

Artist Fellowship
Catalog 2026



The Artist Fellowship Catalog is the State Arts Council’s annual publication that proudly and distinctly showcases the Fellows awarded each year in the Council’s Individual Artist Fellowship program.

As the cornerstone program in the Council's portfolio of grants and services for individual artists, the Fellowship program supports New Jersey artists in achieving their artistic goals and advancing their careers. Since the program's origin in 1970, there have been several iterations of its structure and of the Council's investment. As of 2025, it has been our privilege to carry out the program's current investment of \$2 million dollars for the direct benefit of New Jersey-based artists. Today, the program is carried out collaboratively by the Council and our administrative partners at Mid Atlantic Arts.

This marks our second Artist Fellowship catalog, bringing to the fore the 2026 cohort made up of 99 Fellows, representing 6 artistic disciplines and 19 counties across the Garden State. The pages vibrate with creative energy, illuminating for the viewer an extraordinary cross-section of creators, storytellers, and cultural producers who call New Jersey their home. As you explore the catalog, we hope you'll take note of who these artists are and learn more about their dedication and contribution to their craft. Each year we are honored to support artists through this program, and we are delighted to have the opportunity to curate a central place for any curious viewer to see them. We encourage you to personally experience their work.

Art, in its wonderfully varied forms, is not simply a luxury or an ancillary piece to a greater whole. From the perspective of the Council, art and artmaking are central to what makes a vibrant, democratic society—and artists are the driving force of that value. We're grateful for the artists presented here, and the tens of thousands of other artists in our state, who follow the calling to make and share art, and strengthen communities throughout New Jersey.

Felicia Grant, Chair	Danielle Bursk, Director of Artist Services & Community Partnerships
Allison Tratner, Executive Director	Stephanie Nerbak, Artist Services Manager

The New Jersey Individual Artist Fellowship Program is a project of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and Mid Atlantic Arts.



The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, created in 1966, is a division of the NJ Department of State and a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Council was established to encourage and foster public interest in the arts; enlarge public and private resources devoted to the arts; promote freedom of expression in the arts; and facilitate the inclusion of art in every public building in New Jersey. The Council believes the arts are central to every element we value most in a modern society including: human understanding; cultural and civic pride; strong communities; excellent schools; lifelong learning; creative expression; and economic opportunity.

To learn more about the Council, please visit artscouncil.nj.gov

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Ben Fine	Gabriella Grill	Lauren Scott Corwin	Tania Pomaes
Bryan Gorski	Gail Kelly	Mic Diño Boekelmann	Tania Qurashi
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painting

“The world can frequently feel like a very dark, confusing, and overwhelming place. Too often, we go through the motions of the everyday hustle and bustle without taking the time to look through the fog of life. We miss opportunities to see beauty, truth, and immense healing because it is so challenging to find the space for that respite, that tangible pause. Through my work, I create that pause and hold up a mirror to the stories that form the fabric of our human condition so that we may see beauty in chaos and healing even in profound darkness.”

Tania Pomaes,
Painting Fellow



Harvest Moon, 2026, Oil on Linen

ABIGAIL DUDLEY is a figurative painter who is interested in liminal spaces between quotidian life and the surreal. Her work explores the malleable nature of perception, memory, and the poetics of space. Dudley received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) and her Master of Fine Arts from the University of Delaware. While at PAFA, she received the Raymond D. & Estelle Rubens Travel Scholarship for European travel. Dudley has exhibited in solo and group shows throughout the United States and internationally. Most recently, she exhibited in solo shows in London, UK and in New York City, NY. Dudley is a three-time recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshield Grant in 2020, 2022, and 2025. Abigail Dudley received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

instagram: abidudley



Photo of Alia Bensliman

ALIA BENSLIMAN is a contemporary visual artist whose practice centers on artmaking as a form of visual journaling and self-inquiry. Her work explores personal and collective narratives shaped by cultural identity, memory, and social contexts. Drawing from her lived experiences, she examines themes including religion, relationships, health, taboos, and human rights, exploring the connections between personal stories and broader historical and societal frameworks. Raised in Tunisia and now based in New Jersey, Bensliman’s work reflects the intersection of North African, Islamic, and Amazigh cultural traditions. Through symbolic imagery, intricate patterns, handmade pigments, and layered materials, she investigates memory, identity, resilience, and belonging. Her compositions invite reflection, dialogue, and multiple interpretations, encouraging viewers to connect their own experiences to the work. Bensliman is a visual artist, teaching artist, and arts educator whose work has been exhibited at the Princeton University Art Museum, Lawrenceville School, Pennington School, Artworks Trenton, and galleries in New York City and Philadelphia. Her artwork is held in private collections worldwide.

web: aliabenslimanart.com
instagram: alia_bensliman_art

Chalcedony Clouds, 2024, Oil on Panel, 24 x 24 in.

ALYSSA FANNING (b. 1985, Teaneck, NJ) is a graduate of Pratt Institute (BFA) and Montclair State University (MFA). Fanning has exhibited at AC Institute, New York, NY; the Glass House, New Canaan, CT; Newark Museum, Newark, NJ; Platform x David Zwirner, New York, NY; Pocket Utopia, New York, NY and Teckningsmuseet, Laholm, Sweden, among others. Solo exhibitions by the artist include *A Thousand Moons and Suns* at Platform Project Space, Brooklyn, NY and *Alyssa Fanning: Drawings* at Carlton Hobbs, New York, NY. She has been published in *Battery Journal*, *BOMB Magazine*, *Forever Magazine*, *Hyperallergic*, *Peer Review*, and *Two Coats of Paint*. Her curatorial projects include exhibitions at Eagle Studio, Brooklyn, NY; Platform Project Space, Brooklyn, NY; and Radiator Gallery, Queens, NY. Fanning is co-founder of Show&Tell Art Talks, an artist lecture series held at the New York Irish Center in Long Island City, NY. She teaches drawing and design at Montclair State University in Montclair, NJ and Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, NJ, where she received a Distinguished Teaching Faculty Award in 2022. In 2026, she was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: alyssaefanning.com
instagram: alyssaefanning



Institutional Memory, 2024

ANDREW BARON (b. Cincinnati, Ohio) went to school and earned degrees from the San Francisco Art Institute (MFA, 1990) and Ohio State University (BFA, 1986). He currently lives in Plainfield, New Jersey with his wife, artist Suzanne Kammin. Andrew happily shows his work in and around New York. He received Individual Artist Fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts in 2026 and 2011.

web: andrewbaronstudio.com



Photo of Asem M. Ahmed

ASEM MOUSTAFA AHMED is a Moroccan-Egyptian American painter recognized for his large-scale figurative and narrative works that bridge classical traditions with contemporary themes. Drawing inspiration from the academic methods of the Old Masters, Ahmed has devoted his practice to reviving the discipline of representational art through a modern lens. His work reflects a synthesis of cultural influences—North African, Middle Eastern, and Western—celebrating diversity while exploring the shared human experience. Trained at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the New York Academy of Art, Ahmed's paintings have garnered recognition through exhibitions, publications, and academic engagement. His mastery of the figure and commitment to beauty, truth, and cultural dialogue position him among a new generation of artists redefining classical realism for the 21st century.

web: asemfineart.com

Untitled (Blue Spike), 2024, Oil on Canvas on Aluminum, 25 x 13 x 1.5 in.

BECKY NEWSOM grew up in Cuero, Texas and attended the University of Texas at Austin where she received a BFA with Honors. She lives and works in Hoboken, NJ. Most recently her paintings were the subject of a three person show entitled *Becky Newsom, Ann Stautberg, Frances Bagley* at Andrew Durham Gallery in Houston, TX, a one person show at the Iron Bridge Gallery in Long Lake, NY and a group exhibition entitled *In Bloom* at The Islip Art Museum in East Islip, NY. She is represented by Andrew Durham Gallery in Houston and her work is held in numerous private collections. Becky Newsom received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: beckynewsom.com



Suzanne Clores, 2026, Acrylic on Canvas, 26 x 26 in.

BEN FINE (b. 1970) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Jersey City, NJ. A graduate of Sarah Lawrence College (BFA, 1989), his work spans painting, animation, film, and comics, unified by a commitment to storytelling and visual imagination. Raised by a stone-carving sculptor mother and a scientific researcher father, Fine comes from a family deeply engaged with both art and inquiry. His great-aunt, Rose Fried, was a pioneering New York gallerist who presented Alice Neel's 1944 solo exhibition, an artist who has had a lasting influence on his work. Fine's early career included painting in Guanajuato, Mexico, where he held his first solo exhibition, followed by co-founding Studio lodyne in Brooklyn, an animation and design house known for its innovative stop-motion work. Since relocating to Jersey City in 2019, Fine has focused on painting, developing series such as The Pink Armchair Portraits, marked by bold color, inventive composition, and an emphasis on collective human connection. He is currently expanding this practice through residency-based projects that incorporate video recorded interviews and portrait sessions.

web: pinkarmchairportraits.com
instagram: benfinepainting

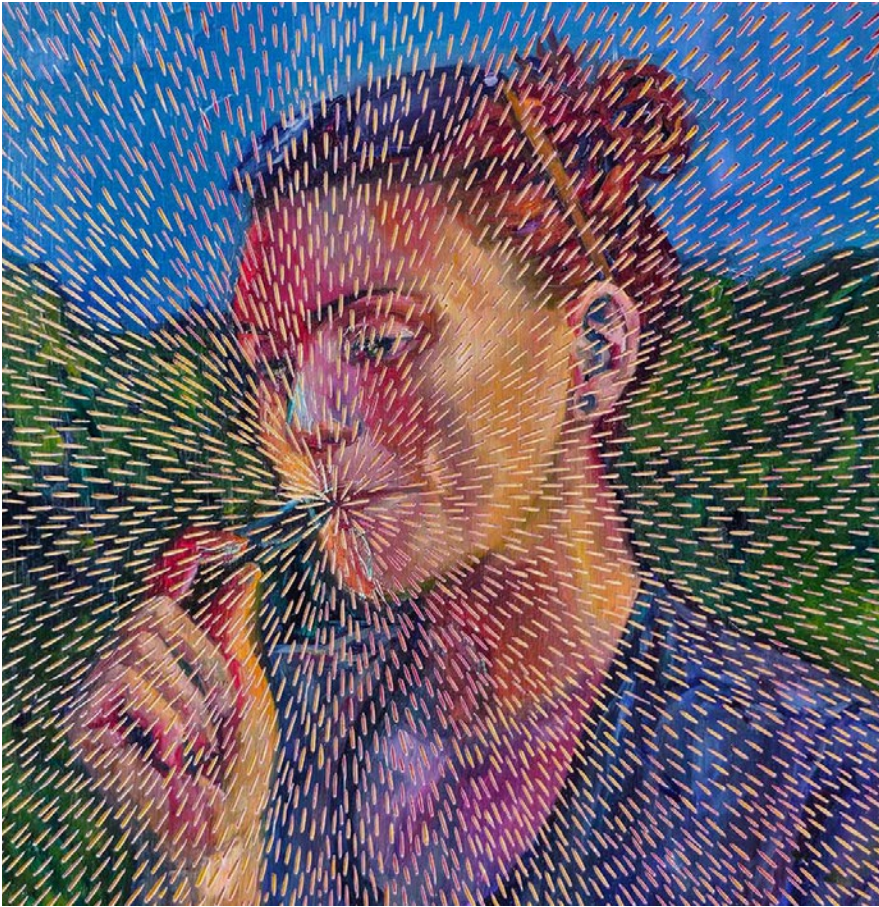


Peony, 2025, Oil on Canvas, 24 x 24 in.

BRYAN GORSKI is a New Jersey-based artist whose work is deeply rooted in the nuances of the natural world. Raised in the coastal environment of Long Branch, the ocean's proximity has served as a foundational influence on his life and aesthetic practice.

Gorski's academic path is uniquely multidisciplinary; he first earned a degree in Geology from Rutgers University before pivoting to pursue his true calling in the arts. He later earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Mason Gross School of the Arts and a Master of Arts from Kean University. For the past twenty-three years, Gorski has balanced his personal practice with a career in art education where he is a teacher of fine arts at Paramus High School. He credits his long-standing dialogue with his students—revolving around the constant critique and creation of work—as a vital catalyst for his own evolution as a painter. In 2026, Bryan Gorski was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: bryangorski.com
instagram: bryan_gorski_art



Breathe III, 2025, Oil and Acrylic

CHRISTINE HAYOUNG HONG is a New Jersey-based painter whose work explores memory, the subconscious, and transformation. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from New York University. Rooted in her Korean American background, her practice examines the fragility and impermanence of life through layered processes of erosion.

Working primarily in oil and acrylic, Hong builds up surfaces before carving back into them, enacting a physical gesture of decay. This excavation serves as both material and metaphor, treating memory as sediment that accumulates, shifts, and resurfaces over time. Through cycles of layering and removal, her paintings investigate resilience, vulnerability, and the evolving nature of memory.

Christine received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: cohort.com/christinehongstudio
instagram: christinehongstudio



Tree and Vines, 2024, Oil on Canvas, 84 x 66 in.

CLAIRE SHERMAN (b. Oberlin, OH) received her BA from The University of Pennsylvania and her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has completed residencies at the Terra Foundation for American Art, the MacDowell Colony, the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program, Yaddo, the Albers Foundation, and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Workspace program. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at PATRON Gallery, Chicago; DC Moore Gallery, NY; KMAC Museum, Louisville; Kimball Art Center, Park City, UT; Houldsworth Gallery, London; and Hof and Huyser Gallery, Amsterdam. Her work is included in the collections of the Nerman Museum, KMAC Museum, UBS Art collection, the Margulies Collection, the Federal Reserve, US Department of State's Art-in-Embassies, the Arkansas Museum of Fine Art, the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Hudson River Museum, and numerous private collections. Sherman is a Professor at Drew University and is represented by DC Moore Gallery in New York and PATRON Gallery in Chicago. She is a 2026 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellow in Fine Art.

web: clairesherman.com
instagram: claire.g.sherman

Snow Covered Street, Blues and White, 2026,
Oil, 30 x 40 in.

DANIEL FINALDI grew up in an immigrant home in Rochester, NY. Much like all immigrant experiences, extended families lived in one home and his upbringing echoed that immigrant lifestyle. The pull to use his visual gifts emerged extremely early on as a child. The family were laborers and lived modestly which meant no money for higher education. Needless to say, this was especially true for any desire in pursuit of being an artist, therefore the burden to pay for any education beyond secondary was fully on Finaldi's shoulders.

Clarity on his devotion to painting came like a bolt of lightning after a college field trip to the Metropolitan Museum in New York where Daniel encountered the work of Cezanne. The color and composition found in Cezanne was the revelation that shifted everything. After studying at SUNY New Paltz, Finaldi completed his MFA in painting at Brooklyn College. He has led the life of balancing teaching, painting, parenting and exhibiting in the New York/New Jersey region for decades. In 2026, Daniel Finaldi was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Daniel Finaldi is currently represented by the George Berges Gallery in New York City.

web: danielfinaldi.com
instagram: [danfinaldi](https://www.instagram.com/danfinaldi)



Biplane with Colonial Chair in Green, 2022,
Oil on Canvas, 36 x 48 in.

