

**The Joyce Foundation 2019 Creative Placekeeping/Placemaking Summit Bios**  
**St. John's Episcopal Church, Cleveland | March 21-22, 2019**

# **The Artist as Problem Solver II**

**Building the Capacity of Artists and  
Cultural Workers as Civic Leaders**



**Shalina S. Ali** (Milwaukee) was born and raised in Milwaukee and is a Mother, Artist and Entrepreneur. Shalina's commitment to helping others and promoting self-care drives her career and serves as a constant motivation on her mission. Co-Executive Director of TRUE Skool, Inc. Shalina co-created the Circulate Creative Entrepreneur Market and developed the "Art of Coping" and "TRUE Knowledge" curriculums. She was awarded Creative Alliance's "Creative Problem Solving Excellence" award for The Art of Coping's proactive address to suicide and depression. Shalina is a member of The Central City Circle of Change, an emotional and social wellness consulting group, and pursues her passions as a poet and free lance photographer. Shalina specializes in program and staff development, curriculum building and for over 15 years has worked with organizations such as the YMCA, Latino Community Center, Violence Free Zone and the First Time Juvenile Offenders Program. Shalina is committed to her work challenging and educating others who serve youth and community.



**Mary Barrett** (Cleveland) of Twelve Literary Arts is Assistant to the Executive Artistic Director. Mary is a dancer, poet, lecturer, student educator, and choreographer. She has performed at Cleveland Public Theater, Karamu, and the Cleveland Museum of Art among others. Her poetry merges critical race theory, feminist theory and hip hop cultural studies with spoken word aesthetics. She has also lectured at Ohio State University about literature and social justice. As a teaching apprentice at Twelve Literary Arts, she has co-facilitated poetry and writing workshops for middle and high school students across the Midwest region. Mary is the current artistic director of Six of Twelve, Twelve Literary Arts' youth performance poetry ensemble.

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**Roberto Bedoya** (Oakland) is the Cultural Affairs Manager for the City of Oakland where he most recently shepherded the City's Cultural Plan: *Belonging in Oakland: A Cultural Development Plan*. Throughout his career, he has consistently supported artists-centered cultural practices and advocated for expanded definitions of inclusion and belonging in the cultural sector. His essays "Creative Placemaking and the Politics of Belonging and Dis-Belonging," "Spatial Justice: Rasquachification, Race and the City," and "Poetics and Praxis of a City in Relation" reframed the discussion on cultural policy to shed light on exclusionary practices in cultural policy decision making. He is a Creative Placemaking Fellow at Arizona State University.



**Phyllis Viola Boyd** (Indianapolis) is an artist and urban strategist. She serves as the Executive Director of Groundwork Indy, a non-profit organization that employs youth to work on community-based projects that equitably enhance environmental, economic, and social wellbeing. Phyllis co-leads with LaShawnda Crowe Storm the RECLAIM 46208 Project, which transforms the blight of vacant lots into economic opportunities for the formerly incarcerated and other community members. This project involves multiple partners such as the City of Indianapolis, neighborhood schools, community artists, and various non-profits. Before joining Groundwork Indy, Phyllis practiced landscape architecture and urban planning in the for-profit sector, where her work focused on sustainable design and planning.



**Jennifer Coleman** (Cleveland) is The George Gund Foundation's senior program officer for arts. Prior to joining the Foundation, she was an architect, and president of her own design firm, Jennifer Coleman Creative LLC, starting in 2005. Prior to that, she practiced architecture with Robert P. Madison International, URS Corporation and Westlake Reed Leskowsky. She also founded CityProwl.com, a company that creates and distributes digital audio walking tours of Cleveland. Among her many civic endeavors, Coleman has served as chair of the Cleveland Landmarks Commission and the Downtown/Flats Design Review Committee. She also has been a member of the board of trustees of many organizations, including the Cleveland Arts Prize, the Cleveland International Film Festival, LAND studio, and the Cleveland Botanical Garden. Coleman has a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Cornell University.



