



The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage 2020 Grantees

Learn more at pewcenterarts.org/2020grants.

PEW FELLOWSHIPS

Each Pew Fellow receives an unrestricted \$75,000 award.

Jacob Cooper, Composer

"I am drawn to the novel and the under-explored, and I have found that timbre drives my compositions more than any other parameter."

Cooper creates expansive sonic palettes that evoke a sense of timelessness through the use of electronic, studio-recorded processes and experimental instrument and vocal techniques. His compositions blend classical and popular music influences, often in dialogue with traditional religious repertoire.

Shatara Michelle Ford, Filmmaker

"As a filmmaker, I'm invested in revealing what is internal and unspoken...I want my audience to witness and interrogate aspects of their ideology, lifestyle, and worldview."

Ford's films convey the separate yet intersected experiences of being both Black and a woman in America. Experimenting with narrative structure and uses of music and color, their work examines class, power, identity, and memory through characters that defy dominant stereotypes.

Jesse Harrod, Visual artist

"Drawing on the long-standing relation between sculpture and the human body, my work intentionally decenters the normative, neurotypical (abled, cis-gender) body as the assumed form invoked within sculpture."

Harrod's interdisciplinary practice encompasses sculpture, painting, stop-motion animation, and other media to reimagine forms of gendered, sexual, and disabled embodiment. Their work engages with the history of feminist art, material culture, and craft practices such as macramé, ceramics, and stained glass.

Marissa Johnson-Valenzuela, Poet and writer

"I want my work to encourage looking again. In particular, I find myself repeatedly going back to moments of exception that teach us about what is possible."

Johnson-Valenzuela's writing is concerned with little-told histories, Mexican American identities, migration, and experiences of incarceration in works of poetry, prose, and music, such as *No Otro Lado*, a conceptual, bilingual album that explores borders and the relationship between the US and Mexico.

Jamil Olawale Kosoko, Performance artist

"I am especially interested in presenting narratives that disrupt conventional performance to recast the historical positionality of the Black body, confront trauma, and offer creative processes for healing."

Kosoko's performance works incorporate elements of dance, music, poetry, film, and visual art to reflect on Black and queer identity. His work uses historical events and archival relics to speak to contemporary life and

considers how performance can serve as a platform to negotiate difference and create new modes of understanding.

Airea D. Matthews, Poet

"I'm convinced that when conventions are justifiably questioned and resisted, both poetry and social identity become more than previously assumed."

Matthews' work experiments with poetic forms to consider how language can shape perceptions of the self, shared histories, and assumed notions of Blackness. In poems that shift narrative perspective and place historical documents in conversation with creative material, Matthews contemplates existential longing and the intersections of textual ancestry and personal narrative.

Bill Nace, Musician

"I build structures or musical moments based on assumptions and then allow those to fail and dissolve over time. Here, frustration or discord is as important as ecstatic coordination."

Nace's experimental improvisations and compositions extend the boundaries of electric guitar technique, using bows, metal, wood, glass bowls, and other implements. His distinctive musical vocabulary references folk, rock, and punk traditions as he works to make a ubiquitous instrument sound new.

Tom Quinn, Filmmaker

"By mixing reality and fiction, I hope to capture...the authentic people and landscapes that will someday disappear."

Quinn makes films that tell character-driven stories within regional communities. Blurring the line between documentary and fiction, he casts professional actors alongside people from the locations where he films, such as the South Philadelphia String Band as it prepares for the annual Mummers Parade and residents of a small town in Pennsylvania facing the closure of their local post office.

Alex Smith, Multidisciplinary artist

"My work is a vessel for the spiritual, political, and psychosocial ushering of queer Black people into a future informed by our cultural needs and shaped by our dreams and imagination."

Smith's writing, Afrofuturist collage art, and avant-garde punk music draw from influences including science fiction, comic art, and Dadaism to frame the creativity, survival, and hopefulness of queer and Black people.

Alexandra Tatarsky, Performance artist

"I seek the slippery edges of disciplines—where one becomes another—as a mode of questioning the categories we use to organize our experience."

Tatarsky blends performance art, comedy, physical theater, and clown practices to probe the construction of meaning, self, and community. Playing with perceptions of language and narrative structure, their live performances are highly responsive to venue and audience, often breaking the fourth wall and embracing humor to reveal vulnerability and humanity.

FELLOWS - IN - RESIDENCE

Raven Chacon, Composer and sound artist (Albuquerque, New Mexico)

"My compositions explore the musical space between natural and unnatural sounds of my self-made instruments: the scrape of an amplified antler against glass...the hum of encroaching electrical towers."

Chacon's compositions and sound installations combine contemporary chamber music with self-made electronic and acoustic instruments while conveying the perspectives of Indigenous people. During his residency, Chacon will investigate Philadelphia's experimental music scene and the region's Indigenous histories as he creates new musical works.

