

Associate Artists working with Gregg Deal

Katina Bitsicas

Katina Bitsicas is a new media artist who utilizes video, photography, and performance in her artworks to explore grief, loss, trauma and memory. She has exhibited worldwide, including The Armory Show, PULSE Art Fair, Superchief Gallery NFT, the Wheaton Biennial curated by Legacy Russell, HereArt in New York, Art in Odd Places in Orlando, Digital Graffiti Festival, and the St. Louis International Film Festival. She received her BA from Kalamazoo College, Post-Bacc from SACI in Florence, Italy, and MFA from the University of South Florida.



She is an Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Digital Storytelling at the University of Missouri, where she also conducts research with the MU School of Medicine on utilizing digital storytelling as a meaning-making intervention for bereaved family members. This collaborative research has been published in *Death Studies*, *OMEGA: Journal of Death and Dying*, and the *Journal of Social Work in End-Of-Life & Palliative Care*.



Valerie Hird

Valerie Hird (she/her) is a multi-media visual artist who lives and works between Vermont, New York, and the MENA regions. Her work explores cultural mythologies and the roles they play in our societal perceptions of each other. She's spent years moving across cultures listening and collecting stories. Hird received a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design 1977 and an MFA from Vermont College 2007. She is represented by the Nohra Haime Gallery New York, NY and NH Galeria, Cartagena, Colombia.

Retired Professor of Art, Saint Michaels College, and Professor of Visual Linguistics, CORE Division, Champlain College, in Vermont. Recent exhibitions include *What DID Happen to Alice: My Avatar* - Nohra Haime Gallery, NYC, 2021, MASSMoCA, Portsmouth Museum, Tampa Art Museum, American University of Dubai, Global Center for Drawing, Melbourne, Australia and the University of Jordan in Amman, Jordan. Awards include 2020 IMDb Best Shorts, Montreal Independent Film Festival, LA's jellyFEST and WRPN Women's Film Festival awards in Animation and Women Filmmakers (2020), Humanitarian Award for *WHAT DID HAPPEN TO ALICE?*

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Mariana Ramos-Ortiz

Mariana Ramos Ortiz (she/her/they/them | b. 1997) is an interdisciplinary artist working between San Juan, Puerto Rico and Providence, Rhode Island. Their practice revises the imperial and colonial relationship the United States has imposed on Puerto Rico. Their recent work articulates relationships between legibility as a condition of manipulation, play as a tactic for resistance, and how these strategies construct the experience and perceptions of the colonial subject and landscape. Ramos Ortiz graduated with a BA from the University of Puerto Rico - Río Piedras in 2019 and received an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2021. They have been featured in exhibitions and residencies at Brown University, Taller Malaquita, RISD Museum, University of Arizona Poetry Center, Caribbean Cultural Center African Diasporic Institute, Guatibirí Gallery, among others.



Yunfei Ren

Born in 1987 in Wuhan, China, Yunfei Ren (he/him/his) is a visual artist living in San Francisco. A self-taught photographer practicing in both The Netherlands and the United States, he has exhibited at the de Young Museum in San Francisco. Yunfei's work explores and questions ideas about identities and belonging. Inspired by his personal experience as a minority and immigrant, he uses art to expose prejudice and elevate underrepresented communities. Visually, he draws inspiration from Old Masters as well as contemporary artists including Philip-Lorca diCorcia and Gregory Crewdson, embedding semiotics and visual clues from contemporary culture.

Rachel Strickland

Rachel Strickland is an interdisciplinary performance artist, aerialist, storyteller, and award-winning choreographer. Her work combines circus arts, dance, and elements of bizarre spectacle to create original, socially relevant performative works. To unearth aspects of the self which are suppressed and mutilated by the sanction of outside influences is both her subject matter and the intended effect on the viewer.



Photo by Max Cooper

Classically trained in ballet since the age of three, she began her study of circus arts in 2007, developing a unique style and innovative approach to aerial hoop. Her work brought her international recognition, and she has coached, performed, and choreographed on four continents. She is the director of [The Audacity Project](#), an 8-week guided process to equip artists and creatives with the tools necessary to be working professionals. She lives in Charleston, SC with her husband, Shaun. They have no children so don't ask, but they would like to meet your dog.