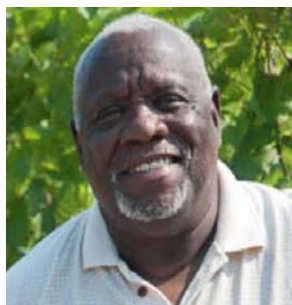
**Ty Defoe** (Giizhig), from the Oneida and Ojibwe Nations-Northern Wisconsin, is an interdisciplinary-hyphenated artist, activist, writer, cultural worker, and shape-shifter. As a two-spirit person, Ty aspires to an integral approach to artistic projects, social justice, indigeneity, and environmentalism. Ty gained recognition in many circles around the world – including a Grammy Award for his work on "Come to Me Great Mystery." Ty's global cultural arts highlights are: the Millennium celebration in Cairo, Egypt with the Call for Peace Drum and Dance Company; Turkey for the Ankara International Music Festival; and Festival of World Cultures in Dubai. Awards include: NEA/NEFA for reconstructing and indigenizing, *Drum is Thunder*, *Flute is Wind*, First American in the Arts Outstanding

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Performance Award, First Americans in the Arts Scholarship Award, an Indigenous Heritage Festival Award: this award is given to artists who have made a major positive impact on indigenous people and rights of the world, a Robert Rauschenberg Artist in Residence, 2016-2018 Olga J. and G. Roland Denison visiting artist Professorship of Native American Studies at Central Michigan University, 2016-2017 Institute of the American Indian Arts Visiting Artist, 2017 Jonathan Larson Award winner creating book and lyrics on "Clouds Are Pillows for the Moon (w/ composer Tidtaya Sinutoke at Yale Institute for Musical Theatre; ASCAP Musical Theatre Workshop), Hart Island Requiem (The Civilians R&D Group), Crossing Borders (CAP 21), Red Pine (Native Voices at the Autry; IAIA of Santa Fe), The Way They Lived (Co-collaboration w Micharne Cloughley and The Civilians at the Met Museum), writer and co-director of Ajijaak on Turtle Island (Ibex Puppetry at La MaMa Theater, NYC, Lied Center for the Performing Arts, NE, and New Victory Theater, NYC) Ty is a co-founder of Indigenous Direction (w/ Larissa FastHorse).



**Raja Belle Freeman** (Cleveland), Support Teaching Artist. Raja is a performance poet, visual artist, and flautist. She has worked with Twelve Literary Arts as an intern, a member of the Six of Twelve Youth Performance Poetry Ensemble, and is a two-year member of the One Mic Open Youth Poetry Slam Team. She is currently a student at Cleveland State University and she hates writing bios.



**Mansfield Frazier** (Cleveland) is a self-taught writer. He also currently serves as the executive director of Neighborhood Solutions, Inc. a non-profit that publishes Reentry Advocate, a national magazine that goes into various prisons, libraries, county jails, halfway houses and prison ministries around the United States.



**Michael Gill** (Cleveland) came to print making as a writer. He has a BA in English (Hiram College, Ohio, 1986) and an MFA in Creative Writing (Eastern Washington University, Cheney / Spokane, Washington, 1988). He lived, worked, and studied in Washington DC, England, Wales, and Ecuador before returning to Cleveland. His poetry has been published in dozens of literary and other magazines, including Rolling Stone, and several chapbooks, which include The Atheist at Prayer (March Street Press, Greensboro, North Carolina) and The Solution to the Crisis is Revolution: Graffiti of Ecuador, collected and translated (Ox Head Press, Browerville, Minnesota).



