



ACTIVATE: Delegates 2021 Cohort Biographies



Natasha Middleton was born into a ballet legacy. Her grandmother danced with the Ballet Russes, and her father, Andrei (Bill) Tremaine, with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. She was a ballerina with the original Pacific Ballet Theatre, under the direction of her father. She trained and danced in Los Angeles, New York and Europe. She danced in such ballets as Nutcracker, Raymonda, Spartacus, and Carmen. With music and acting under her belt, Ms. Middleton performed and choreographed in many musicals, operas, television and theater plays. She traveled much of the world studying many forms of cultural dancing, art design and contemporary dance. Ms. Middleton began choreographing professionally on Broadway for Jazz artist Chick Corea and went on the world tour with Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock. She also staged several productions during the Ford Amphitheater's summer events program. And, in 2000 she founded Media City Dance in Burbank, a school specializing in a strong children's dance program. Natasha Middleton continues to instill in her students her family legacy of classical ballet and more.



Ellie Guzman is a community organizer based on Tongva lands (South Central Los Angeles) who is passionate about building community power and transformative justice (TJ). Her interest in TJ fomented during her time as a youth organizer at California for Justice where she was called to use restorative justice practices to support youth. In her current capacity, as a tenant organizer at Strategic Actions for a Just Economy, she is developing an unlawful eviction rapid response network (modelled from the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective) to build community resilience. In her spare time, Ellie supports autonomous organizing efforts and enjoys learning about sustainable living, herbal medicine, and her ancestral healing practices.



Gleason Bauer (they/them) is a facilitator of white anti-racism affinity groups. Able to recognize and articulate the developmental stages within their own process of building a positive white racial identity, Gleason marries lived experience with their teaching expertise, scaffolding this identity development process, and supporting it with skillful facilitation, mindfulness practices, experiential learning, and compassionate and courageous community. Gleason is also an award-winning theatre artist and educator with over 25 years of experience developing and implementing curriculum, facilitating groups, and coaching individuals to embody the fullness of their humanity. Gleason's professional skill set has been built through years of creating and holding intentional space for personal awareness and transformation, as well as for collaborative and community-based creation. It comes from iterating how best to facilitate experiences that allow groups to build the trust needed to stay in-process as they sit with the discomfort of uncertainty and change.



Giovanni Rubio, graduated in 2012 with a BFA in Digital Media and a Community Engagement certificate with the ACT program (Artist Community Teaching) at Otis College of Art and Design. He considers himself as cultural worker, with a focus on digital graphics and public art. Currently, he does freelance design work along with being a part time instructor for Somos L.A. Arte program and the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs. He has facilitated art workshops for young people at parks, recreation centers, housing projects, youth detention facilities, public schools, charter schools and junior colleges throughout the greater Los Angeles County area.



Lillian Peckos is a recent graduate of Kenyon College, where she studied political science and minored in Spanish. Since finishing college in May of 2020, Lillian made a commitment to try to support and facilitate community within the constraints of the pandemic. With the help of two friends, she began Community Circle, a virtual space for educators who center their practice on justice-oriented education and anti-racism, to exchange ideas and resources. Further, she was a teaching assistant at an academic enrichment program for middle school students. Lillian spent many nights phone banking in Georgia for the general election and the Senate runoff. She is eager to learn more about the intersection of policy, advocacy and the arts!



Joshua R. Lamont is an artist, fundraiser, and teaching artist from Maryland (the DMV). As an artist, he has worked in collaboration Cornerstone Theater Company, The Actors' Gang, The Robey Theatre, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Blair Thomas Puppet Company; Company of Angels; African Continuum Theatre Company, and the all deaf rock band, Beethoven's Nightmare. He has performed in 3 countries including the Festival Dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy and the Festival Clin d'Oeil in Rhimes, France. A teaching artist, Joshua has taught inside California's corrections with adults and children as well as young students inside LA County schools. Joshua has produced several plays including Every 28 Hours, which looked at the statistic that, in America, every 28 hours a Black man, woman or child is killed by someone employed by the US government. He has helped raise more than \$300,000 for the arts.