DAVID Z ORBAN (b. 1955, Trenton, NJ) is an award-winning NJ-based artist creating colorful still-life paintings that merge painterly realism with abstraction. His work highlights the overlooked beauty of utilitarian objects such as antique toys, hand tools, and balloons.

Rooted in tradition yet distinctly contemporary in its color and spatial energy, Orban's paintings stand as thoughtful meditations on material culture...works that feel both timeless and unmistakably of the present.

Orban received his AA in Visual Arts from Mercer County College, where he studied painting and printmaking with Mel Leipzig and Frank Rivera. He received his BA and MFA degrees from Brooklyn College, where he studied with Philip Pearlstein, Lois Dodd, and Al Terris.

Orban is a recipient of a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship Award from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: davidzorban.net
instagram: [davidzorban](https://www.instagram.com/davidzorban)



Community in Bloom, 2023, Image of De'von Downes
in front of their mural in Atlantic City, NJ.

DE'VON 'DIVINE' DOWNES is a non-binary artist from South Jersey who creates impactful works in watercolor, public art, and jewelry. Their portraiture focuses on the black experience, weaving in symbolism from folklore and nature. They've contributed to projects with Mural Arts, Atlantic City Arts Foundation, Made in America, Glassboro Public School, and Camden FireWorks, leaving permanent murals across various locations.

Before muralism, De'von studied Art Therapy, worked as an Arts Coordinator, and conducted community-based workshops emphasizing wellness and emotional literacy. Their belief in influencing change through inclusive, educational art drives them to challenge norms and use public art as a platform for inspiration and education.

De'von is cofounder of Philly Queer Life Drawing, and in 2026 was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. They are currently based in the South Jersey and Greater Philadelphia region.

web: divinedownes.com
instagram: [downes_art](https://www.instagram.com/downes_art)

Sitting with Luis and Thomas, 2024

DIANA POLANCO is an artist based in Jersey City, New Jersey. She received her BFA from Columbia College Chicago, Chicago, IL (2016), and MFA from SUNY, University at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY (2023). In 2026, Diana was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She primarily works in oils, and in her paintings she portrays herself, family, animals, the people she is close with, and does so with attention to how the emotional and sensorial capacities of color and form have the ability to further express and heighten the dynamics of subjects in a piece.

web: dianapolanco.com
instagram: [jodona__](https://www.instagram.com/jodona__)



Burning Down The House, 2026

ERICA ROSE LEVINE, a mixed media artist currently working with oil paint was born in Brooklyn in 1975 in New York. She attended LaGuardia H.S. Of Music and Art before earning a BFA from The School of Visual Arts. Her current studio is located at Mana Contemporary in Jersey City. Her work has been shown worldwide with galleries such as Thinkspace, Modern Eden, The Graffiti Museum, Urban Nation, Strychnin Gallery Germany, Roq La Rue, PowWowHawaii, Aqua Art Miami, Scope Miami, Parlor Gallery and Deep Space NJ. She has been featured in publications such as *Arrested Motion*, *Bliss Magazine*, *Juxtapoz*, *Supersonic*, *Jezebel* and *UrbanNation*. Erica has had two solo shows to date, the first at Thinkspace LA and the second at Clerestory Montclair.

web: ericaroselevine.com
instagram: ericarosey



Gather Yourselves Under The Willow Tree, 2024, Painting on Canvas, 20 x 24 in. © Erin Kuhn 2024

ERIN KUHN is an interdisciplinary artist based in New Jersey working with paint on canvas and wood, cut paper, resin, and mirrors. Her practice treats the studio as a site of transformation, building works in deliberate layers through the integration of botanical, mineral, and elemental materials alongside traditional media.

She earned her BFA from Maryland Institute College of Art and has exhibited in galleries and museums, including a solo exhibition in 2021. She has received awards from Mayor Fulop of Jersey City recognizing her artistic excellence and community engagement. In 2023 she won an international photography award, and in 2024 was featured in *Create! Magazine*. In 2026, Erin Kuhn was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: lightfoxstudios.com
instagram: peachf0x



Portrait Of A Young Man, 2024, Oil on Canvas

FABRICIO SUAREZ is a Uruguayan artist, living and working in Jersey City, NJ. He is the recipient of the David Rhodes President's Scholarship at The School of Visual Arts in NYC. He graduated with an Illustration and Fine Arts degree and quickly began his career as a freelance illustrator having a number of children's books published. Looking to expand on his creativity in painting, he rented his first studio and never looked back.

Suarez was invited to participate in the ESKFF residency at Mana Contemporary in Jersey City, NJ, and later, Off The Grid, a residency for Plein-Air painters in the Red Featherlake Mountains in Colorado.

His work has been shown nationwide and in institutions like the Massachusetts State University and Union County College, NJ. In 2026 he received an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. He continues to paint daily as he prepares for a new body of work.

web: fabriciosuarez.com
instagram: fsuarezart



Honest and Harmless, 2022

FLOYD (b. 1996, Jacksonville, FL) is a Newark-based artist. She received her BFA from The Cooper Union School of Art in 2020 and studied at Malmö Art Academy in 2017. Recently, Floyd received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship award from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She has collaborated with Rutgers University for Earth Day (Newark, NJ 2025). She has exhibited at Vox Populi (Philadelphia, PA; 2023), OUTPOST (Copenhagen, DK; 2022), and Thorvaldsens Museum (Copenhagen, DK; 2021). Floyd's practice conjoins painting with sculpture, writing, and performance. Alongside her studio practice, Floyd is an organizer and advisor of exhibitions and public programming throughout New York and New Jersey. She has collaborated with organizations such as Glassroots, The Children's Museum of Manhattan, Brooklyn Children's Museum, and Brooklyn Public Library.

web: floydk.com
instagram: freud_floyd

Bowery 2, 2025, Acrylic on Canvas

FRANI LUGO is a painter and draftsman. His highly detailed images are representational in nature and explore themes of landscape, portraiture, still life and dreamscape. Currently his primary working medium of choice is acrylic on canvas and ink on paper.

Frani has exhibited at galleries in the Northeast United States and the Caribbean. His work is held in numerous private collections internationally and receives frequent commissions for his portraiture. He received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Frani holds a BFA from the Hartford Art School and was awarded a fellowship to attend advanced studies at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

web: franilugo.com
facebook: [franilugo](https://www.facebook.com/franilugo)

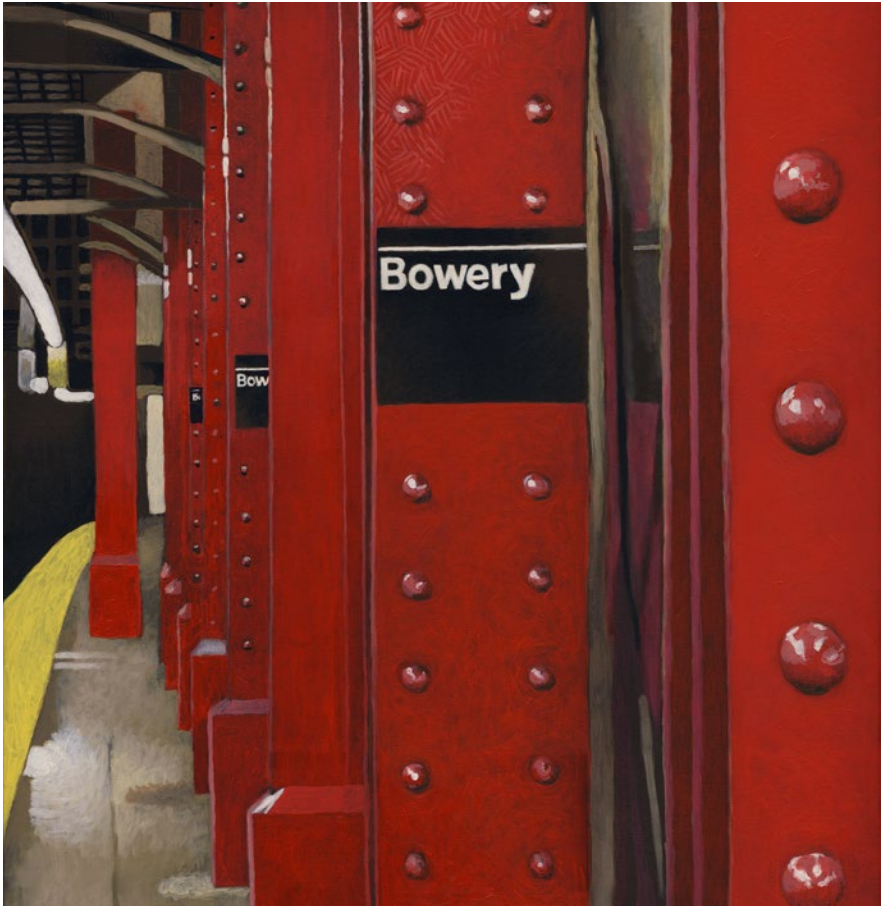


Photo of Gail Kelly

GAIL KELLY is a self-taught oil painter based in New Jersey, primarily working outdoors or “en plein air” during all four seasons. She strives to depict the minutiae of her surroundings with honesty and sensitivity, thus inviting the viewer to see beauty in a scene they may have taken for granted. She can be found painting almost anywhere in New Jersey, but has a special place in her heart for the Jersey Shore.

Gail has been juried into several group shows and plein air festivals around the Northeast United States and as far as Boulder, Colorado. In 2023, the state of New Jersey purchased a collection of Gail’s artwork to present to foreign business officials on a trip to East Asia as a faithful depiction of some of New Jersey’s most scenic spots.

When Gail is not painting she can be found writing, walking, and teaching art to all ages. She loves to help others discover the unique challenges and delights of painting outdoors. She also frequently participates in artisan markets throughout the state.

web: gailkellyart.com
instagram: [gailkellyart](https://www.instagram.com/gailkellyart)

Supernova, 2024

GABRIELLA GRILL (b. Columbia, MD) is an interdisciplinary artist working in painting, sculpture, drawing, and printmaking. Through slow, repetitive handwork, she transforms disposable packaging materials into abstractions that expose the friction between transient material lifecycles and slow sustained labor.

Grill received her BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art and her MFA in Art Practice from Stanford University in 2022. She lives and works in South Orange, NJ. Grill has exhibited her work across the US at venues including Soloway (Brooklyn NY), St. Charles Projects (Baltimore MD), and Patricia Sweetow Gallery (San Francisco CA). She has also exhibited work in London at Huxley-Parlour (London UK). She attended an artist residency in 2022 at Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris FR. In 2026, Grill was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: gabriellagrill.com
instagram: [gabbigrill](https://www.instagram.com/gabbigrill)



Photo of Gina Beavers

GINA BEAVERS (b. 1974, Athens, Greece; lives W. Orange, NJ) holds an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and taught at Columbia University. Her work has been the subject of solo institutional exhibitions at MoMA PS1 in New York (2019) and Neuer Essener Kunstverein in Essen, Germany (2021). Her art has also been featured in notable institutions such as the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles and Chicago, Gallerie Nazionali di Arte Antica – Palazzo Barberini, the Columbus Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome, the Mazovian Contemporary Art Museum, Barns Art Center, Schlossmuseum Linz, The FLAG Art Foundation, Lehman College Art Gallery, Frans Hals Museum, and the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft. Her works are part of the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, MOCA Los Angeles, Perez Art Museum Miami, Institute of Contemporary Art Miami, Kistefos Museum, RISD Museum, Deji Art Museum, Baltimore Museum of Art, Madison Museum of Art, and Tel Aviv Museum of Art. Her art has been reviewed in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Frieze*, *Artforum*, and *Art in America*.

web: ginabeavers.com
instagram: [gina_beavers](https://www.instagram.com/gina_beavers)

Portrait of James Baldwin, 2025, Acrylic on Canvas, 35 x 25 in.

GWENN SEEMEL paints in a polka-dot Cubist style that has been delighting art lovers and inspiring imitation since 2003. In 2017 a tech company named a photo filter “the Seemel,” an unusual honor—and one that happened before AI companies began consuming and regurgitating artists’ creativity without any attribution or payment. Seemel saw “the Seemel” as both a compliment and a challenge from our future robot overlords to keep making original art that matters. For the artist, that means creating figurative paintings that are unapologetically handmade and determined to remind us how interconnected we all are. Seemel speaks regularly about creativity and queerness, notably at their TEDxGeneva talk and in the Belgian documentary *Queerying Nature*. *The Oxford University Press*, *Newsweek*, and *Hyperallergic* have featured their art, and Seemel has worked with Princeton University, Mural Arts Philadelphia, and Jobs With Justice among many other institutions.

Seemel is French-American, and this plural identity acts as a prism. The English- and French-speaking versions of the artist exist in one individual, but understand the world from a slightly different perspective, revealing the many colors contained in each moment.

web: gwenmseemel.com



James Pustorino with Container for the Universe: Connecting the Coordinates, and The eye and the heart are only temporary containers

JAMES PUSTORINO is an artist, arts organizer and the Executive Director of Victory Hall Inc., in Jersey City. He has produced exhibitions and public art projects in New Jersey and NYC, classes for children, seniors and developmentally disabled artists. Pustorino received a 2019 and 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship in Painting from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Born in the New York area, he began art training at age 11. When his family moved to Northern Virginia near the Potomac River he continued to explore color, light and abstract form. Identifying early on with the sensibilities of the Washington Color School artists, he has since added to these his interest in geometry, physics and 3D math puzzles, as well as his graphic design training that emphasized curvilinear and dimensional form. He received a BFA from Carnegie-Mellon University (1983), and began showing and organizing exhibitions in Pittsburgh and at the Butler Institute, and exhibited at the Columbus Museum of Art. He moved to Jersey City in 1997. Recent exhibitions include the Medici Museum, MORE Museum, Livingstone Gallery (The Hague), and Art on Paper Amsterdam.

web: jamespustorino.com
instagram: jamespustorino



Coffee Table Jenga, 2025, Oil on Linen

JANICE BELOVE creates paintings that are vivid, color-driven explorations of everyday life. Whether on canvas or iPad, she captures overlooked details of domestic and everyday spaces. Marked by keen observation, rhythmic composition, and a subtle sense of humor, her work elevates the ordinary. In addition to her studio practice, Janice has taught widely as an adjunct professor of art, public school art teacher, and museum instructor, and currently offers private drawing and painting classes.

Janice holds an MFA from Queens College, CUNY, and a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). She is the recipient of a Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Fellowship and has participated in residencies at the Millay Colony for the Arts and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. Her work was featured in the 2024 New Jersey Arts Annual at the Montclair Art Museum, and she received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Janice exhibits throughout New York and New Jersey, and her work is held in private collections across the United States. She lives in Montclair, New Jersey.

web: janicebelove.com
instagram: janicebelove.art



The Waterfall, 2025

JEFFREY FILBERT studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) where he won many awards including the prestigious Schiedt Traveling Scholarship Award which he used to study in Europe. In 2007 and 2026, Jeffrey Filbert was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for sculpture and painting, respectively. For the last twenty-five years he has maintained a studio in Camden, NJ where he is an adjunct Professor at Rutgers University teaching Painting, Figure Drawing, Design and Printing. He has a diverse body of work that centers around the figure as his main source of inspiration. His most recent show was silkscreen paintings, *Beyond the Veil*, at the Pat Nugent Gallery at Rosemont College in November of 2025. An upcoming show will be at the Marlin Gallery at the Camden County College this coming September. It will include works from his new series of realistic paintings.

web: jeffreylilbert.com
instagram: jeffreylilbert

Unfettered, 2023, Oil on Panel, 8 x 8 in.

