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Leeway Foundation Announces Spring 2019 Art and Change Grantees

24 women and trans artists and cultural producers receive project-based grants to further social change in Greater Philadelphia*

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PHILADELPHIA – Today, the Leeway Foundation announced \$55,000 in grants to 24 women and trans artists and cultural producers in Greater Philadelphia, supporting their work to address a range of social change issues.

Leeway's Art and Change Grant provides project-based funds of up to \$2,500 to women and trans artists and cultural producers who: propose a project that impacts a larger group, audience or community; have financial need; and live in the Greater Philadelphia region. The grant supports artists practicing a variety of disciplines including performance, crafts and textiles, and visual arts.

The Spring 2019 Art and Change Grant recipients are (in alphabetical order):

Annielille Gavino (South Philadelphia), Folk Arts/Literary Arts, \$2,500

Folami Irvine (East Falls), Folk Arts, \$2,500

Freda/Frankie Anderson (Kensington), Multidisciplinary, \$2,500

Gabi Sanchez (Hunting Park), Multidisciplinary, \$2,500

Gabrielle S.C. Orisanmi (Olney) **and Nakesha V. Moore** (Roxborough),
Multidisciplinary, \$2,500

Jasmine Rivera (Greys Ferry), Media Arts, \$2,500

Joyce Hatton (Parkside), Visual Arts, \$2,500

Karen L. Smith (Germantown), Performance Art, \$2,500

Kilamanzego (Cedar Park), Music/Performance Art, \$2,500

Kristal Sotomayor (Graduate Hospital), Visual Arts, \$2,500

Lanica Angpak (South Philadelphia), Visual Arts/Folk Arts, \$2,500

Li Sumpter (Abington), Multidisciplinary, \$2,500

Lillian Dunn (Mantua), Multidisciplinary, \$2,500

Melissa Beatriz (West Philadelphia), Media Arts, \$2,500

Michelle Angela Ortiz (Bella Vista), Media/Visual Arts, \$2,500

Nadine M. Patterson (Mount Airy), Media Arts/Literary Arts, \$2,500

Noemi Charlotte Thieves (Kingsessing), Multidisciplinary, \$2,500

Dr. Rònké Òké (Ardmore), Literary Arts, \$2,500

Tatiana Bacchus (Lower Makefield Township), Media Arts, \$2,500

Vena Jefferson (Bensalem), Multidisciplinary, \$2,500

Verónica Ayala Flores (North Philadelphia), Visual Arts, \$2,500

Art and Change Grants are distributed twice a year and evaluated by an independent peer review panel. The Spring 2019 review panel consisted of cultural organizer **Allison Budschalow (ACG '18)**, interdisciplinary artist **Farrah Rahaman (ACG '18)**, and poet **M. Nzadi Keita (ACG '14)**.

Applications are made available on the Leeway website, and may also be obtained by calling (215) 545-4078 or emailing info@leeway.org. Potential applicants are encouraged to attend one of the many support sessions offered throughout the year, or schedule an appointment with a staff member for one-on-one support.

Press inquiries and photo requests should be directed to Cesali Renn at (215) 545-4078 or crenn@leeway.org.

ABOUT LEEWAY

The Leeway Foundation supports women and transgender artists and cultural producers working in communities at the intersection of art, culture, and social change. Through our grantmaking and other programs, we promote artistic expression that amplifies the voices of those on the margins, promotes sustainable and healthy communities, and works in the service of movements for economic and social justice. For more information about Leeway, its grant programs, grantees and events, visit leeway.org.

**We use the term "trans" in its most inclusive sense, as an umbrella term encompassing transsexual, transgender, genderqueer, Two-Spirit people, and more generally, anyone whose gender identity or gender expression is nonconforming and/or different from their gender assigned at birth.*

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Annielille Gavino**Neighborhood: South Philadelphia****Change Partner: Kunyanglin/Dancers****Discipline: Folk Arts, Literary Arts****Social Change Intent: Cultural Preservation****Amount: \$2,500**

Annielille will host Patawili, a monthly ritualistic gathering in the traditional Filipino “Kamayan” (Kamayan means eating with our hands) dinner style which will be open to first- and second-generation Filipino/a/x Americans. Along with the gatherings, Annielille will facilitate language workshops, Philippines history discussions, offer folk dance lessons and curate a safe space for this subgroup to demonstrate Filipino/a/x pride and lineage.