Rhodesa Jones, Theater artist (San Francisco, California)

"Whatever the genre, my intention has been truth-telling, whether I'm on a stage or in a classroom, whether I'm in a prison yard or in a dance studio."

Jones is a theater performer, director, teacher, and writer whose five-decade body of work tells the stories of women, particularly women of color and incarcerated individuals. In Philadelphia, Jones will hold workshops and in-progress readings as she develops a new solo performance and a book on theater creation for women in prisons.

PROJECT GRANTS

Each amount listed below represents project funding plus an additional 20% in unrestricted, general operating support.

The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University

DEEP DIVE

\$359,023

An immersive new media exhibition will animate the research of six scientists and highlight the scientific, historical, and social contexts of water in the Philadelphia area. Theater director and Pew Fellow Whit MacLaughlin and artist and creative researcher Janani Balasubramanian will create a hybrid physical and online storytelling experience, using audio from the scientists and original music and sound design, accessible through phone numbers embedded in illustrated maps and physical markers situated around the city.

COLLABORATIVE PROJECT:

African American Museum in Philadelphia & Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Rising Sun – Artists and an Uncertain America (working title)

\$480,000 to each organization

Two historic museums will commission and present the work of 30 contemporary artists to address the canon of American art and the necessary work of re-appraisal, reckoning, and repair as institutions and artists work together toward more equitable museum spaces. The project takes inspiration from the metaphor of the "rising sun" as framed by Benjamin Franklin—who asked in 1787 if the sun was rising or setting on the United States—and again in 1900 by James Weldon Johnson's *Lift Every Voice and Sing*: "Facing the rising sun of our new day begun." PAFA will empty its 1876-built museum of its permanent collection and dedicate the entire space to this joint effort, while AAMP will give artists unprecedented access to its collection and display new works throughout the museum and surrounding outdoor spaces. Participating artists will include John Akomfrah, Tiffany Chung, Arlene Shechet, and Hank Willis Thomas.

Arcadia Exhibitions

Sun & Sea (Marina)

\$360,000

A contemporary Lithuanian opera will address ecological concerns through the inner monologues and melodies of a chorus of beachgoers. On an artificial beach viewed by the audience from a mezzanine above, swimsuit-clad singers will convey anxieties ranging from sunburn to environmental catastrophe, supported by a cast of local extras. The looping, hourlong piece by Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė, Vaiva Grainytė, and Lina Lapelytė earned a Golden Lion for best national presentation at the 2019 Venice Biennale.

The Barnes Foundation

Suzanne Valadon

\$360,000

A monographic exhibition on French painter Suzanne Valadon (1865-1938) will consider her under-recognized contributions to early 20th-century art and contemplate themes of female desire and physicality, marriage, and motherhood. The exhibition, curated by Nancy Ireson and accompanied by a richly illustrated catalogue, will place Valadon's portraits and nudes in conversation with the Barnes' collection of late 19th- and early 20th-century paintings by male artists to provoke questions about the representation of women in the art-historical canon.

BlackStar Projects

Swarm: Terence Nance

\$262,164

Black filmmaker, writer, actor, and musician Terence Nance's first solo exhibition will shed light on his interdisciplinary film and media work, such as *Random Acts of Flyness*—the Peabody Award-winning HBO series that examines contemporary Black life in America. Two installations will be curated by Maori Karmael Holmes, with a decade of Nance's work presented at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and a new commission exhibited at The Fabric Workshop and Museum.

Bryn Mawr College

Algorithmic Theater

\$360,000

Theater artist Annie Dorsen will build on her decade of work that situates the digital world's algorithmic influence on our everyday lives in dialogue with classical dramatic form. During a multi-year residency comprising a commission of new work, a mid-career survey, a publication, and a convening of scholars and artists in the technology field, Dorsen will interrogate the consequences of digital communication and confusion about appearances, illusions, fakes, and copies.

The Center for Art in Wood

The Mashrabiya Project

\$360,000

An exhibition and a publication will contemplate the mashrabiya, a defining element of Islamic visual culture that features elaborate geometric wooden latticework comprising thousands of individual lathe-turned pieces. In newly commissioned works, six artists from the Muslim world will respond to societal and cultural concepts evoked by the mashrabiya, while master Egyptian wood turners will work with local practitioners, and an augmented reality installation will transport viewers to restored Islamic heritage sites.

The Crossing

Farming

\$360,000

A choral work will confront ways in which modern farming and food production shape the environment, communities, and essential workers in live performances staged among the crops of a Bucks County farm. Director Kaneza Schaal and Crossing conductor Donald Nally will collaborate with composer Ted Hearne to develop a libretto that draws on source material from scientists and journalists as well as personal stories from family farms and the industrial farming industry.