JODI GERBI (b. 1971, New York) is an oil painter who brings a profound dedication to the technical aspects of her craft, resulting in strikingly realistic works of art. With an MFA from the New York Academy of Art and a BFA from Syracuse University, Jodi's educational background has deeply influenced her meticulous approach to painting.

Her work has been shown in exhibitions at Forum Gallery, IMUR gallery, Aqua Art Miami, MK Apothecary, Fort Works Art, Deep Space Gallery and the Monmouth Museum.

She received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: jodigerbi.com
instagram: jodigerbi



Sometimes It's Not Self-Evident, 2025, Oil on Canvas, 60 x 44 in. (152 x 112 cm)

JONATHAN YUBI (b. 1993, Bronx, New York) is a first-generation Ecuadorian-American painter based in Bergenfield, New Jersey. His work explores labor, identity, and social unrest through parable-like narratives. His paintings center on construction workers—both documented and undocumented—placing them within historical landscapes and contemporary contexts to examine labor struggles as a defining thread of Pan-American history.

Yubi earned his BFA from Lehman College, CUNY, and previously studied at Memphis College of Art and the University of Central Florida. His work has been exhibited at the Montclair Art Museum, Anna Zorina Gallery, 17 Frost Gallery, Satellite Gallery, and CityArts Factory, among other venues. He presented a solo exhibition with MiA Gallery in Philadelphia and participated in exhibitions and public programs connected to New Jersey Monuments to Migration and Labor, a Mellon Foundation-funded initiative. Yubi was an artist-in-residence at Guttenberg Arts as part of the 2025 Space and Time Residency. In 2026, he was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: jonathanyubi.com
instagram: jonathanyubi



That Which I Hold Dear, 2022, Oil on Canvas, 20 x 16 in.

KATHERINE MOJZSIS is an artist and educator based in Jersey City, New Jersey. She earned her BFA from the School of Visual Arts and her MFA from Hunter College, CUNY. Mojzsis has exhibited her work both nationally and internationally at venues including the Bronx Museum of the Arts, Memphis College of Art, Lower East Side Printshop, the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, the Morris Museum, the Goethe-Institut, the National Arts Club, the Hunterdon Art Museum, and the Zimmerli Art Museum.

She has received numerous awards and residencies from institutions such as the Brodsky Center, Lower East Side Printshop, the Bronx Museum AIM Fellowship, Llotja Escola d'Arts Aplicades, and the Maine College of Art. Her work is held in the permanent collections of the Montclair Art Museum, the Library of Congress, the Newark Public Library, the New York Historical Society, and the New Jersey State Museum, among others.

web: katherinemojzsis.com
instagram: katherinemojzsis



Kavion Robinson at Annex Art Gallery

KAVION ROBINSON is a Jamaican American multidisciplinary artist based in New Jersey. Working across painting, illustration, mixed media, writing, and photography, his practice centers on Black culture, history, and the Jamaican landscape. His work explores themes of the African diaspora, identity, music, and heritage, with a strong emphasis on narrative figurative painting and portraiture. As an illustrator, Robinson has illustrated more than 15 books. He published his first book as an author, *Out of Many, One People: The Story of Jamaica Illustrated*, in 2019, a visual narrative of Jamaica's history through portraiture. In 2024, he released his second book and continues to expand his literary and visual practice, currently developing his third book alongside a new body of paintings. He holds a BA in Fine Art from the University of the Arts and is an award-winning painter recognized for historical portraits of influential Jamaican figures, including Nanny of the Maroons and Marcus Garvey. His work has been exhibited at the National Gallery of Jamaica, Ellarslie Museum, Annex Art Gallery, Perkins Center for the Arts, and Warden's House Gallery.

web: kavionart.com
instagram: kavionart

A2015.008 Cubic Inception Series, 2015

KYUNG YOUL YOON (b. 1947, Gangjin, Jeollanam-do, South Korea) is a Korean-born artist based in the United States since 1995. He studied painting, sculpture, and printmaking at the National University of Madrid (University of Bellas Artes) in Spain from the 1980s to early 1990s. Active internationally, Yoon has exhibited extensively in the United States, Korea, Spain, and China, establishing a sustained and evolving practice that bridges material experimentation and perceptual inquiry.

Yoon is best known for his ongoing Cubic Inception series, a body of sculptural paintings that explores perception, materiality, and spatial experience through modular constructions. Working with materials such as aluminum, acrylic glass, brass, copper, hanji paper, and other found and industrial elements, his works blur the boundaries between painting, sculpture, and architecture. Depending on the viewer's perspective, the compositions may evoke cityscapes, landscapes, or cosmic imagery, shifting between objecthood and metaphysical space.

Kyung Youl Yoon received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

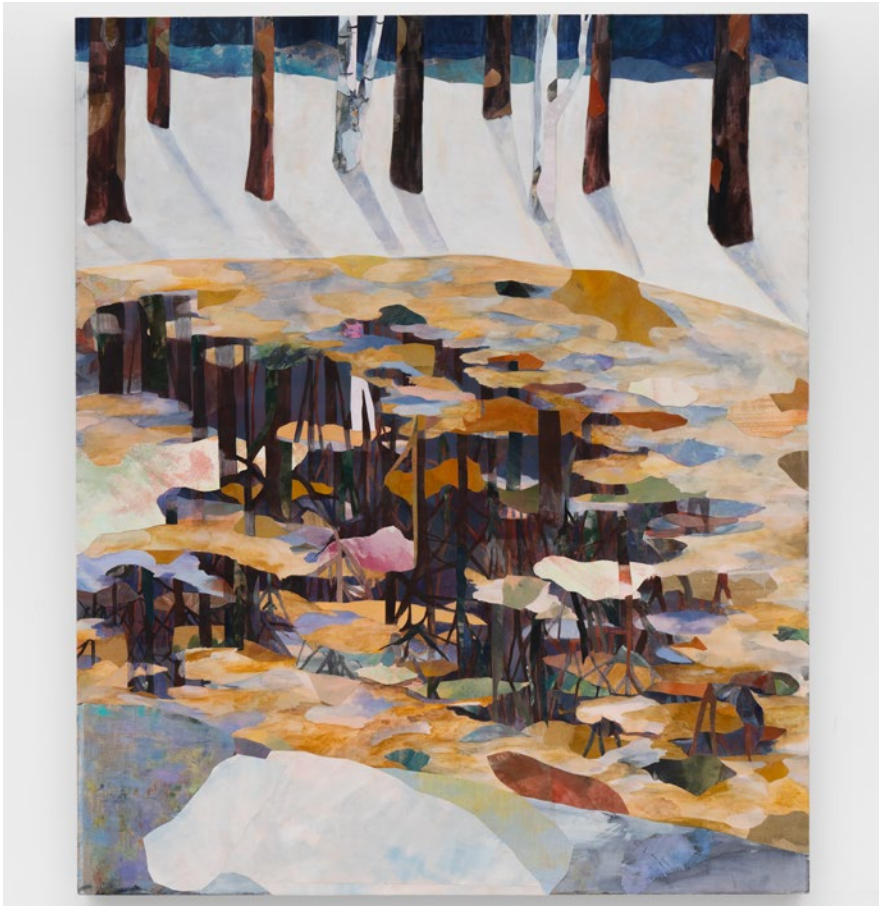
web: kyungyoulyoon.com
instagram: yoonkyungyoul



Puddle, 2025

LAUREN PORTADA is a Cuban-American artist, currently living and working in the Oranges, NJ. She has exhibited nationally and internationally in New York, Chicago, L.A., India and Norway. Recent shows include Deanna Evans Projects (solo; 2025) Gold Gallery (solo; 2024, 2022) Transmitter Gallery, BK (solo; 2019) The Pit, LA (2018) and Kristen Lorello, NY (2018). She was one of ten founding members of the artist-run collective Regina Rex located in Brooklyn and Manhattan from 2010-2018. She held residencies in India (Fulbright), Svalbard, Norway, and Iceland. In 2026, Lauren Portada was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: laurenportada.com
instagram: lportadada



U-Haul, 2025

LAUREN SCOTT CORWIN is a painter and textile-based artist whose work explores how pattern can hold memory and map a sense of place. Raised in Mercer County, New Jersey, her early experiences were shaped by a family rooted in gardening and time spent outdoors. She draws on memories of shifting landscapes (ongoing construction, the racks in Caldor, the evolution of her downtown, and learning to drive along the New Jersey Turnpike, to name a few) as a framework for understanding change, repetition, and lived environment.

Corwin received her BFA in Painting from the Maryland Institute College of Art and her MFA from the University of Delaware. She is a recipient of a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: laurenscottcorwin.com
instagram: lascocorwin



Self Portrait in Manila Envelope, 2024

MIC DIÑO BOEKELMANN is a Filipino American artist born in Quezon City, Philippines. She was raised in Germany, Israel and the US and received her BA from UC Berkeley. She is a dedicated arts advocate.

Her work is included in the permanent collection at Princeton University and has been shown at the American University Museum Katzen Arts Center, the Chautauqua Institution, the Filipino American Contemporary Art exhibit at San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, CA, the NARS Foundation on Governors Island, Princeton University, Salmagundi Club, Allied Artists of America and is a contributing author to *Last Artist Standing: Living and Sustaining a Creative Life over 50* edited by Sharon Loudon.

She received a 2026 Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the Sustainable Arts Foundation Fellowship, the Chautauqua Visual Arts Residency, the NYFA Immigrant Artist Program. She has facilitated artist talks at the Women's Caucus for Art, Pratt Institute and the Princeton Public Library. Boekelmann lives and works in Princeton, NJ.

web: micbstudio.com
instagram: micboekelmann

MICHELLE DOLL (b. Canton, Ohio) received her BFA from Kent State University (1999) and MFA from the New York Academy of Art (2006). Michelle's paintings capture quiet, private moments hinged on personal connections between herself and her subjects. Her paintings are infused with themes of intimacy and introspection and explore contemporary ideas about family, love, desire and femininity. Selected awards include the Prince of Wales/ Forbes Foundation Travel Grant (2006), Artist in Residence at Eden Rock on St. Barth's (2008), The Bennett Prize Honorable Mention (2018), Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts (2026 & 2019) and The Lillian Orlowsky and William Freed Grant (2024). Select publications include *New American Paintings*, *ArtNews*, *The Figure* by Margaret McCann (Rizzoli) and *The Figurative Artist's Handbook* by Robert Zeller (Monacelli Studio). Her paintings have been exhibited in the US and internationally with solo exhibitions at Lyons Wier Gallery in NYC, Pontone Gallery in London and Galleri Ramfjord in Oslo. Michelle currently lives and works in Hoboken, NJ and teaches at New Jersey City University and The New York Academy of Art.

web: michelledoll.com
instagram: michellelynnndoll



NETTE FORNÉ THOMAS primarily creates paintings, graphite drawings, and mixed media artworks. For 36 years she was an art educator and arts administrator in the Newark Public School System in Newark, NJ. Her art has been widely exhibited nationally on college campuses and in regional museums. It is included in the Rutgers University 40th anniversary perpetual virtual archival website of the Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series. Since retiring from education, Nette has been associated with Pen and Brush, a 135-year-old women's visual and literary arts organization in New York, where she is the elected president. Her other artistic endeavors involve curating and managing exhibits of local and nationally renowned artists for various art organizations statewide. Her recent art has been exhibited at The Newark Museum of Art, the Montclair Art Museum, Monmouth Museum and the Morris Museum. In 2023 she created a mural that was installed on a Public Service Facility in Newark, NJ. In 2026 Nette was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: nettefornethomas.com
instagram: nettefornethomas



PHILIP J. CARROLL sees creativity as part of our DNA and the foundation of how an artist transforms their story and interprets the world around us. Painting realistic landscapes and still lifes that inspire, using watercolor studies en plein air, drawings, and reference photographs Philip transforms images into larger works as paintings in the studio.

Yet as much as DNA might be embedded with stirring the creative genes. He finds that reflecting on one belief: "That he does not choose the subjects, but rather they choose him." This notion holds some truth, as each painting represents a concept that emerges from various sources of inspiration and the chance meeting of your subject. These sources can manifest themselves at any time, in a dream, a gentle breeze, a ray of light, a falling leaf, or a fleeting movement caught in the corner of one's eye.

web: philipcarroll.com
instagram: philipcarroll_artist



RAY ARCADIO is a New Jersey-based artist born in the Dominican Republic, known for his InShapeUniverse and emerging AfroDynamic style that probes the immigrant experience, identity, and the search for self. He builds layered visual narratives with masks, symbols, urban gestures, and Indigenous markings, blending playful imagery with socio-political depth. His work draws on Caribbean heritage and contemporary urban culture.

Arcadio holds a BFA from New Jersey City University and has a background in graphic design and street art. He has painted numerous murals across the East Coast and is a founding member of Jersey City's culture-jamming collective Artflux. His work has been exhibited throughout the United States and is held in major collections including the Zimmerli Art Museum (New Brunswick, NJ), the Museum of Modern Religious Art (St. Louis, MO), and the Museo de Arte Moderno (Santo Domingo, DR), with additional recognition at the Montclair Art Museum. In 2026, he received an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: rayarcadio.com
instagram: rayarcadio

Thread of Life, 2022, Oil on Round Convex Canvas, 36 in.

RIHAM ELSADANY is a multidisciplinary Egyptian-American artist and educator whose work bridges technical mastery with profound psychological inquiry. With a career spanning over two decades, her practice explores the complexities of human consciousness, memory, and the layers of the psychic realm through large-scale sculpture, oil painting, and traditional printmaking.

ElSadany just completed a Master of Fine Arts at the New York Academy of Art (Class of 2026). Her recent work, including the thesis series “Beneath the Gown,” acts as a visual excavation of the psychic landscape. Utilizing figurative symbolism to peel back the layers of social persona, the series gives form to internal states and explores the tension between our outward-facing masks and the hidden realities that lie beneath. Her work often employs intricate sculptural metaphors—most notably her 12-foot carousel installations—to examine the cyclical nature of experience and the tension of figures seeking to escape the platform of the known.

