Leeway Foundation Announces Fall 2017 Art and Change Grantees
18 women and trans* artists and cultural producers receive project-based grants to further social change in Greater Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA – Today, the Leeway Foundation announced $43,500 in grants to 18 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 18 artists were awarded grants (in alphabetical order):

Adonis BC Okonkwo of West Philadelphia, Multidisciplinary, $2,500
Amy June of West Philadelphia, Visual Arts/Media Arts, $2,500
Ana Martina of Kingsessing, Multidisciplinary, $2,500
Annie Mok of West Philadelphia, Media Arts, $2,500
Ants on a Log of West Philadelphia, Music/Performance, $2,500
Barb Baur of Mayfair, Media Arts/Crafts & Textiles, $2,500
Bonita Elaine Taylor of Chester, Folk Arts/Visual Arts, $2,500
Boston Gordon of Center City, Literary Arts/Performance, $2,000
Denise Allen of Jenkintown, Multidisciplinary, $2,500
Erika Guadalupe Núñez of South Philadelphia, Visual Arts, $2,500
Heather Racquel Phillips of South Philadelphia, Media Arts/Visual Arts, $2,500
Hye-Jung Park of West Philadelphia, Media Arts, $2,500
Juliana Reyes of Cedar Park, Literary Arts/Media Arts, $2,500
Kathryn Smith Pyle of Center City, Media Arts, $2,500
khari jackson of Glenwood, Visual Arts, $2,500
Maria Dumlao of East Kensington, Visual Arts/Literary Arts, $2,500
Mary DeWitt of Media, Visual Arts/Media Arts, $2,500
Mina Zarfsaz of Kensington, Media Arts/Visual Arts, $1,500
Art and Change Grants are distributed twice a year and evaluated by an independent peer review panel. The Fall 2017 review panel consisted of arts administrator and nonprofit development professional Amanda Morales Pratt, vocalist and pianist Dena Underwood (ACG ‘16), and social research activist artist Julie Rainbow (LTA ‘16, 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 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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Leeway awarded $43,500 in project-based grants to 18 women, transgender and gender nonconforming artists with a focus on the following social change intents:

- Cultural preservation: 9
- Feminism: 6
- Transgender justice, gender self-determination: 5
- Displacement, migration, immigration: 5
- Racial justice: 4
- LGBTQI social movements: 4
- Economic justice: 3
- Ending war, militarization, criminalization, and mass incarceration: 3
- Indigenous sovereignty/rights: 2
- Disability justice: 2
- Environmental justice: 1

Within these artistic disciplines:

- Media Arts: 9
- Visual Arts: 8
- Literary Arts: 3
- Multidisciplinary: 2
- Performance: 2
- Music: 1
- Crafts & Textiles: 1
- Folk Art: 1

*Grantees selected up to 2 disciplines and up to 3 intents.

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Adonis BC Okonkwo  
**Neighborhood:** West Philadelphia  
**Change Partner:** William Way LGBT Community Center  
**Discipline:** Multidisciplinary  
**Social Change Intent:** Cultural preservation; LGBTQI social movements; Transgender justice/gender self-determination  
**Amount:** $2,500

Adonis will produce a multimedia interactive art exhibit focusing on what freedom—freedom of speech, expression, and choice—looks like for trans people in Philadelphia. The exhibit will consist of a movement-based performance piece with audio-visual, photography, sculpture components, and a self-produced educational zine on trans history and the current state of trans rights in Philadelphia. The zine will be released alongside the exhibit opening and donated to an LGBTQI archive.

Amy June  
**Neighborhood:** West Philadelphia  
**Change Partner:** Sade Ali  
**Discipline:** Visual Arts, Media Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Cultural preservation; Indigenous sovereignty/rights; LGBTQI social movements  
**Amount:** $2,500

Amy will attend the annual First Nations celebration in West Philadelphia and travel to the east coast’s only LGBTQ/Two-Spirit pow wow in upstate New York. Through these travels, pow wows, interviews, and casual meet ups, Amy will photograph those who would like their image taken in a location and attire of their choice. Amy’s goal is to create a body of work that illustrates the beauty of North American Indigenous culture, particularly where it intersects with other identities of urbanized, mixed race, or queer, as they see themselves, rather than from an outside colonial gaze.

