Culture Push is an arts organization that works with hands-on learning, group problem solving, serious play, and creating connections.
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## STAFF

- **Clarinda Mac Low**, Executive Director
- **Pelenakeke Brown**, Assistant Director
- **Shawn Escargia**, Director of Publicity and Public Programming

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Mark Bradford**, Intellectual Property Attorney
- **Chloë Bass**, Artist, Culture Push Fellow 2013 and Assistant Professor at Queens College-CUNY Social Practice Program
- **Alicia Grullón**, Artist, NYFA Immigrant Artist Mentor, Columbia University Wallach Art Gallery Fellow, Culture Push Fellow 2013
- **Nancy Nowacek**, Artist, Assistant Professor, Stevens Institute of Technology, Culture Push Fellow 2012
- **Rody Douzoglou**, Independent Curator
- **Carolyn Hall**, Freelance Dancer/Artist and Historical Marine Ecologist

## ADVISORY BOARD

- **Ishmael Houston-Jones**
- **Felicity Hogan**
- **Michael DiPietro**
- **Sur Rodney Sur**
- **Sarah Dahnke**
MISSION STATEMENT

Culture Push is an arts organization that works with hands-on learning, group problem solving, serious play, and creating connections. The mission of Culture Push is to create a lively exchange of ideas between many different communities; artists and non-artists, professional practitioners and laypeople, across generations, neighborhoods, and cultures. Culture Push supports the process of creating new modes of thinking and doing, and serves a diverse community of creative people. The programs of Culture Push focus on collaboration and group learning through active, participatory experiences. Culture Push programs appear in many different locations, taking many different forms, and public presentations are low-cost or free, to give access to the widest audience.

YEAR IN REVIEW

2018 was a big year for Culture Push, as we expanded our programming initiatives and increased fiscal support for Fellows. We continued to support two Fellows from 2016, and welcomed six new Fellowship projects, supporting a total of seven new artists. Fellows engaged with communities in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. We launched our Associated Artists program, held our first annual Fellowship Symposium, Show Don’t Tell, and published a bilingual English-Chinese issue of PUSH/PULL. We concluded our three-year collaboration with the Finnish-German arts collective YKON, with the Summit for Practical Utopia, and Culture Push staff participated in the exhibition Citizen Participation: Diagrams and Directives, curated by Esther Neff (Fellow 2012) for ABC No Rio. We also created new programming to encourage networking and collaboration between our Fellows, Associated Artists, and a wider community.

Winter 2017

- Continued to support Noemí Segarra Ramírez (PISO proyecto), Clarivel Ruiz (Dominicans Love Haitians Movement), Yvonne Shortt (Women Who Build - Artists Who Own), Hidemi Takagi (The Bed-Stuy Social ‘Photo’ Club), Chris Ignacio (Co-Written), Walis Johnson (The Red Line Labyrinth), Theodore Kerr (What Would An HIV Doula Do), and Chinatown Art Brigade.

Spring 2018

- We held our Spring Open Call and awarded the Spring 2018 Fellowship for Utopian Practice to Sonia Louise Davis, Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow and Eli Brown and their worthy projects.
- Culture Push staff participated in the Citizen Participation: Diagrams and Directives show at Bullet Space, produced by ABC No Rio.
- We released Issue 6 of PUSH/PULL, edited by Chinatown Art Brigade (Fellows 2017) which focused on the issues faced by Chinatowns throughout the diaspora in the United States and beyond.
Summer 2018

- Fellows Clarivel Ruiz (Fellow 2016) and Theodor Kerr (Fellow 2017) received two-week summer residencies with NURTUREart, longtime supporters of Culture Push and the Fellowship.

Fall 2018

- Held our Fall Open Call and awarded the Fall 2018 Fellowship to Claudia Prado, Damali Abrams, and Adelaide Matthew Dicken & Meliça McIntyre.
- Launched our newest program, Associated Artists, with seven inaugural artists.
- Partnered with Open Source Gallery for 7 Minutes in Heaven, show and tell and meet and greet with current Fellows (Spring/Fall 2018).

