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### **Leeway Foundation Announces Spring 2018 Art and Change Grantees**

*22 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 22 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 following 22 artists were all awarded \$2,500 grants (in alphabetical order):**

**Ada Trillo** of Mount Airy, Visual Arts,

**Allison Erdneka Budschalow** of Germantown, Folk Arts/Media Arts

**Anissa Weinraub** of West Philadelphia, Performance

**Arielle Julia Brown** of South Philadelphia, Performance

**Beeta Baghoolizadeh** of West Philadelphia, Visual Arts/Media Arts

**Farrah Rahaman** of West Philadelphia, Media Arts/Visual Arts

**Iris Devins** of West Philadelphia, Media Arts

**Jaq Masters** of Cedar Park, Media Arts

**Katie Rauth** of West Philadelphia, Media Arts/Performance

**Kennedy Allen** of West Philadelphia, Literary Arts

**Mal Cherifi** of West Philadelphia, Performance

**Mary DeWitt** of Media, and **Paulette Carrington** of North Philadelphia, Visual Arts/Performance

**Monika Estrella Negra** of Cobbs Creek, Media Arts

**Nikki Powerhouse** of North Philadelphia, Performance/Literary Arts

**Pratima Agrawal** of Kensington, Performance

**Raven Hollaway** of West Philadelphia, and **Sonja Nosisa Noonan-Ngwane** of Haverford, Multidisciplinary

**Rorie Still** of Wynnefield, Visual Arts/Literary Arts

**Sannii Crespina-Flores** of Northern Liberties, Media Arts/Performance

**Shanel Edwards** of West Philadelphia, Performance/Media Arts

**Wit Lopez** of West Philadelphia, Multidisciplinary

Art and Change Grants are distributed twice a year and evaluated by an independent peer review panel. The Spring 2018 review panel consisted of cultural organizer and facilitator **Andrea Jacome**, filmmaker and sound artist **Catherine Pancake** (LTA '17, WOO '17, ACG '16), and multidisciplinary artist **Petra Floyd**.

Applications are made available on the Leeway website, and may also be obtained by calling (215) 545-4078 or emailing [info@leeway.org](mailto: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 Denise Beek at (215) 545-4078, ext. 14 or [dbeek@leeway.org](mailto:dbeek@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.*

## **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 [www.leeway.org](http://www.leeway.org).

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**Ada Luisa Trillo****Neighborhood: Mount Airy****Change Partner: Centro de Cultura Arte Trabajo y Educación (CCATE)****Discipline: Visual Arts****Social Change / Intent: Displacement, Migration and Immigration; Racial Justice****Amount: \$2,500**

Through the use of photography and audio, Ada Trillo will tell the stories of people living in safehouses in the major border towns of Mexico. She intends to document the cruelties and injustices of the failed immigration policy under the current administration, and highlight the enormous contributions that immigrants from South and Central America have made to the country. The images will be rendered in print and shown at Centro de Cultura Arte Trabajo y Educación, a family center in Norristown that promotes culture, art, work training and education.

**Allison Erdneka Budschalow****Neighborhood: Germantown, Northern Liberties****Change Partner: Debora Kodish****Discipline: Folk Arts****Social Change / Intent: Cultural Preservation; Displacement, Migration and Immigration; Racial Justice****Amount: \$2,500**

Allison will revive the lost stories of the Kalmyk Mongolian people who first settled in the U.S. in the early 1950s in Northern Liberties. The interviews that she conducts with three generations of family members will be shared on YouTube and in a blog to preserve these histories in the midst of an ever-rapidly gentrifying neighborhood. The voices of 12 Kalmyk people will be at the forefront of these story pieces with their shared lessons and perspectives, followed by Allison's own personal reflections and narrations. This is phase one of what Allison hopes to be a larger project that preserve the traditions and culture of Kalmyk people.