Ana Martina  
**Neighborhood:** Kingsessing  
**Change Partner:** Cathi Tillman  
**Discipline:** Multidisciplinary  
**Social Change Intent:** Cultural preservation; Displacement, migration, and immigration  
**Amount:** $2,500

Ana will work with newly arrived immigrant youth in Philadelphia and Upper Darby, many of whom have gone through challenging experiences with immigration detention and foster care. The project will involve storytelling and the creation of collages using maps, painting, and fabric. Participants will draw the paths they have transited until arrival in their current neighborhood, describing their relationship to the territories in which they have lived and reflecting on their identity. Ana will conduct four sessions at La Puerta Abierta in Norris Square Neighborhood Project, culminating in two community events and a website showcasing short podcasts and narratives.

Annie Mok  
**Neighborhood:** West Philadelphia  
**Change Partner:** Carman Spoto  
**Discipline:** Media Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Disability justice; Transgender justice/gender self-determination  
**Amount:** $2,500
Annie is co-writing the script for *Imogen*, a feature film that follows a young trans woman (played by Annie), and her friends, roommates, and boyfriend, all of whom will be played by queer and trans actors of color. The film explores themes of sexual trauma, depression, and healing and follows Imogen's journey as she deals with the debilitating after-effects of childhood abuse while trying to date and enjoy sex with her boyfriend. Funds will be used to support the film’s production: shooting, editing, and paying the cast and crew.

**Ants on a Log**  
**Neighborhood:** West Philadelphia  
**Change Partner:** Christine Dolle, Moms Clean Air Force  
**Discipline:** Music, Performance  
**Social Change Intent:** Environmental justice; Feminism; Transgender justice/gender self-determination  
**Amount:** $2,500

Ants on a Log will record the soundtrack to their musical, *Curious, Think Outside the Pipeline*. The musical is about a girl named Clio and her younger sibling, Taylor (whose gender is never named), as they organize their community to fight big business oil. With strands of feminism woven throughout, the siblings research renewable energy solutions to convince the public to fight with them. Making the album will involve adapting the songs and dialogue for audio presentation, rehearsing, recording in a professional studio, mixing and mastering, packaging into an album, and adapting the discussion guide.

**Barb Baur**  
**Neighborhood:** Mayfair  
**Change Partner:** Maria Möller, Mural Arts Philadelphia, Tacony LAB  
**Discipline:** Media Arts, Crafts & Textiles  
**Social Change Intent:** Economic justice; Feminism  
**Amount:** $2,500

Barb will start a program that teaches 3D technology software to female and transgender teens and young adults at the Tacony LAB. Barb hopes to create accessibility to vital job skills that are not easily available to this demographic, build self-confidence, and facilitate the growth of a local maker community starting with the program participants. An additional goal would be to nurture enough community engagement to eventually support an art/maker space.

**Bonita Elaine Taylor**  
**Neighborhood:** Chester  
**Change Partner:** Deborah Montgomery  
**Discipline:** Folk Arts, Visual Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Cultural preservation; Economic justice  
**Amount:** $2,500

Bonita will lead a series of workshops for low income, predominantly Black children to use their imagination and self-expression to create jewelry that reflects the Black culture. This will ensure that the cultural preservation of Black jewelry making is not lost. The participants will find creative ways to make a living by selling jewelry as a hobby or as an entrepreneurial endeavor.

**Boston Gordon**  
**Neighborhood:** Center City  
**Change Partner:** Julia Perch  
**Discipline:** Literary Arts, Performance  
**Social Change Intent:** LGBTQI social movements; Transgender justice/gender self-determination  
**Amount:** $2,000
Boston will curate You Can’t Kill A Poet, a reading series designed to give voice to Philadelphia’s queer and/or trans identified poets and writers. Boston will curate each event to be an exclusive space for queer and/or trans identified readers to share their stories, art, and experiences with the community. Readers will not be asked to meet any requirements, except for the desire to share and participate. All will be welcome to attend and the readings will be free, taking place at Tattooed Mom’s and the Free Library of Philadelphia.

Denise Allen  
**Neighborhood:** Jenkintown  
**Change Partner:** Rhashidah Perry  
**Discipline:** Multidisciplinary  
**Social Change Intent:** Cultural preservation; Disability justice  
**Amount:** $2,500

Denise will interview and photograph young African American women who have struggled with mental illness and their mothers, who have gotten their daughters help and supported them on their journey. Denise will create a short documentary film and photo exhibit that will help remove the stigma associated with mental illness in the black community, especially among black women.