Winter 2018

- First Culture Push Holiday Market! Culture Push, in partnership with the Domestic Performance Agency, celebrated the holiday season with crafts, gifts, and good cheer from artists who have gone through the Fellowship for Utopian Practice.

Staff and Board changes

- We bid farewell to Madelyn Ringold-Brown, who was Assistant Director from 2012-2018, and to Linnea Ryshke, Admin Director 2015 -2018. Madelyn moved on to work as a horticultural intern at Wave Hill and Linnea left the city to pursue her MFA at Washington University in St. Louis. Social Media Director Natalia Vilela (2015-2018) left to pursue work with a non-profit that aids immigrants, and we welcomed Shawn Escarciga as our newest Social Media Director.
- We welcomed Pelenakeke Brown as the new Assistant Director.
- The Board also experienced some changes. We said good-bye to Risa Shoup and welcomed Carolyn Hall and Rody Douzoglou. Hall brings her knowledge and experience as a working interdisciplinary artist and scientist, and Douzoglou brings her knowledge as a curator and instigator to the organization.
The Fellowship for Utopian Practice is a testing ground for new ideas that aim to create positive social change through civic engagement and horizontal learning opportunities. Through the Fellowship for Utopian Practice, Culture Push serves artists by providing creative, analytical, and logistical tools in the creation of truly transformative projects.
The following Fellowships were awarded in 2018:

**SPRING 2018**

Sonia Louise Davis: Become Together Freedom School, is an experimental platform to cultivate critical improvisation: tactics for self-articulation and collective engagement as we demand a more just society.

Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow, *Junkanooaacome* is a site-specific, interdisciplinary/interactive project consisting of workshops, performances, and other media intended to decolonize and raise awareness of NYC's historic spaces and monuments still bearing names of slave masters.

Eli Brown, *Trans Family Archive*. Is a community led year-long series of facilitated round table discussions designed to increase the contact and communication between generations of trans and non-binary individuals and to develop a nationwide trans family audio archive.

**FALL 2018**

Claudia Prado, *Escritura en tránsito / Writing in Transit* is a transitory writing workshop for the commuters of the St. George Ferry Station in Staten Island.

Mel McIntyre & Adelaide Matthew Dicken will gather communities fighting for disability justice and trans justice to envision solidarity economy endeavors rooted in these connected liberation struggles.

Damali Abrams, *Radical Self-Care Workshops for Busy Black New Yorkers* These workshops will provide an opportunity for busy Black New Yorkers to heal in community, and to share techniques for bringing self-care into unlikely spaces such as the workplace and the subway, in order to facilitate health and well being as a way of life.
SHOW DON’T TELL
April 23/24, Performance Project @ University Settlement
A SYMPOSIUM with CULTURE PUSH FELLOWSHIP FOR UTOPIAN PRACTICE
and THE PERFORMANCE PROJECT’S 2018 ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE

We presented our first annual symposium, a 2-day event with past and current Fellows’ presenting presentations, workshops and their findings to the general public. Hosted by the Performance Project @ University Settlement in conjunction with the AIR Performance Project.

TUESDAY, APRIL 24

Aida Šehović shared participatory material from w_i_t_n_e_s_s_(assembly), a multi-year project that addresses gender-based violence and connects with survivors to help initiate healing and reconciliation.

Walis Johnson screened a short film that documents her work in Fall 2017 on The Red Line Labyrinth Project, where she uses labyrinth walking as part of her exploration of the historical legacy of redlining in Brooklyn.

Yvonne Shortt held a discussion about the impact of collaborative construction and design, which has been central to her project Women Who Build - Artists Who Own, a woman-led and woman-grown initiative based in Rego Park, Queens.

Noemí Segarra joined us via live stream from Puerto Rico to discuss the evolution of her collaborative art practice in the wake of Hurricane Maria and shared her experience of displacement.
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25

Hidemi Takagi installed her pop-up photo booth to take portraits of attendees, replicating the form of her Fellowship project, The Bed-Stuy Social ‘Photo’ Club. As a photographer and artist intimately involved in her community of Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn, Hidemi shared her progress in setting up a photography studio in Bed-Stuy where community members gain the skills to capture their everyday lives.