Jocelyn Guihama has worked with community-based organizations for over twenty years. She is the Director of Administration and Experiential Learning for UCLA's Undergraduate Program in Public Affairs, which requires students to work in the community during their senior year. Previously, she was Deputy Director of the Institute on Inequality and Democracy, which supported programs and research on housing justice and criminal justice reform in partnership with social activists. She also managed research on the nonprofit sector at the Center for Civil Society. Before joining UCLA, Jocelyn worked at various nonprofits serving youth and immigrants. Off-campus, she has been board chair of MEND (Meet Each Need with Dignity), president of the Balboa Parent Association, and an advisory board member of CSUN's Center for Southern California Studies.



Felicia Cain is the Admissions Coordinator at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts (LACHSA), where she coordinates and oversees all aspects of the application, audition, admission and enrollment process for prospective and incoming students. Over the past 4 years, she has provided support for LACHSA's administration, arts department chairs, faculty and students. In addition, Felicia has served as a parent representative and staff representative on countless committees including LACHSA's equity task force, parent council board and foundation board. Felicia is the proud mom to a college student and LACHSA Alumnus. She is an accomplished vocalist and is very eager to returning to performing when it is safe. Felicia is also a lifelong learner and will begin graduate studies in the spring.



Audio engineering sparked her interest when **Stephanie Monte** started tinkering with her dad’s record player. That inspired her to become a DJ and career in radio. She obtained a BA degree in broadcast journalism from CSULA and worked at the University Times newspaper where she developed reporting skills and started the first internet radio station. In 2013, Stephanie began the MA program at USC and later interned at the Children’s Radio Foundation in South Africa where she produced shows with young people living in the townships who shared stories about identity and community. Stephanie interned at SCPR on the education desk then started to build her own after-school media program. Stephanie mentors the Por Vida Media Youth Collective, creating a space for young people to share their narrative. Navigating as a queer Xicana woman has been challenging and she hopes to give students the tools they need to also break through.



Celia Rivera is an actress, activist, arts educator and theatre administrator. She graduated from USC. She is the Artistic Associate at Skylight Theatre. She spent six years at the Geffen Playhouse, working her way up from Box Office Agent to Teaching Artist and then to the Community Engagement Coordinator. Her work merges theatre and social justice. Currently, she is working on a grassroots organization that focuses on accountability in the theatre industry. Its main goal is to create safety and equity for BIPOC theatre-makers. Some past acting credits include Time Out LA recommended Love Is Another Country, Bolingbroke in Chase What Flies’ Richard II, Antony in Project Nongenie’s Julius Caesar. She co-directed Skylight Theatre’s Never Is Now. IG: CeliaMandel



An actor and arts advocate, **Jeannine Stehlin** is producing managing director/publicist for The New American Theatre, where she’s produced over 100 plays in LA and NYC. Jeannine received the 2019 Career Achievement Award from Stage Raw, a digital journal dedicated to honoring L.A.-based arts and culture. She was recently reappointed to her second term as a Cultural Affairs Commissioner for Culver City. As commissioner, she granted money to arts organizations for programming, and co-designed the city’s Artist Laureate program. She advises the school district’s Career Technical Education program to support students on career pathways in the arts and creative industries. She is past president, Culver City Cultural Affairs Foundation, and served on the board of Culver City Citizen’s Bond Oversight Committee, overseeing a \$160M Municipal Bond for School Improvement projects. Jeannine earned her MBA from Illinois Institute of Technology and a BS in Communications and Advertising from the University of Illinois.