Erika Guadalupe Núñez  
**Neighborhood:** South Philadelphia  
**Change Partner:** Vamos Juntos  
**Discipline:** Visual Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Displacement, migration, and immigration; LGBTQI social movements; Racial justice  
**Amount:** $2,500

Erika will develop an after-school graphic design and stipend screen-print training program for immigrant youth living in South Philadelphia. Housed at Juntos, the program will be taught by Erika and local artists through a series of bilingual lesson plans which will be stored in an archive on Juntos’ website for free public use. By providing participants with the tools to create their own images, Erika hopes to develop future artistic leaders for Juntos that will raise consciousness around issues affecting queer and/or immigrant communities and other communities of color. As a final capstone, Juntos youth will host their own open house event and lead their own mini workshop for members of their community, for which they will each be paid.

Heather Racquel Phillips  
**Neighborhood:** South Philadelphia  
**Change Partner:** Aisia Fletcher  
**Discipline:** Media Arts, Visual Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Cultural preservation; Racial justice; Transgender justice/gender self-determination  
**Amount:** $2,500

Heather will create a series of short documentaries that preserves the histories and amplifies the voices of queer and trans people of color, people of color, and women of color within the leather community. In her interviews, Heather will cover topics like microaggressions, direct racism and phobia, and liberation. A collaborative conceptual portrait will accompany each video. Heather intends to create a universal and empathetic view into her subjects’ experiences as a way to reach beyond the leather community, destigmatize fetish, and foster change and acceptance. The project will culminate in a screening and exhibition of the portraits, with a discussion to follow.
Hye-Jung Park  
**Neighborhood:** West Philadelphia  
**Change Partner:** Philadelphia Committee for Peace and Justice in Asia  
**Discipline:** Media Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Ending war: militarization, criminalization, and mass incarceration  
**Amount:** $2,500

Hye-Jung will create *The Korea Peace*, a series of short web documentaries that examines the tensions between the U.S. and North Korea and provides both historical and current information and analysis, while humanizing the people who live in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), especially women and families. Through interviews with women workers in North Korea and other activists, the web series will provide an alternative to mainstream and U.S. governmental explanations of why we are so close to war. The series will prompt viewers to question what the role of the U.S. has been on the peninsula, and the responsibility the U.S. bears to try to defuse tensions.

Juliana Reyes  
**Neighborhood:** Cedar Park  
**Change Partner:** Lovella Calica  
**Discipline:** Literary Arts, Media Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Cultural preservation; Displacement, migration, and immigration  
**Amount:** $2,500

Juliana will document the Filipino food potluck dinner she created with other Filipinos in the diaspora living in Philadelphia. Juliana will interview each member of the group, and then write essays about them and how the potluck came to be. These essays will be included in a cookbook featuring one recipe from each of the potluck members, which will be available via hardcopy and online. The project will culminate with a larger potluck open to the group’s friends and family, where Juliana will share her findings, lead a discussion, and read from the cookbook.

Kathryn Smith Pyle  
**Neighborhood:** Center City  
**Change Partner:** Michael Seltzer  
**Discipline:** Media Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Economic justice; Feminism; Racial justice  
**Amount:** $2,500

Kathryn will produce *SISTERS*, a short, character-based documentary film and audience engagement project addressing racism in the all-white Greek-letter college sorority system. Educators, student activists, and civil rights advocates in the Delaware Valley will advise on the project’s content and help organize screening events for their constituencies. Screening-discussion events will be organized for classes (e.g. race or gender studies); for professional educators (e.g. a Diversity Officers workshop); and for civil society groups (e.g. ACLU meetings).

Khari Jackson  
**Neighborhood:** Glenwood  
**Change Partner:** Off Brand Comix  
**Discipline:** Visual Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Cultural preservation; Ending war: militarization, criminalization, and mass incarceration; Indigenous sovereignty/rights  
**Amount:** $2,500
khari will create a comic series that retells the history of Philadelphia through an honest, spiritual, philosophical, abolitionist, and healing focus. This project seeks to educate Philadelphians and neighbors on the true history of the area in an accessible manner, centering the impacts of settler colonialism on all marginalized groups, specifically bringing together Black and Nanticoke Lenni Lenape First Nations communities by highlighting their shared struggles. khari will distribute the comics for free at local libraries, community centers, and elementary and middle schools.

