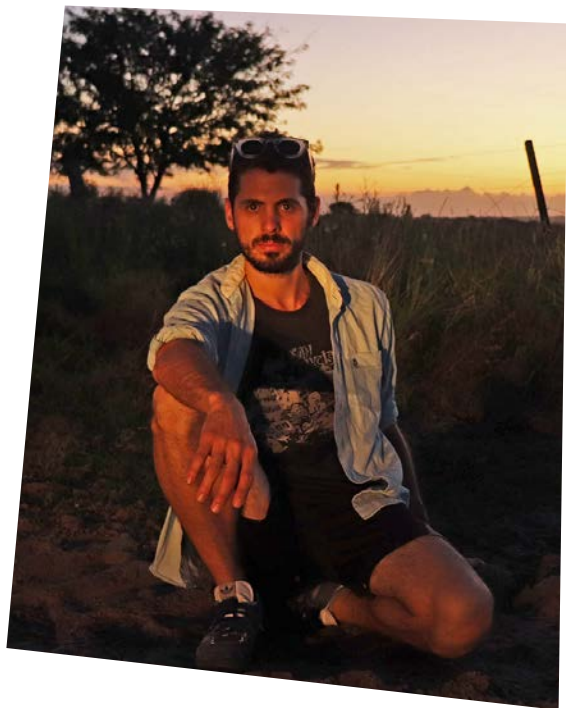
As a scholarship recipient of the Japanese Ministry of Education he has completed film & video studies at the School of Tokyo Visual Arts (2005) and since then he has developed projects in Argentina, Chile, United States & France.

He is a PGI grantee of RISCA to develop the latinx queer

platform Thank You For Listening, a platform to manifest, celebrate and inquire into different Latin American cultural expressions.

As an art producer he has worked with the Providence Department of Art, Culture and Tourism for the public art & music festival PVDFest (2017 & 2018), which brings together the work of over 200 local artists with an audience of over 50,000 people. With the Artists Communities Alliance he has coordinated two of their annual conferences and collective ‘EPI’ training for artists & arts administrators from across the country, and he has co-produced documentary videos with Panasonic LTD and NHK Japan in Patagonia and Antarctica.

In 2021 he self-founded the Ministry of Future Access, a traveling platform to facilitate bilingual learning opportunities and share stories across the Atlantic coast of the US. In partnership with the Providence Community Library they have engaged local artists with Spanish speaking constituents through 25 free workshops in art making practices, collective health and civic agency, closing the series with a block party style celebration.





Becky Karush

Swansey, NH

She/Her

Becky Karush is the founder of Read to Me Literary Arts, where writers learn to dazzle us and themselves with fresh, brilliant writing. We know writers of all backgrounds can write amazing things, and so they do.

Through group writing salons, individual coaching, book development programs, the Read to Me podcast, and tools to support solo writing practice, we step over the cult of the critic and help writers surface their innate talent.

Becky is a certified teacher of the Gateless Writing method and has led more than 250+ group Gateless Writing salons, online and in-person, with writers of all ages. She has a B.A. from Wesleyan University and a Master's degree in Writing and Publishing from Emerson College. Before becoming a small business owner in 2012, she worked as a teacher, farmer, journalist, Disney magazine editor, summer camp counselor, and copywriter. She lives in southwestern New Hampshire with her family and cat.



Morgan Leichter-Saxby

Bellows Falls, VT

They/Them

Morgan is a longtime community and therapeutic playworker, researcher and trainer. Based in Vermont, Morgan works internationally to promote the concept and tools for creating community-level changes in support of children's play. This includes public lecture tours across the USA (2014; 2019), Canada (2017) and around the world (2015), as well as teaching at Middlebury College, the Community College of Vermont, and Bloomsburg University.

Morgan is currently completing a PhD in Playwork at Leeds Beckett University, in Health and Community Studies. Its focus is on embodied reflective playwork practices, incorporating somatic approaches to the professional facilitation of therapeutic play environments. Morgan is currently retrofitting a vintage ambulance as a locally-focused Emergency Play Response Vehicle, to facilitate creative play events and residencies in public and partnership spaces.

Zeph Lodestone

Burlington, VT

They/Them

Zeph (they/them) is a thirdgender, homebound, adult-diagnosed Autistic disabled with C/PTSD, Agoraphobia, and Functional Neurological Disorder. Prior to becoming disabled, Zeph's career spanned from Family Social Services to Talent Acquisition & Engagement to CEO of a startup contact center. Zeph built their professional reputation on delivering innovation-driven results to privately held consulting and entrepreneurial ventures through F500 firms. In each of these functions, Zeph supported and led individuals and organizations through major life, paradigm, and cultural change.

