

Belonging In Oakland: A Just City Cultural Fund 2021 Awardees & Reviewers

With deep gratitude to the field, we are honored to present the 2021 projects. Through these grants, Belonging in Oakland: A Just City Cultural Fund invests in Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) cultural practitioners who are rooted in Oakland, who are in deep relationship with at least one BIPOC community here, and who use their cultural practice to radically imagine justice for Oakland. This cohort presents a dynamic representation of the possible paths to a racially just Oakland.

2021 Awardees

Grant amounts include an added stipend to help underwrite life-sustaining expenses for participating artists/cultural practitioners, such as healthcare, childcare, student debt, or restorative activities.

Civic Design Studio

Name of Organization: Civic Design Studio

Fiscal Sponsor: Philanthropic Ventures Network

Project Name: Civic Design: Public Space Initiative

Cultural Practitioner: Tommy Wong

Website: civicdesignstudio.com

Grant Amount: \$100,800

Project Description: The Civic Design Studio – Public Space Initiative reimagines and improves shared public spaces for underserved communities across Oakland. The project focuses on parks, library exteriors, and outdoor commercial areas as the most democratic spaces in our society. Civic Design utilizes a network of schools, district leaders, community organizations, creative industry partners, and city agencies, focusing on “tipping-point,” deep-impact cultural design projects in public spaces. Creating “evergreen curriculum” in schools and industry pathways for young creatives, Civic Design Studio reshapes how siloed sectors can work together to center the invisibilized and uplift entire neighborhoods and communities.

Dads Evoking Change

Name of Organization: Dads Evoking Change

Project Name: Hear My Heart: Oakland Dads Speak

Cultural Practitioners: Kareem Chadly, Shawn Williams, Pendarvis Harshaw, and Cory TK Campbell

Website: dadsevokingchange.org

Instagram: @dadsevokingchange

Grant Amount: \$78,400

Project Description: Through a series of powerful new media features and community engagement activities, Hear My Heart will chart the harmful misperceptions of Black fathers, and the influence of those misperceptions on the outcome of divorces, child custody, and child support cases involving Black fathers. Hear My Heart: Oakland Dads Speak partners with public agencies, family-serving organizations, local media and Oakland artists/cultural practitioners to interrupt systemic marginalization of Black fathers by the family court system.

Friends of Peralta Hacienda Historical Park

Name of Organization: Friends of Peralta Hacienda Historical Park

Project Name: De-Colonizing Oakland and Peralta Hacienda

Cultural Practitioners: Walter Hood, Linda Yamane, Vincent Medina, Corrina Gould, Henry Sale, and Holly Alonso

Website: www.peraltahacienda.org

Socials: Facebook: @PeraltaHaciendaHP; Instagram: @peraltahaciendahp; Twitter: @peraltahacienda; TikTok: @MuseoPeralta

Grant Amount: \$100,800

Project Description: Since its founding, the United States' policies of genocide and land theft of Indigenous Peoples and enslavement of Africans, has established racialized labor and economic systems that, to this day, devastate the people and land on which we all depend. African American landscape architect/sculptor Walter Hood, Ohlone culture practitioners/artist Corrina Gould, Linda Yamane, Ruth Orta, Ramona Garibay and Vincent Medina partner with the Peralta Hacienda staff and Fruitvale community residents to animate visions of Indigenous culture through language justice, restoration of native landscapes, and place-based coalition-building. De-Colonizing Oakland and Peralta Hacienda will partner with Alameda County Public Health, Lao Family Community Development, Oakland Parks, Recreation & Youth Development, The Unity Council and Friends of Negro Spirituals to address historical annihilation and contemporary invisibility of Native voices and culture.

Still I Rise: Oakland

Name of Organization: Still I Rise: Oakland

Fiscal Sponsor: Intersection for the Arts

Project Name: Still I Rise: Oakland

Cultural Practitioners: Madeleine Clifford, Ryan Nicole, Coco Peila

Grant Amount: \$100,800

Project Description: Still I Rise is a collaborative project between Masters of Ceremony, RyanNicole Peters, G.O.L.D. (fka Coco Peila), and Maddy "MADlines" Clifford. It merges the ancient, African, artistic structure of the Hip Hop cypher with the technology of a vodcast and EP series, effectively sparking courageous conversations that interrupt Misogynoir, amplify marginalized voices and empower Oaklanders for decades to come.