Maria Dumlao  
**Neighborhood:** East Kensington  
**Change Partner:** Vox Populi  
**Discipline:** Visual Arts, Literary Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Cultural preservation; Displacement, migration, and immigration; Feminism  
**Amount:** $2,500

Maria will create *History in RGB*, an immersive art installation of prints, plants, and filters. Prints are comprised of color-coded images that appear abstract to the naked eye. Viewing prints through color filters, certain images are revealed while others are obfuscated. Collaging images of history, popular culture, and mythic folklore, it proposes alternatives to systemic representations ordered by colonial narratives.

Mary DeWitt  
**Neighborhood:** Media  
**Change Partner:** Paulette Carrington  
**Discipline:** Visual Arts, Media Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Ending war: militarization, criminalization, and mass incarceration; Feminism; Racial justice  
**Amount:** $2,500

Mary will paint, fire, and install a tile mural portrait of Paulette Carrington in Philadelphia. An accompanying narrative will describe Paulette’s case and her sentencing, at the age of 16, to 40 years of life without parole in Pennsylvania. More juvenile lifers are sentenced to life without parole in Philadelphia than any U.S. city. Paulette hopes to use the site of the tile portrait as a place to gather and share her experiences and struggle.

Mina Zarfsaz  
**Neighborhood:** Kensington  
**Change Partner:** Icebox Project Space  
**Discipline:** Media Arts, Visual Arts  
**Social Change Intent:** Displacement, migration, and immigration; Feminism  
**Amount:** $1,500

Mina will create *A Corporeal Orchestration of Sounds*, an interactive installation of fragmented bits of Iranian rebellious songs and calibrated electronics—tuned like an instrument to the participants’ movements. Mina will create a system of sensors, speakers, and projectors that will measure the impact of spectators’ movements, which will then reconstruct the dismantled fragments of the music. As they trigger the sensors, the bodies of the spectators will co-compose the rhythmic content through their movements with others.
Amanda Morales Pratt  
(pronoun: they)  
Amanda Morales Pratt is an arts administrator and nonprofit development professional who has worked in nonprofit and arts & culture contexts for their entire career. They currently serve as the Director of Development at Bread & Roses Community Fund, a social justice fund in Philadelphia dedicated to supporting community organizing. Prior to joining Bread & Roses, Amanda managed fundraising and marketing for Norris Square Neighborhood Project, a Latinx arts, culture, and gardening organization grounded in food justice and culture preservation. Amanda worked in institutional advancement at the Pennsylvania SPCA, running their grants program as well as supporting annual fundraising and special events. Previous to this, Amanda served as an AmeriCorps VISTA with the Urban Technology Project, an I.T. workforce development program for Philadelphia public high school graduates, and as the Arts on South Coordinator for Philadelphia’s Magic Gardens, a mosaic art environment created by Isaiah Zagar. In these positions, Amanda developed their fundraising, community outreach, and event planning skills. Amanda earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatrical Design & Technology at Emerson College and a Master of Science in Nonprofit Leadership at La Salle University. They were selected as a 2017 class member for Leadership Philadelphia’s Connectors and Keepers program.

Dena Underwood  
(pronoun: they)  
Dena Underwood is a vocalist and self-taught pianist from Philadelphia. Hailing from a family of gifted vocalists and instrumentalists, Dena’s passion for music began at an early age. Since graduating from the Philadelphia High School for the Creative and Performing Arts, and studying Jazz Voice Performance at Temple University, Dena has performed at a number of venues, including The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Academy of Music and The Kimmel Center in Philadelphia, World Café Live, Plays and Players Theatre, the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, and New York City’s Lincoln Center. Dena performs regularly as vocalist/pianist in the Philadelphia area.

Julie Rainbow  
(pronoun: she)  
Julie Rainbow is a social research activist artist who integrates critical thinking with 25 years of social work experience, while synthesizing and analyzing stories from elders into original artistic work. Rainbow’s social work experience allows her to listen deeply and uncover both the bold and the humble responses to life. Her work is meant to stimulate an “urgent reconsideration” of how the aging are perceived and the role they play. In 1995, Julie was selected as a W.K. Kellogg Foundation International Leadership Fellow. The fellowship provided learning in seven countries on four different continents, further encouraging her to pursue her passion of documenting the lives of elders. Her book, Standing the Test of Time: Love Stories of African American Elders, published by Pilgrim Press in 2002, was a tribute African American elders. Artistically, her work brings honor and recognition to the aging population and helps to inform the conversation about creating places for the aging population to be valued, engaged and heard across generations. Rainbow has received funding for her work from the Leeway Foundation, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and was a 2016 Leeway Foundation Transformation Award recipient. She studied Economics at Spelman College and earned a MSS from the Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research.