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**Esther Grisham Grimm** (Chicago) is 3Arts Executive Director of 3Arts, a social justice and arts organization that advocates for women artists, artists of color, and artists with disabilities working in the performing, teaching, and visual arts in Chicago. Esther's careerlong work in the arts spans museum education, arts education, and philanthropy. Prior to joining 3Arts, she was the Associate Director of Marwen, a nonprofit visual arts organization that provides out-of-school art instruction, college planning, and career development programs to Chicago youth in grades 6-12. Before Marwen, she served as the Assistant Director of Museum Education at The Art Institute of Chicago and worked in museum education at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut. Esther is the Chair of the Alliance of Artists Communities and serves on the Grantmakers in the Arts Support for Individual Artists Committee, the Dance/USA Service Organization Committee, and as the Secretary of the American Friends of the Vienna Museum Board of Directors. In 2017, Esther received the Kathryn V. Lamkey Spirit of Diversity Award from the Equal Employment Opportunity Committee of Actors' Equity Association. She also received the Wren Award in honor of women in theater from Rivendell Theatre Ensemble and the Women Who Make a Difference Award from Lakeside Bank.



**Juana Guzman** (Chicago), National Arts Consultant, I Juana Know Inc. For more than 35 years, Juana has served as a nationally acclaimed arts consultant and organizational management leader. Throughout her career, Juana has championed the promotion and preservation of the arts, culture and heritage as a catalyst for economic and social change for diverse American populations. Since 1980, Juana has developed and implemented strategies that focused on organizational capacity building, diversity training in the workplace, alternative sources of revenue, entrepreneurialism, creative place-making and place-keeping in diverse communities of color. In 2012, Juana left her position of 13 years as the Vice-President of the National Museum of Mexican Arts (NMMA) in Chicago, the largest accredited Latino arts institution in the country, to start her own company "I Juana Know Inc." Juana previously served as the Director of Community Cultural Development for the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) for 18 years. During her tenure at the DCA she was responsible for innovative economic initiatives that focused on providing strategic planning and earned income development in support of Chicago's most diverse and underserved communities. Juana also served as a team technical advisor, consultant for the Ford Foundation's Shifting Sands Initiative in New York City, NY that focused on funding diverse non-profit organizations and museums throughout the United States. The initiative worked to reframed arts, cultural and non-art organizations as vital agents of community development through improving neighborhoods identities, social mobility, and economic growth. Juana served as a consultant for Leveraging Investments in Creativity (LINC) in New York City. LINC was a national initiative aimed at improving the living and working conditions for diverse artists in all disciplines. Juana is also the Co-Founder of the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures and serves on local and national boards. Juana is currently serving as an Associate Consultant as part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies' Arts Innovation in Management (AIM), and is currently

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serving as a technical advisor to the Joyce Foundation in Chicago and the University of Houston's Inter-University of Latino Research a national partnerships of 26 Universities throughout the United States. Juana is also the co-founder of the National Association of Latino Arts and Culture.



**Tracie D. Hall** (Chicago) is the Director of the Joyce Foundation's Culture Program. She has previously served as Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events for the City of Chicago where she oversaw the Arts and Creative Industries Division; and in The Boeing Company's Global Corporate Citizenship Division where she worked as Community Investment Strategist and later as Chicago Community Investor. Deeply invested in the intersection of arts access and economic development, Hall is the recipient of various awards for her creative and community work. She is Founding Curator of Rootwork Gallery, an experimental arts space in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood.



**DeAmon Harges** (Indianapolis) of The Learning Tree ([thelearningtrees.com](http://thelearningtrees.com)) is the original "Roving Listener" as a neighbor and staff member of the Broadway United Methodist Church. His role is to listen and discover the gifts, passions and dreams of citizens in his community, and to find ways to utilize them in order to build community, economy, and mutual delight. The bulk of DeAmon's work is based on the principles and practices of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD) that brings neighbors and institutions together to discover the power of being a good neighbor. DeAmon builds on what is already present and in place in the neighborhood, using those formally undiscovered assets to connect and empower rather than working only from the community's needs and deficits. There is now a core of "Roving Listeners" working in the Broadway Methodist Church neighborhood.



**Telina Johnson** (Cleveland) is a high school senior attending Charles F. Brush High School. Telina is a Twelve Literary Arts (TLA) intern, and has performed across Northeast Ohio as a member of TLA's youth performance poetry ensemble, Six of Twelve. Telina is a current member of the youth poetry slam team representing Cleveland at this year's Brave New Voices Festival and Competition in Las Vegas.