Julie Sutherland

Julie Sutherland is a San Francisco based artist whose practice explores issues of power, privilege, public memory, and technology through mediums that include painting, social practice, and design. She has shown her work at Columbia College in Chicago, the Handwerker Gallery in Ithaca, New York, and Root Division in San Francisco, and was included in the Drawing Center's Viewing Program. She has been an artist in residence at the Santa Fe Art Institute and the Vermont Studio Center, and was a 2016 Design Fellow at the civic technology non profit, Code for America. Sutherland is also a founding member of the artist collective, 100 Days Action who were a recipient of the 2017 YBCA 100 List Award. www.juliesutherland.net | julieseasuth@gmail.com

Associate Artists working with Bob Holman

Ama Birch

Ama Birch is the author of "Faces in the Clouds," "Sonnet Boom!" and "Ferguson Interview Project" and a video game available for Android, "Space Quake by Ama Birch". She has a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from the California Institute of the Arts and a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from the State University of New York at New Paltz. She has been published by Autonomedia, A Gathering of the Tribes, Vail/Vale, Les Fignes Press, Vitrine, Insert Blanc Press, CalArts Creative Writing Program, the State University of New York, and The Brooklyn Rail.



Kimberly Dixon-Mays

Kimberly Dixon-Mays is a poet, playwright and performer. A Cave Canem, Callaloo and Ragdale fellow, Kimberly Dixon-Mays' poetry has been published in journals including *Reverie*, *Anthology of Chicago*, the anthology *Trigger Warning*, *Uproot* magazine, *RHINO* magazine (finalist, Founder's Prize, 2018; Illinois Arts Council Agency Literary Award, 2020) and *Consequence* magazine (finalist, Prize in Poetry, '14). As a playwright, Kimberly has received readings and staged productions at Crossroads Theatre Company, Plowshares Theatre Company, Emotive Fruition, Windy City Playhouse, Rivendell Theatre and Mad Cow Theatre. In addition, from 2005-2013 she was a recurring member of the Guild Literary Complex's devised theater project the Poetry Performance Incubator (Artistic Director Coya Paz), co-creating and performing in its original works *Tour Guides* and *Like Bread*. Kimberly is an Associate Editor for *RHINO* poetry magazine.

Chevon Guthrie

Chev Guthrie is a spoken word artist from Atlanta, Georgia by way of New York City. His work stems from lifelong loves of love, life, discourse, and all things black. His first taste for performing came as a member of St. John's first ever College Union Poetry Slam Team in 2018. He's since become an International Grand Slam Champion in the Troubled Tongues Tournament of 2020, Poetry Battles Game 22 Champion, a member of Team Pencilz & Penz which took 3rd in the International Poetry Slam, and both hosted and feature at the famed Apache Cafe in Atlanta. Chev has loved words for as long as he can remember and in his adulthood he's traded lunch tables and the backs of school buses for stages and studios in attempts to use art to make the world around him make sense.



Tennessee Reed

Tennessee Reed is the author of seven poetry collections, a memoir and a novel. She has read her work around the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, England, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Israel and Japan. She is the chairperson of PEN Oakland and the managing editor of *Konch Magazine*. Her seventh poetry collection, *Califia Burning*, was published on November 3, 2020.

Crystal Vance Guerra

My name is Crystal Vance Guerra and I am a chicana poet, historian, and educator based between Chicago and Mexico City. My art is latinamericanist in root, often Spanglish in expression, and written to be read aloud. Previous poems have been published in Acentos Review, Contratiempo, and Mono Ediciones. I have been most active in the poetry community in Mexico, but since the pandemic brought me back to Chicago I am finding my voice in English.