The Fabric Workshop and Museum

Jayson Musson: His History of Art

\$323,520

Over a two-year residency, Black artist Jayson Musson will interrogate how our present-day cultural consciousness is constrained by a narrow understanding of art history. Ten years after his popular satirical video series *Art Thoughtz*, Musson will form a new comedic persona to scrutinize the art world's biases through wit and research. Curated by Karen Patterson and drawing on FWM's expertise for costume design, the project will feature videos, film sets, gallery installations, and a publication.

Fleisher Art Memorial

360 Culture Lab

\$360,000

An arts incubator will create opportunities to preserve and share Indonesian and Venezuelan cultural life and traditions through collaborations with South Philadelphia's growing immigrant communities and newly arrived residents. Fleisher will share its studio and gallery spaces, tools, and resources with organizational partners Casa de Venezuela and Modero Dance as they co-produce community engagement programs, art-making workshops, and a culminating exhibition and festival.

Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation

Chronicling Resistance

\$305,040

Philadelphia's history of civic action will be brought into context with present-day social justice movements in a project that mines the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries' extensive archives related to community activism. Working with librarians and consulting curator and Pew Fellow Yolanda Wisner, a team of "Activist-Curator Fellows" will research documents held in the special collections and collaborate on exhibitions, programming, and community archiving toolkits to foster shared authority over historical records.

FringeArts

Awakening

\$360,000

A contemporary chamber opera will tell the story of a 21st-century Black woman exploring her spirituality and purpose through the legacies of 19th-century Black women leaders: founder of Philadelphia's Black Shaker movement Rebecca Cox Jackson and abolitionists Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman. The creative team—which includes composer Courtney Bryan, librettist Sharan Strange, director Charlotte Brathwaite, performer Helga Davis, and a music ensemble organized by International Contemporary Ensemble—will incorporate

material from Philadelphia residents that considers the city's history in engaging with social change movements.

Girard College

Be Holding

\$308,520

Using poet Ross Gay's book-length poem *Be Holding*—inspired by Philadelphia basketball champion Julius Erving (a.k.a. "Dr. J")—as its libretto, a musical performance will incorporate a creative process that engages Girard College's first-through-twelfth-grade students. The commission will explore themes of Black genius and beauty in the face of racial violence and inequities. The school will host Gay, composer Tyshawn Sorey, director Brooke O'Harra, and musical ensemble Yarn/Wire in a multi-year residency to develop the multidisciplinary performance work.

Institute of Contemporary Art

Ulysses Jenkins: Without Your Interpretation

\$360,000

A major retrospective of Ulysses Jenkins will spotlight the pioneering work of one of the first Black video artists to emerge in the late 1970s. Jenkins' video and performance works interrogate Black stereotypes and provoke questions about the representation of race and gender in media and popular culture. Co-organized by the ICA and the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles and curated by Meg Onli and Erin Christovale, the exhibition will be presented at both venues and will be accompanied by a robust catalogue.

Institute on Disabilities at Temple University

Reclaiming the Past, Constructing our Future: A Collaborative Exploration of the Pennhurst Archive

\$359,903

A community-based storytelling project will interpret the history and ongoing impact of the institutionalization of people with disabilities. Members of the intellectual disability community will work with artists, historians, and archivists to investigate the archives of the now-closed Pennhurst State School and Hospital, which once housed over 4,000 residents in overcrowded and inhumane conditions. The research will inform the creation of an interactive, multimedia "story wall" that will connect historical records to lived experiences of institutionalization.

Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers

WHERE IS MY B-O-D-Y

\$40,716

Accomplished dance artists Gus Solomons jr and Pallabi Chakravorty will collaborate with choreographer Kun-Yang Lin in a discovery process to develop new movement methods for artists who are navigating lives as mature creators with physical limitations. The artists will consider new modes of creation and documentation and the ways in which their artistic practices can be preserved and communicated to others.

The Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia/Philadelphia City Archives

7th Ward Tribute

\$240,000

Public art installations will tell a place-based account of the vibrant communities that made a Philadelphia neighborhood, once known as the city's 7th Ward, an important center of Black culture. Artists will work with

historians and community leaders and draw from the Philadelphia City Archives to create new pieces, situated around the neighborhood's borders, that capture the essence of the ward and the people who created it.

Moore College of Art & Design

Exploring Our Neighborhoods: Norris Square

\$49,475

A discovery process will support a collaboration between Moore College and the Norris Square Community Alliance to develop new forms of art-based civic engagement in a historic Puerto Rican neighborhood in North Philadelphia. Guided by Moore professor and artist Nasheli Ortiz, the project will invite residents to participate in discussions and art-making programs—facilitated by artists Betsy Casañas, Rosenda Álvarez Faro, and Zuania Minier—that focus on historical and contemporary Puerto Rican craft models.