Blanca Pacheco and Carmela Apolonio Hernandez**Neighborhood: Germantown****Change Partner: New Sanctuary Movement of Philadelphia****Discipline: Crafts & Textiles, Folk Arts****Social Change Intent: Cultural Preservation, Immigrant Justice****Amount: \$2,500**

Blanca and Carmela’s project is called *A Tapestry for Justice and Community*. The dream for this project is to teach other women how to embroider a tapestry that honors immigrant families living in sanctuary as well as the community’s fight for social justice. The women will work together to create the tapestry while sharing their experiences, their luchas (struggles) and how they can become involved in the fight for social justice.

Folami Irvine**Neighborhood: East Falls****Change Partner: Rhonda Holloway****Discipline: Folk Arts****Social Change Intent: Cultural Preservation, Racial Justice****Amount: \$2,500**

Folami is a fifth-generation African American woman herbalist continuing her family legacy of folklore healing arts by teaching a series of free summer herbal workshops for children age three and older. The children will receive the ABC Herbal Coloring Book, a teaching aid about herbs and remedies. The workshops will take place at several childcare centers in Philadelphia.

Freda/Frankie Anderson**Neighborhood: Kensington****Change Partner: The U School****Discipline: Multidisciplinary****Social Change Intent: Cultural Preservation, Economic Justice, Racial Justice****Amount: \$2,500**

Freda/Frankie will be leading high school students in collaborating with the U School’s neighborhood community to create *Ferguson School History, Arts, and Culture Museum*. Ferguson was a public elementary school that was shut down in 2013 due to budget cuts by the School District of Philadelphia. The school’s

closing left a void in the neighborhood; the museum aims to help heal that wound and honor the space and people of Ferguson.

Gabi Sanchez

Neighborhood: Hunting Park

Change Partner: Esperanza Academy

Discipline: Multidisciplinary

Social Change: Land Sovereignty/Housing Security

Amount: \$2,500

Gabi's social change project will center research, discussions and artistic creations on gentrification through the lens of ten students from Esperanza Academy. As mass gentrification occurs in North Philadelphia it shifts the ways people experience home, community, and interpersonal relationships, which Gabi believes, are the fabric of any healthy neighborhood.

Gabrielle S.C. Orisanmi and Nakesha V. Moore

Neighborhood: Olney, Roxborough

Change Partner: Tien Sydnor-Cambell, MS

Discipline: Multidisciplinary

Social Change Intent: Feminism, Racial Justice

Amount: \$2,500

Gabrielle and Nakesha's *The Somatic Stories Project* is a photojournalism series and interactive art exhibition that will provide digital and physically safe spaces for Black women and femmes to engage themes of bodily autonomy, self-love and acceptance and psychosomatic trauma rooted in gender-based violence through storytelling, performance, and visual art. In the first phase of this project, Black women will tell their stories through the lens of their bodies in a series of photojournalistic articles. In the second phase of the project, they will create an art exhibition where individuals in the Philadelphia area can engage the somatic stories via interactive modalities, receive wellness resources from vendors, and art-based tools to begin unpacking their own somatic experiences in a safe environment.

Jasmine Rivera

Neighborhood: Greys Ferry

Change Partner: Sundrop Carter

Discipline: Media Arts

Social Change: Decarceration, Immigrant Justice, Racial Justice

Amount: \$2,500

Jasmine is working with the Shut Down Berks Coalition on a series of educational videos to use in their social media campaign. These videos will feature different Latina members of the coalition speaking on various topics that are connected to their goal for the State of Pennsylvania to end immigrant family detention. The videos will also utilize art, photos, and graphics that have been made for the campaign.

Joyce Hatton

Neighborhood: Parkside

Change Partner: Maria Khristina Acosta

Discipline: Visual Arts

Social Change: Feminism, Racial Justice

Amount: \$2,500

Joyce's project is a comic that examines a Black woman's desire to access power in the same way that is easily accessed by white cis men, unpacking how that power is both alluring and disgusting. Her comic is rooted in feminism and racial justice because it pushes the boundaries of "appropriate" narratives for Black women and envisions a world where they have more ease and emotional safety in life.

Karen L. Smith

Neighborhood: Germantown

Change Partner: Debra Powell-Wright

Discipline: Performance

Social Change: Decarceration

Amount: \$2,500

Karen is creating, *AWOKE*, a musical set under a circus tent that looks into a day in the life of a juror and examines the behaviors of the individuals in the courtroom responsible for administering justice. The play's dialogue is a commentary on the various biases within the legal system and raises questions about those who are resistant to criminal justice reform.

Kilamanzego

Neighborhood: West Philadelphia

Change Partner: Muhubo Mohamed

Discipline: Music, Performance

Social Change: Cultural Preservation

Amount: \$2,500

Kilamanzego is composing a short album using African sounds (eg. kalimba, hand drums) that African Americans in Philadelphia will be able to access via an archive. There will be a workshop and listening party allowing African Americans in the area to explore native African sounds to be creative with. This project will serve as a culturally unifying force between African Americans and Africans.

