On May 31, AAW was thrilled to gather in person at the Japanese American National Museum with our 16 AAW Artists in Los Angeles County and their organizational partners for a celebration of their work halfway through the term.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MIDPOINT GATHERING

AAW LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARTISTS: MARCUS KUILAND-NAZARIO, MARU GARCIA, MYISHA ARELLANO, MICHELLE GLASS, TAYLOR GRIFFITH, NANCY WOO, DREW ARRIOLA-SANDS, JESSA CALDERON, AUDREY CHAN, JASON CHU, RENE FISHER-MIMS, KAYLA SHELTON, REGINALD B. MCKINLEY II, VOJISLAV RADOVANOVIC, KARINA CEJA AND ERICK INIGUEZ

The implementation of Artists At Work in Los Angeles County is made possible by the generous support of The Mellon Foundation who provided a $3M grant to expand AAW nationally, launching programs in Los Angeles County (2021), the Mississippi Delta region (2022), and the Borderlands region (2023).
**MARCUS KUILAND-NAZARIO**  
18TH STREET ARTS CENTER | SANTA MONICA CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Sea Change Lab is a mobile, multi-site, interdisciplinary, contemporary art program developed by artist and curator Marcus Kuiland-Nazario in association with the 18th Street Arts Center. Sea Change Lab explores the senses and how they have been affected by Covid-19. Sea Change Lab is housed in a 25’ by 8’ foot trailer. Sea Change Lab operates as a lab for performance artists to explore and further develop works conceived during the pandemic - offering time, space, and an honorarium. The Sea Change Lab also presents interdisciplinary works to the public outdoors in collaboration with community partners and the communities where it finds itself parked.

**MARU GARCÍA**  
18TH STREET ARTS CENTER | SUSTAINABLE WORKS

Maru is focusing on a one-year research of practices called ‘Radical propagations/propagaciones radicales’, to create spaces of healing, resilience, and regeneration in the community of the City of Santa Monica. Her work involves the curation of an exhibition under the same name, where invited artists explore the application of regenerative practices including composting, cultivation, community gardens, and interspecies relationships.

The exhibition is on view at 18th Street Arts Center until July 30th 2022. In partnership with 18th Street Arts Center, Maru is working with Sustainable Works, an organization based in Santa Monica that fosters healthy and more equitable communities to heal our natural environment through interactive events, educational programs, and green business initiatives, to create additional activations and share information within the community.

**MYISHA ARELLANO & MICHELLE GLASS**  
ARMORY CENTER FOR THE ARTS | NAACP PASADENA BRANCH #1054 | THE PASADENA COMMUNITY JOB CENTER

Myisha Arellano and Michelle Glass are leading a series of community engagement workshops in community spaces throughout Northwest Pasadena and at community events hosted by the Armory Center for the Arts, NAACP, and the Pasadena Community Job Center. Workshop participants at each site will be guided in creating their personal mixed media ‘story’ panel by using images, words and symbols. Individual stories will come together to create a shared narrative through Interwoven Stories, a quilted mural, that will serve as a monument to honor the histories of diverse communities within Pasadena. By telling our stories in our own voice we are documenting our histories to build connections to our ancestors & each other and the land we inhabit.
Drew Arriola-Sands, in partnership with Chicxs Rockers and Latino Equality Alliance, collaborated on two community events that centered queer and gender expansive youth of color in East and South East parts of Los Angeles. The first event was something called “Spring Into Health Fair” which offered free resources, clothing swap, food, live art, drag performances and a karaoke session hosted by Drew. On May 28th we collaborated on our second event which was a spaced themed Prom for queer and gender expansive youth and allies ages 15-20. The proms theme, music and look where chosen by our own youth committee that worked along side Drew and the social impact partners. Over the next 6 months we hope to continue making these spaces accessible to our youth and providing more musical opportunities.

Jessa Calderon, in partnership with Chicxs Rockers and Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous People, will be working with the community to bring awareness to environmental justice and healing. Jessa will teach a series of songwriting workshops focusing on crafting lyrics that creatively express the personal and community effects of larger ecological disasters. The workshops will culminate in an event to celebrate and perform these songs with all of the participants.

Taylor Griffith is working with AltaSea to bring community engagement, focus and care to ecological health and more sustainable futures. Taylor leads a series of panels called Intertidal Encounters that bring together artists and scientists whose work focuses on the ocean, with an emphasis on southern California’s coastline. He is also hosting a series of beach clean-ups where participants can create artistic works from their findings and learn about the health of their natural surroundings.