Christopher “Rocket” Descartes is a Caribbean American Artist from Earth. Brooklyn born, currently residing in Los Angeles where he has been producing a wide array of works focused more on the materials and created textures to highlight the varying subjects. Recently he has been merging form and function with a collection of sculptural home goods. Making spaces of intentional peace & tranquility. More plant art coming.... Learn more about him through conversation. Slide in his DMs @chris_rocket_



Mariam Tabatabaee is an arts worker with a passion for creating inclusive and accessible programming for all constituents, regardless of background, ability, socioeconomic status, gender, race, et al. She holds particular interests in disability advocacy and accessible programming, having developed tours for visitors who are blind or have partial vision at the Guggenheim and Craft Contemporary. She has worked at institutions including LACE, The Broad, The Guggenheim Museum, and The California Science Center, and is currently the Project Coordinator for the Learning and Engagement department at the forthcoming Lucas Museum of Narrative Art. She serves as Programming Committee Co-Chair for Emerging Arts Leaders, where she has also revamped the Protégé mentorship program as the Program Manager of Mentee Enrichment. Mariam holds a BS in Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior from UCLA, and is an AAM 2020 Annual Conference Scholar and 2020 Studio Museum in Harlem Museum Education Practicum participant.



Rosalind McGary has been a working artist for over 25 years. Her interest lies in art and the practice of art as healing tools for both individuals and communities. Rosalind is Founder and Artistic Director of Compton based Sēpia Artist Collective, through which she is producing The Compton Arts Project. The Compton Arts Project is a series of multidisciplinary events, exhibits, panels, and workshops recognizing Compton’s impact on arts and culture. McGary is also Founder and Creative Director of Cakecutter Institute, a non-profit arts organization fostering cultural exchange centering the narratives of Black and brown artists. Rosalind is dedicated to finding ways to create space and opportunity for artists to express themselves and thrive.



Kathleen Jequinto, Development and Events Associate at LAMusArt, where she works closely with foundations and program partners to provide equitable access to the arts for youth throughout LA’s Eastside. The arts played a major role in all developmental aspects of her youth, so she grew determined to help pave the same pathway for those who are less represented in arts fields so that they too may reap all the benefits that the arts foster. Initially by way of concert marketing and performance, Kathleen began working with her theatre alma mater, and 20 LA Archdiocesan elementary schools to administer music, art, dance and drama to schools who had little to no budget for arts education. She has spent the most memorable moments in her career as a teaching artist in voice, musical theatre and piano implementing original curriculum and lessons to bring out the best in young artists.



Aidan O’ Connor is best described as a rejected Fanta girl (just as bubbly, but not as tall). While she grew up in LA County, Aidan has spent the last 7 years devoting her time to performing sketch comedy and improv at numerous theaters around Chicago. Most notably, she has performed with teams at iO and Second City, co-produced a weekly variety show, Thunderdome, at CIC Theater, and worked as a professional choreographer for Second City’s RedCo. She is a graduate of Columbia College Chicago's Comedy Writing and Performance Program and the Second City Conservatory program. Aidan is looking forward to learning and advocating for arts in LA.



Rebekah Keller is an artist and educator with a deep love for the wisdom of artists and their power to affect change. Raised in China, Hong Kong, and Thailand, Rebekah has found her home in Los Angeles. For more than 10 years Rebekah has used her degree in Art Education to lead workshops designed for participants of all ages. She has partnered with Angel's Gate Cultural Center, the Pasadena Education Foundation, and the former Pasadena Museum of California Art to teach art to students from across the Pasadena and Los Angeles Unified School Districts. A passion for life-long learning has led Rebekah to design her own self-directed M.F.A. program in Matriarchal Art Practice. This program -- based on the overlooked labor of caretakers -- incorporates performative art practice, collaborative research projects, and domestic craft. Rebekah's artwork is rooted in identity and often features printmaking, collage, mixed media, and found objects.



Asya Shein is the Founder and Publisher of Fusicology "The Source for Progressive Events, Music & Culture since 2003" aggregating event listings in 20+ North American cities along virtual streams with exclusive content and releases that define the Soul Diaspora. Working in the music business since the age of 15, as a promoter then later talent agent, Asya was raised in Toronto and attended Wayne State University in Detroit and then settling in Los Angeles in 2000, a proud resident of over 40 years. As a new media, tech and music marketing entrepreneur, Asya has produced the various events with the City of Los Angeles and Department of Cultural Affairs, LA County via the Ford Theaters and Grammy Afterparties that have featured Stevie Wonder, and Common. Fusicology has launched a brand new virtual portal and app platform in 2020 along with embarking on a new health & wellness startup, FuseLife.