Disabled in 2020, Zeph was guided to create a textile multimedia art form as occupational and neurological therapy. Designed for impermanence, Zeph's art collaborates with Time, Gravity, and



the Elements in a dynamic becomingness, to tell a story of a New Relationship between Gaia and Humanity. Influences include Andy Goldsworthy, Marina Abramovic, Medieval Art, Spider, and Isaac Newton.

In 2021, Zeph formed Wravenwood Studios to invest in mental health destigmatization and support through community art events. Wravenwood produced two successful LGBTQ+ Community Art & Connection (CA&C) events the summer of 2021, procuring grant funding, partnering with multiple community organizations, and engaging hundreds of participants at each event. The second event built upon the first by providing participants with an iconic bracelet that serves as a reminder of connection to the community with potential to trigger feel-good neurochemicals associated with the event.

Zeph's mission includes producing documentaries of these art events to tell community stories; engaging the larger community for permanent, outdoor display of these community art pieces; and developing a grassroots foundation for mental health awareness and support in the LGBTQ+ community. Zeph is over the moon about the opportunity to more fully develop this work to reach and serve more people!

Joel Mackall

Dorchester, MA

He/Him

Bro. Joel Mackall is an award winning Educator & Project Developer with the ReIdren Business Group based in Roxbury MA. He is the co-founder of the S.O.S. Living Museum, the Hidden History of Black Boston Tours, the Nubian Writer's Group and is a self-published author. He has also served as secretary of the Cameroonians of Lowell Association, as an officer on the Warren Gardens Housing Cooperative board, on the advisory council of the Network of Immigrant and African American Solidarity and as a technology chairperson with the Black Community Information Center.

Bro. Joel presented "Excellence AND Culture: Operating Your Cooperative Better, Simpler and Truer" at the National Association of Housing Cooperatives Annual Conference in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands and "Why Do We Black Folks Hate On Each Other?" at the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations' Ancient Egyptian Studies Conference in Newark, NJ.

He has led/facilitated numerous classes, talks and professional workshops on topics including genealogy, African & world history, business design and technology across Boston, including the Freedom House, Mother Caroline Academy, Warren Gardens Housing Cooperative, Roxbury Multi-Service Center, Roxbury Community College, Emerson College, Lesley College, South Bay House of Correction, most of the Boston Public Library branches and Walden Square Technology Center (north Cambridge), in both English and Spanish.



Cailin Marcel Manson

Springfield, MA

He/Him

Cailin Marcel Manson, baritone and conductor, a Philadelphia native, has toured as a soloist and master teacher at major concert venues throughout the United States, Europe and Asia with many organizations, including the Radio-Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart, SWR Sinfonieorchester, Taipei Philharmonic, Bayerische Staatsoper - Münchner Opernfestspiele, Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Teatro La Fenice, Teatro San Carlo, Konservatorium Oslo, and the Conservatoire de Luxembourg.

He has also been a guest cantor and soloist at some of the world's most famous churches and cathedrals, including Notre Dame, Sacré-Coeur, and La Madeleine in Paris, San Marco in Venice, Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence, San Salvatore

in Montalcino, Santa Maria Maggiore and San Giovanni in Laterano in Rome, Thomaskirche and Nikolaikirche in Leipzig, and Wieskirche in Steingaden.

Cailin has held positions as Music Director of the Vorarlberger Musikfest, Music Director and Conductor Laureate of the Chamber Symphony of Atlantic City, Artistic Director and Conductor of the Montgomery County Youth Orchestra, Chair of Vocal Studies at the Hazleton Conservatory for the Performing Arts, Director of Music at The Putney School, and as Music Director of the Bennington County Choral Society. He has also served as a member of the faculty of the Vermont Governor's Institute on the Arts and the Performing Arts Institute of Wyoming Seminary. He also founded and directed the Germantown Institute for the Vocal Arts and the Germantown Concert Chorus.

Cailin is a frequent guest conductor, clinician, presenter, panelist, and adjudicator for conventions, conferences, competitions, and music festivals. Cailin studied voice performance at Temple University, and opera performance and orchestral conducting at the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg.

Cailin Marcel Manson is currently

- Associate Professor of Practice in Music and Director of Music Performance at Clark University,
- Music Director of The Keene Chorale,
- Music Director of Barn Opera
- and Artistic Director of the New England Repertory Orchestra.