Sal Muñoz discussed his collaboration with Ranjani Chakraborty on their project Say What?! Street Harassment Intervention Strategies, a community-centered multimedia approach to bystander intervention when witnessing street harassment. He gave a brief overview of the project process and highlighted key takeaways from their intervention strategies workshop.

Chris Ignacio performed a selection of songs generated from his project Co-written, a series of songwriting and performance workshops in New York for young people of color. He was accompanied by Champion Beatboxer Mark Martin.

Theodore Kerr lead a conversation with participants from THE PAST PREPARES US FOR A BETTER FUTURE, a writing workshop created by writer Timothy DuWhite. Kerr and DuWhite are members of What Would an HIV Doula Do?, a collective of artists, activists, chaplains, and doulas who explore the role of community in the ongoing AIDS crisis and how to respond through a care-based approach.

Chinatown Art Brigade, a collective of Asian-American artists and activists, gave a presentation about their efforts to facilitate community-led responses to gentrification and displacement in New York’s Chinatown.

MEET OUR FELLOWS / SYMPOSIUM

Aida Šehović
Walid Johnson
Yvonne Shortt
Noemí Segarra
Hidemi Takagi
Sal Muñoz
Ranjani Chakraborty
Chris Ignacio
Theodore Kerr
The Chinatown Art Brigade (CAB)

The Performance Project answers the call to mentor, encourage, and diversify art makers, leaders, educators and students. University Settlement is a 130 year-old cultural kitchen that is deeply rooted in community, and the arts are represented across the Performance Project’s entire body of work.
The staff of Culture Push were invited to participate in *Citizen Participation: Directives and Diagrams*, curated and organized by Esther Neff and Steven Englander, and produced by ABC No Rio, taking place at Bullet Space. Also participating in the exhibition were Fellowship alumni Chinatown Art Brigade and Barrie Cline/Worker’s Art Coalition.

The exhibition used Sherry Arnstein’s 1969 *A Ladder of Citizen Participation* as an instigation, and eight artists/groups working in participatory, civic, and collective ways were invited to realize works re-imagining the ladder’s depiction of citizenship, direct democracy, and/or power distribution. Each artist/group used one "rung" of the ladder as inspiration.
The staff (Pelenakeke Brown, Clarinda Mac Low, Madelyn Ringgold-Brown, Linnea Rysheke, and Natalia Vilela), using the rung of "citizen control," created a series of prompts called *How to Be in a Place*.

“We invite you to go on a self-guided, self-designed walk, using different forms of attention to heighten your sensory, bodily, and mental experience. At Culture Push, we experiment with modes of relationality that draw on artistic, activist, and academic practices. Many of our initiatives, from the Fellowship for Utopian Practice to our projects with other organizations, center on the development of conceptual and artistic tools that expand how we navigate the world as relational beings.”

The installation contained ephemera from the public walks, where participants were encouraged to document their experiences through mark-making.

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**HOW TO BE IN A PLACE?**

We invite you to go on a self-guided, self-designed walk, using different forms of attention to heighten your sensory, bodily, and mental experience. At Culture Push, we experiment with modes of relationality that draw on artistic, activist, and academic practices. Many of our initiatives, from the Fellowship for Utopian Practice, to our projects with other organizations, center on the development of conceptual and artistic tools that expand how we navigate the world as relational beings.