An accomplished academic, ElSadany holds a PhD and a Master’s degree in Art Education. In 2026, she was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: rihamelsadany.com
instagram: riham.elsadany



Mother of Sea Beasts, 2026

SAHANA RAMAKRISHNAN was born in Mumbai, India and raised in Singapore. After completing her BFA in Painting at the Rhode Island School of Design, she lived and worked in Brooklyn and Jersey City for ten years. Her work has been exhibited internationally and nationally in Rajiv Menon Contemporary, Fridman Gallery, Brooklyn Museum, ICA Miami, Jeffrey Deitch Projects, The Rubin Museum and more. Ramakrishnan was an artist in residence at The Arctic Circle Residency and Yaddo, a fellow at the Robert Blackburn Printmaking workshop, the Feminist-in-Residence program at Gateway Project Spaces, and the Yale/ Norfolk Summer program, among others. Her work is currently in the permanent collections of the Institute of Contemporary Art in Miami, The Brooklyn Museum in New York, and the Kadist Foundation in Paris. Her paintings and exhibitions have been reviewed in publications such as *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Artforum*, *Hyperallergic*, and *Artnet News*. In 2026, she received an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Sahana is currently a resident at Roswell Artist in Residence.

web: sahana-ramakrishnan.com
instagram: sahanabanana



Photo of Robert O'Connor in his studio

ROBERT O'CONNOR is an interdisciplinary artist working across music, painting, printmaking, and video, with work exhibited throughout the United States and Japan. He holds an MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts and degrees from The Cooper Union, and has studied at the National Academy of Design and the Art Students League of New York.

O'Connor received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for painting and a 2025 Finalist Award for music composition. An active composer since 2014, he trained at Juilliard and participated in the European American Musical Alliance residency in Paris. His work has been featured at NY Studio Gallery, Mass MoCA, and the Arizona State University Art Museum, and recognized at the Cannes and Toronto Short Film Festivals.

As co-founder of FilmOneFest, an international micro short film festival, he served as Creative Director for ten years. He previously coordinated exhibitions for the VCFA Visual Arts MFA program and currently chairs the Exhibition Committee for AHArts in New Jersey.

web: robertoconnor.art
instagram: rjocon



Heading North and South, 2026, Oil on Canvas, 48 x 30 in.

SAM TIPPETT is a life-long craftsman, self-taught artist, and grower of squash and beans. His collection is an eclectic and wide range of figurative imagery from nature and rural culture. Currently painting in oil on canvas or panel, he has dabbled in inks, watercolor, metals and other media. Finding inspiration in the oddest of places and sounds, he is influenced by the beauty in mundane details.

He was born in Croton, NJ, a slice of misplaced Appalachia, where he grew up with his artistic family of outsiders. Ingenuity was a way of life and eccentricity pervaded every space. His work is both surreal and uncanny, but honest and unpretentious, conveying a generosity of spirit. His reticence belies a gift for raw humor and openness that surfaces in his work. Sam loves long-haired kitties and lives with his family in Frenchtown, NJ.

instagram: sam_oak_tippett

The Remnant, 2025

SARAH BECKTEL is an American artist based at the New Jersey shore. She earned her BFA in painting from the Tyler School of Art and continued her studies in representational drawing and painting through atelier training and workshops.

Becktel's work has been exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the United States, including the National Museum of Wildlife Art, the Loveland Museum, and the Customs House Museum and Cultural Center.

She has been awarded artist residencies at Brush Creek Ranch in Saratoga, Wyoming, and PLAYA in Summer Lake, Oregon. In 2026, she received an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Becktel has also received awards from organizations including the Colored Pencil Society of America, American Women Artists, and the Salmagundi Club.

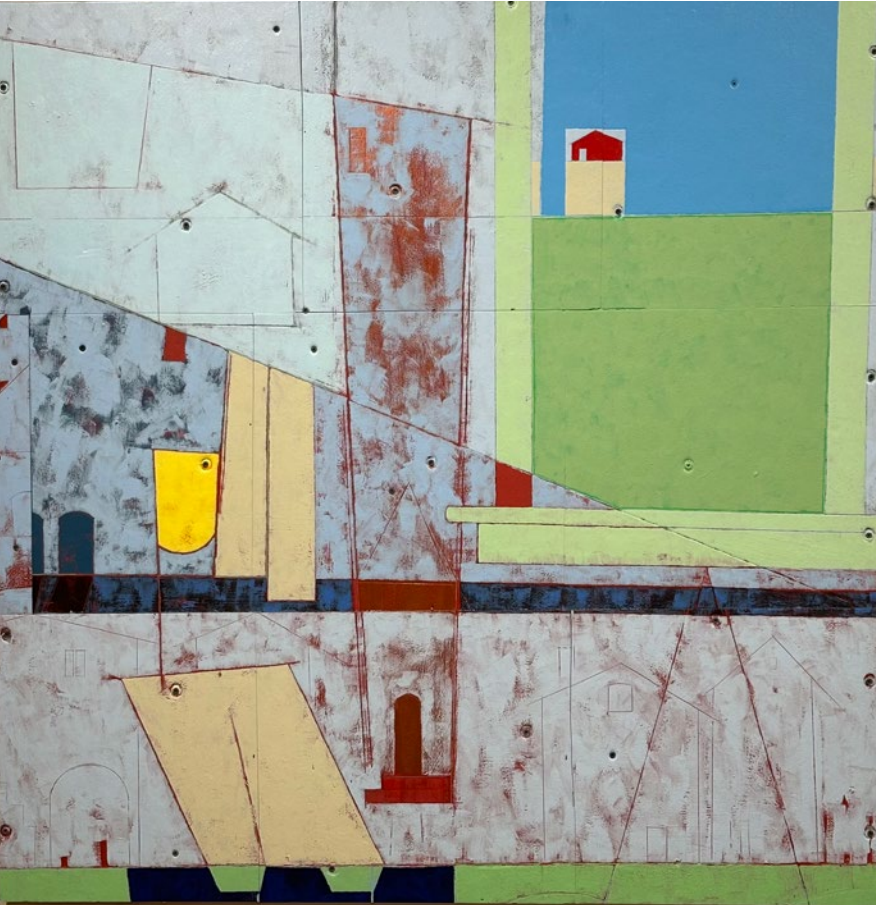
web: sarahbecktel.com
instagram: sarahbecktel



Fractured Landscapes: Memories of Isobe, 2024

SCOTT KNAUER is the Director of Galleries and Collections, Monmouth University Department of Art and Design. He received a BFA from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and an MFA from Ohio University. Examples of Knauer's professional experience include the New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art, New Harmony, IN; Denise Bibro Fine Art, New York, NY; Guernsey's Auction (project participation on the Baseball Auction that featured the historic Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa home run baseballs and the Elvis Auction featuring items from the Graceland archives), New York, NY; the Katharina Rich Perlow Gallery, New York, NY and the Weber State University Kimball Visual Arts Center, Ogden, UT. Examples of curated exhibitions include *Derek Boshier, Works on Paper: A Retrospective 1955-2003*; *A Spellbound Vision: Viewing Asmat Art Through the Eyes of the Western Contemporary Artist*; and *Beyond Commerce: A National Design and Illustration Invitational*. Knauer's artwork has also been included in national exhibitions and can be found in numerous private and public collections. In 2024 he received a Finalist award and in 2026 an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: svknauer.wixsite.com/sfknauer
instagram: brilliantfeet



Epochal Violence 9: Querencia/Altar. 2021, Oil on Linen, 47 x 63 in.

SEAN MOUNT (b. Bucks, PA) is a self-taught oil and watercolor painter who is also a keen naturalist, mushroom forager and birdwatcher.

After a childhood spent in the woods, Sean attended Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, for degrees in biology and literature. After working as a decorative painter and muralist, he spent a decade in New York City working in the film and television industry as a member of the Scenic Artists Union. During that time, he won three Art Directors Guild Awards for his work on *MR. ROBOT* and *The Night Of*. Sean has received myriad other awards and recognitions for his painting, including two New Jersey Individual Artist Fellowships in 2019 & 2026, and Best Painting at the Shad Fest in Lambertville, NJ where he lives with his family.

The painting featured here was purchased by the James A. Michener Art Museum in Doylestown, PA. It is currently on view as part of their permanent collection.

web: seanmount.com
instagram: meansount



In the Balance, 2024

TANIA POMALES is a New Jersey-based Puerto Rican artist who specializes in dark and surreal works created primarily in oils. As a nod to her colorful and bold heritage, Pomales incorporates bright color palettes into her art in juxtaposition with darker motifs, such as skulls and human anatomical references, to explore themes of life, death and the cyclical nature of the human experience. The importance of mental health and deep self-reflection are also fundamental themes in her work, aiming to captivate the viewer and guide them to introspection and growth by giving them space to also be seen within her creations.

Tania Pomales received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: taniapomalesart.com
instagram: taniapomalesfineart

Still Life with Vessel and Rose, 2026, Oil on Wood Panel, 14 x 11 in.

TANIA QURASHI (b. 1993, New Jersey) is a Philadelphia-based artist whose work explores cultural and racial melancholy through symbolic objects, vessels, and figurative and floral motifs. Working primarily in painting and drawing, she engages with imagery tied to her Pakistani and Guatemalan heritage, using still life compositions to examine personal and collective histories. Qurashi received an MFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Qurashi has exhibited her work in group exhibitions including the Asian Arts Initiative (Philadelphia, PA), Long Beach Island Foundation (Loveladies, NJ), Amos Eno Gallery (Brooklyn, NY), Fjord (Philadelphia, PA), and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Arts Museum (Philadelphia, PA), and TROVE [flat file] by Deanna Evans Projects (New York, NY). She has attended residencies including the Vermont Studio Center and Jentel Artist Residency. She is a recipient of the Brodsky Center of PAFA James V. Nixon Jr. Award and her work has been published in *New American Paintings*. Tania Qurashi received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: taniaqurashi.com
instagram: [tania.qurashi](https://www.instagram.com/tania.qurashi)



Rest Assured, Oil on Canvas, 2025, 60 x 48 in.

TROY JONES (b. 1974) is a contemporary fine artist born and raised in Jersey City, NJ, where he continues to live and work alongside a studio practice in New York City. A recipient of a Bachelor of Fine Arts from New Jersey City University, Jones has spent over 30 years honing his craft under the mentorship of world-renowned artist Ben Jones—a lineage rooted in the Black Arts Movement that remains central to his vision.

His exhibitions span the U.S. and abroad, including a notable appearance at Casa de Africa in Havana, Cuba, and culminating in his 2025 debut solo museum exhibition, *Echoes of the Diaspora: A Study in Style, Culture and the African Mask*, at the Morris Museum in Morristown, NJ. In 2026, he was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

At the heart of his practice is the *Mask* series of large-scale oil paintings of contemporary African American figures wearing African tribal masks, confronting identity, duality, and the full complexity of Black life in America today.

instagram: [troyjonesartist](https://www.instagram.com/troyjonesartist)



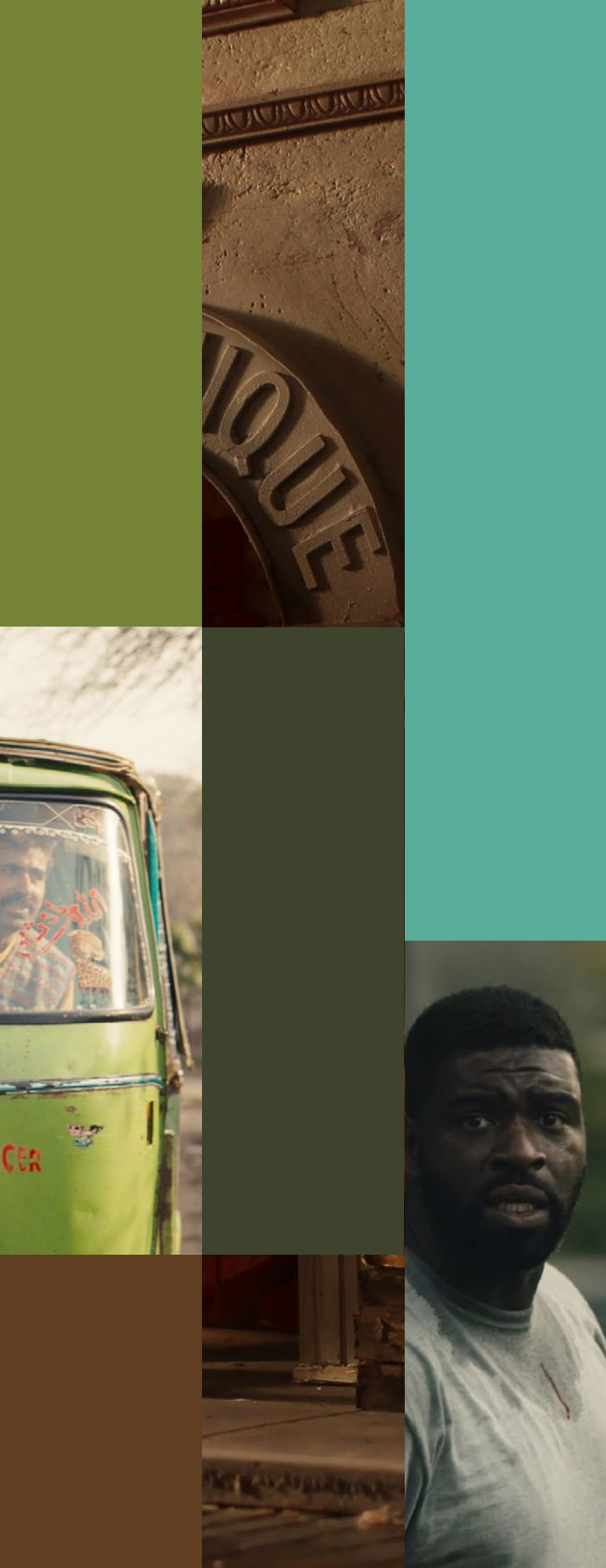
Beast, Oil on Canvas, 2025, 23 x 27 in.

WEI YAN is a Chinese artist whose work maps the fault lines between personal memory and cultural expectation. Born and raised in Northeast China and trained at Tsinghua University, Wei launched her career as an illustrator in Beijing's advertising industry, where she soon built a following as an influencer and model. These years behind and in front of the camera inform the narrative tension between cultural narrative, feminine desire, and self-construction that are a throughline of her work.

Working across painting, large-scale charcoal drawing, and installation, Wei layers fragmented figures, text, and mythical imagery in immersive, visual environments for reflection on the disquieting interplay between personal and cultural narrative. Her recent relocation from Beijing to the United States elevates themes of displacement and adaptation in Wei's already charged investigation of identity.

In 2026, Wei was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She currently lives and works in New Jersey.

web: weibeyond.com
instagram: [koomoowei](https://www.instagram.com/koomoowei)



film/video

"I see art not as something separate from life, but as something embedded within it. Film, in particular, allows us to see ourselves in ways we otherwise cannot. Without a mirror or a photograph, our perspective is limited; we move through the world without fully witnessing who we are. Cinema disrupts that limitation."

LeRon Lee,
Film/Video Fellow



Photo of Adam Nawrot filming *The Shackleton Row* off the coast of Antarctica

ADAM NAWROT is an instigator of adventure and chronic over-thinker. He has directed two feature documentaries—*Godspeed*, *Los Polacos!*, which explores the fall of the Soviet Union through the lens of whitewater kayaking, and *The Shackleton Row*, which chronicles an ill-fated human-powered attempt to retrace one of history's greatest survival stories off the coast of Antarctica. With his wife, Sonia Szczesna, he runs Sourland Studios, a Trenton-based production company currently producing an interactive narrative installation about the Revolutionary War. When he's not deep in the edit cave or obsessing over how to most efficiently pack a Pelican case, you'll find him by the trail, in the river, or on belay.

web: adamnawrot.com
instagram: [adam.nawr](https://www.instagram.com/adam.nawr)



Photo of Afia Nathaniel

AFIA NATHANIEL is a Pakistani-American filmmaker who confronts gendered sexual violence issues through narrative films. She fuses the personal with the political, creating emotional truths grounded in lived experience.

