

Photo: Andreina Maldonado w La Colectiva de Mujeres at Dance Mission Theater

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

ARTS CO LAB

A LABORATORY OF ARTISTIC COLLABORATION

FIRST YEAR OF RESULTS

FROM THE COMMUNITY OF ARTS.CO.LAB

We are taking this space to express our gratitude for your unique contribution to our year.

We want to highlight some of our successes such as: funded artists and cohort participants, artists' collaborations, and takeaways from the Transformative Grant Writing program, as well as share our vision for 2022.

Thank you for helping launch Arts.Co.Lab with your time, funding, participation, and good wishes. Your interest is a testament to the need of tools for grassroots cultural equity organizing, and your participation in the Arts.Co.Lab Community as-a grant seeker, affiliate, and supporter greatly contributed to our first-year successes. We are fortunate to contribute to such an amazing kaleidoscope of artists and supporters!

Simply put, 2021 has been an extraordinary year. We ushered 75 artists into Transformative Grant Writing and invested in 7 cohorts and over 20 collaborative projects. We are struggling with a health crisis, a climate crisis and unprecedented attacks on our democracy, and through it all our grassroots artist's community held strong together, which is definitely something worth celebrating.

OUR CALL TO ACTION

It is no secret that the Arts and Culture ecosystem in our communities, in the Mission District, and across the San Francisco Bay Area has been affected by years of gentrification and displacement. Based on information of the National Endowment for the Arts, by the end of 2019, about 80% of the artists had experienced a form of displacement from their homes, work spaces, or performance spaces, a situation quickly aggravated by the COVID19 pandemic. According to a survey by Americans for the Arts, 95% of artists lost income during the COVID crisis limiting their access to art supplies, physical space, and their social network. Of them, a staggering 80% of surveyed artists have no plan to get back on their feet.

In the wake of the health crisis of 2020, Arts.Co.Lab activated, offering pro-bono professional coaching to artists to navigate the bureaucracy of accessing Emergency Funds from local, state, and national organizations, initially supporting 29 artists across the state of California.

Artwork by: Cherry Lopez - Cohort IV

OUR INSPIRATION

A VISION FOR COLLECTIVE LIBERATION

Arts.Co.Lab is a 'Laboratory of Artistic Collaboration' that builds Cultural Equity by catalyzing the collective wisdom of artists from Black, Indigenous, LGBTQIA+ people, disabled people, and other under-resourced communities, together to weave a resilient network of artists who are normally are not in the room for conversations around cultural equity in the arts.

Arts.Co.Lab is a BIPOC centered space where everyone is invited to participate.

2022 is all about strengthening the Arts and Culture ecosystem in our communities; holding spaces to convene to create equity goals and policies, developing cultural strategies with promising impact; using engagement in arts and culture to dismantle narratives of oppression, poverty, and trauma; building relationships and advocating for government representatives to create funding for underserved youth, specifically for cultural education, and mental health for artists; as well as partnering with arts and culture organizations to create culturally relevant means through technology to engage public input from underrepresented communities.



Therese & Arturo holding the numbers of the 10th Cohort of Emerging Arts Professionals SF/BA Fellowship

TAKEAWAYS

The Transformative Grant Writing Program contributes to the professional practices of the participating artists. These are some of the takeaways that our students have experienced:

- Clarity on the Arts and Culture funding ecosystem.
- New communication tools for grant writing.
- Ability to identify grant opportunities and write professional fundraising pieces.
- General understanding of the content and structure of grant proposals.
- An applied project piece that can be used for fundraising strategies.
- A personal grant writing perspective and narrative based on their vision.
- 1:1 Creative and Grant Writing coaching.
- A resilient network of creative entrepreneurs.

Artwork by: Josue Rojas - Cohort IV

ARTS CO LAB

MEET SOME OF OUR ARTISTS



Laura Camacho - Cohort V
Singer-songwriter,
Educator.



Chris Burch - Cohort IV
Visual artist, events
organizer, and educator.