Associate Artists working with Shahzad Ismaily



Sonya Belaya

Sonya Belaya is a Russian-American pianist, singer, composer, and improviser, who divides her time between Michigan and New York. Her work explores the integration of women’s trauma and the immigrant experience as musical narrative by centering power-sharing and storytelling as a symbol of powerful vulnerability. Sonya is a 2020-2021 Resident Artist at Roulette Intermedium. She has performed as a pianist and singer with members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, New Music Detroit, Wild Up, Michigan Opera Theatre, Russian Renaissance, and Bang on a Can All-Stars. Sonya’s lead project is “Dacha”, an octet flowing freely through influences of creative music, jazz, folk, and contemporary music. Dacha was born out of a necessity to find a sense of home and belonging, when Belaya’s mother went missing in 2014. The first project, “Songs My Mother Taught Me”, is a five song cycle released in May 2019. Belaya released a second album with the ensemble, “Dacha: Live at Roulette”, in September 2020. She has served as piano faculty at Metropolitan State University at DIME-Detroit, and has worked as a dance collaborator at the University of Michigan, Mark Morris Dance Center, Adelphi University, Eglevsky Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, and the Martha Graham School.

Caleb Flood

Caleb Flood is an interdisciplinary artist from Virginia, working primarily in sound and performance. Their work negotiates processes of mental negation via sounding/listening, as well as engaging with narratives of identity through symbol and allegory. As a musician, Caleb has recorded and performed with a smattering of mostly east coast artists for the last 15 years, regularly touring and playing DIY and small venue spaces. Recently they completed an MFA in Creative Technologies at Virginia Tech, where they created a series of ritual compost piles, imagined as sculpture.





Aleya Kassam

Aleya Kassam is a Kenyan feminist, storyteller, writer and performer, whose work explores narratives from the margins. She is widely experimental with form, from page to stage, screen to speaker, micro fiction to memory poems, musical theatre to docu theatre, blogs to twitter threads - she loves to play with the ways people experience story. Her first writing home was www.chanyado.wordpress.com, described by Nanjala Nyabola as '*shuffling between personal narrative and political observation*.' Her work has been published and performed on multiple platforms and stages, from Nairobi to Kampala, Kigali to Stuttgart. Aleya is also the 'A' in The LAM Sisterhood, a content studio that fills the world with stories for African women to feel seen, heard

and beloved, such as the award-winning stage show Brazen, un-invisibling the stories of extraordinary women from Kenya's history. Find her on stage, or on twitter /instagram as @aleyakassam

Raquel Klein

Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, Raquel Acevedo Klein is an active vocalist, conductor, instrumentalist and visual artist. Raquel has performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Radio City Music Hall, Town Hall, BAM, St. Ann's Warehouse, Celebrate Brooklyn!, National Sawdust and elsewhere. She has recorded and performed with the likes of Glen Hansard, Arcade Fire, Bon Iver, The National, Grizzly Bear, Caroline Shaw, Angélica Negrón, Cory Smythe, NY Philharmonic, International Contemporary Ensemble and Mariinsky Orchestra among others. She has premiered operas and chamber works by Paola Prestini, Philip Glass, John Adams, Louis Andriessen, Nico Muhly, Bryce Dessner, Missy Mazzoli, and Shara Nova, to name a few. She conducts for the Grammy Award-winning Brooklyn Youth Chorus, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, National Sawdust Ensemble, and Ensemble Pi.





Gracia Mwamba

Gracia Mwamba (aka Cianga) is an interdisciplinary artist. She began her art journey in slam poetry, where she represented the bay area & UC Berkeley on national stages. Gracia then began developing her visual art and music practice in her undergraduate degree and working.

Gracia's work on themes of home, mental health and faith also led her to be the keynote speaker at Houston's annual A.R.I.E.S symposium. She writes, draws, composes and

performs with the thesis of art as communication and black joyful art as a form of radical protest. For more information on her art, check out her website: cianga.com

Allen (Lee) Tesche

Lee Tesche is a multi-instrumentalist, sound designer and filmmaker from Atlanta, Georgia. He is best known for his experimental tape based work and as the guitarist for the band, Algiers. He has performed all around the world and has contributed music to numerous television programs and films. Lee is currently based in New Smyrna Beach.