**Sean Oreo Jones** (Indianapolis) is an artist currently residing in Indianapolis. Originally focused on hip hop culture, Jones has harnessed his craft as a musician around the country and has developed a role as community organizer with an artistic purpose by founding Chreece — one of the Midwest's biggest hip hop festivals. In 2015, Sean he began working with Big Car Collaborative as Sound Artist in Residence at Listen Hear located in the Garfield Park neighborhood. As part of the organization, Sean also supports the creative community by curating exhibitions at Listen Hear and helping operate Big Car's FM radio station, 99.1 WQRT, that broadcasts cultural, musical, and community-focused programming 24/7 from the sound art gallery.

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**Tonika Lewis Johnson** (Chicago) is a photographer from Chicago's Englewood neighborhood. She received her BA in Journalism & Photography from Columbia College Chicago and her MBA from National-Louis University. In 2010, she helped co-found Resident Association of Greater Englewood (R.A.G.E.) and now serves as its Program Manager. She was selected as a 2017 Chicagoan of the Year by Chicago Magazine for her photography depicting Englewood's enduring beauty as a counternarrative to pervasive media coverage focused on poverty and crime. In 2017, the Chicago Reader ran a photo essay by Johnson as its cover story titled "Life Beyond The Headlines." Selected work from her two projects are currently being exhibited at Loyola University's Museum of Art (LUMA) in Chicago.



**Amanda King** (Cleveland) is the Creative Director, Shooting Without Bullets Art School. She is an activist artist who is elevating the voices of Cleveland teens through the arts. She is the founder and creative director of Shooting Without Bullets, a revolutionary movement for black and brown teens that employs photography, design and hip-hop performance to combat social injustices. Amanda serves as the youth advocate on the Cleveland Community Police Commission. Amanda received her B.A. in Art History from Bryn Mawr College (2011) and a J.D. from Case Western Reserve University School of Law (2017). Her activism has been recognized by the Case Western Reserve University School of Law as a recipient of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for following in character and conduct the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Diane Ethics award for demonstrating in academic, professional and extracurricular activities the best understanding of the ethics and ideals of the profession and the Dean's Award For Community Service for her commitment to enriching the lives of others in the Greater Cleveland Area and serving as an example to those within and outside the legal profession.



**Daniel Gray-Kontar** (Cleveland) is Executive Artistic Director of Twelve Literary Arts. A poet and education activist, he has worked as an advocate for social transformation in the city of Cleveland for more than 25 years. Gray-Kontar is an education consultant for the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; writer-in-residence at MOCA Cleveland; former chair of the Literary Arts Department at the Cleveland School of the Arts; and a former graduate school fellow at UC Berkeley's College of Education. His work in arts education has been showcased on PBS Newshour. Gray-Kontar has lectured at universities, public schools, arts organizations and scholarly conferences across the US. His TED talk discussing youth leadership in public school education has affected the ways public school administrators think about the inclusion of youth and their families in the process of re-making school cultures and curricula.



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**M. Carmen Lane** (Cleveland) (Tuscarora, Mohawk, African-American) is a two-spirit poet and cultural worker living in Kahyonhake (Cleveland, Ohio). Their poetry has been published in the *Yellow Medicine Review*, *River Blood & Corn*, and *Red Ink Magazine*. Carmen contributed to the Lambda Literary nominated anthology *Sovereign Erotics: A Collection of Two-Spirit Literatures*. Their first collection of poetry is *Calling Out After Slaughter* (GTK Press, 2015). M. Carmen Lane has worked as an experiential educator, facilitator, trainer and consultant for over 15 years. Her passion is working with individuals and organizations to support their development as competent and ethical agents of change. Carmen has also engaged communities as a diversity practitioner for 25 years. Carmen's model for change work as an organization and systems development (OSD) consultant and diversity practitioner is indicative of her life long journey as a human being interested in a just world--an integration of ancestry, legacy, and spirituality. She uses technologies developed through her training at NTL Institute's Diversity Leadership Practitioner Program, the Gestalt OSD Center, and the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland integrated with teachings from movement elders and through Indigenous forms of knowledge. Carmen has developed and taught coursework in diversity at Chicago Theological Seminary. A member of NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Science, she is an Amanda Fouter Scholar and co-steward of the Personal Growth Community of Practice. Carmen holds a master's degree in organization development from American University, School of Public Affairs and is a Segal-Seashore Fellow and Hal Kellner Awardee. Carmen lives in Cleveland, Ohio and enjoys spending time with family and volunteering at a local free alternative health clinic. Specialties: group dynamics, facilitation & training, coaching, organizational leadership, diversity & inclusion, and change.