**Anissa Weinraub****Neighborhood: West Philadelphia****Change Partner: Chris Rogers****Discipline: Performance****Social Change / Intent: Racial Justice****Amount: \$2,500**

Using story circles to document the experiences and beliefs of educators, students, and parents, Anissa will co-create a piece of documentary theater that shares their visions for educational transformation in Philadelphia. Her cultural strategy through this project is to strengthen bonds and heal tensions within the education justice community and amplify participants' calls for systemic change. Anissa will pull on her experience as a theater director to have youth participants answer questions about what liberatory education looks like and what skills and strategies we need to solve the problems of our world.

**Arielle Julia Brown****Neighborhood: South Philadelphia****Change Partner: Eva Booker****Discipline: Performance**

**Social Change / Intent: Cultural Preservation; Racial Justice; Transgender Justice/ Gender Self-Determination**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Arielle is creating a performance piece, *Fallawayinto*, a circular and fragmented play about Donna Booker, a black trans woman activist (1962-2006) and her relentless quest to create a sanctuary of her body. Arielle aims to honor Donna's life, while building a performance-making process that demonstrates Donna's leadership as technology and mindfulness about the transitions of our bodies into the future. The play will use puppetry, live-devised sound, iterative poetry, and interactive performance to celebrate the living/present leadership of black trans women.

**Beeta Baghoolizadeh**

**Neighborhood: West Philadelphia**

**Change Partner: Twelve Gates Arts**

**Discipline: Visual Arts, Media Arts**

**Social Change / Intent: Cultural Preservation; Displacement, Migration and Immigration**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Beeta Baghoolizadeh is creating an animated documentary film, *Diaspora Letters: Postmarks between Iran and the U.S.*, based on the letters and packages sent by families based in Iran and diaspora in the 20th and 21st centuries. The film will aim to humanize Iranians in light of the government's vitriolic war rhetoric and the Muslim Ban. The animated graphics will be accompanied by archival footage, found audio, and interviews tracing how people negotiated distance and longing through tangible expressions of love and belonging. Beeta will facilitate workshops at Twelve Gates Arts around the creation of the film and discussions about the diversity of the Iranian American experience, the consequences of war, and sanctions on the last 40 years of Iranian history.

**Farrah Rahaman**

**Neighborhood: West Philadelphia**

**Change Partner: Lan Dinh representing VietLead**

**Discipline: Media Arts, Visual Arts**

**Social Change / Intent: Cultural Preservation; Displacement, Migration, and Immigration; Racial Justice**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Farrah will train a group of after school students in South Philadelphia's Furness High School in storytelling and media production. Over the course of 12 weeks, those students will work with VietLead's OurRoots Youth Program to start a farm on school grounds, along with a recipe book. The project serves to document the farm building process, tell stories about the importance of seed saving, recipe sharing, and food as resistance and memory. The students will learn about collaborative media making, storyboarding, shooting and editing, and will produce 4-6 works that will be published online and screened at a showcase.

**Iris Devins**

**Neighborhood: West Philadelphia**

**Change Partner: Mari Walker**

**Discipline: Media Arts**

**Social Change / Intent: Feminism; Transgender Justice/ Gender Self-determination**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Iris seeks to share the joy and frustrations of being a young trans woman through her short narrative dark comedy, *TRASHY BOOTY*. The film tells the story of two dumpster diving trans women who encounter a hitch hiking robot- one based on a real life social experiment. Iris plans to submit the film to LGBT and trans film

festivals like Qflix, Frameline, and the San Francisco Transgender Film Festival, as well as to online vehicles. In those spaces, Iris hopes to engage in conversations with diverse audiences about the film's themes (feminism, gender self-determination, friendship) and bring increased visibility to trans women.

**Jaq Masters**

**Neighborhood: Cedar Park**

**Change Partner: Jamila Medley**

**Discipline: Media Arts**

**Social Change/Intent: Cultural Preservation; Displacement, Migration, and Immigration; Racial Justice**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Jaq will create *Fam-ing*, a feature length documentary exploring systems of infrastructure and interpersonal relationships in cooperative living. Using West Philadelphia's culture of intentional communities, this documentary will explain how these white-washed systems of communal living are rooted in POC tribalhood and have the potential to combat displacement as an act of racial justice. *Fam-ing* will premiere at local public community centers, supported by panel discussions with the help and promotion of Philadelphia Area Cooperative Alliance.