Kingmakers of Oakland

Name of Organization: Kingmakers of Oakland

Project Name: Black Joy: Kingmakers of Oakland

Cultural Practitioners: Obasi Davis, Cava Menzies

Website: kingmakersofoakland.org

Grant Amount: \$100,800

Project Description: Kingmakers of Oakland believes a just Oakland must include a transformative education system that elevates Black genius, engages multigenerational audiences, cultivates "artivism," promotes racial justice, and builds a broad body of work that includes film, music, dialogue, and digital curricula. Moving beyond the notion of art as entertainment, Black Joy partners with young artists from Oakland Unified School District's Office of Equity (via the African American Female Excellence and African American Male Achievement programs), Young Gifted and Black (YGB), and the Oakland School for the Arts. Black Joy envisions a justice-facing soundtrack album, Black anime film, and cultural showcase in collaboration with Oakland Unified School District.

Oakland Sustaining Ourselves Locally (SOL)

Name of Organization: Oakland Sustaining Ourselves Locally (SOL)

Project Name: Oakland SOL Revival

Cultural Practitioners: Avé-Ameenah, Laya Wig

Grant Amount: \$100,800

Project Description: Oakland SOL Revival is a Black American preservation and radical reparations project focused on Queer, Femme leadership and collaboration. Avé-Ameenah and Laya Wig are utilizing a storefront and garden they steward to create a stronghold for Black community and culture in the San Antonio/Fruitvale neighborhoods of East Oakland. This project directly challenges issues of displacement and food injustice by addressing the disappearance of Black businesses, artists, cultural hubs, and living food programs in Oakland. We are envisioning Oakland as a hub for radical reparations, where Black people are creating and combining resources rather than waiting to be displaced.

Spirit Root Medicine People (SRMP): Two Spirit Lifeways

Name of Organization: Spirit Root Medicine People (SRMP): Two Spirit Lifeways

Fiscal Sponsor: Social Good Fund

Project Name: Reclaiming Sacred Two Spirit/LGBTQI Roles, Spirit Root Medicine People

Cultural Practitioners: M.Zamora, Loa Niumeitolu, RaheNi Gonzalez

Facebook: @SpiritRootMedicinePeople

Grant Amount: \$100,800

Project Description: Sacred roles tied to medicinal knowledge and wellness served by settlers and systems of colonization continue to be made forgotten. Reclaiming Sacred Two Spirit/LGBTQI Roles, Spirit Root Medicine People gathers Indigenous Two Spirit/LGBTQI folx across age, ability, sexuality, religion, body, and knowledge traditions to reclaim their sacred roles within communities. Led by Two Spirit/Takataapui cultural practitioners, SRMP engages Two Spirit/LGBTQI Indigenous people who exist across Huichin/Oakland to envision a just city in which wellness and medicine circles heal and renew Two Spirit people from unprecedented rates of suicide, severe mental illness, high rates of drug addiction, wide spread homelessness and poverty, and the normalization of living in the closet.

Village in Oakland

Name of Organization: Village in Oakland

Project Name: Tarpestries

Cultural Practitioners: Anita Needa Bee Miralle, Pancho Pescador, Ayat Jalal Bryant, Lola

Website: thevillageinoakland.org

Facebook: @thevillageinoakland

Grant Amount: \$98,560

Project Description: Tarpestries seeks to activate the creativity and agency of Oakland's unhoused citizens through activities grounded in their humanity, dignity, and rights. They will work with unhoused citizens to design and transport murals carrying messages of healing and information about community resources and direction-action plans related to Oakland's housing affordability crisis. Tapestries will provide Oakland's unhoused neighbors with know-your-rights trainings and eviction defense resources, and work to shift public opinion about the unhoused through community engagement strategies at each site.

2021 Reviewers

Belonging in Oakland: A Just City Cultural Fund benefited from the voices of community-based cultural leaders and activists in the application review process. We sought and found people with lived experience and knowledge of the historical grounding and cultural practices of a wide range of communities impacted by systemic racism and other forms of injustice.