Gail Lopes is a retired lawyer with specialties in corporate, employment, technology, and nonprofit law. She has served as Chair of the Boards of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) in New York City, and Students Rising Above in the California Bay Area. She is also a member of Theatre Communications Group's National Advisory Council. After earning a JD at Harvard Law School, she spent ten years at the law firm of Morrison & Forester. Gail also served as a Vice President for product for legal and HR professionals in two start-ups. Through a consulting firm she co-founded, Gail has led numerous strategic planning initiatives at both profit and nonprofit organizations. She and her husband Jim have two daughters, one a theatrical director in Los Angeles and the other a sommelier.



As a lover and advocate of the Arts, **Jennifer Castillo** strives to nurture my passion and interests through the work that I do. I am continuously in search of opportunities in which to be of service to the community and contribute to making the Arts more accessible to people of all ages and from all walks of life.



Jacqui Malouf is a multiracial Teaching Artist who reminds us that tradition says, “the young will teach the old.” She is committed to the decolonization of education, aiding marginalized members of society to find voice and full expression, as antiquated, oppressive systems thankfully die. At the dawn of another renaissance, Jacqui strives to amplify this movement, on the stage and the page. Ms. Malouf believes that arts integration is the seed of democracy. She identifies as Ojibwa, MicMac, Metis, SWANA and Celtic & acknowledges how imperative it is to value, tell and reflect our ancestor's stories, in order to create a more just present and an equitable future. She lives, creates and teaches on stolen Tongva land and has founded a non-profit foundation called "What's Your Story?" WYS provides professional development for teachers and school administrators to address DEIB and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in storytelling, through the greater, evolving narrative.



Sonia Mehrmand received her Master’s degree in Public History and Museum Studies at the University of California, Riverside, during which she worked on oral history projects in Riverside’s Eastside and LA’s Chavez Ravine, co-curated the States of Incarceration exhibit in partnership with the New School, and coordinated the Huntington Library’s annual summer professional learning series for public school teachers. She moved to Sydney in 2016 and produced projects such as Australia’s inaugural Screen Diversity Showcase, the Citizen Writes writers development program, and the StoryCasters Project for emerging POC content creators. She currently lives in Orange County and works remotely as Assistant ED at Diversity Arts Australia, a national organization that advocates for racial equity in the creative industries. Her projects are grounded in collaboration, mentorship and capacity building as a means of creating lasting and substantial systemic change in the creative sector.



Albert Tran is an arts advocate, visual storyteller, creative writer, determined student, and curious about all aspects of art mediums. In June of 2018, Tran graduated from Gabrielino High School. Tran is currently a third-year student attending Pasadena City College to achieve his goals of transferring and obtaining his Bachelor’s Degree in Communications in June 2022. Building his career, he is working as an Education Intern for a nonprofit performing arts organization called the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts. He is collaborating alongside Wallis’ Director of Education, Mark Slavkin. Some of his roles include but not limited to; organizing and researching information related to the Wallis’ School Partners program, communicating with various co-workers to work on various projects, outreaching to independent teaching artists, and attending weekly meetings concerning the arts sector.



Nancy Nyberg serves as a Teaching Artist/Mentor in Storytelling and Dramatic Arts. Nancy earned her M.F.A. in Drama/Directing and a Certificate in Arts Management from the University of California, Irvine. She received B.A.'s from Wichita State University in Theatre and Anthropology.



Originally from El Paso, Texas, **Khayla Golucke** is a professional dancer and arts management professional currently based in Los Angeles. She earned her MA in Arts & Cultural Management from King's College London and BA in English and Dance (Magna Cum Laude) from Loyola Marymount University. Khayla has diverse experience in the arts and entertainment sectors, and has worked in marketing, programming, and community engagement roles for companies such as the Debbie Allen Dance Academy, Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre, and Tremaine Dance Conventions. In LA, Khayla is an active member of Dancers Alliance and is passionate about advocating for dance and the arts in her greater community.