**Katie Rauth**

**Neighborhood: West Philadelphia**

**Change Partner: Melissa Krechmer, MSW, LSW**

**Discipline: Media Arts, Performance**

**Social Change / Intent: Feminism; LGBTQI Social Movements**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Informed by personal experiences & community talkbacks, Katie will produce relatable content in the form of video shorts for fat femmes. Katie hopes to forward the radical fatness and the fat acceptance movement, which are often left out of social justice discourse while in recent years, the #bodypositive movement has been co-opted. The culminating viewing party will be held in a public park as a community space that extends the conversation on fat liberation to thin audiences and push the boundaries of public fat joy.

**Kennedy Allen**

**Neighborhood: West Philadelphia**

**Change Partner: Len Webb**

**Discipline: Literary Arts**

**Social Change / Intent: Cultural Preservation; Feminism; Racial Justice**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Kennedy will write *Speculative Philadelphia*, a collection of short stories focusing on science and speculative fiction taking place in past, present, and future in Black Philadelphia. Each story will feature a Black protagonist in a particular Philadelphia neighborhood during different historical periods, and will explore themes of time travel, the supernatural, and the social complexities of being a Black woman in this country. Kennedy plans to publish these stories and share them through Black Tribbles, a radio show she co-hosts that explores geek culture through the lens of the Black American experience.

**Mal Cherifi**

**Neighborhood: West Philadelphia**

**Change Partner: Wesley Flash**

**Discipline: Performance**

**Social Change / Intent: Cultural Preservation; LGBTQI Social Movements, Transgender Justice/ Gender Self-determination**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Mal will lead a group of LGBTQI artists in the creation of *The Queer Ghost Project*, an interactive theater piece that uses historical research to explore queer ancestry and the erasure of queer identity. They hope that this work provides an artistic corrective to the assumption that queer and trans lives exists as a contemporary phenomenon. It will address structural lack of opportunities for LGBTQI people in theatre providing substantive work and representation for LGBTQI artists. The four-day devised theater workshop will culminate in a one-time final community showing in October 2018.

**Mary DeWitt & Paulette Carrington**

**Neighborhood: Media and North Philadelphia**

**Change Partner: Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral**

**Discipline: Visual Arts, Performance**

**Social Change / Intent: Ending war: Militarization, criminalization, and mass incarceration;**

**Feminism; Racial Justice**

**Amount : \$2,500**

Mary DeWitt and Paulette Carrington will collaborate with the congregation at the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral in September 2018 to lead tours of Mary's portraits of life-sentenced women. Paulette, who is the second woman released in Pennsylvania sentenced to life without parole as a juvenile, has known and lived with these women for decades. Paulette, whose portrait is also on view, will talk about the effects of growing up in prison and her relationships with these women while leading tours of Mary's paintings. Reparation for Incarceration will provide an opportunity for the visiting public to deepen their awareness of the serious crisis facing not just these women portrayed, but the larger community and nation.

**Monika Estrella Negra**

**Neighborhood: Cobbs Creek**

**Change Partner: Robert Jones**

**Discipline: Media Arts**

**Social Change/Intent: Cultural Preservation; LGBTQI Social Movements; Racial Justice**

**Amount : \$2,500**

Monika's newest short film, *BITTEN* is about a young, Latinx vampire who seeks vengeance on the ancestral bloodlines of her victims. The film explores transgenerational trauma, and the complexities of race, identity, and spirituality that exist within queer spaces. She will intentionally film within the Philly queer underground scene as a means of introducing new audiences to a world that is rarely seen or represented accurately. She also plans to employ a "dream crew" of artists who identify with the story she is bringing to the screen. The film will further the mission of Audre's Revenge Film (named for Audre Lorde), a collective of cinephiles who want to create genre-specific film with a diverse narrative and highlight women of color, queer and trans individuals who have a hard time finding themselves represented in film - namely horror and science fiction.