Knowing the weight of the responsibility shouldered by our review panelists, we are honored by their generous contribution of insights to the process and their commitment to justice in Oakland. We wish to acknowledge and sincerely thank them for the diligence, wisdom, and compassion they brought to the task put before them.

Gina Acebo

ARTISTRY: visual arts, Grant Maker

Gina Acebo is a third generation Filipina who grew up in Oakland, California. For the last twenty years she has worked with racial justice organizations as a community organizer, policy advocate, and coordinator of national gatherings. Over the years, she's explored ways to connect her art practice to her social change work. Using everyday materials like paper and cardboard combined with found ephemera and readymade objects, Gina's art making leverages storytelling, political analysis, and humor as a cultural strategy for public discourse amongst diverse audiences. When she's not in the studio or in the streets organizing, she's on a quest to roll the perfect lumpia.

Shanna Bowie

ARTISTRY: dance, creative youth development

Shanna is the Art Center Program Manager at Destiny Arts Center, where she works to create a safe, artistic environment where youth and their extended families can thrive. Originally from Brooklyn, New York, she has been with Destiny since September of 2018. Shanna believes in the power of art to change the world and help people envision a better future. Shanna has worked for the past decade at various arts and education organizations in the Bay Area as well as advocating for youth leadership development and arts education as an executive committee member with the Arts Education Alliance of the Bay Area. In addition to her work at Destiny, Shanna is a podcaster and comic book writer. Shanna is trained in youth leadership development practices through Be the Change Consulting. She holds a B.A. in Africana Studies from Brown University.

Katherin Canton

ARTISTRY: weaver, healer, cultural organizer

Katherin Canton (they/them/theirs), based in occupied Nisenan, Maidu, and Miwuk land (Sacramento, CA), is a detribalized K'iche GuateMayan, weaver, healer, cultural organizer, and facilitator raised on Yelamu (occupied Ramaytush Ohlone land/San Francisco) and Huichin (occupied Chochenyo Ohlone land/Oakland). Katherin has served as administrative director at the Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco and as the first Western regional organizer of the U.S. Department of Arts and Culture; and was the cultural equity policy director of Peacock Rebellion and the founding Program Manager of Oakland's Just City Cultural Fund. As the California Arts Council's first Race and Equity Manager, they continue a lifelong journey of learning how to be in right relationship with themselves, neighbors, the land, and ancestors, particularly centering queer and trans Black, Indigenous, communities of color.

Brett Cook

ARTISTRY: interdisciplinary, visual arts

Brett Cook is an interdisciplinary artist and educator who uses creative practices to transform outer and inner worlds of being. His public projects often involve community workshops featuring arts-integrated pedagogy along with contemplative practices, performance, and food to create a fluid boundary between art making, daily life, and healing.

Teaching and public speaking are extensions of Cook's social practice that involve communities in dialogue to generate experiences of reflection and insight. He has taught at all academic levels in a variety of subjects, and published in academic journals at the Maryland Institute College of Art, and Columbia and Harvard Universities. In 2009, he published *Who Am I In This Picture: Amherst College Portraits* with Brett Cook and Wendy Ewald through Amherst College Press. Cook's work has been featured in private and public collections including the Smithsonian/National Portrait Gallery, the Walker Art Center, and Harvard University.

Malkia Devich Cyril

ARTISTRY: media, literary art

Founder and Director of the Center for Media Justice, Malkia Devich Cyril dedicates her life to ensuring that the voices of all communities are heard by providing them with tools to harness the power of the media. Cyril grew up believing that “everyone deserves a public voice.” Inspired by her mother’s work editing the Black Panther’s newspaper in Brooklyn, New York, Cyril recognized the power of media informing and disseminating public opinion. Ever since she has dedicated her life to providing all communities with the tools to harness the power of the media to ensure their voices are heard. Since the CMJ’s founding in 2002, the organization has been involved with helping numerous organizations develop communications strategies to support social justice. Although Malkia spends “an inordinate amount of time writing fiction and poetry,” she has also found the time to publish her work advocating for media justice in the New York Times, Politico, the Huffington Post, Essence Magazine, the Village Voice, the Advocate and the San Francisco Chronicle.