Fatema Maswood

Providence, RI

They/Them/She/Her

Fatema Maswood (they/she) is a landscape designer, educator and environmental artist of Tunisian and Bangladeshi descent. Their work explores food sovereignty, decentralized water infrastructure, disaster resilience, remediation, and joy. Past projects include a community seed library system for the city of Providence, RI, modeling future cities with young designers, interactive disaster preparedness games, and graphic introductions to zoning and cooperative land ownership. They hold a B.S. in Architecture from Barnard College and a Masters in Landscape Architecture from the University of Washington. They have been awarded a Merit by the American Society of Landscape Architects and were a 2019 National Olmsted Scholar Finalist.



Camille Montano

Providence, RI

She/Her

Camille Montano is a visual artist, educator and community arts administrator based in Providence, RI. She is currently the Program Manager at Providence iCityArts! For Youth, a community arts space that provides free arts education and programming to Providence youth. Camille has worked as a teaching artist, classroom art teacher, arts curriculum designer, and community arts facilitator. She has taught young artists in Pre-K through High School as a Digital Arts and Photography classroom specialist in Seattle, WA, Philadelphia, PA, and Providence, RI. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography from the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, RI, and a Masters of Arts in Teaching, also from RISD; Camille holds a K-12 Art Education Certification in RI. Camille is visual art practice explores placemaking through participatory art projects utilizing antique photography techniques, printmaking, sound, and sculptural installation. Camille is passionate about designing accessible, liberatory art curriculum and programs that center and amplify young artists' voices and lived experiences.





Ellice Patterson

Brookline, MA

She/Her

Ellice Patterson is the founder/executive and artistic director of Abilities Dance, a Boston-based dance company that welcomes artists with and without disabilities. She is also the executive director of BalletRox, a Boston-based dance education program to provide access to high quality dance education to youth within Boston Public Schools and in our after-school program in Jamaica Plain. Outside of self-produced Abilities Dance's shows, her choreography has appeared in the MFA, Links Hall in Chicago, Gibney Dance in NYC, The Series: Vol IV at the Ailey Citigroup Theatre in NYC, and more. She has given lectures and workshops at schools, universities, and organizations across the country, including Harvard Graduate School of Education, Fidelity Investments, Boston University, and more. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Biological Sciences from Wellesley College and her Masters of Science in Management Studies from Boston University Questrom School of Business.

Alison Yueming Qu

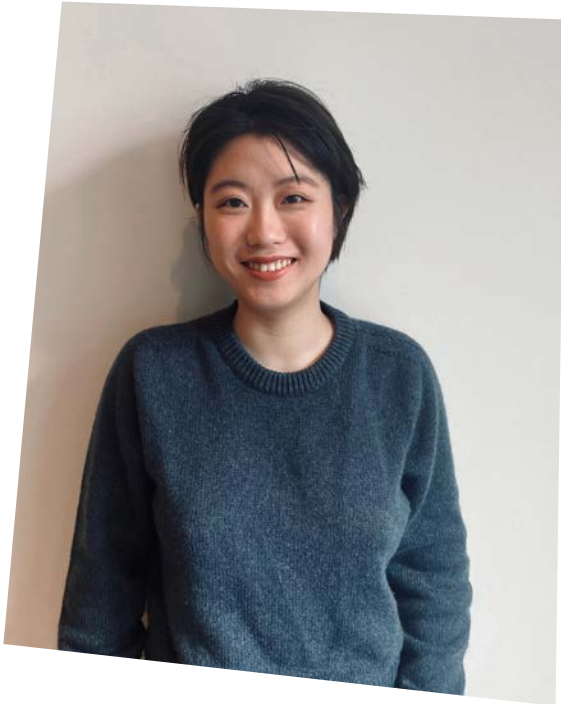
Boston, MA

She/They

Alison Yueming Qu 曲悦鸣 is a Creative Producer, Director, and Dramaturg. Alison currently serves Company One Theatre as the Connectivity Producer, and the Co-Founder & Executive Producer of CHUANG Stage, the first Mandarin bilingual, bicultural theater collective nationwide.

Past producing include Company One Theater/Pao Arts Center “Boston Chinatown Musical” with Kit Yan & Melissa Li; The 24 Hour Plays: Nationals 2021; B·O·N·D International Virtual Performance Festival: Global Chinese Voices; audio immersive piece Imaginarium (Out of the Blue Theatre, Applecarts Art, Georgetown Festival); Season II of Artists Connectivity Series (Ping Pong Arts). Their dramaturgy work for 10 Out of 12 by Anne Washburn (Emerson Stage) received the 2020 LMDA/KCACTF Region 1 Student Dramaturgy Award. Alison and CHUANG Stage is a Co-Recipient of the 2021 TBF Live Arts Boston Grant.