Divya Kaushik Kohli has been a Development consultant for Film Festivals for over 7 years. Following the Festival circuit from Mumbai to LA and Cannes, she has worked with several international studios and media partners like Unifrance, TV5Monde, Telefilm Canada, Luce Cinecittà, etc. Kohli is based out of Los Angeles and manages Cultural and Community partnerships for the American Film Institute's Festivals), concurrently heading the Sponsorship team for the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles. Prior to this, she worked in Entertainment Sales with Walt Disney India and CNBC Network 18, managing partnerships with brands like Audi, Volkswagen, Marriott, etc. She has Masters in both Business (MBA) and Film (PGDMC) and immigrated to the United States in 2013. Combining her love for the Arts and Community building, she hopes to be instrumental in matching organizational missions to the right audiences locally and globally.



Lisa Diane Wedgeworth is an interdisciplinary artist who has been invited to exhibit her work in Los Angeles, North Carolina, Scotland and Paris; and to perform at Williams College and Northwestern University. She is a recipient of the 2020 COLA Individual Artist Fellowship and has lectured about her work at NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), OTIS, California State University Los Angeles, Chapman University and Los Angeles City College where she is a part-time faculty member. A cultural producer, Wedgeworth exhibited emerging artists in her studio-based project space PS 2920 between 2015 - 2016 and recently launched the public platform, Conversations About Abstraction to share the voices of abstract artists historically excluded from the Western canon. She has recently joined Arts at Blue Roof as its Executive Director.



Allison Soto Morales is the Development Manager at Las Fotos Project. Having pursued a bachelor's degree in Romance Languages and Literatures from Mount Holyoke College she is currently finishing her master's degree in World Heritage Studies from Brandenburgische Technische Universität. With professional experience working in several cultural organizations throughout Los Angeles, this native of the San Fernando Valley is interested in how access to cultural institutions is influenced by policies and how they reinforce cultural and social barriers. Motivated by the space and shared authority Las Fotos Project has created for its community in Boyle Heights and neighbouring areas, Allison hopes to bring the same spaces in communities throughout the San Fernando Valley.



Carene Mekertichyan is an actress, writer, singer, educator, and proud Angelena. As a Black Armenian woman, she is drawn to storytelling that centers marginalized narratives and believes true art exists to spark empathy and create social change. Her identity and LA upbringing inform both her art and intersectional activism. She serves as the Artistic Associate for Social Justice at Independent Shakespeare Co. and is a teaching artist for The Unusual Suspects and Creative Acts. Her plays have been produced at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, MeetCute LA, Company of Angels, Independent Shakespeare Co., and Sacred Fools' "We the People Theater Action". She is also part of LAist's "Racism 101" team. She received her training from Dartmouth College and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA).



Mickiela Montoya recognized lack of public awareness & services available to Veterans specifically women veterans in the U.S. She inspired Columbia University Professor Helen Benedict's award-winning book *The Lonely Soldier*, which received an extraordinary amount of community & public media support including an Exceptional Merit in Media Award (EMMA). Mickiela's impressive selflessness has led to many roles in her community ranging from swaying policy through testifying before Congress & the Senate, promoting academia for USC's Military Social Work Program and spokesperson for VA's most viewed PSA commercial. She was named 2018 Los Angeles Veteran of the Year and 2019 Shero of Los Angeles for her continued service to Veterans and her community through her combined 18+ years of federal service.



Sehnita Mattison is a television producer for a number of daytime talk shows and court shows such as *Judge Judy* and *Divorce Court*, where she earned her second Emmy nomination this year. In front of the camera, Sehnita served as the Co-Host and News Director for *CCN Sunrise*, a hyper-local morning show serving the world-class city of Pasadena, California. The show engaged residents with entertaining segments on everything from local/national politics to cooking and fitness. Sehnita moved to Culver City in 2011 with her husband and has two children. Her oldest son is completing the Spanish Immersion program at El Marino Language School. Sehnita graduated with a B.S. in Biopsychology from the University of Michigan.