Davey D

ARTISTRY: writer, journalist, DJ, cultural historian

Davey D is an Oakland-based nationally recognized journalist, adjunct professor, Hip Hop historian, syndicated talk show host, radio programmer, producer, deejay, media and community activist. Originally from the Bronx, NY, Davey D’s been down with Hip Hop since since 1977 where he started out as an emcee for two crews TDK [Total Def Krew] out of Co-op City and the Avengers out of the Marble Hill Section of the Bronx.

Davey D is the co-founder and host of several of the most cited Hip Hop radio and online news journalism projects of all time. Hard Knock Radio (HKR) is an award-winning daily syndicated prime time afternoon show focusing on Hip Hop culture and politics. Davey D is the co-author of 2 books ‘How to Get Stupid White Men Out of Office’ (Soft Skull, 2004) and ‘BAF-Be A Father to Your Child’ (Soft Skull, 2008). He also contributed to Project Censored’s Media Democracy in Action-Censored 2004 (Seven Stories Press, 2004).

Jewelle Gomez

ARTISTRY: literary arts

Jewelle Gomez (Cape Verdean/Ioway/Wampanoag) is a writer and activist and author of the double Lambda Award-winning novel, *THE GILDA STORIES* from Firebrand Books. Her adaptation of the book for the stage "BONES & ASH: A GILDA STORY," was performed by the Urban Bush Women company in 13 U.S. cities. The script was published as a Triangle Classic by the Paperback Book Club.

Her fiction, essays, criticism and poetry have appeared in numerous periodicals. Among them: *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice*; *Ms Magazine*, *ESSENCE Magazine*, *The Advocate*, *Callaloo* and *Black Scholar*.

She has served on literature panels for the National Endowment for the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council and the California Arts Council.

Jeremy Liu

ARTISTRY: visual arts, interdisciplinary

As a nationally-recognized community development innovation expert, Jeremy leads, invests in, or advises purpose-built social enterprises with a track record of transformative projects in real estate, community development, urban agriculture, food retail, green infrastructure, and arts and culture. Jeremy works as a real estate developer, business builder, artist and cultural producer, community organizer, and technology designer.

As an artist he has received the Artadia Artist Prize and grants from Visible Republic/NEFA, LEF Foundation, and Creative Work Fund. His art has been exhibited at the LA County Museum of Art, Hammer Museum, Smart Museum, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, SITE Santa Fe, Boston Center for the Arts, Blaffer Art Museum, Live Biennale in Vancouver, Open Engagement Art + Social Practice Conference, and the Grantmakers in the Arts conference.

Isa Nakazawa

ARTISTRY: literary arts, film, media

Isa Nakazawa is an Oakland-based writer, educator, and radio host. After graduating from Wesleyan University in 2008 with a dual degree in Sociology and American Studies, Isa jumped coasts to join Youth Speaks, one of the country's leading spoken word and literary arts organizations, as a teaching artist and poet mentor. She is currently the Director of Marketing and Communications at the Bay Area Video Coalition, a community media hub and resource for media makers in the Bay Area, serving over 7,500 filmmakers, activists, and artists every year. Outside of her work at BAVC, Isa hosts a radio show, Rhizomatic Radio, the second and fourth Thursday of every month on AllDayPlay.FM dedicated to her love of connecting listeners to the transformative power of music. No matter the medium, Isa leads with her curiosity, attention, and fundamental belief in the interconnected nature of the liberation of all people. Shake the syntax, shake the world.

Patricia Wakida

ARTISTRY: visual arts, lit, community history

Patricia Miye Wakida is a fourth-generation Japanese American artist, writer and community historian. For the past fifteen years, she has done editorial, curatorial, or development work with numerous cultural institutions such as the Japanese American National Museum, the Oakland Museum of California, Topaz Museum, Densho Project, Heyday Books and has served on numerous non-profit boards. She studied as an apprentice papermaker in Gifu, Japan and as an apprentice printer and hand bookbinder in Berkeley, California; to this day, she still maintains her own linoleum block and letterpress business, hand carving and cranking out prints on 100-year-old equipment. She lives in the heart of the Fruitvale district of Oakland, California, with her husband and son.