They are a proud alumna of Emerson College (BFA Theatre, 20'), National Theater Institute, and an associate member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.



Nohemi Rodriguez

Boston, MA

She/They

Nohemi Rodriguez is a Chicana artist and educator born and raised in Houston, TX. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Education and a Master's degree in Art Education from The University of Texas at Austin. She completed a thesis focused on collaborative art making with adolescents of the Amani community and developed a "toolbox" for art facilitators. Her continued work with community engagement feeds into her approach in collaborating with subjects through portraiture. She creates visual narratives that explore human connectivity through environmental portraiture.

Nohemi continues her work in creating community-centered spaces as a visiting professor at the Massachusetts College of Art & Design in the Art Education Department. She also works as a youth educator at the Institute of Contemporary Art/ Boston where she collaborates with Teen Arts Council to host creative spaces for teens in the museum. She loves tajin on mango and watermelon.



Susan Rosano

Guilford, VT



Susan E. Rosano, MA, is a Registered Expressive Arts Consultant, Educator and Therapist, Master Teaching Artist and a Mosaic and Mural Artist with a Masters Degree from Wesleyan University. Susan has worked in senior centers and hospice programs throughout New England as an Expressive Arts Therapist, Consultant and Educator. For twenty years she has also worked as a Master Teaching Artist on the juried rosters of the Vermont Arts Council, New Hampshire Arts in Healthcare, Arts for Learning Connecticut and Life Time Arts in Vermont. Recently, Susan is working with the Central Vermont Council on Aging to create an art project for their “Creative Care Kit,” which will be sent to 200 homebound seniors to work on over the winter of 2021 – 2022. Her entry, “The Life Path Project” was chosen as a viable activity for those seniors, which includes drawing lessons and life review. In the past, Susan has worked with communities to create painted or mosaic murals that have current, relevant themes. Susan’s murals grace the walls of schools, hospitals, libraries, museums and other public spaces around New England. Recently, Susan has created nine murals with parents and students at an elementary school in Newtown, CT with themes that include respect, friendship, hope and kindness; all are symbols of a community that is moving on from tragedy.

Greg Torrales

Deltona, FL



A Miami-native, Greg relocated to East Boston, Massachusetts, in 2011 to continue supporting underrepresented minority students in Higher Education. Greg started at Emerson College's Office of Diversity & Inclusion before transitioning into MIT's Office of Minority Education in 2013. A year later, he also became the Administrator for Masacote Entertainment, an Afro-Latin music and dance company based in Cambridge, MA.

Initially, Greg started as a front desk attendant under the work-study program and is now part of the company's ownership and directorial board. As a small business, he wears many hats to manage the Dance Company, School, and Retreats. One of them is the MASACares Mini-Grants program which partners with local organizations to identify, award, and further the artistic and philanthropic development of multidisciplinary creative youths.

As an Administrator in STEM Higher Education and the Arts, his passion is to leverage the uniqueness of these two vastly different worlds to support students/youths more holistically.

Bess Welden

Portland, ME

She/Her

Bess Welden is a theater-maker living and working in Portland, Maine for the last 20 years. Her creative practice includes playwriting, performing, teaching, and producing. Bess has been exploring the intersection of writing and acting through solo performance for most of her career with a strong focus on stories that center women and girls. Over the last decade she has written several plays for multi-character casts including *Refuge Malja*, which premiered on Portland Stage Company's mainstage in 2018; *Death Wings*, winner of the 2020 Maine State Prize of the Clauder Competition for New England Playwrights; and *Madeleines*, a finalist for the 2021 Bay Area Playwrights Festival. Helping others step into the power of their own voices and stories motivates her teaching. At Colby College she offers acting and playwriting courses that emphasize both skills-based technique and creative risk through experimentation. She has also developed and facilitated creativity workshops for adults and adolescents, most recently the *Activist Storytelling Workshop*, a combined writing and performance intensive. Bess is actively working to transform her role as an independent producer, co-producer, and board member in Portland's theater community by advocating for and leading creative processes that are artist-centered and move beyond the exhausting and often exploitative systems that have predominated white-led American theater production.



Amanda Whitworth

Ashland, NH

She/Her

Amanda Whitworth M.Ed. is a dancer who leads and consults on interdisciplinary projects in technology, design, wellness, business, and public education. She believes that the creative process is tangible magic. Amanda is the co-founder of Articine, a nonprofit that brings arts and medicine together for innovative wellness solutions. She is currently serving as Artist Laureate of the state of New Hampshire and is making dance visible in both rural and urban geographies across the state.



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