Kristal Sotomayor

Neighborhood: Graduate Hospital

Change Partner: Marissa Pina Rodriguez

Discipline: Visual Arts

Social Change: Immigrant Justice

Amount: \$2,500

Kristal's short bilingual documentary film aims to tell the story of the historic campaign, led by the Latinx immigrant community in South Philadelphia and Juntos, an immigrant rights organization, to disrupt police database sharing. The film outlines the entire span of the movement including the community meetings, social media archives, protests, and the press conference at City Hall where Mayor Jim Kenney ended the Preliminary Arraignment Reporting System (PARS) contract with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Lanica Angpak

Neighborhood: South Philadelphia

Change Partner: Sarong Sorn

Discipline: Visual Arts, Folk Arts

Social Change: Cultural Preservation

Amount: \$2,500

Lanica's art for social change project will bring together Cambodian Americans from the Philadelphia metropolitan area through photography. Lanica will recreate ancient art, historical paintings, and family relics

through photography to recapture their almost completely lost art, culture, and history. After more than thirty years of resettlement, the Cambodian diaspora is still healing, and this work will provide Cambodian Americans of all generations, immigrant status, education levels opportunities to engage in conversations centered around identity and history.

Li Sumpter

Neighborhood: Abington

Change Partner: Matt Kalasky

Discipline: Multidisciplinary

Social Change: Environmental Justice

Amount: \$2,500

Li's Cozy Catastrophe is a live-action gaming installation and pop-up skill-share outpost exploring threats to humanity and planet Earth through the lens of current events, speculative fiction, and Afrofuturism.

Lillian Dunn

Neighborhood: Mantua

Change Partner: Sabrina Thigpen of New Pathways Project

Discipline: Multidisciplinary

Social Change: Cultural preservation, Land sovereignty/Housing Security, Racial justice

Amount: \$2,500

Lillian will work with participants at New Pathways Project, a community mental health center serving LGBTQIA people in recovery, to identify healing plants growing in vacant spaces in their neighborhood. Local herbalist Eva Bryant, will offer herb walks and hands on workshops to teach identification, harvesting usage in teas and tinctures. Along with choreographer Shanel Edwards and videographer Marie Alarcón, Lillian will create and exhibit photographic and GIF portraits that communicate these plants' healing properties as they pertain to recovery. They will also plant a medicinal garden in an unused garden bed at Pathways.

Melissa Beatriz

Neighborhood: West Philadelphia

Change Partner: Maria Hernández

Discipline: Media arts

Social Change: Decarceration, Immigrant Justice

Amount: \$2,500

Melissa is creating *The Fight Continues/La Lucha Sigue*, a documentary film that centers immigrant community leaders in Philadelphia who use grassroots and cultural organizing to advocate for policy changes. The leaders that are featured fight for a world that values human beings above borders.

Michelle Angela Ortiz

Neighborhood: Bella Vista

Change Partner: Shut Down Berks Coalition

Discipline: Media Arts, Visual Arts

Social Change: Decarceration, Immigrant Justice

Amount: \$2,500

Michelle's Familias Separada is a public art project that focuses on the stories of families affected by detention and deportation in Pennsylvania. The current phase of her film is centered on families formerly detained at the Berks family prison for two years. The goal is to amplify the testimonials of the mothers and host community screenings and talkbacks throughout Pennsylvania to support the Shut Down Berks Coalition's efforts.

Nadine M. Patterson**Neighborhood: Mount Airy****Change Partner: Tatiana Bacchus****Discipline: Media Arts, Literary Arts****Social Change: Cultural Preservation, Racial Justice****Amount: \$2,500**

Nadine is creating Harriet Tubman Haiku Film Project, a meditation on nature, history, and resistance featuring Professor Sonia Sanchez. The purpose of this film is to recover the story of Harriet Tubman for the younger generations from an Afrocentric feminist point of view. Nadine will be partnering with the African American Museum of Philadelphia to create program to engage the Philadelphia community through screenings and panels with local historians.

Noemi Charlotte Thieves**Neighborhood: Kingsessing****Change Partner: Eva Wô****Discipline: Multidisciplinary****Social Change: Disability Justice, Economic Justice, Transgender Justice/Gender Self-Determination****Amount: \$2,500**

Noemi's *Memory Vein* is a video series exploring the link between the movies we watch and the memories we attach to them. Each video contains a scene from a film with one memory narrated over it using Noemi's voice. Noemi believes our identities, queer or otherwise, are often discovered, named, and explored through cinema and can encourage people to see movies, and themselves, anew.