Ely Sony Orquiza - Cohort III
Multidisciplinary Actor, Director
and Teaching Artist



Mabel Jiménez
Cohort VI
Photographer



Valerie Troutt
Cohort V
Singer-songwriter
Community Organizer

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 49% LATINX
- 28% AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 12% SOUTH ASIAN
- 7% WHITE
- 5% ASIAN

Arts.Co.Lab is proudly **a BIPOC Centered space where everyone is welcome to participate.** These are some of the intersections from our participating artists so far:

- WOMAN 64%
- IMMIGRANT 29%
- FIRST-GENERATION AMERICAN 26%
- LGBTQ+ 19%
- IDENTIFIES W/ A DISABILITY 11%

Artwork from: The Women's Building, SF.



Andreina Maldonado

Dancer, Community Organizer

COHORT I

The funds from the SFAC will support the creation of a new theatrical piece directed and choreographed by Maldonado in collaboration with members of the Women's Collective and Day Labor Program (WC/DLP), and professional artists.

The goal of this project is to create an evening-long performance about the lives, victories, and struggles of the Immigrant Domestic Workers' Rights Movement, complete with audiovisual projections, choreographed dance, live music and testimonies. Andreina will facilitate workshops and collaborate with professional dancers and musicians who will help embellish the worker's testimonies. The final show will be presented at Dance Mission Theater or virtually in Fall 2022.

San Francisco Artist Grant

$20,000

Artwork by: Jun Yang - Cohort VII

FUNDED ARTIST

ACHIEVEMENTS

We created Arts.Co.Lab as a space to catalyze collective wisdom amongst artists which, in 2021, allowed us to **train 75 artists through Transformative Grant Writing, and applied for over $1 Million in funding for their practices.**

Emerging to established to legacy artists were able to develop and build upon their professional experiences gaining clarity on their **Cultural Equity contribution to their communities,** differentiating themselves in the grant seekers market.

We celebrated with participating artists the funding of their projects, already we have notifications for:

- Andreina Maldonado, **$20,000 from San Francisco Arts Commission.**
- Adrian Delgado - **$10,000** and Jess Nguyen **$5,000 from the California Arts Council.**

And supported artists in accessing funding for professional development from the **Center for Cultural Innovation, $34,000 in Quick Grants.**

We elevated and celebrated our artists' unique voices, empowering them to write from their lived experiences, including encouraging them to write in their first language and then translate their grants into English.

We developed all the tools in this program through the lens of **Indigenous practices and traditions, Black Liberation, and Gender non-conforming theory.**

We supported artists in gaining the competitive edge with skills that set them apart and positioned them to grow and expand on their personal and collective narratives.

Artists were able to forge critical connections with professional peers, and well-networked instructors.

ARTS .CO. LAB

EQUITY BEYOND GRANT WRITING



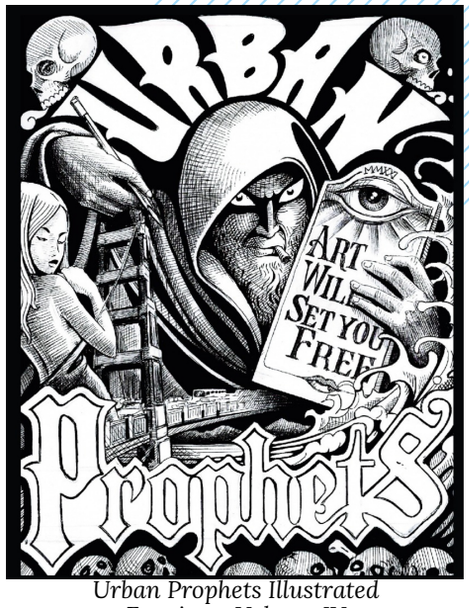
Inti Batey @ International Women's Day with La Colectiva de Mujeres



Heal your Heart. Directed by Therese Davis.

Across our 7 cohorts, we cultivated a network that produced 8 collective projects between 15 artists across our 7 cohorts. Our collaborative projects in 2021 ranged from advocating for domestic workers at International Women's Day in the Mission District to collaborative mixed media -poetry, music, visual art- videos advocating for ways to heal our historically underrepresented communities and hearts in these times.