**Nikki Powerhouse**

**Neighborhood: North Philly**

**Change Partner: Resources for Human Development (RHD)**

**Discipline: Performance/Literary Arts**

**Social Change/Intent: Economic Justice; Feminism**

**Amount : \$2,500**

Nikki will lead *The Art of I Am*, a workshop that teaches the art of storytelling, poetry and song. Workshop participants will create a performance art piece that reimagines a new narrative by taking a deeper look at feminism and economic justice. These workshops will be designed specifically for women who suffer from



addiction and homelessness. In partnership with Resources for Human Development, Nikki will connect with women during weekly one-hour sessions where they will be encouraged to “peel back the layers of their lives in order to be clear in discovering their true selves.” Nikki believes that it is through the sharing of our personal journeys that challenge the standard of beauty, sexuality, and belonging.

**Pratima Agrawal**

**Neighborhood: Kensington**

**Change Partner: Asian Arts Initiative**

**Discipline: Performance**

**Social Change / Intent: Feminism; Racial Justice**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Pratima will perform *Voided*, a solo theatre performance inspired by the true story of Kalpana Chawla, the first Indian female astronaut in space. This piece weaves in and out of the stories of Kalpana and herself. In looking at how two women of Indian descent have had to navigate the world, *Voided* imagines the possibility of greater gender equity and racial justice in Philadelphia arts and beyond. Pratima plans to bring three performances of *Voided* to the Asian Arts Initiative for audiences attending the 2018 Philadelphia Fringe Festival. Audiences will be able to see and hear a performance that connects to their community, yet pushes the boundaries of who that community includes and what it does.

**Raven Holloway and Sonja Nosisa Noonan-Ngwane**

**Neighborhood: West Philadelphia and Haverford**

**Change Partner: Mari Morales-Williams**

**Discipline: Multidisciplinary**

**Social Change / Intent: Cultural Preservation; Economic Justice; Racial Justice**

**Amount \$2,500**

*Woven Strands* is a three-month workshop series that will teach participants to braid natural hair as a means of promoting knowledge of natural hair, empowering girls and women to investigate their identity and curating intentional community. Raven and Sonja believe that hair holds cultural, social, biological, and therefore artistic significance. From July through September, they will facilitate braiding and hair maintenance workshops, while teaching how hair functions as an act of economic liberation. Raven, Sonja and the participants of *Woven Strands* will create hair art, textiles like mud cloth, self-portraiture and other mediums of expression and affirmation. The series will culminate in exhibition that showcases the power, strength and beauty in black women and girls through the natural hair movement.

**Rorie Still**

**Neighborhood: Wynnefield**

**Change Partner: Amalgam Comics and Coffeehouse**

**Discipline: Visual Arts and Literary Arts**

**Social Change / Intent: Racial Justice**

**Amount: \$2,500**

Rorie Still is the creator of *Flashbang: Sci-Fi Stories That Will Blow Your Mind!*, an inclusive book of sci-fantasy for Black and Brown people. She plans to turn this work into a graphic novel, making it accessible to a wider readership and addressing the absent and/or negative images of people of color within the comic book genre. By making the book into a visual piece, Rorie will promote with the power of radical imagination and racial pride within her community. She seeks to fight racial injustice within the comic book medium by sharing the work through a series of readings and workshops at Amalgam Comics and Coffeehouse.

**Sannii Crespina-Flores**  
**Neighborhood: Northern Liberties**  
**Change Partner: Marangeli Mejia-Rabell**  
**Discipline: Media Arts and Performance**  
**Social Change / Intent: Feminism**  
**Amount: \$2,500**

Sannii Crespina-Flores will curate *When the Dust Speaks*, an exhibition that will blend still images, poems, short video and audio that excavates layers of myth, memory and the culture of silence taught to Black and Afro-Latin women of child sexual assault. The stories on display will be from Philadelphia women who understand and encourage open dialog about sexual abuse in a safe space. Her goal is to explore the impact of culture and society, and compassionately examine the intersection of sexual child abuse and feminism.