**Lisa Langford** (Cleveland), a graduate of Harvard University, is an actress and playwright. In addition to television and film, Lisa has acted Off-Broadway (Playwrights Horizons), regionally (LaJolla Playhouse, Old Globe, Actors Theatre of Louisville) and locally (Cleveland Play House, Dobama and Mamai). Her plays have appeared at Cleveland Public Theatre (ICOGNEGRO, THE NEGRO PERKINS, THE BOMB and, most recently THE ART OF LONGING) and convergence-continuum (OUTSIDE/IN: THE FATTENING HOUSE and THE SPLIT SHOW). Lisa has also been a copywriter, a journalist, and a member of the creative team that launched the late Dr. Maya Angelou's greeting card line. She received her MFA from Cleveland State and is a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.



**Eduardo Luna** (Indianapolis) was born in Mexico and raised in the Midwest. He is passionate about creating a bridge between the two cultures. Eduardo works as a placemaking artist and immigrant and refugee outreach specialist at Big Car Collaborative. He is a founding member of NOPAL Cultural, a Latino-American arts organization that connects Latino artists with art projects in Indianapolis. In his free time Eduardo hosts a variety of music events such as *Espanglish Night* and *Radio Calaca*. He also manages events and appearances of his friend, El Camaron Electronico, a Mexican luchador MP3J whose mission is to share alternative Spanish language music in Indianapolis.

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**Shauta Marsh** (Indianapolis) is a co-founder of Big Car Collaborative and works as its curator and program director. From 2009-2011 she was assistant director at the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art (iMOCA). In 2012 she was promoted to executive director and chief curator. During that time, Big Car Collaborative and iMOCA frequently collaborated on projects and exhibitions. At iMOCA, Marsh curated and/or organized more than 35 exhibitions including LaToya Ruby Frazier and Tony Buba: Inheritance, Toyin Odutola, Tabitha Soren, Trenton Doyle Hancock: Mound At Large, Richard Mosse: Fermata, and more. Marsh returned full-time to Big Car Collaborative in March of 2015 when the organization purchased a vacant former manufacturing building, Tube Factory. Tube Factory artspace is a 12,000-square-foot museum, social practice art lab, and Big Car Collaborative studio space. Exhibitions there are curated based on the themes of community, place, memory and mythology. Since 2016, Marsh has commissioned Indianapolis-based, regional and national contemporary visual and musical artists – working with artists such as Carlos Rolón, Calvin Johnson, Jesse Sugarmann, Larissa Hammond, LaShawnda Crowe Storm, Mari Evans, Pablo Helguera, Prince Rama, Scott Hocking, Juan William Chávez, Carl Pope and more. She also leads and coordinates public art projects.



**Elizabeth Nash** (Indianapolis) is staff artist of public programming and outreach at Big Car Collaborative where she leads the placemaking and city-wide programming branch of the art and design nonprofit. Elizabeth received a dual bachelor's degree in art history and gender studies, focusing on feminist performance art and queer theory, from Indiana University. She then went on to receive a master's degree in museum studies from Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis where she focused on curatorial practices. Soon after, Elizabeth went to work for a community development nonprofit working to support community members through reentry services for people leaving incarceration, educational programming for children that have experienced trauma, and low-income, low-barriers housing. Wanting to take these skills and put them to work for the arts sector, Elizabeth continues her community-minded, equity-focused career path through creative placemaking at Big Car.