The heart of our organization is **to develop tools for collective creation** that uplift and celebrate all the voices in the space.



Urban Prophets Illustrated Fanzine - Volume IV

OUR NEXT STEPS

In 2022, we will be creating an Ambassadors Program for former and current cohorts, through which they will become the essential instigators for in-person and online meet-ups.

We also have a service-growth vision for the next few years which focuses on four visions for cultural equity:



Community Leadership Development



Civic & Political Advocacy through the Arts



Mental Health Access for Artists



Creation of Community Affinity Circles.

Artwork by: Blane Art - Cohort IV

MEET THE TEAM

Centering our contribution around **Cultural Equity,** the success of **Arts.Co.Lab** relies on the reciprocity within our network, including artists, organizations, mentors, and stakeholders like you.

Arturo Méndez-Reyes
Founder & Executive Director



Arturo Méndez is a Cultural Producer working in areas of development, communication, production/curation, community organizing, and cultural diplomacy in San Francisco, CA, and Puebla, Mexico for over 10 years.

He is the founder of Arts.Co.Lab, La Diáspora Festival, Urban Prophets Illustrated and a curator of the Mission Arts and Performance Project, formerly working at the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts. He has produced shows for Harvard and Cornell University, and the United Nations, as well as the Mexican Consulate in SF, and the Secretary of Culture of Puebla, Mexico.

He is a Fellow at the Advocacy ('20), Leadership ('21), and Intercultural ('22) Institutes with NALAC, the Emergent Arts Professionals of SF and Seeding Reciprocity with the San Francisco Arts Commission.

"La Cultura es una herramienta indispensable para la Dignidad de los Pueblos"
"Culture is an essential tool to grant dignity for all people".



Therese Davis
Co-Founder & Executive Producer

Therese Davis (M. Cheeskos) is a SF Bay Area Visual and Performance Practice Artist, and Creative Life Coach. Often described as a gifted, warm, open-hearted, and dedicated coach. Her coaching practice is primarily focused on supporting, Black, Indigenous, LGBTQIA+ people who strive to be change-makers and artists.

Her successful experience as a funded artist informs how she coaches others in the creative arena, reimagining narratives around what's truly possible. She enthusiastically supports folks to transform their ideas into realized projects, with 15+ years experience supporting over 150 artists and activists in promoting and raising awareness about their craft and their mission.

"I see that life is a spectrum and where you put your energy is what is worth looking at."

ADVISORY TEAM

This is a short list of our advisors, mentors, and consultants. We thank them for their brilliance and wisdom:

Erin Merritt, Arts Administration Consultant - Grant Writing, Funding Development
Mazan Jamal, Holistic Underground - Content and Business Development
Jason Wyman, Queering Dreams - Content Development and Networking
Zackary Forcum, ODC/Dance Dance Theater - Funding, and Development
Lucía Obregon, Immigrant Rights Commission for City of San Francisco - Community Organizing, Leadership Development.
Maria Nemeth, PhD, MCC. - **Academy for Coaching Excellence LLC** - Coaching and Group Training Methodologies.

FISCAL SPONSORS

Thank you to these institutions for their support and guidance.

Mission Cultural Center, SF

Holistic Underground Oakland

JOIN OUR COLLECTIVE VISION

Arts.Co.Lab is radically transforming our communities at the grassroots level, and this metamorphosis takes hard work, dedication, and resources. We hope you will be inspired to help us empower a new generation of artists to resource their important, world-changing work.

