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Leeway Foundation Announces Spring 2015 Art and Change Grantees

22 women and trans artists and cultural producers receive project-based grants to further social change in the Delaware Valley

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PHILADELPHIA – The Leeway Foundation recently announced \$49,400 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 impact a larger group, audience or community; have financial need; and live in the Delaware Valley area. The grant supports artists practicing a variety of disciplines including performance, crafts and textiles, and visual arts.

The following 22 artists were awarded grants (in alphabetical order):

ANA GUISEL, West Kensington
Crafts & Textiles/ Folk Art

Ana will lead a series of workshops to preserve The Day of the Dead- a Mexican cultural tradition- where a community of immigrants will learn about its origins and produce a colorful procession of paper-mache figures, reinstating the authenticity of this celebrated syncretism.

ANULA SHETTY, Fishtown
Media Arts

Anula's film, *Cosmic Egg*, is a documentary that explores the long-term physical and emotional impact of reproductive technologies in a global marketplace through the personal stories and struggles of three Indian women: a health worker, a doctor, and a surrogate mother.

APRIL GILLIAM, Southwest Philadelphia
Multi-Disciplinary

April will conduct weekly art sessions with the residents and alumni of Morris Home, a trans and gender non-conforming drug and alcohol treatment community. The sessions will culminate in a gallery opening, raising awareness in the larger surrounding community.

EMILY ABENDROTH, West Philadelphia
Media Arts

Emily's project, *LifeLines: Voices Against the Other Death Penalty*, is a sound installation created from audio interviews with people serving life in Pennsylvania intended to inform and transform the understanding of Life Without Parole sentencing.

FERNANDA MARROQUIN GOZALO, West Philadelphia
Literary Arts/Visual Arts

Fernanda will create a poetry book that documents the displacement of her and her family in 2000, when she was only 11 years old. The poems will be about various traumas caused by migration, and the path towards healing and liberation.

GENESIS CRESPO, Kingsessing

Multi-Disciplinary

Genesis seeks to dismantle an overarching stigma that artists are responsible for gentrification by expressing the diasporic state of artists of color in a series called *La Gran Herida (The Grand Wound)*, an assemblage of photographs and drawings examining personal displacement and sparking dialogue about challenging systems of oppression.

KATE GALLAGHER, Cedar Park

Literary Arts/ Folk Art

Kate will create a collection of interactive short stories for people, specifically queer women, to read when they are experiencing high levels of anxiety. Kate's science fiction stories imagine a world where there is safety and solace for people who often feel unsafe both in the external world and in their own minds.

KATHRYN PANNEPACKER, Germantown

Crafts and Textiles/ Visual Arts

Kathryn's *Healing Blanket Project* will use small textiles to memorialize victims of gun violence in Philadelphia and the communities impacted. Each textile will be installed at intersections where gun violence took place, accompanied by a tag with support information. A piece of the healing blanket will be mailed to the victim's family, along with resources to comfort and aid them in their healing journey.

LANESHE MILLER-WHITE, Delcrot

Performance

LaNeshe's project, *Theatre in the X*, will provide the people of West Philadelphia the opportunity to see classical theater in their own neighborhood at no cost. With reversed-raced presentations of Shakespeare's *Othello*, LaNeshe seeks to break down the universal themes of racism, love, jealousy, betrayal, revenge, and repentance.

LAUREN VARGAS, Hunting Park

Visual Arts

Lauren will celebrate and honor teenage girls from North Philadelphia with the creation of a collaborative portrait project. The young women will participate in a series of artistic workshops on identity, racism, sexism, and the effects of poverty, and with Lauren, create self-portraits that express their identities and hopes for a more just world.

LILY HUGHES, West Philadelphia

Performance/Media Arts

Lily's project, *TACTIC: Recipes for Survival, An Elders Dance History Project*, is a creative leadership development and mentorship project. Through a series of intergenerational storytelling, movement, and resiliency-building workshops, participants will gather skills and knowledge from the lessons and dreams of elders to reinvent formulas for winning justice. The project will culminate in the generative creation of an outdoor, site-specific performance and video.