Pennsbury Society

nkwiluntàmën: I long for it; I am lonesome for it (such as the sound of a drum)

\$264,000

Multidisciplinary artist Nathan Young, a member of the Delaware Tribe of Indians, will create a site-specific, sound-based installation in the landscape surrounding Pennsbury Manor, a reconstruction of the home of Pennsylvania founder William Penn. Young's work will foster a deeper understanding of the tribe's heritage and ancestral homeland Lenapehoking (known now as the Mid-Atlantic US) through sounds of wind, water, and wildlife. Installed along a path through Pennsbury's grounds, the work will connect listeners to the environment while reexamining histories of colonialism.

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

sTREEt Work

\$479,719

A large-scale sculptural work and a series of public interactions will raise awareness of how trees can combat the effects of climate change in urban communities. Led by curator Marina McDougall and art and design collective Futurefarmers, programming will include tree tours, hands-on workshops, and film screenings that motivate public participation in tree planting across Philadelphia—particularly in underserved neighborhoods where summer temperatures can be more than ten degrees hotter than in higher income areas. Awbury Arboretum in East Germantown will serve as the site for sculptural work and a main hub for the project, with additional community gathering sites located throughout the city.

Philadelphia Museum of Art

The Shape of Time (working title)

\$360,000

An exhibition will survey 30 years of contemporary art made by artists who share an experience of South Korea by their birth, residence, or ancestry. Curated by Hyunsoo Woo and Elisabeth Agro, the exhibition will present more than three dozen works in the museum's galleries and outdoor public spaces to examine a generation of artists—born mainly between 1960 and 1980—who experienced the transition from South Korea's last authoritarian regime to the onset of globalization and new democratic freedoms.

Philadelphia Theatre Company*The Tattooed Lady*

\$360,000

A musical by librettist Erin Courtney and composer Max Vernon will foreground the bravery, artistry, and bodily autonomy of a group of women who embraced personal transformation through tattoos. Directed by Ellie Heyman, the work will explore expressions of the self and a path through “otherness,” offering a historical survey of sideshow performers wedded to a fictional tale of the bond between mother and daughter.

Pig Iron Theatre Company*The Pregnant Speakeasy*

\$360,000

A devised performance work will blend theater, installation, cabaret, and visual projection to reveal and celebrate the power of the pregnant body. Working with director Dan Rothenberg, filmmaker, writer, and director Josephine Decker will draw from her own experience of pregnancy and motherhood to inform the immersive piece, in which audience members will journey through a series of performance environments to become initiated into the “secret knowledge” of the pregnant.

The Print Center*I Re-Emerge: Imaging the Self*

\$294,228

A solo exhibition of photo-based work by Carmen Winant will reflect on historic and contemporary visual representations of women’s oppression, liberation, and self-expression. Drawing from the archive of Women in Transition, a service organization that began as a feminist collective in 1971, Winant will translate photos and ephemera into gallery installations, prints displayed in Philadelphia bus shelters, and an artist book that together shed light on the often invisible experiences of women.

Swarthmore College*Rosine Association 2.0*

\$360,000

An art and archive-based project will reinterpret the mission of the Rosine Association, co-founded by Quaker activist Mira Sharpless Townsend in 1847 to help women of that era struggling with physical abuse, exploitation, and drug use. Led by artistic director and curator Carol Stakenas, a collective of artists, harm-reduction leaders, and archivists will collaborate with women, trans, and non-binary people working in vulnerable communities. Narratives from the collective and Townsend’s archival papers and will inform a series of exhibitions, public art interventions, and programs.

Theatre Horizon*Our Norristown*

\$331,560

A large-scale play with music, staged in a public parking lot, will draw on the varied stories of Norristown’s residents in a new play challenging the myth of American small-town homogeneity. Using Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town* as a structural provocation, playwright Michael John Garcés and director Nell Bang-Jensen will create a work to be performed by both professional performers and “citizen artists,” with an original score sourced from the sounds of Norristown by artist collective ILL DOOTS.

University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design

What Minerva Built

\$360,000

The first exhibition to survey the work of architect Minerva Parker Nichols (1862-1949) will reexamine her significant contributions to Philadelphia's built environment at the turn of the 20th Century and spotlight the broader legacy of women in design. Co-curated by architectural photographer Elizabeth Felicella, historian Molly Lester, archivist Heather Isbell Schumacher, and the Weitzman School's William Whitaker, the exhibition and an accompanying publication will feature newly commissioned photographs by Felicella of Nichols' surviving buildings along with drawings and archival materials.

The Wilma Theater

The Cherry Orchard

\$360,000

A new interpretation of Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, led by Dmitry Krymov, will provide a modern-day means of viewing the 1903 classic through the eyes of a contemporary Russian artist. Featuring the Wilma's resident ensemble, kinetic set designs, and large-scale puppetry, Krymov's staging will pare down the original text to concentrate on a more physical approach to Chekhov's canonical work.