Afia's debut feature *Dukhtar*, a road trip thriller about child brides, premiered at Toronto and was Pakistan's Oscar submission (2014). Her latest short film "Don't Be Late, Myra," a survival thriller and a searing portrait of patriarchy, swept several festival awards and was Oscar-qualified for Best Live Action Short Film (2026).

Afia is a member of the Directors Guild of America. She has been featured in *Variety*, *New York Times*, *Indiewire*, *Huffington Post*, *Screen Daily*, and NPR. Her films have been supported by: HBO, National Geographic, Netflix, Hubert Bals, Sorfond, Tribeca Film Institute, NYSCA and NYFA.

web: afianathaniel.me
instagram: [afia.nathaniel](https://www.instagram.com/afia.nathaniel)

Photo of Alfredo Diaz

ALFREDO DIAZ is an actor, writer, and producer whose work blends emotional authenticity with socially driven storytelling. A lifetime member of the Actors Studio, Diaz has performed on stage at Manhattan Theatre Club in *Brooklyn Laundry* and starred as Macbeth in a production directed by Alec Baldwin and Geoffrey Horne. His screen credits include *Dexter: Resurrection*, *Power*, and the feature film *Rumba Love*.

Diaz is the creator and lead of the gritty vigilante series *Roman*, a project inspired by real-world displacement and systemic injustice, which explores the transformation of an everyday man into a force of resistance. Through his production company, Rebel Religion Works, he develops film, television, and theater projects centered on resilience, justice, and community. In 2026, Diaz was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for his work on *Roman*.

web: alfredodiaz.com
instagram: [alfredo.diaz777](https://www.instagram.com/alfredo.diaz777)



Photo of Elliot Lobell

ELLIOT LOBELL is an award-winning independent stop-motion filmmaker, illustrator and monster maker. Based in Jersey City, NJ, he has spent the last 15 years working in stop-motion and digital animation. He most recently completed his 7-minute stop-motion short “Edward,” which had its world premiere at Coney Island Film Festival, where it won Best Animated Film. It had its European premiere in Oslo, Norway at Ravenheart Film Festival, and won Best Animation at The New York Short Film Festival. He was a resident of Project14C in the summer of 2025. In 2026, Elliot was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: edwardshortfilm.com
instagram: [lobelliot](https://www.instagram.com/lobelliot)



Us Being Epic, 2026, Still Image

JEANNETTE LOUIE is a documentary and experimental filmmaker of Chinese American descent. Her visionary portraits of human consciousness capture the choreography of the mind as it navigates the fragile terrain of identity.

A recipient of a Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome, a Creative Capital Foundation Fellowship and residencies from The Bogliasco Foundation, Yaddo, Skowhegan and the Center for Photography at Woodstock, her films are presented internationally at Hot Docs, AmDocs, RiverRun, LeFiFA, Vancouver, Bolton, Los Angeles Asian Pacific, Imagine Science, Maryland, Reel Sisters of Diaspora, Tallgrass, Florida, Brooklyn Film, among others.

web: jeannettelouie.com
instagram: [jeannettelouie2](https://www.instagram.com/jeannettelouie2)



Photo of LeRon Lee

LERON LEE is a Newark, NJ native, a filmmaker and educator whose work explores themes of life, identity, rebirth, and discovery. His acclaimed short film, “UGLY,” was acquired by HBO and its platforms, and was featured in over 40 festivals, including a premiere at the Cannes Film Festival and a finalist spot in the HBO Short Film Competition. “UGLY” has garnered six Best Short Film awards. Later, he was shortlisted for the 2020 HBOAccess Directing Fellowship, a 2022 Disney Launchpad finalist, and a 2023 NBC Original Voices Pitch Competition fellow. Lee’s two-part short film, “Catch A Girl” and “The Catch A Girl Experience,” has earned him three Best Director awards and was recently acquired by PBS. “Catch A Girl” is also used as an educational tool in classes at Dartmouth, Princeton, and other universities. In addition to his filmmaking, Lee is dedicated to teaching filmmaking to youth and individuals transitioning from prison. He is the co-creator of The Newarkive, a boutique multimedia archive that shares images and connects stories of Newark residents. His latest short film, “Ninki Nanka,” is set for release later this year.

web: leronlee.com
instagram: [lookatmrlee](https://www.instagram.com/lookatmrlee)

Photograph of Nana Yaw Yeboah smiling

NANA YAW YEBOAH is a director, producer, cinematographer and a multi-award-winning filmmaker whose work has taken him around the world, telling stories that resonate across cultures. His documentaries, short and feature films have screened at prestigious international film festivals, colleges, universities, museums and the United Nations. He has taught film workshops and masterclasses in Europe, Africa and the United States, bringing real-world experience into the classroom, equipping aspiring filmmakers with the tools to develop and share their own narratives.

Beyond his work behind the camera, Nana is the Founder and Director of Ghana Film Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting filmmakers across Africa with the logistical and financial support needed to navigate the hurdles of the film industry. With degrees in Communication, Psychology and Law, he brings passion, creative instinct and a deep understanding of human behavior to his storytelling. He is a recipient of the 2026 New Jersey State Council on the Arts Individual Artist Fellowship, a recognition of his contribution to the global film landscape.

web: nanayawyeboah.com



Photo of Robin Rose Singer

ROBIN ROSE SINGER is a New Jersey-based filmmaker, originally from a cow town of 5,000 people. She specializes in finding fresh takes on genre to make exploring the human condition exciting.

She was an Academy Nicholl top 10 finalist for her script *The Lions Of Mesopotamia*, based on the true story of the Iraqi Football Team during the Hussein Regime. Two of her scripts were supported by Producers Guild programs, including a PGA x Google collaboration with Paul Feig's company Powderkeg, additionally supported by Panavision and Kodak. Her films have played major festivals including Tribeca, NBC/Universal, TIFF Next Wave, and more.

Additionally, Singer works in commercials, creating content for major brands. She recently co-directed a comedy piece with CBS *Ghosts* star Asher Grodman for Paramount/CBS Upfronts. She is a member of the Producers Guild of America and the Alliance of Women Directors, and a proud New Jersey artist and toddler mom.

web: robinrosesinger.com
instagram: [robinrosesinger](https://www.instagram.com/robinrosesinger)



Blind Angels: Richmond, Virginia

UMBREEN BUTT is an award-winning filmmaker, writer, and educator with nearly two decades of global experience working at the intersection of advocacy, branding, and documentary. Her work engages with contemporary conversations around health, equity, and the environment, and has been published on CNN, Discovery, Hulu, PBS, *The New York Times*, CBS, MSNBC, Al Jazeera, and National Geographic.

Her documentary series *Blind Angels*, on HIV activists in the American South, reached millions of viewers across CNN's linear and digital platforms. Her work has received multiple Edward R. Murrow Awards, a Webby, Titan Health Awards, Festival of Media, Digiday Publishing, Anthem Awards, and a Sigma Delta Chi Award from the Society of Professional Journalists. Her films in development include *No Woman's Land*, a narrative feature set in Pakistan, and *A Country Without a Post Office*, an animated hybrid documentary rooted in Kashmir. Butt teaches film production, ethics, and history at Baruch College in New York. In 2026, Butt was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: umbreenbutt.work
instagram: [umbreenbutt](https://www.instagram.com/umbreenbutt)



interdisciplinary

"I'm interested in the dance between the determined and the becoming... how the envelope can dictate what's written in the letter, how the writing of the words changes the writer, and how the reader finds themselves between the lines."

Gian Torrano Jacobs,
Interdisciplinary Fellow



Photo of Gian Torrano Jacobs

GIAN TORRANO JACOBS is a harpist, composer, and interdisciplinary artist based in New Jersey. His work explores the intersection of sound, material, and process, drawing from tradition while engaging experimental and cross-media practices. Through electroacoustic composition, instrument design, and performance, he investigates themes of transformation, embodiment, and ecological cycles.

His projects often incorporate reimagined objects, custom-built instruments, and live electronics, creating immersive environments that blur the boundaries between music, sculpture, and ritual. He has collaborated with performers, ensembles, and artists across disciplines. Gian is also the founder of Chord47, a community supporting innovative approaches to the harp. In 2026, he was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: giantorranojacobs.com
instagram: [gian.tj](https://www.instagram.com/gian.tj)



"On Putin's Watch" Heads and Bodies, 2026

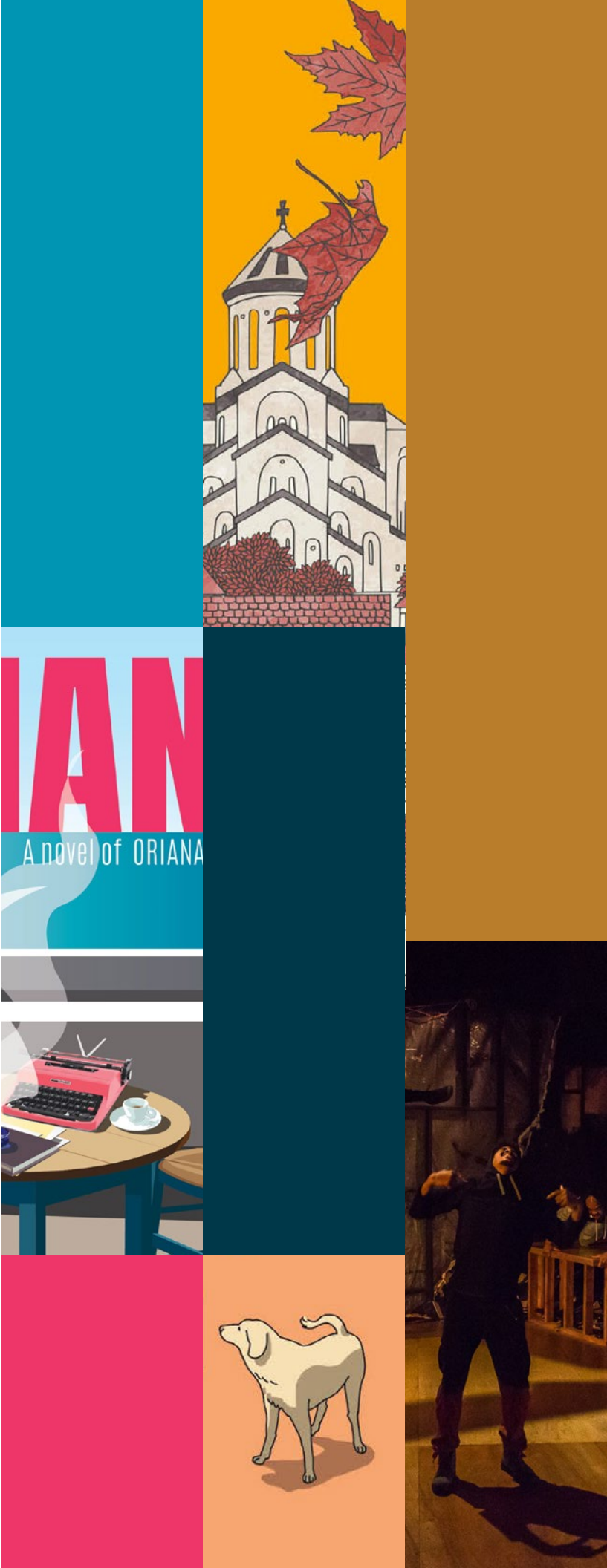
JERRY HIRNIAK is an interdisciplinary artist from an immigrant Ukrainian family whose work has focused on displacement, memory, place and the preservation of culture, often bridging the gap between historical trauma and contemporary expression. The recent war in Ukraine has sharpened his focus on repetition, violence, and cultural memory. His art practice is defined by a multidisciplinary approach—encompassing photography, printmaking, drawing, installation, performance, and film. This versatility stems from a deep-seated interest in the tension between the ephemeral, time-bound nature of performance and the static, historical resonance of the captured image. For forty years he has maintained a dual career in studio practice and pedagogy, teaching at the university and high school levels in New Jersey. This ongoing dialogue between teaching and creating continues to challenge his artistic premises, fueling the constant evolution of a practice that remains tethered to his Ukrainian roots. His work has been supported by grants, residencies and exhibits in the United States and Canada. He received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: jerryhirniak.com
instagram: [jerryhirniak](https://www.instagram.com/jerryhirniak)

Musa Hixson in front of his Fairmount Nebula Sculptural Relief, Newark, NJ

MUSA HIXSON earned an MFA in Sculpture at Pratt Institute in 1998 and a BA in Comprehensive Art from Hampton University in 1995. Musa was recently awarded a 2026 New Jersey State Council on the Arts Individual Artist Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Art. His mixed media work was exhibited in the Havana Biennial 2024. Previous public works include *The Healing Arch* in Tompkinsville Park, NY/ NYC Parks, Staten Island. In 2018, Architect Sir David Adjaye featured Musa’s photo wall relief sculpture *Fairmount Nebula* in Newark, New Jersey’s Fairmount Art Wall Project. Hixson was a recipient of the 2017 UNIQLO Park Expressions Grant to produce the *Conversation Sculpture* for Herbert Von King Park in Brooklyn, NY/NYC Parks. He was selected as artist-in-residence at Wave Hill, Winter Workspace, Bronx, New York in 2015, at The 3-D Foundation, Verbier Switzerland in 2011, Obama City Art Residency, Obama Japan in 2010, Vermont Studio Center, Johnson Vermont in 2006, and Virginia Center for Creative Arts, Amherst, Virginia in 2005. In 2010 he was selected for the Aichi Triennale in Aichi, Japan. Musa is also the founder of the Nonprofit Brooklyn Art Incubator.

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prose

“Much of my prose begins with a concrete observation, a signaling pathway, a grandmother’s remedy, a student’s question that won’t let me go, and works outward toward something harder to name. I’m interested in the ways precision and wonder coexist, how the most rigorous description of a thing can also be the most tender. Writing, for me, is an extension of teaching: both ask you to hold something up to the light until someone else can see it too.”