**PHASE ONE**

1. Choose one or more of the following lenses for your walk:
   - **The Non-Human:** Pay attention to the non-human animals or plants that you come into contact with. Consider who they are and their relationship (or lack of) to you. Stretch your imagination beyond the human to the life-worlds of the non-humans who share our urban environment.
   - **Architecture:** What does the architecture reveal about how we construct our social world? What does it indicate about the past and future of our social relations and political and power structures?
   - **Deep Time:** Consider the layers of time that have shaped the streets you are walking, and how those layers can or cannot be seen today. Think of the geological layers, the cultural intersections (from native people to waves of European colonizing and immigration, and beyond), and the ecological selves that have existed in this space.
   - **Exploring Va:** Va is in-between space, it is relational space awareness, it is the seen and unseen relationships. As you walk, think about the relationships occurring between you and what you encounter. What does this inform your decision making? What is the context of the space around you and how does this change how you relate?
   - **Sensory Awareness:** Use senses besides sight to navigate your surroundings. Allow your senses of smell, sound, and/or touch (including your proprioceptive sense of place in space, and the feeling of your feet on the ground) to guide your noticing and the direction of your wandering.

2. Take several sheets of tracing paper to document your walk, with words, symbols or drawings. Another person will use these "directions" to follow the path you took.

3. Go on a 15 minute walk on your own, within a ¼ mile radius, that ends back at Bullit Space.

4. Bring back one artifact from your walk (ex: crayon rubbing of a texture, found object, etc.)
The Summit of Practical Utopians was the culmination of an ongoing collaboration between Culture Push and the Helsinki/Berlin-based collective YKON. The collaboration began in 2016 with the Dinner Games, and continued in 2017 with 7 Exercises for Practical Utopia.
The Summit for Practical Utopians was designed to integrate utopian thinking into our everyday lives. It was a three-part initiative beginning with a three-day retreat in Massachusetts where 13 creative practitioners, including artists, activists, and curators, came together to develop an app with a series of exercises. The 13 planners (made up of current and alumni Fellowship artists and other practitioners affiliated with Culture Push and YKON) created the Practical Utopia app. The app, which launched in the following week, allowed participants to choose new pathways through their day to day lives, and shift their thinking and practice in community with others. The Summit aimed to shine a light on individual decision-making, looking directly at social interactions & social norms within an urban context.

The Summit was made possible by support from the Finnish government. Accommodations at Red Gables in Massachusetts generously donated by Ghana Think Tank.

YKON

YKON is a non-profit arts organization that was founded as an artistic initiative and platform for exploring utopian fantasies and the political imaginary in relation to concrete sociopolitical structures and concerns. Emerging from and working in the field of contemporary art, YKON merges the language and approaches of a number of disciplines, such as game design, scenario development, experimental education, dynamic facilitation, social architecture, and alternative economies.
PUSH/PULL is an online journal sponsored by Culture Push, a platform for ideas in development. PUSH/PULL is a virtual venue that allows us to present a variety of perspectives on civic engagement, social practice, and other issues that need attention. PUSH/PULL helps to situate the Fellows and the work they do within a critical discourse, and acts as a forum for an ongoing dialogue between the Fellows, the Culture Push community, and the world at large. It is also becoming a venue for work from our Associated Artists.

ISSUE 6/ SPRING 2018

Issue Six: Chinatown/Connex, a bilingual Chinese/English issue guest edited by Spring 2017 fellows Tomie Arai and ManSee Kong from Chinatown Art Brigade, brings together writing from collaborators and allies of the collective who share a deep concern for the future of Chinatowns locally and globally as the tides of hyper-development threaten to displace residents who have called these places home for decades. Contributions from Huiying Chan, Diane Wong and Mei Lum, Alina Shen, Emily Mock, the Gòngmíng Collective for Language Justice, and the Chinatown Art Brigade.
CHINATOWN/CONNEX

QUOTES FROM THE EDITOR'S STATEMENT

How can we show our love for this community in any other way than protesting, door knocking, and fighting for our families, our neighborhoods, friends, and ourselves?

—Alina Shen

Since its founding in 2015 The Chinatown Art Brigade has facilitated a series of community led responses to gentrification and displacement, created in close partnership with the Chinatown Tenants Union, a program of CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities. As a cultural collective of Asian American artists, media makers and activists, our creative process is women-led, community driven and guided by the core belief that fighting against racial and economic inequity must be central to our cultural and art making process.

This past year, we have used the process-based Fellowship from Culture Push to focus on reflection and assessment. We have taken the time to ask ourselves what it means to work collectively. We have questioned the role of artists and galleries as gentrifiers complicit in artwashing our neighborhoods. We have explored what it means to promote arts and culture as a way to support community-led and community-centered campaigns for social justice.