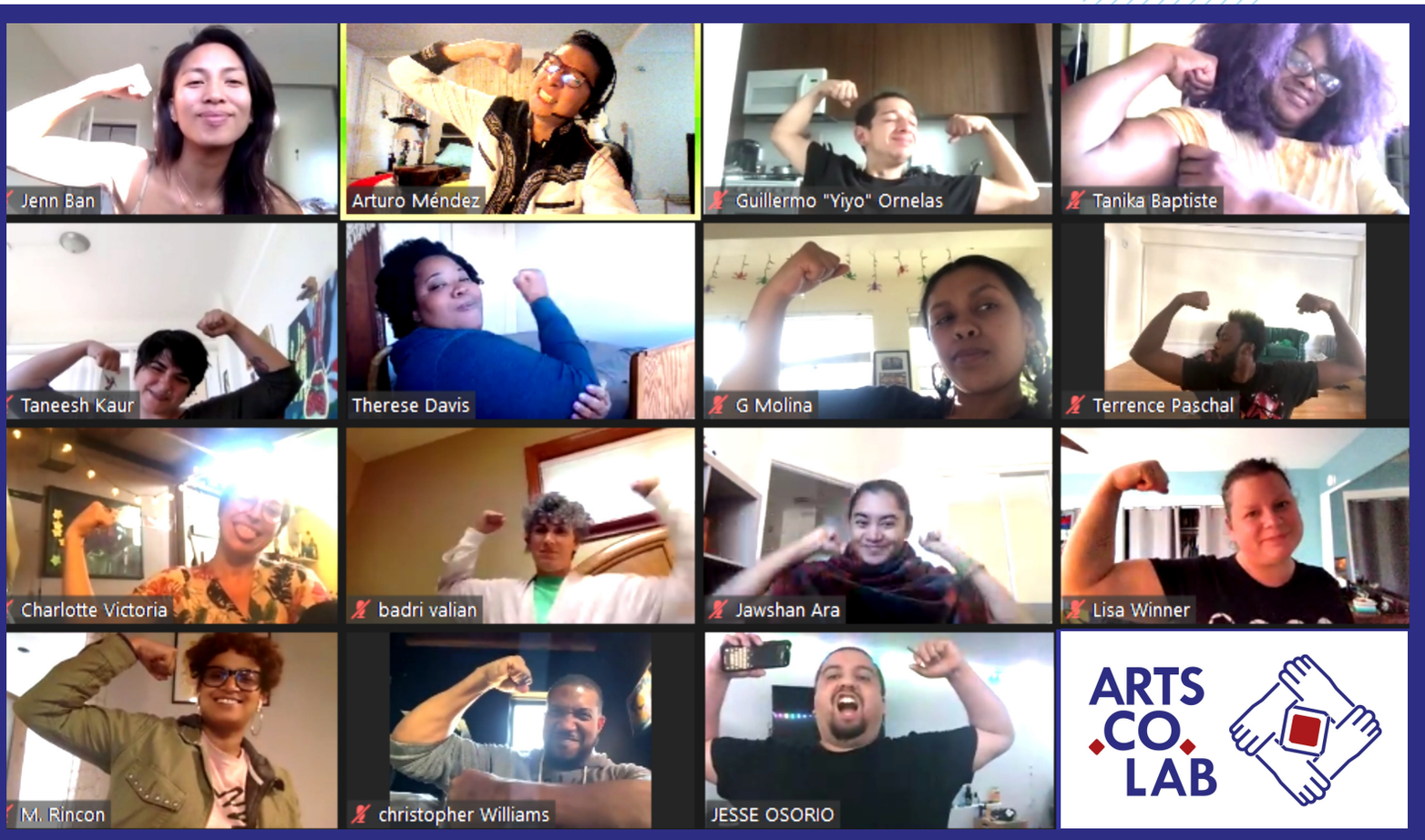
Contribute to this Collective Success! Help us support our growth and advance our vision with a contribution to Arts.Co.Lab TODAY.

You can help us reach our goal to provide 20 full-tuition artist scholarships for the Transformative Grant Writing Program, so that every artist, regardless of income, can participate in the training. Thank you for your support and contributions to your communities!

For volunteer opportunities and additional ways to contribute to our efforts, please contact Therese at tmdavis435@gmail.com and Arturo at arturomendezsf@gmail.com.

DONATE HERE

"History shows that **when the culture changes, policy follows.**" Favianna Rodriguez



Growing a resilient network of community-based artists **to advance Cultural Equity** in our communities.