James K Martin II,
Prose Fellow

Photo of Alexandra Apuzzo

ALEXANDRA APUZZO is a fiction writer living in Jersey City. She holds an MFA from Rutgers-Newark and teaches writing at colleges across New Jersey. In between teaching and playing with her dog, she is working on her first novel. She is a fiction reader for *Another Chicago Magazine*, and her prose has appeared or is forthcoming in *Juxtapose Literary Magazine*, *Chestnut Review*, *Grist Journal*, and elsewhere.

instagram: alexandra.apuzzo



Photo of Alice Elliott Dark

ALICE ELLIOTT DARK is the author of the novels *Fellowship Point* and *Think of England*, and two collections of short stories, *In The Gloaming* and *Naked to the Waist*. "In the Gloaming," a story, was chosen by John Updike for inclusion in *The Best American Short Stories of The Century* and was made into films by HBO and Trinity Playhouse. She is the recipient of a Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She is a Professor in the English department and the Director of the MFA in Creative Writing program at Rutgers-Newark. A standalone edition of *In the Gloaming* with a new Afterword will be published in September by Scribner, and a novel, *Wherever You Are*, is forthcoming from Scribner in May 2027.

web: aliceelliottdark.com
instagram: [aliceelliottdark](https://www.instagram.com/aliceelliottdark)



Photo of Amy Kiger-Williams

AMY KIGER-WILLIAMS holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Rutgers-Newark, as well as a bachelor's degree in Comparative Literature from New York University. Her work has been published in *The Yale Review*, *South Carolina Review*, *Chicago Quarterly Review*, and many other literary magazines. Her short story "Spinster, Shrew, Harridan" was included in *jmww (2013-2022): A Modern Times Anthology*. She has attended the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. She was born in northern Indiana, has also lived in Pennsylvania and New York City, and has made New Jersey her home for many years.

web: amykigerwilliams.com



Photo of Anastasia Stacy Rubis

ANASTASIA STACY RUBIS is the author of *ORIANA: A Novel of Oriana Fallaci*, based on the true story of the trailblazing Italian journalist who forged the way for Barbara Walters and Christiane Amanpour. Stacy has been published in *The New York Times* and literary journals and holds a BA from Brown and an MA from Montclair State University, where she was an adjunct professor. Recently, she completed a second historical novel. She was ecstatic to receive a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Stacy often writes about Greece, the country where her parents were born, and she tries to spend summers there as often as possible. She had a career in advertising and public relations before turning full-time to her childhood dream of writing.

web: anastasiarubis.com
instagram: [stacyrubis](https://www.instagram.com/stacyrubis)



Photo of Anya Pearson

ANYA PEARSON is an award-winning playwright, poet, actress, performance artist, screenwriter, memoirist, deviser, and activist whose work lives at the intersection of Black literary tradition, embodied form, and social justice. A former Hodder Fellow at Princeton, she'll be an upcoming Lecturer in the Princeton Atelier. Anya Pearson received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for her forthcoming memoir.

A 2025 AGE Legacy Playwright (*The Killing Fields*), Pearson was the inaugural recipient of the Voice is a Muscle Grant for her choreopoem *Made to Dance in Burning Buildings*, developed at Joe's Pub at The Public Theater and premiered at Shaking the Tree Theatre. Her Shakespeare adaptation *The Measure of Innocence* won the Drammy Award for Best Original Script, was selected for the Kilroys List, and made history as the first work by a Black playwright to be a finalist for the Oregon Book Award for Drama. She's the founder of Urban Haiku—a production company, activist clothing label, and online writing center dedicated to decolonizing performance and centering the global majority.

web: anyapearson.com
instagram: iamanyapearson



Photo of Deborah Way

DEBORAH WAY's short fiction has appeared in *The Missouri Review* and *American Short Fiction* and is forthcoming in *The Georgia Review*. She's a past winner of The Missouri Review Editors' Prize in Fiction and was a finalist for the 2025 Story Foundation Prize. Her essays have appeared in *The New York Times* and *O, The Oprah Magazine*. Deborah is the creator and editor of *The Keepthings* memorial project, which publishes stories of the dead inspired by the objects they left behind. She and her husband, novelist Will Allison, are both recipients of 2026 Individual Artist Fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: deborahway.com

Photo of Carlie Hoffman, Photo by Johnny Steers

CARLIE HOFFMAN is the author of three poetry collections, including *One More World Like This World* and *When There Was Light*, winner of the National Jewish Book Award. She is the translator from German of Paul Celan's cousin, Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger's *Song of the Yellow Asters*; her translations of Rose Ausländer are forthcoming. A 2025–26 Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture Fellow, her honors include a 92NY Discovery/Boston Review prize, a Poets & Writers Amy Award, and fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts in 2026, the Goethe-Institut, and NYSCA/NYFA.

Hoffman earned her MFA from Columbia University, her BA from Ramapo College of New Jersey, and her AA from Bergen Community College. Hoffman is the founder and publisher of the New Jersey-based nonprofit literary magazine and small press Small Orange/Orange Editions and Assistant Director of the MFA in Creative Writing at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

web: carliehoffman.com



Photo of Hugo dos Santos, Photo by Fatima dos Santos

HUGO DOS SANTOS is the author of *Reduction in Force* (Bauhan Publishing, 2026), winner of the May Sarton New Hampshire Poetry Prize, and *Then, there* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2019), a collection of Newark stories. He is the translator of *Homecoming* (Arquipelago Press, 2024) and *A Child in Ruins* (Writ Large Press, 2016), a staff pick at *The Paris Review Daily*. Hugo received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: hugodossantos.com
instagram: hugofdossantos

Photo of iman ādam

iman ādam is a Mombasa-born writer and artist who does not believe in borders. They grew up in Kenya and France and received their MFA from Rutgers-Newark, where they now teach. iman's work can be found or is forthcoming in *BOMB Magazine*, *Lolwe Magazine*, *Apogee Journal*, and *Kweli Journal*. Most recently, they received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

web: imanadam.net
instagram: alm0stadam



Photo of James K Martin II

JAMES K MARTIN II holds a PhD in Molecular Biology from Princeton University, where his research contributed a major publication in *Cell*. A graduate of Florida Atlantic University at seventeen, he went on to postdoctoral work at the University of Chicago before finding his vocation in the classroom, teaching high school science in Chicago and eventually joining the faculty at Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine, where he co-directs the AI in Medicine Program. His writing draws on the overlap between scientific inquiry and lived experience, exploring how close observation of the natural world, whether at the molecular level or in the backyard apiary, reshapes our understanding of ourselves. His prose has been shaped by years of mentoring students across every level of education, a practice he considers inseparable from the impulse to write. In 2026, he was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

instagram: wonderwanderer_35



Photo of John D. McCall

JOHN DAVID MCCALL interviewed literary historian Malcolm Cowley in 1982 and that interview was published in *The Paris Review*. That same year McCall received a Special Services Award from the federal Upward Bound Program for his work with minority high school students. Having to choose between academia or journalism, McCall chose journalism because there was no urine test and alcoholism was considered an occupational hazard, not a disease.

McCall's work has appeared in *The Paris Review*, *EastWest Magazine*, *The Village Voice*, *Story*, *Mid-Atlantic*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Atlantic Game & Fish*, *On The Water* and other periodicals. He has received four New Jersey State Council on the Arts fellowships for fiction writing and he is the past recipient of the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors' highest award for editorial achievement for writing what was judged to be the best editorial to appear in any English language weekly anywhere in the world in a given year.

McCall has earned a living as a newspaper reporter, editor, columnist, college professor, waterman, woodcarver, and common laborer. Because of the Council's Artist Fellowship, he now has the opportunity to concentrate more on his fiction.



Photo of Lana Storey

LANA STOREY is a writer and teacher whose work has appeared in *HAD*, *Joyland*, *PANK*, and elsewhere. In 2026, she was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She has an MFA from the University of Guelph. Originally from Canada, she now calls New Jersey home.

web: lanastorey.com
bluesky: lanastorey.bsky.social

Photo of Lauren Grodstein

LAUREN GRODSTEIN is the author of six novels, including the Amazon.com Book of the Month *A Dog in Georgia*, the Read with Jenna selection *We Must Not Think of Ourselves*, *The New York Times* bestseller *A Friend of the Family* and *The Washington Post*’s “Best Book of the Year” *The Explanation for Everything*. Lauren’s work has been translated into French, Turkish, German, Hebrew, and other languages, and her essays have been published in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *Salon*, *Refinery29*, and *Elle*, alongside various journals and anthologies. She directs the MFA Program in Creative Writing at Rutgers University-Camden and lives in southern New Jersey with her husband and children.

web: laurengrodstein.com
instagram: [laurengrodstein](https://www.instagram.com/laurengrodstein)



Photo of Megan Rose

MEGAN ROSE writes short stories, novels, and poetry with a coming-of-age focus that finds characters of all ages trying to bridge who they are and who they want to be—a dichotomy that they at first (just like real humans) don’t realize exists for them. With a nine-year history as a student across literary conferences, Project Write Now, Emerson’s Pre-College Creative Writing Program, and Columbia College Chicago, she is still figuring out how to find the level of clarity on life she gifts her characters on the last page. Through her portfolio, *The Live Writer*, she showcases her love of storytelling, music, playlist curation, film, as well as her pride for her home state of New Jersey. Megan has been publishing in *Bridge Ink*, *Coffee People Zine*, and *You Might Need To Hear This* and has received a fellowship through Project Write Now and a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She believes life should be as cinematic as the art we love and love to create.

web: thelivewriter.com
instagram: [thelivewriter_meganfroehlich](https://www.instagram.com/thelivewriter_meganfroehlich)



Photo of Michael McKeown Bondhus,
Photo Credit: Kevin Hinkle

MICHAEL MCKEOWN BONDHUS (he/they; formerly Charlie) is an Irish-American writer. His books include *Divining Bones* (Sundress, 2018) and *All the Heat We Could Carry* (Main Street Rag, 2013), winner of the Thom Gunn Award. Their horror fiction has appeared in *Chthonic Matter* and *Ghostlight* and has been read on the *Nocturnal Transmissions* (AUS) podcast. Bondhus’s poetry has appeared in *Poetry*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Hotel Amerika*, *Hayden’s Ferry Review*, *diode*, and *Copper Nickel*. He received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and has previously received fellowships from the Virginia Center for Creative Arts, the Sundress Academy for the Arts, the Tyrone Guthrie Center (Ireland), and the Hawthornden Castle International Retreat for Writers (UK). They teach English at Raritan Valley Community College and live in Jersey City, NJ.

web: michaelbondhus.com
instagram: [bondhuspoetry](https://www.instagram.com/bondhuspoetry)



Photo of Nicole Pandolfo

NICOLE PANDOLFO received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She is currently in development with a film adaptation of her play *Canadian Tuxedo*. She has published opinion pieces in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and *American Theatre Magazine* and developed several original television projects. She received a commission as part of the NJPAC Stage Exchange with Premiere Stages at Kean University. She is a member of the Dramatists Guild Fellows and her work has been developed as a Jerome Foundation Fellow at Tofte Lake Center, at The Actors Studio, the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, the Lark Play Development Center, and NJ REP among others. She was a finalist for the Stanley Drama Award, the Edward F. Albee Foundation Fellowship, the Leah Ryan Fund for Emerging Women Writers, and SPACE on Ryder Farm. Her plays appear in numerous publications and have been produced on four continents. She earned her MFA at Hunter College and is a member of The Actors Studio in the Playwright/Director Unit and a proud member of the Dramatists Guild. Nicole is a faculty member in the Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing at Wilkes University.

web: nicolepandolfo.com
instagram: [nicole_pandolfo](https://www.instagram.com/nicole_pandolfo)

Photo of Paul Weidknecht

PAUL WEIDKNECHT is the author of *Native to This Stream: Brief Writings About Fly-Fishing & the Great Outdoors*, a chapbook collection of previously published short stories, essays, and poems. He received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. He wrote the short film, “Know Thy Partner,” (MC PATRAT Films) and his work has appeared in *Gray’s Sporting Journal*, *Outdoor Life*, *Rosebud*, *Shenandoah*, *Structo* (UK), and elsewhere. Paul has won the Peter Barry Short Story Competition and the Trio International Poetry Competition, and has been awarded a scholarship to The Norman Mailer Writers Colony. He is currently submitting his feature-length psychological drama, *How They Talk*, for representation, as well as editing his feature-length screenplay on the first African-American war hero, a story that might be described as a Revolutionary War version of *Glory*. He lives in Phillipsburg, New Jersey.



Photo of Pooja Makhijani, Photo Credit: Sylvie Rosokoff

POOJA MAKHIJANI is the author of *Mama’s Saris* (2007), *Bread Is Love* (2026), *Together For Mama* (2026), and *Aunties* (forthcoming). Her bylines have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, NPR, *Teen Vogue*, and *Bon Appétit* among others. She holds degrees from Johns Hopkins University, Sarah Lawrence College, and Rutgers University. Pooja received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She is also a recipient of a General Scholarship from Boyds Mills (formerly the Highlights Foundation) and has been in residence twice at SPACE on Ryder Farm. web: poojamakhijani.com



Photo of Rachel Reynolds Westerwelle

RACHEL REYNOLDS WESTERWELLE is a novelist, podcaster, and collage artist based in Jersey City where she lives with her family in a possibly haunted Victorian home. She received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for her writing. Her gothic horror, psychological suspense novel was also recognized by the International Thriller Writers. She is the producer and co-host of *SUBWAY READS*, a podcast where she speaks with the people behind the books that keep us reading well past our subway stops and into the night. When not writing, or talking about writing, she creates hand-cut and digital collages. Her work has been featured in galleries, juried exhibitions, and public art installations. Over the years, she has coordinated scripts for Good Morning America, managed an independent bookstore, worked on PBS documentaries—and even led a few ghost tours along the way. web: rachelreynoldswesterwelle.com instagram: rachelwasalreadytaken



Photo of Rich Russell

RICH RUSSELL (he/him) teaches composition, literature, and creative writing at Atlantic Cape Community College. He has received the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching and the President’s Distinguished Alumni Award. He has been an advisor of Atlantic Cape’s literary magazine since 2012 and was previously the advisor of the college’s Fine Arts Club. In 2026, he was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship for Prose from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. He received an AA in Liberal Arts from Atlantic Cape, a BA in English/Creative Writing from New York University, an MS in Teaching from The New School, an MA in English from University College London, and an MFA in Fiction from Arcadia University. He lives and works among the flying squirrels and carnivorous plants of the Pine Barrens.

Photo of Ronnie Huett

RONNIE HUETT graduated from a continuation high school of last resort in 1996. Decades later, he went on to study at Columbia University's School of General Studies and the CRIT writing workshop in Brooklyn, NY. A 2022 Elizabeth George Foundation grantee, he was an Axinn Fellow in fiction at NYU, from which he graduated with an MFA in creative writing in May 2023, and a MacDowell Fellow in Fiction the same year. His creative nonfiction essay "Cosmic Latte" was published in The Normal School and selected for The Best American Essays 2020. In 2026, he was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Ronnie teaches creative writing to high schoolers at BelovED Community Charter School in Jersey City, NJ. He is the father of two sons, Henry and Benjamin, who are proving superior to him in every way.