Tatiana Bacchus**Neighborhood: Lower Makefield Township****Change Partner: Nadine Patterson****Discipline: Media Arts****Social Change: Cultural Preservation, Racial Justice****Amount: \$2,500**

Tatiana is creating a documentary *Ulrick* as a love letter to the Haitian Diaspora to challenge negative stereotypes. It gives novices access to engaging, an often unknown, Haitian history and introduces the world to an underappreciated master visual artist Ulrick Jean-Pierre.

Dr. Rònké Òké**Neighborhood: Ardmore****Change Partner: Chinazo Enigwe and Skye Idehen****Discipline: Literary Arts****Social Change: Cultural Preservation, Racial Justice****Amount: \$2,500**

Dr. Rònké Òké's project, *LIT!*, aims to move beyond the book club model to create uniquely curated, interactive workshops framed around African literature. African literature has the ability to craft a world for Black readers that connects them to a cultural history and experiences. Stories allow readers to critically engage with what is while engaging their imagination to create what is not.

Vena Jefferson**Neighborhood: Bensalem**

Change Partner: Ira L. Bond
Discipline: Multidisciplinary
Social Change: Cultural Preservation, Immigrant Justice, Racial Justice
Amount: \$2,500

Vena will create *The AfroSphere*, a contemporary African art concept celebrating Black peoples' organic similarities in America, the Caribbean, and Africa. It will offer a lens into the contemporary melding of roots by using folk art, jazz, and hip-hop to disrupt socio-political ideas of "African-infused" art. Vena aims to present and create an authentic dialogue and experiences for people of the Black Diaspora.

Veronica Ayala Flores
Neighborhood: North Philadelphia
Change Partner: The Stadium Stompers
Discipline: Visual Arts
Social Change: Economic Justice, Land Sovereignty/Housing Security, Racial Justice
Amount: \$2,500

Veronica's project seeks to align and amplify the collective power of legacy residents, students, workers, parents, and organizations in North Central Philadelphia to combat the misappropriation of millions of dollars for the construction of a stadium and demand alternative places for investment. Using postcard writing, pop-up photo-booths, and installations Veronica will help build movements and community.



Allison Budschalow
(pronoun: she)

Allison hails from Philadelphia where she was born and raised as part of the Kalmyk Mongol diaspora. She is a mama of color with a history of supporting the hard and necessary work to build movements for justice, dignity, and human rights in the U.S. Most recently, she focuses on how grassroots fundraising can support and sustain community-building. She aims to bring her praxis to her work in a number of different community spaces in Philadelphia.

Farrah Rahaman
(pronoun: she)

Farrah Rahaman is an interdisciplinary artist and scholar from San Fernando, Trinidad. Through her film based and teaching practice, Farrah explores the ways in which communities of color resist, decolonize and build. Being moved by immersive space, material texture and soundscapes, she is fascinated by the potential of installation to prompt reflection, critical thinking and to educate audiences. Farrah is the Program Coordinator at BlackStar, where she's had a role in producing the organization's festival, panels and filmmaker's symposium. As an incoming PhD student at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, her current work focuses on the activist and artist networks in the Caribbean and Latin America who are actively eroding colonially produced calcifications through their collaboration. Such collectives embody the rich and defiant intellectual heritage of the Global South to enact anti-hegemonic processes and imagine an environment beyond crisis. Farrah is a 2018 NextDoc Fellow and a 2018 Leeway Foundation Art and Change Grant recipient.

M. Nzadi Keita
(pronoun: she)

M. Nzadi Keita, a 2017 Pew Fellow in poetry, is a first-generation urban northerner. The Philly-born writer also works as an editor, scholar and teacher. Her most recent book is *Brief Evidence of Heaven: Poems from the life of Anna Murray Douglass* (Whirlwind Press), a finalist for the 2015 Phillis Wheatley Poetry Prize from the Quarterly Black Book Review. Through persona poems, Keita imagines how the first wife of Frederick Douglass -- free-born and illiterate -- saw the world as an independent woman, mother, and abolitionist in her own right. Some poems portray the voices of others within Douglass's world, including her children, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet Tubman. Keita's poems have appeared in literary journals such as *Crab Orchard*, and *Poet Lore*. Anthologies featuring her work include *Peace Is A Haiku Song*, *The Ringing Ear: Black Poets Lean South*, and *A Face to Meet the Faces: An Anthology of Contemporary Persona Poetry*. Grants and fellowships from the PA. Council on the Arts, the Leeway Foundation, Yaddo and the Fine Arts Work Center have supported her creative adventures. She is an alumna of the black poetry collective, Cave Canem. Keita has done consulting with the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program. She is an associate professor and co-coordinator of the African-American/Africana Studies Program at Ursinus College.