MELISSA TALLEY-PALMER, Germantown

Multi-Disciplinary

Melissa's *Let's Dance* project will explore the history of social dancing with intergenerational audiences through Bop, Cha Cha, and Line Dance classes. An eight-week series at the Free Library of Philadelphia, Greater Olney Branch, *Let's Dance* will provide an opportunity for participants to share their own traditional dances, visit other dance classes around the city, and record interviews, which will be used to preserve the history and culture of these dances.

NICOLE BINDLER, South Philadelphia

Performance

Nicole will create a new dance with women from Diyar Dance Theater, a folkloric dance company that seeks to humanize Palestinians by performing for Western audiences unaware of Palestinian struggle. Exploring gender inequity and effects of the Israeli occupation on women in Palestine, Nicole will travel to Bethlehem, Palestine, and share her experiences upon her return at a free and public event.

PASCALE BOUCICAUT and ADACHI PIMENTEL, West Philadelphia

Folk Arts/ Visual Arts

Pascale and Adachi will travel to kitchens all around Philadelphia and practice traditional culinary arts as a mode of expressing identity, preserving culture, and promoting health amongst people of African heritage. The project will be shared in an installation of dishes, photographs, recipes, and live demonstrations that showcase both the beauty of African heritage cooking, and the impact of culinary arts as a tool for vibrant communities.

SARAH MILINSKI, South Philadelphia

Media Arts

Sarah will work with members of the Philadelphia Student Union (PSU) to create a participatory website that features media produced by youth about students' experiences in Philadelphia during the educational budget crisis. To support the creation of website content, Sarah will lead a series of workshops where participants will learn basic photography, video, and blogging skills, construct personal narratives, and share a vision of what their ideal education could look like.

SINTA PENYAMI HITE, South Philadelphia

Folk Art/Performance

Over the course of six weeks, Sinta will teach traditional Indonesian dance classes to both children and adults of immigrant families in South Philadelphia. Sinta will showcase how Indonesian dance tells a story, teaches traditional values, exercises precision, and builds fitness and confidence. After the classes, participants will have the choice to perform at Indonesian Week hosted by the Indonesian Diaspora Network of Greater Philadelphia.

SUZANNE CLOUD and RHENDA FEARRINGTON, Collingswood and Morton

Multi-Disciplinary

Suzanne and Rhenda's project, *Hands Up! Don't Shoot! Blue on Black Violence*, will be inspired by the danger young black men face from police in the U.S. Suzanne and Rhenda will create a libretto to be performed by a 10-piece jazz orchestra and sung by three singers who will reflect different perspectives of these tragedies. *Hands Up! Don't Shoot! Blue on Black Violence* seeks to shape personal consciousness and encourage others to confront their biases.

TARA FELICIA JONES, Worcester Township

Literary Arts/Visual Arts

Tara will create a book called *Sistahs Coping*, which will comprise essays, poems, and short stories, by African American girls and women whose fathers have been murdered. Throughout its creation, Tara will allow space for participants to share experiences of untold trauma, unresolved emotional anguish, and vicious cycles of poverty that plague their lives and communities.

TAYARISHA POE, West Philadelphia

Media Arts/Visual Arts

Tayarisha's project, *Selah and the Spades*, is a multimedia film told in an epistolary format – a series of letters and documents – that focuses on the lives of three high school seniors, their friendships, and the gang they run. *Selah and the Spades* seeks to challenge how we see and define feature films through its innovative, entirely online format, which will allow it to reach individuals without access to exclusive festivals and theaters.

WESLEY FLASH, West Philadelphia

Multi-Disciplinary

Wesley's project, *Annual Reminder*, is a mobile app that provides a walking tour of historic sites where LGBTQ activism took place in Philadelphia. Using a digitally accessible map, narrative audio tracks, archival photographs and smartphone technologies, Wesley will create an interactive art project and online learning tool. *Annual Reminder* aims to preserve Philadelphia's LGBTQ social activism by making historical narratives engaging and interactive.

Art and Change Grants are distributed twice a year and evaluated by an independent peer review panel. The March 2015 review panel consisted of facilitator and artist **Qui Dorian**, quilter and doll maker **Ra'sheedah Bey**, and filmmaker **Wazmah Osman**.

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. The next Art and Change Grant deadline is August 1, 2015.

Press inquiries and photo requests should be directed to Denise Beek at (215) 545-4078, ext. 14 or 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.

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