At a time when hyper-development and real-estate investments on a global scale threaten to evict and displace the residents who call Chinatown home, we recognize that gentrification and displacement are not just Chinatown issues. Historic neighborhoods across the country and the world are also at risk, from Boyle Heights in Los Angeles to Treme in New Orleans; from Johannesburg to Havana. Today, more than ever, we see that it is urgent to connect our separate struggles and act in solidarity.

These articles return again and again to themes of resiliency—mapping resistance, amplifying the voices of local residents, celebrating creativity and using the power of art and culture to bring artists and communities together to fight for a common cause.

—Tomie Arai and ManSee Kong, Chinatown Art Brigade
Culture Push Associated Artists receive support for mid-process and established projects that are aligned with the mission and experimental vision of Culture Push. Associated Artists are individuals and projects that have established themselves within New York City, but can still benefit from collaboration with and assistance from our organization. Unlike the seedling-stage ideas of our Fellowship for Utopian Practice, our Associated Artists and their projects have already run through their first logistical stages and idea-testing, and are ready to be bolstered through fiscal, institutional, and creative support.
Christina Freeman is an interdisciplinary artist based in New York City. Her work takes on various forms including photography, video, artists’ books, multimedia installation, participatory performance, and curatorial projects. Creating unconventional rituals, she invites the audience to join in disrupting dominant cultural norms. Intervening in systems often taken for granted, she approaches culture as something we actively shape together.

BFAMFAPhD is a collective that employs visual and performing art, policy reports, and teaching tools to advocate for cultural equity in the United States. The work of the collective is to bring people together to analyze and reimagine relationships of power in the arts. BFAMFAPhD members Susan Jahoda and Caroline Woolard are now working on Making and Being, a multi-platform pedagogical project which offers practices of collaboration, contemplation, and social-ecological analysis for visual artists.

Candace Thompson’s project The Collaborative Urban Resilience Banquet (aka The C.U.R.B.) uses the act of urban foraging and the projected "what if" disaster scenarios of climate change to examine critical issues around food and food sovereignty, land access, environmental remediation, multi-species interdependence, and right relationship(s) with the (un)natural world.

Sherese Francis is a southeast Queens-based poet, speculative fiction writer, blogger, workshop facilitator, and literary curator. She has published work in many journals and anthologies and also acts as editor for several journals. Her other projects include her Afrofuturism-inspired brand, Futuristically Ancient; being a core member of the Southeast Queens Artist Alliance (SEQAA); and her southeast Queens based pop up bookshop/mobile library project, J. Expressions.

Katherine "Kat" Cheairs is a filmmaker, educator and activist who utilizes moving image arts as a healing modality. Katherine has designed and taught numerous courses and workshops in media arts for school and community based organizations focused on adult and K-12 populations, which include neurodiverse and on the spectrum individuals; incarcerated youth and adults; new immigrant and English language learners.

Régine Romaine is a dynamic storyteller who uses photographs/film/performance to create acts of social resistance to stoke the collective imagination and keep alive new ways of seeing. She recently completed Brooklyn to Benin: A Vodou Pilgrimage, a mixed-media project and three short films. While in West Africa, she created the WaWaWa Diaspora Centre - to actively heal historic wounds and trauma related to the TransAtlantic Slave Trade through intergenerational arts, education, and exchange programs.
Our ninth benefit honored artist and activist Ed Woodham, Director of Art in Odd Places. Ed has been working tirelessly to create opportunities for artists to make and present work outside of institutional spaces. His work closely aligns with Culture Push’s mission and it was a pleasure to honor Ed and his work and as a longtime friend of CP. We had a “tombola” themed raffle, where 37 current Culture Push Fellows, Fellowship alumni, and Culture Push friends donated their beautiful works. Catering was provided by food creative Nadine Nelson using donated food from local NYC farms and drinks were donated by our longtime supporter Lagunitas! The benefit was hosted by our friends at Abrons Arts Center.
ARTWORKS DONATED BY:

Hidemi Takagi
Clarivel Ruiz
Chris Ignacio
aricococo
Todd Shalom
Sarah Cameron Sunde
Peter Stankiewicz
Nancy Nowacek
Michelle Levy
Laura Miller
Joy Garnett
James Hannaham
Iris Lezak
Pat McCarthy
Roz Crews
Caroline Woolard/Jeff Warren
Adam Simon
Joseph Moore
Esther Neff
Go! Push Pops
New York Times Feminist Reading Group
Lise Brenner
Dwayne McKinney/Sarah Dahnke
Salvador Muñoz
Tomie Arai
Marina Zurkow
Lorie Novak
Laura Miller
Jeff Thompson
Clarinda Mac Low
Chloë Bass
Alicia Grullon
Aaron Landsman
Lorie Novak
Michael DiPietro
Lainie Fefferman
Nicholas O’Brien
In our first-ever Holiday Market, Culture Push partnered with the Domestic Performance Agency to celebrate the holiday season with crafts, gifts, and good cheer created by artists from the Fellowship for Utopian Practice. Fellowship Alums Nancy Nowacek, Chloë Bass, Sal Muñoz, Sarah Dahnke/Dances for Solidarity, aricoco, and Go! PushPops/Katie Cercone created pins, t-shirts, books, zines, greeting cards, talismans, and a slew of other one of a kind items.
2018 Donors
Nitin Mukul
Regine Leys
Patrick Vassel
Carrie Hawks
Dannielle Tegeder
Edward McAdams
Wendy Blum
Elliott Maltby
Eve Mosher
Laura Miller
Shawn Shafner
Kathleen Anderson
Akiko Sasamoto
Will Penrose
Felicity Hogan
Carmelita Naval
Lorie Novak
Andrea Kleine
Linda Austin
Sheila Yu
Laurel Chen
Joseph Moore
Lise Brenner
Dave Ruder
Marina Zurkow
Janet D. Clancy
Chris Lotspeich
Paz Tanjuaquio
Chloe Bass
Monika Wuhrer
Mike Taylor
Amy Leigh Steiner
Thomas O’Keefe
Barrie Cline
Alice Keane
Nora Herting
Matthew Nishi-Broach
Mordecai-Mark Mac Low
Carolyn Hall
Tal Yarden
Elae
Felicity Hogan
Linda Stein
Brian Kane
Bracken Hendricks
Rody Douzoglou
Okwu Okpokwasili
Walis Johnson
Jeffrey Kasper
Lorie Novak
James Hannaham

FY18:
Government: 40.3%
Foundations: 28.7%
Individuals: 17.3%
Corporations: 12.8%
Earned: 1.0%

Foundations
Rubin Foundation
Lezak Family Foundation

Corporate
Scopia Capital

City Government
The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs -- Cultural Development Fund
National Endowment for the Arts
-- Art Works Grant
New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA)

Fiscal Sponsorship
At Culture Push, once you’re a Fellow, you’re a Fellow forever. As part of our effort to create an ongoing dialogue and system of support for all Fellows — currently active and no longer active -- we offer Fiscal Sponsorship to artists even after completion of their Fellowship Term. In 2018 Culture Push raised a total of $5,900 for past and present Fellows through our fiscal sponsorship program. Through Culture Push sponsorship, Alina Shen, part of Chinatown Art Brigade (Fellows 2017) received $5,900 from the Asian Women’s Giving Circle, through the Ms. Foundation, for the project CONTOURS, a series of collaborative mapping events with people from Manhattan’s Chinatown.
### REVENUE

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*Our Fiscal years begin on June 1 and end on May 31 of the following year. FY18 = June 1, 2017 - May 31, 2018.

** Printing, postage, meeting costs, website maintenance, insurance.

† Carry-over of $12,000 from the previous fiscal year was also used to cover expenses.

### EXPENSES

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<th>FY17</th>
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† Carry-over of $12,000 from the previous fiscal year was also used to cover expenses.