**Shanel Edwards**  
**Neighborhood: West Philadelphia**  
**Change Partner: Kai Davis**  
**Discipline: Performance and Media Arts**  
**Social Change / Intent: LGBTQI Social Movements, Racial Justice**  
**Amount \$2,500**

Shanel Edwards will choreograph a dance visual production called *This is for You* that represents the softness, kinship and radical joy among black queer femme circles. The cast and crew will include black queer femmes in the Philadelphia area who will demonstrate the ways they flourish and pour into one another. *This is for You* portrays the existence of black queer femmes beyond their trauma of being silenced, stolen from and erased, and allows for more creative abilities to take up space. As a video, this piece utilizes both racial and gender identities to uplift a specific intersectionality, and addresses the need for black queer feminism visibility in media. The visual will be published online and made accessible to black queer femme circles around the world.

**Wit López**  
**Neighborhood: West Philadelphia**  
**Change Partner: Gina Renzi**  
**Discipline: Multidisciplinary**  
**Social Change / Intent: Economic Justice, LGBTQI social Movements, Racial Justice**  
**Amount: \$2,500**

Wit López will host the second *Black QT Artistic Body* which, over the course of two days, showcases the visual art, performance art, and writing of queer and trans artists from throughout the African Diaspora. The event will feature five performers each day and will include a visual art exhibition of work by Black LGBTQ+ artists of varying trainings and backgrounds. *Black QT Artistic Body* will host Black LGBTQ+ vendors and employ Black LGBTQ+ youth as paid interns, offering them the opportunity to learn about arts management while providing avenues for economic income and transferrable work experience.





**Andrea Jácome**

*(pronoun: she)*

Andrea Jácome is a cultural organizer and facilitator. She is the former Community Organizing Director at Girls Rock Philly, a music mentorship nonprofit that builds with girls, women, and trans and gender nonconforming people. A graduate of Swarthmore College, she has been dedicated to interdisciplinary modes of cultural organizing and popular education - often bridging music with art and gardening - as means to build pockets of liberatory spaces. From 2011-2014, she was a core member of Taller de Paz, a transnational collective of popular educators working with internally displaced youth outside of Bogotá, Colombia. From 2015-2017, as co-director of Girls Rock Philly, she focused on deepening GRP's commitment to social justice and youth power--among wearing many other hats. Currently, she is working toward completing her herbal apprenticeship with Sacred Vibes Apothecary as well as her first chapbook of poetry.

**Catherine Pancake (LTA '17, WOO '17, ACG '16)**

*(pronouns: he, she, or they – all pronouns are okay)*

Catherine Pancake is an award-winning filmmaker, video, new media, and sound artist. She has exhibited at national and international venues such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Royal Ontario Museum, Baltimore Museum of Art, Murray Art Museum Albury, Australia, Shanghai Conservatory – Shanghai PRC, and Academy of Fine Arts, Prague. Pancake's narrative and experimental documentary work has been screened at over 150 venues nationally, as well as broadcast (entirely or as excerpts) in the US and UK on the Sundance Channel, PBS, FreeSpeech Television, and the CommunityChannelUK. Her films are nationally & internationally distributed by Bullfrog Films and Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre and are held in permanent collections in over 75 university and museum archives nationally. Pancake is an Assistant Professor in the Film and Media Arts Program at Temple University.

**Petra Floyd**

*(pronoun: she)*

Petra Floyd is a first-generation Liberian-American multidisciplinary artist from Philadelphia. She uses drawing, sculpture, writing, printmaking, and performance to meditate on Blackness in the United States and other sites of the African diaspora, focusing on reinvention through inherited and appropriated material culture and performance. Petra received a BA in Studio Art from Swarthmore College in 2012. She has been an artist-in-residence at 40th Street AIR (2016-2017), a Fob Holder at Second State Press (2016), and a Post-college Apprentice at The Fabric Workshop and Museum (2014). She has exhibited work at The Arthur Miller Theatre at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, The Art Dept., The Colored Girls Museum, 40th Street AIR Gallery, the Fox Art Gallery at University of Pennsylvania, FringeArts, and The Fabric Workshop and Museum. She has performed original work at 4 Weeks in January, Super I object 004: Bodies, Little Berlin, and the COLLAGE Festival.