Nancy Woo, along with continuing her personal writing practice, is engaging the community in a variety of events with a focus on creative writing. With her partners at SBCC, Nancy leads weekly youth workshops and participates in other community events as they arise. Also with SBCC, Nancy has designed a program called Poems & Produce, which distributes poems in free weekly produce bags from a community garden. With her partners at Angels Gate Cultural Center, she led a series of three virtual workshops called Midweek Feast that combined cooking and poetry with a focus on nourishing the mind, body and soul.
RENE FISHER-MIMS
LA COMMONS | WELLNEST LA

Rene Fisher-Mims, in partnership with Wellnest and LA Commons, will host a series of music- and discussion-based workshops, centered around individual and community healing. Using her knowledge of West African drum playing, she will guide the workshops so the participants can fully engage and experience healing through music.

AUDREY CHAN & JASON CHU
NATIONAL CENTER FOR THE PRESERVATION OF DEMOCRACY AT THE JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM (NCPD@JANM) | ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE - LOS ANGELES

In addition to continuing their own creative practices, Audrey Chan and Jason Chu are working with NCPD@JANM and Asian Americans Advancing Justice - LA on a collaborative project drawing from their expertise in image and text. “An American Vocabulary” is a series of flashcards with illustrations and poetry conveying concepts of language, community, and care. The content will be presented in various mediums (physical flashcards / installation / web content) and unveiled at a Fall '22 event that will engage the community of Little Tokyo and Downtown LA civically and creatively.

KAYLA SHELTON
LA COMMONS | COMMUNITY INTELLIGENCE

Kayla Shelton, in partnership with social impact initiative Community Intelligence, is focusing on capturing the generational wisdom of elders in Leimert Park Village. She is currently the process of interviewing elders and recording their stories; which will be used to inspire a series of portraits. She is also working on designing banners that will honor members of the Leimert Park community that have passed on as well as a mask that will be featured in the procession of the annual Festival of Masks. The mask and portraits will be featured in a final exhibition this winter.

REGINALD B. MCKINLEY, II
THE LANCASTER MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY | ART IN RESIDENCE

Reginald B. McKinley, II is currently conducting research on economic inequity in the Antelope Valley region, taking inspiration from W. E. B. Du Bois’s Data Portraits. With this research and data collection, he is working towards the development of a longer term Augmented Reality project.

In addition, in partnership with the City of Lancaster, he will be connecting with the Public Works' Team of Illegal Dump Eliminators (TIDE) Crew starting this June. The TIDE Crew works to clean up debris from illegal dumping and graffiti; Reginald will be embedded with the TIDE Crew, exploring creative ways to share the stories of communities in Lancaster.
VOJISLAV RADOVANOVIĆ
THE LANCASTER MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY | ART IN RESIDENCE

As part of the renovation of the Skytower Park in Lancaster, Vojislav Radovanović designed two murals totaling 300’ inspired by the community and painted with their assistance. In the first public workshop on site, MOAH, AIR and Vojislav gathered people’s ideas, wishes, and themes. Several concepts stood out: Community, Family, Exploration, Joy and Nature. From that input, Vojislav Radovanović conceived two designs and sketched them out on the walls. During a second public workshop, more than 60 participants (mostly neighbors, parents with kids, teenagers, adults, and seniors) collectively painted within the outlines contributing to the project. Now in the final stage, Vojislav is completing the details for an unveiling at the end of the month.

KARINA CEJA
TIA CHUCHA’S CENTRO CULTURAL | PLAZA COMUNITARIA SINALOA

Karina, in partnership with Plaza Comunitaria Sinaloa, will be organizing jewelry and art making workshops tailored to the elders that participate in Plaza Comunitaria Sinaloa’s programs. She hopes to give participants new creative skills with the potential to become part of overall wellness, hobbies, forms of livelihood and fundraising, or new family traditions passed down from older to younger people in hopes of informing future creative generations. Karina will prioritize creating bilingual programming to serve Plaza Comunitaria Sinaloa’s constituency, which is primarily made up of Spanish speakers.

ERICK INIGUEZ
TIA CHUCHA’S CENTRO CULTURAL | PUKÚU CULTURAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

Erick Iniguez is currently running a series of photography workshops for the youth affiliated with his social impact partner Pukúu Cultural Community Services, helping the youth to tell their stories visually. Some of these workshops will be held out in the field, including the Angeles National Forest, and focus on reclaiming spaces and traditional names.

More information on the Los Angeles County program and each of our Artists can be found on our website here. Event photography by Tommy Su @snapitstudio  
AAW project photos and images courtesy of the Artists