Photo of Sakinah Hofler, Photo Credit: Yvel Clovis

SAKINAH HOFLER is a fiction writer, poet, and playwright. Her work has appeared in Kenyon Review, Georgia Review, Analog Science Fiction and Fact, among other literary journals, and her plays have been produced by Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music. She has won the Yemassee Poetry Prize, the Hurston/Wright Award for College Writers in Fiction, the Manchester Fiction Prize, the C.P. Cavafy Poetry Prize, and the Sherwood Anderson Fiction Award. She's a 2024 FORGE NYC Fellow and a 2024 winner of the Analog Award for Emerging Black Voices. In 2026, Sakinah was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Her work has received support from the Albert C. Yates Foundation, the Kingsbury Foundation, the de Groot Foundation, the Taft Research Center, and the P.E.O. Scholar Award. A former chemical engineer for the United States Department of Defense, she currently teaches in the Writing Program at Princeton University. Her debut novel, *Stable*, is forthcoming from Holt in March 2027.

web: sakinahhofler.com
instagram: blackquisition



Photo of Sandy Gingras

SANDY GINGRAS has written and illustrated twenty-five gift books with four different publishers. She's also traditionally published a novel, *Paradise Girls* (St. Martin's Press), a murder mystery and a poetry chapbook. Her fiction, poetry and narrative non-fiction have appeared in literary journals like New Ohio Review and Solstice. She has a BA from Hamilton College, an MA in English from Duke University and an MA in Counseling from Rider University. She's received awards for her writing including The Crime Writers' Association Debut Dagger Award and a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for prose. She designs products for the gift industry, owns two retail stores and lives on Long Beach Island in a lovely little cottage on the bay with her husband and a golden retriever named Turtle.

web: sandygingras.co
instagram: gingrassandy



Photo of Taylor Tracy, Photo Credit: Olivia Anne Gennaro

TAYLOR TRACY is the middle grade author of the Stonewall Award Honor Book and 2025 Lambda Literary Award Finalist *Murray Out of Water* and 2026 Lambda Literary Award Finalist *Pasta Girls*. Taylor writes books filled with humor and heart that explore the joys and hopes of queer kids, focusing on mental health, found family, and the importance of a sense of community. *Murray Out of Water* has been selected for the 2026 Intermediate Sequoyah Book Award list in Oklahoma, the 2026 Rhode Island Middle School Book Award list, and the 2026 Vermont Golden Dome Book Award list. *Murray* was also named a Bank Street College of Education best book of the year, an ALSC Notable Book, a School Library Journal Best Book of the Year, and as an ALA Rainbow List Top Ten Title. Taylor received a 2026 Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She lives in New Jersey with her family (including a fluffle of six mischievous rescue bunnies) and loves everything her home state has to offer: the best bagels, pizza, and beaches. She is represented by Maria Vicente at P.S. Literary.

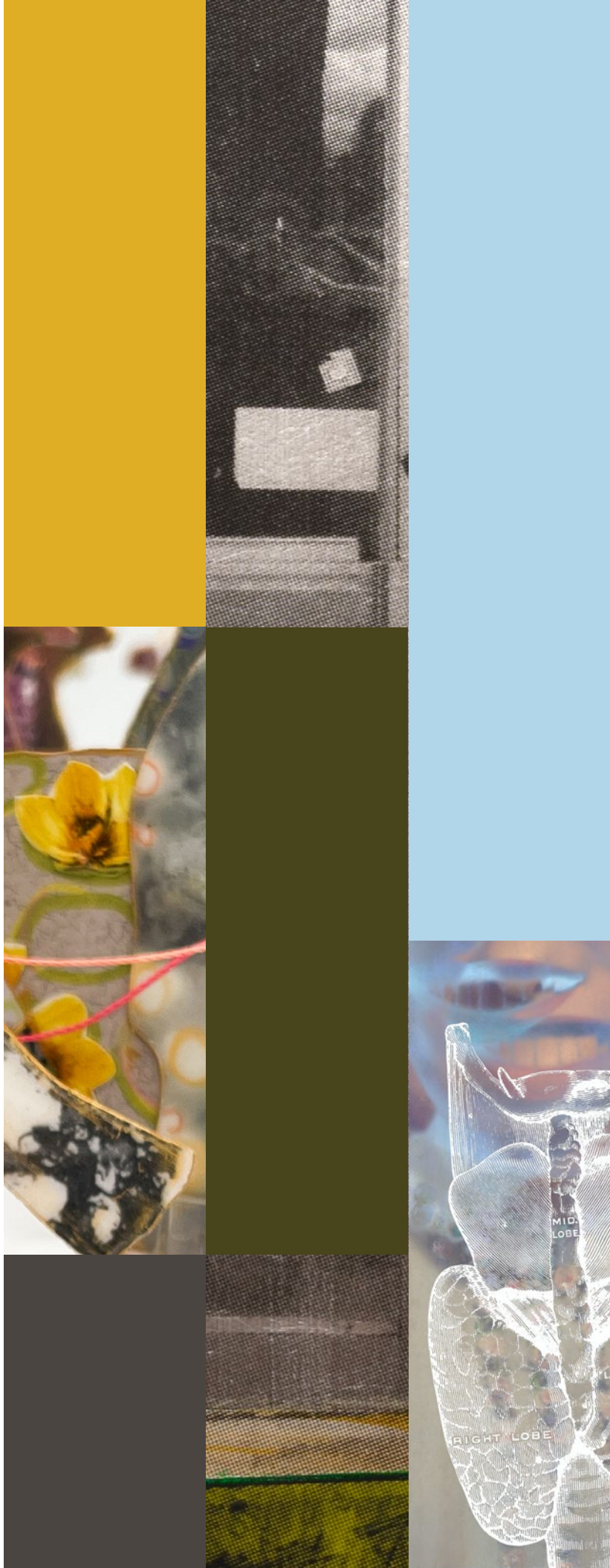
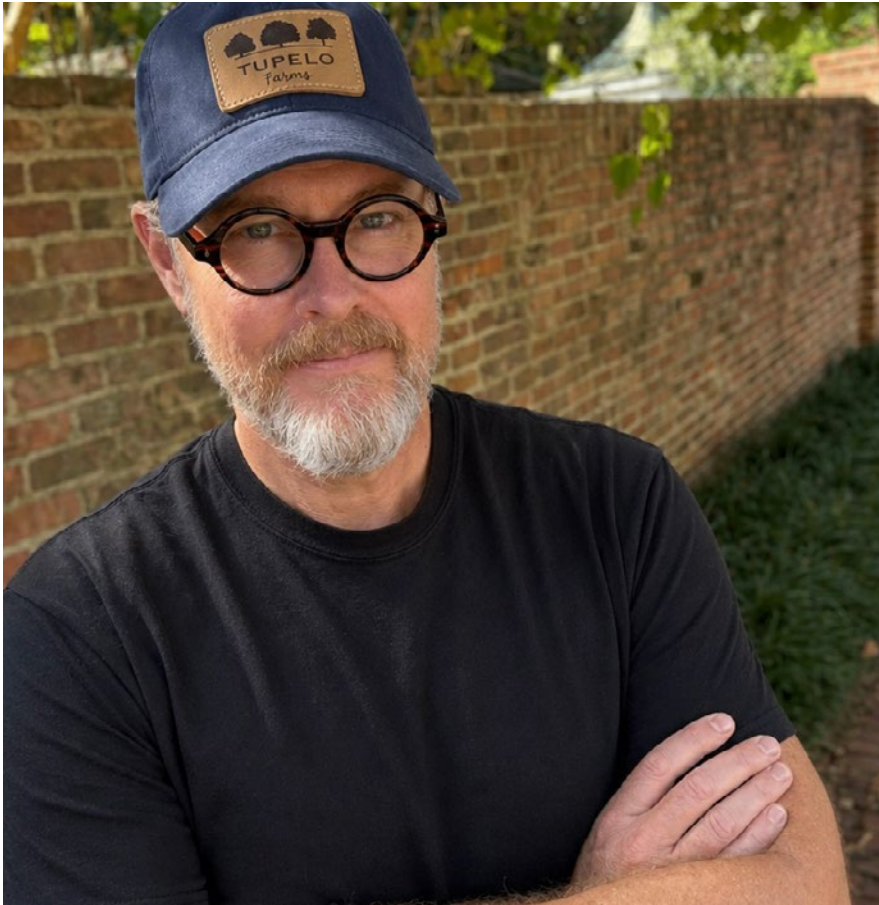
web: taylorismyfirstname.com
instagram: taylortracywrites

Photo of Will Allison

WILL ALLISON is the author of two novels, *What You Have Left* and *The New York Times* bestseller *Long Drive Home* (both from Free Press/Simon & Schuster). Will's stories have appeared in *Glimmer Train*, *American Short Fiction*, *One Story*, *Zoetrope: All-Story*, *Shenandoah*, *Kenyon Review*, *Cincinnati Review*, and elsewhere. Will received Individual Artist Fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts in 2019 and 2026. He is also the recipient of grants, fellowships, and scholarships from the Indiana Arts Commission, Arts Council of Indianapolis, Ohio Arts Council, and the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference.

Since 2011, Will has served as a contributing editor at the award-winning, Brooklyn-based literary magazine *One Story*. Previously he was executive editor of *Story* and editor-at-large of *Zoetrope: All-Story*. Will lives in South Orange, NJ, with his wife, Deborah Way, who is likewise the recipient of a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship in prose from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. As an independent editor specializing in fiction and creative nonfiction, Will works one-on-one with both new and established authors.

web: willallison.com
instagram: [willallison2](https://www.instagram.com/willallison2)



printmaking /drawing /book arts

“My work considers and questions the ideas of what a book can be. The artists’ books I create are vessels which contain ideas, thoughts and messages with the ability to engage viewers using many diverse forms to reflect the content within. Artists’ books are not confined to only paper and thread, but can occupy space with sculptural dimensionality.”

Kirstin Demer,
Printmaking/Drawing/Book Arts Fellow

The Contemporary Charmer, 2023,
Graphite on Plywood, 96 x 48 in.

ABHISHEK TUIWALA is a conceptual artist whose practice spans sculpture, drawing, and large-scale installation. Working with materials such as metal, wood, marble, graphite, and elastic, he approaches material as both substance and metaphor, constructing relationships between industry and nature, structure and adaptability, and inherited systems of labor and production. His current work develops from elastic sourced through his family’s manufacturing background in Surat, shaping a dialogue between personal history and industrial processes.

Tuiwala has exhibited internationally at venues including Gallery LVS in Seoul, the Raza Foundation in New Delhi, L’Space Gallery, Aicon Gallery, Swivel Gallery, and Dinner Gallery in New York, as well as Mana Contemporary and the International Sculpture Center in New Jersey, and the India Art Fair. He is a recipient of an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the Rema Hort Mann Artist Community Engagement Grant, and the Stutzman Foundation Award for Sculpture. Based between India and the United States, he maintains a studio at Mana Contemporary in Jersey City.

web: abhishektuiwala.com
instagram: abhishek.tuiwala



Grid Bone 1, 2026, Mixed Media on Paper, 12 x 12 in.

AMY FARIS engages in a drawing practice that moves between acts of accretion and acts of disruption. Through the gradual buildup of interwoven mixed media applications, she constructs surfaces marked by textural density and nuanced variations in color and light. Earlier stages are deliberately undone, positioning the work in the unstable interval between creation and ruin to allow an interrogation of how systems—physical, psychological, architectural—fracture and reconstitute over time. Her drawings and prints have been included in exhibitions at AUTOMAT Collective, Philadelphia; The Center for Contemporary Art, Bedminster, NJ; Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, Summit, NJ; Ely Contemporary Art Center, New Haven, CT; Woman Made Gallery, Chicago; the 2018 Outsider Art Fair, Blackburn Study Center, and Andrew Edlin Gallery, NYC. She received a Sustainable Arts Foundation Studio Residency Fellowship at Gallery Aferro in Newark, a Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Grant for residency at the Vermont Studio Center and a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She is currently Assistant Professor of Studio Arts at Brookdale Community College.

web: amyfaris.net
instagram: afaris1

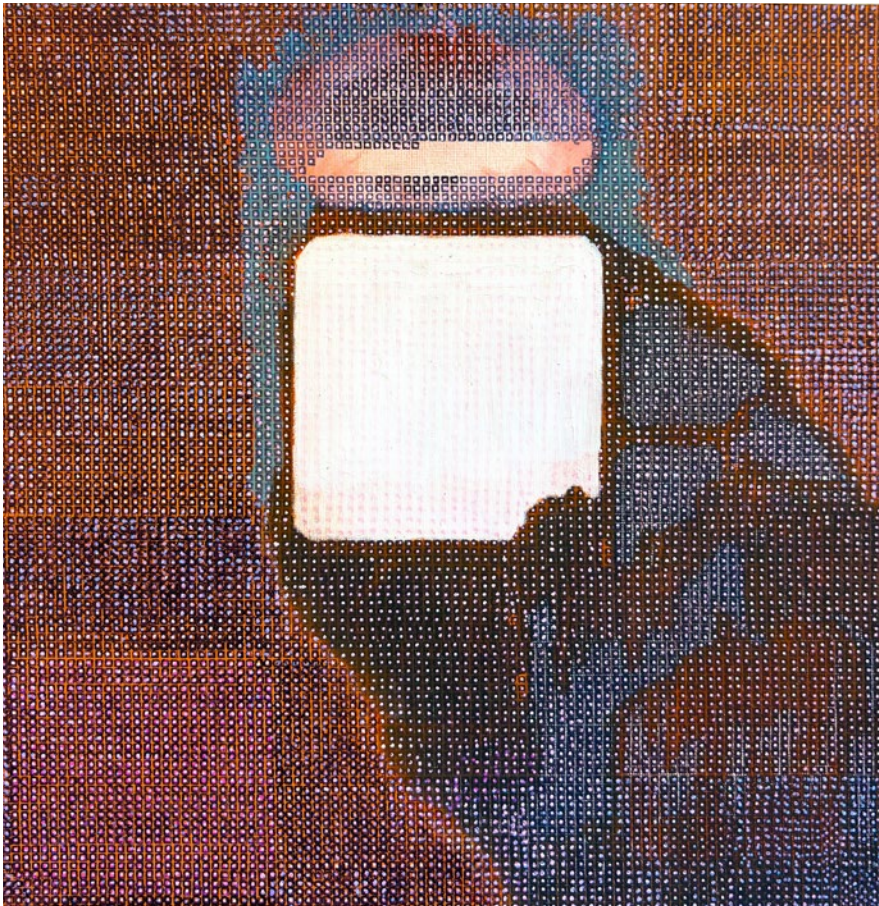


Photo of Angela Pilgrim

ANGELA PILGRIM (b. 1991, New Jersey) lives and works in Newark, New Jersey. Working primarily in printmaking and mixed media, Pilgrim builds meaning through layering; accumulating mark, pattern, and material to examine Black subjectivity through the Black female gaze. Her practice moves across portraiture, pattern-making, and process-driven composition to explore constructions of beauty, spirituality, and power within Black diasporic identities. Drawing from the visual languages of the African diaspora, she threads inherited traditions through contemporary material approaches and the expressed knowledge of Black womanhood, reframing Black presence as self-defined, nuanced, and expansive.

Solo exhibitions include *New Growth*, The Center for Contemporary Art, New Jersey (2024), and *Rooted in Spirit*, Art Center Sarasota (2024). In 2026, Pilgrim was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Her work has been featured in *Pressing Matters*, *The Creative Independent*, and *The Getty Archives*, and is held in collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and the Milwaukee Art Museum.

web: angelapilgrim.com
instagram: aplgrm



Revolution. (2017), Colored pencil on matte paper / Digital print

EMAN WN (Eman Alnababteh) is a Palestinian-Jordanian-American fine artist based in New Jersey. Her practice focuses on drawing, exploring the intersections of culture, identity, and personal history. Alnababteh holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Montclair State University (2018), where her work was featured in the BFA group exhibitions Culture and Identity and at 3.5 Gallery.

