

I take my position as Artistic Director of the Beloved Community Project (BCP) very seriously, but I also greet it with joy and honor. My first priority is to be true to myself as an artist and to always have an open mind. As a core board member I am responsible for conceiving, facilitating, and implementing the artistic vector of the events held by the Beloved Community. I understand the practical needs of an artist first hand and am here to support them in finding a studio, sourcing materials, connecting them with other artists and opportunities, or just making sure they are being fed. I will provide leadership, coordinate teams, organize events, and communicate with the other directors and members of the BCP. I want to be an approachable and confident force that allows art to flow through me, not around me. I will manage art pieces for the BCP with reverence for the purpose of auction, display, and inventory. My goal is to shine the spotlight on each and every artist that connects with the BCP to show the way in which they can change the world locally and beyond. For myself, I must maintain a current, open minded, artistic competence through classes, cultural awareness, and critical conversations. I see the BCP not so much as an organization but an organism. I am committed to being vulnerable and transparent like the work and artists I represent as they share the most intimate part of themselves. I believe this is a potent ingredient to the revolution, harnessing our skills, talents, and differences to reach a celebration of diversity. I want to build a forward thinking, positive artistic community that welcomes the cutting edge yet has a reverence for the masters of the

past. If we listen, art will teach us, I am simply an arrow pointing to it.

Art is but one branch of the BCP and I would like to see many different seeds fall from that branch into fertile soil, such as collaboration of artists and organizations, art therapy resources and exploration, workshops for children and adults, art education and introductions, activism and social change, public art programs and installations, large scale works, children's art enrichment, partnership of businesses and communities, increased opportunities for new or young artists--just to name a few of our goals. I will be attending all BCP events and meetings and I want the community to feel as if they can share ideas, criticism, recommendations and testimonies with me at any time. I will be ensuring that every artist is capable of capturing the spirit of the causes we are exploring and that they feel comfortable, intentional, and connected to the ideas. The beautiful thing about art is that it is an agent for equality. You cannot say this is art but this is not, you cannot say this piece is beautiful, this piece is not-it is only your perspective. I will bridge the gap between the artist and the people, and get out of the way of work. If only we treated our brothers and sisters (and all those in-between and around!) perspectives with such value, and our differences as beauty. I will never limit the definition of art for the BCP to a painting in a frame. Art can be cooking, dance, sculpture, assemblage, painted works, performance, anything that comes from the heart and leaves us with a physical wake of its passion. Thank you for allowing me

the opportunity to serve my community and my world through art.

To contact me you can email burkeanna78@gmail.com, call or text [937-477-7039](tel:937-477-7039), or find me on Facebook as "Rusty Ace". If you know of original works of art or artists that you believe would be essential to the BCP, please feel free to submit them or share my contact information. My greatest appreciation to Rev. Aaron Saari for leading me to this position.