**Michael Orange** (Oakland) Michael is the Director of the Matatu Festival of Stories in Oakland, CA. Founded MATATU in 2013 as a cultural experience vehicle. Mimicking rural share taxis as a mode of publicly accessible transportation, MATATU shuttles local communities and global diasporas from one arthouse experience to the next. Through the platform, Michael engages in public inquiry around the role of the African Diaspora in a contemporary urban American context, asking, "How does an Afrofuture actually materialize with some intentional framing by creative citizens from the Diaspora," and "Where are the occasions to envision strategies for health in post-colonial Black culture?" MATATU pairs film with music and literary performances, and has premiered over one hundred award-winning titles from forty-eight nations to five thousand annual attendees over the last five years. He has been a purveyor of good culture and public/private space in developing communities for nearly 20 years. He plays



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key roles in cultural and real estate development and works to create equitable models in partnership with institutions like the City of Oakland, Intersection for the Arts and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.” Orange has held roles in Oakland’s redevelopment and arts and culture sectors for the past ten years, joining the city’s anchor redevelopment project in 2008 and founding Top Ten Social, a series of lectures, performances, and film screenings that bridge the socioeconomic and subcultural elements of Black Oakland. He initiated this work at a time when Oakland was first enduring a violent wave of displacement, and this platform helped stabilize the city’s cultural landscape. In 2018, Orange completed his first crowdfunding campaign for a film he is executive producing alongside Kara Walker and Lin-Manuel Miranda, and directed by longtime collaborator Saul Williams. Orange also recently entered a partnership with Red Bay Coffee, the nation’s largest Black specialty coffee roaster, to present a pop-up arthouse called The Nomadic Cinema. He is a 2019 Leadership Fellow with the Association of Performing Arts Professionals, and active in leadership for Arthouse Convergence, which works to advance excellence and sustainability in community-based, mission-driven media exhibition.



**Roy Priest** (Alexandria, Virginia), is a creative architect and administrator of community development programs. Roy is well known and respected in Washington and across the country. His distinguished 50-year career in government and the non-profit sectors included executive positions at the local, municipal and federal levels. His exemplary leadership and accomplishments reflects his steadfast commitment to serving the social and economic needs of our nation’s families and communities. His success is not benchmarked by the thousand of housing, retail, commercial and industrial projects that have been built and financed through programs he has developed and engineered throughout his career in Community Economic Development but by the creation of measurable program and policy outcomes built in the intersection between places and people.



**LaShawnda Crowe Storm** (Indianapolis) is an artist, activist, community builder and occasionally an urban farmer. Whether she is making artwork or sowing seeds, Crowe Storm uses her creative power as a vehicle for dialogue, social change and healing. Her series, The Lynch Quilts Project, has won widespread support. At the core of Crowe Storm’s creative practice is a desire to create community-based processes where the process of making art becomes the opportunity to create the necessary space and place for necessary conversations around a variety of topics ranging from racial justice and historical violence, gender empowerment and community healing.

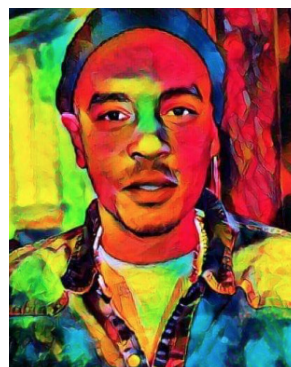
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**Christina Vassallo** (Cleveland) has served as Executive + Artistic Director of SPACES in Cleveland since 2014, where she provides creative direction and oversees operations for one of the longest running alternative art organizations in the country. Her most notable SPACES initiatives so far include launching a \$3.5 million capital & endowment campaign, spearheading a relocation, expanding outreach initiatives, curating critically acclaimed issue-oriented exhibitions, and developing two re-grant programs for artists in Northeast Ohio. She served on Cuyahoga Arts and Culture's Support for Artists Planning Team, is an ex officio board member of the Cleveland Museum of Art's Contemporary Art Society, and is an advocate of organizations that fairly compensate cultural producers. Before relocating to Cleveland, Christina was the Executive Director of Flux Factory in Queens, which builds sustainable artist networks and helps retain creative forces in New York City. Christina holds a B.A. in art history and an M.A. in nonprofit visual arts management from NYU.