A recipient of the 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Alnababteh is currently developing Glimpses of Memories, a six-piece series that delves into the fluidity of recollection. Her early recognitions include a second-place award at the Passaic County Community College (PCCC) annual art competition. Beyond her personal series, she maintains an active practice of private commissions and continuous technical growth.

instagram: emanwn

Careful, 2025, Encaustic Monoprint and Collage with Acrylic, String, and Beads

ERICA ENGFER PIZZA is a multidisciplinary artist and arts educator whose work encourages viewers to pause and appreciate beauty in everyday life. Inspired by the intimate nature of bookmaking, she employs mixed media, assemblage, and repetition to both honor and reimagine its conventional form. She challenges traditional book structures by displaying pages simultaneously from walls or ceilings, expanding the medium’s physical scale while preserving its core essence. Erica holds a BFA in Design from The College of New Jersey and an MA in Metalworks and Jewelry from Montclair State University. Her work has been featured at the Hunterdon Art Museum, Morris Museum, and The Museum of Early Trades & Crafts. Her solo installation, *Slow Down*, toured nationally as part of The Creativity Caravan. Erica has curated exhibitions celebrating contemporary female artists and served as an exhibits coordinator for Studio Montclair. Her 23-year career as an arts educator deeply informs her studio practice. Backed by two Artists in Education Residencies cosponsored by the State Arts Council and Young Audiences, she led district-wide professional development and community printmaking installations. She recently served as a featured lecturer for the Collage Artists of America.

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Erik Hougen in his Maplewood Studio, 2026

ERIK HOUGEN was born in Bismarck, North Dakota, and currently lives and works in Maplewood, New Jersey. His dreamlike, surreal works combine photo silkscreen with painting, spray paint, and metal leaf to create richly layered compositions on panel. Drawing from childhood memories, found images of supernatural encounters, and uncanny landscapes, Hougen uses imagery as a point of exploration rather than a vehicle for fixed narratives. Hougen often extracts forms from maps and natural phenomena—such as the outline of a rectangular iceberg—and transposes them onto photographs. Embracing unexpected correspondences between disparate places, memories, and geographies, he constructs fictional worlds that feel at once familiar and unsettling. While engaging with the surreal, his work is marked by a dark, playful sense of humor. Hougen’s work has been exhibited at the Bronx Museum, the Montclair Museum, Print Center of New York, Planthouse, and Kunsthalle Galapagos. In March 2013, he was a finalist in the Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition and exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

web: erikhougen.com
instagram: [erikhougen](https://www.instagram.com/erikhougen)



Fire, from the series Depression. Repression. Possession. 2024, Pigment Print from a Digitally Manipulated 35mm Color Negative, 13 x 19 in.

JENNIFER CABRAL (b. Brazil) is a photographer and multidisciplinary artist now living in Lawrenceville, NJ, where she transforms archives into spaces of imagination and resistance, drawing inspiration from public collections and the intimate traces of her family archive. Through delicate narratives constructed with image and text, she invites the viewer into exploring topics such as immigration, race, and the environmental crisis. Some of her photographs are in the contemporary collection at the Museum of Avant-Garde in Switzerland, where she was a Graciela Iturbide MA-g Award Finalist. Following nominations for photobook awards Mulheres Luz 2024 (Brazil), Foto em Pauta 2024 (Brazil), Encontro da Imagem 2025 (Portugal), and Ffotogallery 2026 (Wales), her work is held in the respective libraries and archives. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Escola Guignard, a degree in Social Communications from PUC-MG and a Master of Information in Archives and Preservation from Rutgers University. Her work was selected for the 2024 NJ Arts Annual, she received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and a 2025 coLAB Arts Artist Grant.

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The World We Live In, 2024

KIRSTIN DEMER is an art educator and interdisciplinary artist working in hand papermaking, letterpress and the book arts. She creates artists’ books and explores storytelling using unique book structures to convey an understanding of our shared experiences and connectedness.

She received her BFA in Sculpture from The Pennsylvania State University and her MFA in Interdisciplinary Book and Paper Arts from Columbia College Chicago.

Her artists’ books are held in many university special collections including, Baylor University, The Crouch Fine Arts Library, University of California, Irvine Library, University of Puget Sound, Collins Memorial Library, as well as private collections. Her work has been exhibited in national and international exhibitions including Sebastopol Center for the Arts, Montclair Art Museum, Rowan University Museum of Contemporary Art, McNeesse State University, and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. Kirstin Demer received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She maintains a studio practice in rural New Jersey.

web: kirstindemer.com



Photo of Krystle Lemonias

KRYSTLE LEMONIAS (b. 1989, Jamaican) is an interdisciplinary artist, labor activist, and art educator, whose work addresses issues of social class, labor rights, and economic inequality, particularly within Black communities. Her work portrays Black individuals, particularly those in essential but often overlooked labor roles, as multifaceted individuals with agency and resilience. Lemonias’s pieces have been featured in notable exhibitions, including *Yu cyaan ketch Quaku, yu ketch im shut* at Andrew Rafacz Gallery, *Show Me the Signs* at Blum and Poe for the #sayhername campaign, and *Unblocked: Improvisation and Identity in Contemporary Quilts* at Hunterdon Art Museum. She employs found materials, fabric, and iconography to probe the complexities of Black immigrant cultural identity and its ties to the broader diaspora.

With a BFA in printmaking from New Jersey City University and an MFA from the University of South Florida, Lemonias is currently Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Art at Rowan University. She received a 2026 Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

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instagram: empress1989kl



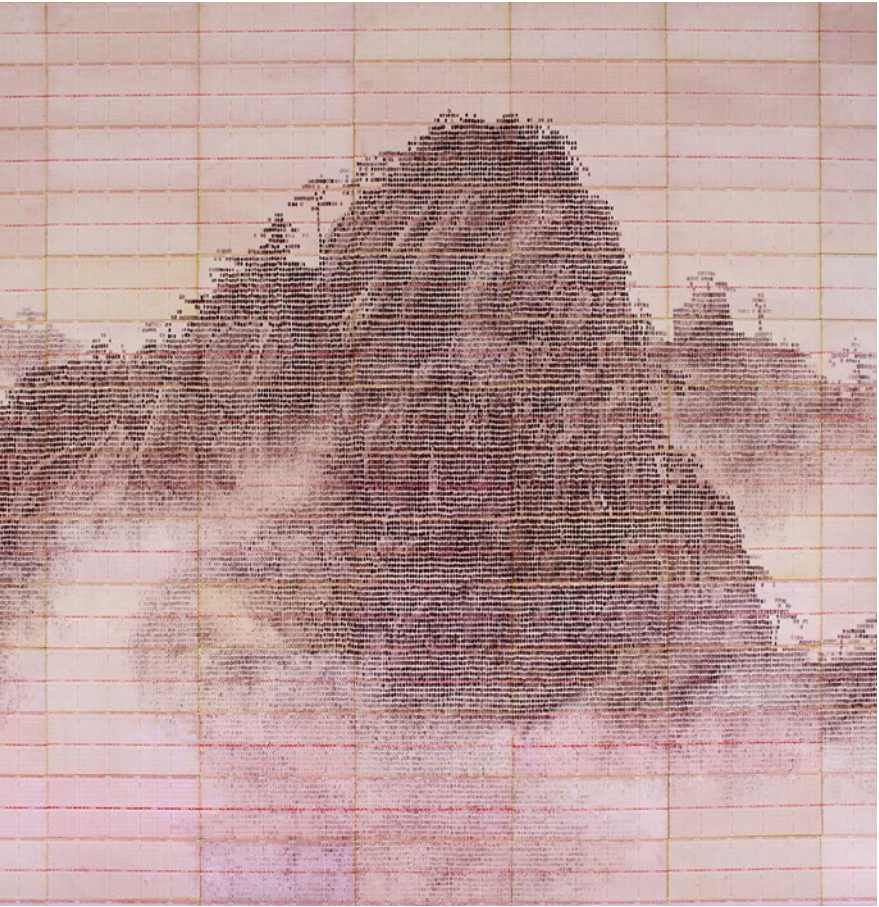
Schuylkill River Drawing, 2023, Earth Pigments, Gum Arabic, and Water on Arches Watercolor Paper, 48 x 48 x 2 in.

LAUREN ROSENTHAL MCMANUS is an interdisciplinary artist and educator whose work explores ecology, community boundaries, and notions of home through mapping, material research, and collaborative practice. She holds a BFA from Washington University in St. Louis and an MFA from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, where she was an urban livability fellow.

Her work is held in permanent collections including the Nurture Nature Center, the Charlotte Museum of History, and the Bank of America Collection. She has received support from Together North Jersey’s Vibrant Places Program and Delaware Wild and Scenic for projects focused on flood resilience and watershed education, and has participated in residencies at the University of Colorado and McColl Center.

Alongside her studio practice, McManus is the founder of Ampersand Made, a custom picture framing studio rooted in craft and preservation. She lives and works in Lambertville, New Jersey.

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instagram: laurenrosenthalmcmanus



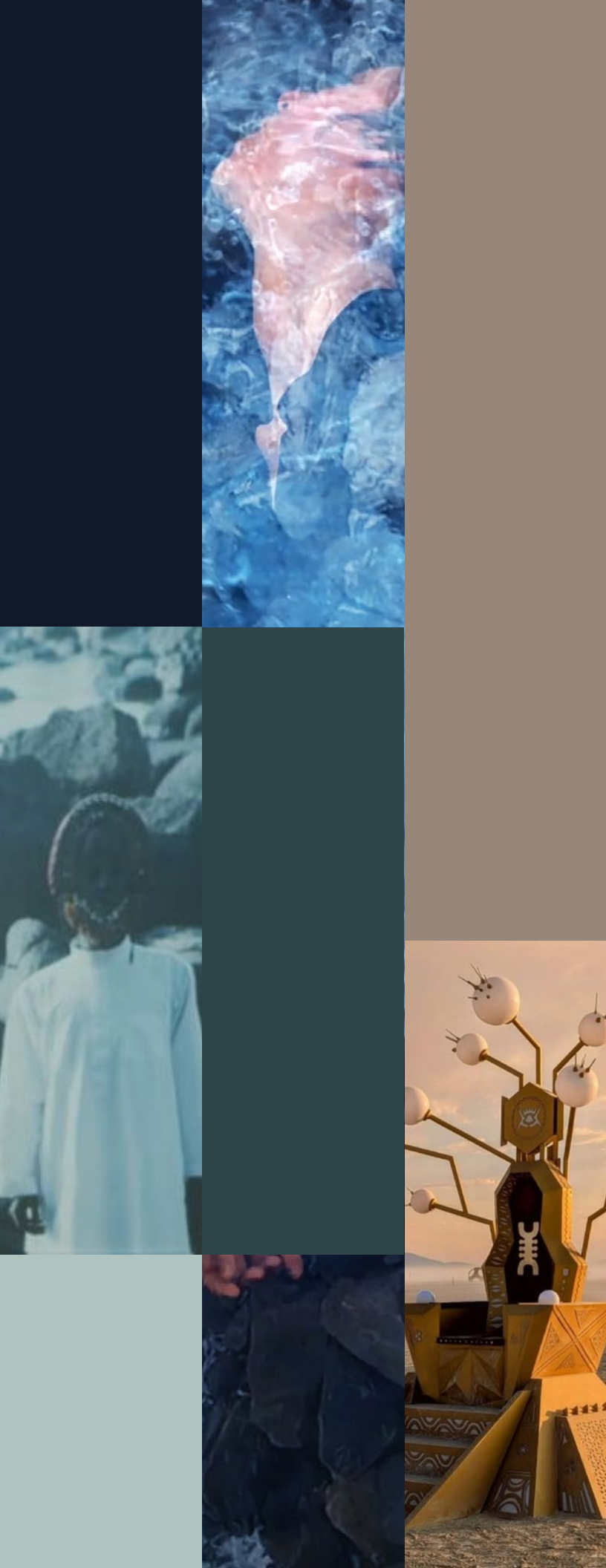
Everlasting, 2022, Seal Ink, Lottery Ticket, Paper, Wood, 44.5 x 48 in.

SUNG HO CHOI (b. Seoul, Korea) has lived and worked in New York City and Bergen County, New Jersey since 1981. He earned his BFA from Hong IK University in Seoul in 1980 and received his MFA from Pratt Institute, New York, in 1984. Over a career spanning more than 45 years, his work has been exhibited widely at venues throughout North and Central America as well as Asia.

His honors include a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant (1995), an Artists’ Project Grant from The National Endowment for the Arts, support from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts (1996), and an Award from the AHL Foundation (2005). Choi was also awarded Individual Artist Fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts in 2019 and 2026.

Beyond his studio practice, Choi has been deeply engaged as a cultural activist, art educator, and archivist in New York City and throughout Bergen County since 1988. In 1990, he co-founded Seoro Korean Cultural Network, organizing numerous cultural programs and exhibitions.

web: sunghochoi.com
instagram: pubrivate



digital/electronic

“By sculpting time through a cinematic lens and merging multiple art forms, I seek to develop a distinct artistic language that deepens the exploration of the human experience, creating space for reflection, connection, and shared meaning.”

Laia Cabrera,
Digital/Electronic Fellow



Moved By Spirit Video Installation -
Dakar Biennale, 2022

CHELSEA ODUFU is a photographer and director crafting Afrofuturist luxury worlds for fashion, culture, and the global Black diaspora. Her work blends celestial aesthetics with ancestral power, using photography, film, and sculptural couture to elevate Black identity as regal, expansive, and divine. Working between Newark, New Jersey and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, Odufu builds immersive visual narratives rooted in the traditions of the African diaspora while embracing speculative futures. Her imagery invites viewers into a dimension where heritage, myth, and style collide—and where Black presence becomes cosmic.

Odufu's work has been exhibited internationally, including at Christie's, Photo London, Los Angeles Contemporary Museum, and the Dakar Biennale. As a commercial director and image-maker, she partners with global brands including Chanel, Chase Sapphire, Bose, and Dr. Martens to bring culturally resonant storytelling to life through campaigns, films, and editorial content. She is also the founder of Astheria, a couture label merging sculptural craftsmanship with Afrofuturist aesthetics, and co-founder of Tech Afrique, a platform amplifying African innovation in art and technology.

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Close Up, 2021, Immersive Video Installation

LAIA CABRERA is a Catalan-Spanish filmmaker, video artist, and multimedia creator working at the intersection of immersive installation and new cinema. Her practice spans experimental and narrative filmmaking, visual poetry, and interdisciplinary forms including interactive and projection-based environments that expand storytelling into spatial and sensory experience. Drawing from cinematic and scenographic language, she creates immersive works where moving image, sound, and architecture converge. Her installations interrogate the perceived divide between nature and culture while reflecting on how technological and cultural frameworks shape collective experience. Key video installations including *Perennial Land*, *Close Up*, *Qualia*, *Shifting Gaze*, and *Dream-e-scape* have been presented internationally across museums, public spaces, and festivals in the U.S., Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Her work has been exhibited in Times Square, Mana Contemporary, Morris Museum, the Tempietto di Bramante in Rome, BAM, Hong Kong City Hall, Film Criticism Forum in Riyadh, and the United Nations COP16. She is the Founder and Artistic Director of Laia Cabrera & Co., a multidisciplinary creative studio.

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