Beth Soroko is an advancement officer at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (ICA LA). She joined the organization in 2014, during its previous iteration as the Santa Monica Museum of Art (SMMoA) and was part of the core team that transformed and relaunched SMMoA with a new home in downtown Los Angeles and new identity as ICA LA in 2017. She received her BA in Interdisciplinary Studies from UC Berkeley, where she created a specialized research program titled *Art and Social Change*; her studies included field research in the Community Arts Lab at Utrecht University, Netherlands. Prior to ICA LA, Beth managed grants and youth education programs at Red Hen Press. She sits on the advisory board of *A Ship in the Woods*, a nonprofit incubator for visual art, music, and new media.



Phylise Smith is a native of Los Angeles and currently lives in Pomona. As a long-time Dance Professor at College of the Canyons, and Scripps College, her dance specialties and background include, modern, West African dance and other dance styles. She is also a certified Yoga Instructor. A staunch advocate for dance and the arts, Phylise has led her own dance company, “The Serakumbil Project” and has received grants from the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department. Phylise has presented scholarly papers on dance both nationally and internationally and works locally to create choreography and produce dance concerts allowing the “everyday” student to experience the beauty of dance. With graduate degrees in both Political Science and Dance, Phylise has always advocated for students and the importance of the arts in their lives and their communities.



Joyce Kwon is a musician and creative placemaker committed to increasing access to the arts through storytelling. Through brand strategy, writing, video production, and song, she has been crafting stories about folks of the diaspora as well as arts organizations and independent musicians. She is a long-time content strategist and editor at Tronvig, a branding agency for museums and nonprofits based in Brooklyn, and serves on the Equity, Diversity, Accessibility & Inclusion committee at Young Musicians Foundation, where she is a teaching artist. An LA County High School for the Arts graduate and Museum Camper at the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History, she holds a BA from UC Berkeley and an MM from Manhattan School of Music, where she was a Fellow at the Center for Music Entrepreneurship. During quarantine, she has been enjoying creating public art and community spaces for villagers on her Animal Crossing island.



Mara Hsia-Palma (she/her) is a multi-hyphenate artist, writer, performer, and teaching artist. She works with the Unusual Suspects Theatre Company, and most recently worked with Center Theatre Group (LA) and re:theatre as an instructor. Her mission in life is to help people who feel powerless discover their own unique inner superpower and strength. Mara completed East West Players’ Writing a TV Pilot course, taught by Teresa Huang (2020). She combined her artistry with activism during the Intiman Theatre Emerging Artist Program in 2017, developing a 10-minute solo performance piece about her family’s immigration story from the Philippines. Mara graduated from Wellesley College with a degree in Political Science and Theatre Studies.



Nahal Jalali is a visual artist, writer, and strategy consultant focused on advancing social change through the arts. She has supported dozens of public, private, and social sector organizations in the areas of innovation and growth, and has written and researched extensively on the topic of socially engaged art - including as the Laura Zucker 2020 Arts for LA Fellow. Nahal earned her MPP from Georgetown University.



Alfred Nomad is an artist activist & entrepreneur creating his own path as an artist and curator. He is also the founder of the culture brand LxVE (Love x Value Everything & Everyone) to highlight and encourage entrepreneurial creatives to follow their passions, collaborate with like minds and give back to communities through creative content, clothing and events based around music and fine art. Alfred has been using his voice as an artist and storyteller to cultivate amity within communities for more than a decade. Curating experiences such as concerts, art exhibitions, panels, and his annual festival (hitting it's 5th year anniversary this year) LxVE Fest, Alfred effortlessly weaves together his musicianship and collective advocacy. With his thoughtful life driven subject matter, and musically modern sound that tends to blend Hip Hop, Jazz, eclectic samples and an alternative influence he lets his art speak to the lives of his listeners.