**Leonardo Vazquez** (Union, New Jersey) is a national award-winning planner who is a leader in two emerging fields in urban planning: creative placemaking and cultural competency. He has two decades of experience in community development, community engagement, small group facilitation, local economic development, leadership development and strategic communications. He has worked with a wide variety of communities in New Jersey, California, Connecticut, Louisiana, New York and Pennsylvania. Creative Perth Amboy, a plan he developed through Community Coaching, received the 2016 Outstanding Plan - Municipal award from the American Planning Association New Jersey Chapter. With a strong focus on implementation and sustainability, he specializes in building leadership teams to oversee plans and raising funds to support planning and implementation efforts. In addition to his affiliation with the National Consortium for Creative Placemaking, Leonardo Vazquez is a Senior Associate at the Nishuane Group. He is the author of *Leading from the Middle: Strategic Thinking for Urban Planning and Community Development Professionals* and co-editor of *Dialogos: Placemaking in Latino Communities*.



**Fidel Verdin or 'Fidel Viva'** (Milwaukee), visionary artist and social entrepreneur is a highly requested guest speaker and emcee. He currently serves as Co-Executive Director of TRUE Skool Inc, Milwaukee's Center for Creative Arts and Hip Hop Culture. Fidel has received national and local recognition for his many achievements including a "Creative Placemaking" award from Groundwork Milwaukee for his urban agricultural work founding the Peace Park and Garden. Fidel has also won an "International Film Festival" award for a short film he co-produced. He is widely known for launching "Summer of Peace" an annual event focused on conflict resolution and youth leadership. In recent years he developed a growing "Promote the Positive" campaign that encompasses all of his work for over 20 years to uplift and empower humanity.

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**Jim Walker** (Indianapolis) is CEO and lead artist of Big Car Collaborative (bigcar.org), a socially engaged art nonprofit he helped found in 2004. Walker leads the organization's work to utilize cultural strategies to support the equitable and inclusive revitalization of a long-overlooked neighborhood just south of downtown Indianapolis where he lives with his family. Big Car's work here, alongside many partners, includes bringing new life to 16 formerly vacant buildings (residential, commercial, and industrial) on one block. This project, now in its fifth year and already a recipient of funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and others, recently received a \$3 million grant from Lilly Endowment. Walker – who received his MFA from Warren Wilson College in Asheville, N.C. – has also worked as a media producer, journalist, and designer. And he currently teaches in the University of Indianapolis Social Practice Art and Placemaking graduate program. He also enjoys spinning records and interviewing artists and leaders as a DJ on 99.1 WQRT – Big Car's art and community FM broadcast radio station (wqrt.org).



**Jovontae Williams** (Cleveland) is a high school junior attending John Hay High School. Jovontae is a current Fellow with Twelve Literary Art's One Mic Open After School Fellowship, and is a member of the youth poetry slam team representing Cleveland at this year's Brave New Voices Festival and Competition in Las Vegas.



**Bryan Thao Worra** (St. Paul, MN) is a Laotian American writer who works actively to support Southeast Asian American artists. A 2002 Many Voices Fellow, he has gone on to write six books, including the forthcoming *Demonstra* from Innsmouth Free Press in Fall, 2013. He represented the nation of Laos as a Cultural Olympian during the 2012 London Summer Games and is the first Lao American to hold an NEA Fellowship in Literature. A professional member of the Horror Writer Association and the Science Fiction Poetry Association.



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