Rachel Keller is a public programs professional and independent curator, specializing in community outreach and audience engagement. She currently works as Public Programs Coordinator for Palm Springs Art Museum, and formerly was Education & Community Outreach Liaison at Hauser & Wirth Los Angeles where she managed programming with the gallery's community partners including: Cal State LA, Art + Practice, CalArts, and SciArc. Rachel has also held positions at The Broad, Shulamit Nazarian gallery, and LACMA. Her curatorial practice centers on interdisciplinary dialogue, community engagement, and public participation, and she has curated exhibitions in Los Angeles, New York, and Dakar, Senegal. Rachel holds a BA in Art History from Sarah Lawrence College and a MA in Curatorial Practices and the Public Sphere from USC Roski School of Art and Design.



Kim Córdoba is a writer and the director of glass design brand Vissio where she oversees collaborations with artisans, designers and architects. Her writing has appeared in multiple publications including Art Agenda, Art Review, frieze, SFMOMA's Open Space, and Momus, where she was the Mexico City Contributing Editor. She was short listed for the 2017 International Award for Art Criticism (IAAC) and was selected for the 2020 Art Writer Workshop. Córdoba is deeply committed to public welfare. She has worked with humanitarian aid organization Direct Relief on initiatives including earthquake relief and mobile healthcare to serve marginalized communities in Mexico. Prior to living in Mexico, Córdoba was active at grassroots organization Emerging Art Leaders Los Angeles (EAL/LA) which provides professional development to self-defining "emerging" art administrators in greater LA. As a 2020 Zhi-Xing Eisenhower Fellow, Córdoba is working on a design-based cultural diplomacy exchange initiative between Mexico, China, and the US.



Betsy Avila is a political and non-profit operative with over 10 years experience, and a start-up artist. Demonstrated ability in organizational planning and strategy development, team leadership, project management and community organizing. Knowledgeable about political and government affairs, and a fanatic of fine art. LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/betsyavila](https://www.linkedin.com/in/betsyavila), Instagram: [@betsyavilaart](https://www.instagram.com/betsyavilaart)

Austin Cyr is the President and Founder of Ground Up Communications, a Los Angeles based community engagement firm focused on infrastructure and local political campaigns. Austin arrived in Los Angeles after serving as a political tracker, working with American Bridge through Arizona's 2014 midterms. Austin also worked with Arizona artist agency Store44, representing clients in the visual arts.

Karin Chan is a communications specialist with a background in public policy, nonprofit advocacy, and journalism. She has worked to advance policies that benefit the Asian American community on a national and state level and most recently conducted media relations and partnership outreach for the 2020 Census campaign on behalf of the U.S. Census Bureau. Based in the San Gabriel Valley, she spends her free time organizing digital cultural activities within her community and producing self-released music.

Michelle Vincent has been teaching Art for 14 years in the Whittier City School District at Katherine Edwards Middle School. She is committed to creating an enriching artistic environment for students, providing educational and artistic opportunities, making cultural and community connections in the arts, and continually developing as a professional to further enhance the program for my students. Additionally, Michelle set up a You-Tube channel, Michelle Vincent art, to aid in Distance Learning. Michelle believes every student deserves access to the tools and resources needed to succeed academically, personally, and artistically.

Anne Marie Acosta's passion is igniting students with engaging and current art curriculum, and connecting communities through art. She co-founded The Graffiti Art Project which ran for six years and established a Chalk Walk that has run for seventeen, including during the COVID pandemic. She also co-founded the TakePart in Art festival serving three school districts in its eleventh year. Anne Marie studied with Paul Darrow at Scripps College while earning a BA in Art at Claremont Mckenna College. After Claremont, she spent several years in high tech prior to finding her career in art education. She holds a M.Ed. from Canisius College and is an early adopter of the digital classroom evolution. Anne Marie has a deep connection to Letterpress and owned a 100 year old Vandercook proof press on which she published 7 books. In her free time, she can be found painting a public mural, or crafting Ukrainian eggs.