



MEDIA ALERT
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Contact: Juan Garcia
Public Information Director
juan.garcia@lacity.org

**City of Los Angeles
Department of Cultural Affairs
announces the Recipients of the
2021/22 City of Los Angeles (COLA) Individual Artist Fellowships**

Los Angeles - The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) is pleased to announce the recipients of the **2021/22 City of Los Angeles (COLA) Individual Artist Fellowships**. These nine Fellows will each produce a series, set, or singular new artwork with a grant of \$10,000. These original works will be premiered and promoted by the City of Los Angeles in the Spring of 2022 as part of the 25th edition of this annual initiative.

“The City of Los Angeles is one of the few municipalities in the world that proudly provides fellowship grants for accomplished avant-garde artists, naming them as treasured residents and boosting their mid-career productivity by sponsoring new fabrications that further their arcs of creativity,” said Joe Smoke, DCA’s Grants Administration Division Director. “As a service to the public, these Fellows will be promoted in a beautiful digital catalog available in June, 2022. A limited edition print run of this publication will also be distributed to City branch libraries, national art schools, and international museums.”

The 2021/22 COLA Individual Artist Fellows in the literary, performing, design, and visual arts are:

Literary and Performing Artists

Najite Agindotan
Suchi Branfman
Shonda Buchanan
Jibz Cameron

Design and Visual Artists

Nancy Baker Cahill
Sharon Louise Barnes
York Chang

Danny Jauregui
Yoshie Sakai

Each of these Fellows has demonstrated an exemplary career-trajectory. Each has contributed more than 15 years of professional public presentations in the LA region. In addition, these artists are highly respected by their peers because of their ongoing creative endeavors and contributions to the community.

The grantees were chosen in several review-rounds by a set of multi-disciplinary peer panelists including a museum curator, three past COLA Fellowship recipients, two local independent curators, a celebrated solo performing artist, and a literary arts organization manager.

COLA is one of the twelve grant-categories offered annually by DCA, and all of the categories honor the synergetic relationship between Los Angeles and its creative entrepreneurs, the spectrum of our collective cultural history, and the city's status as a global center of creative talent.

About the 2021/22 COLA Fellows

Literary and Performing Artists

Najite Agindotan

Najite Agindotan is a master drummer/Afrobeat musician. Mr. Agindotan is a renowned Nigerian-born master drummer, activist, multi-instrumentalist, singer, and composer who founded the Los Angeles-based Afrobeat band Najite & Olokun Prophecy (NOP). Najite's notable contributions to LA Black communities include the founding of the Leimert Park Drum Circle, Leimert Park Art Walk, Leimert Park Day of Ancestors Festival of Masks, Annual Fela Kuti Day, and a score of collaborations with musicians and communities throughout Los Angeles. To see more of his work, visit [Najite Agindotan on Journey to Afrobeat \(Clips\) - YouTube](#).

Suchi Branfman

Suchi Branfman, choreographer, curator, performer, educator, and activist, has worked from the war zones of Managua to Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre and from Kampala's Luzira Prison to NYC's Joyce Theatre. Her work strives to create an embodied terrain grounded in storytelling, dialogue, listening, and action. Branfman is currently amidst a ten-year choreographic residency at the California Rehabilitation Center, a medium security state men's prison in Norco, CA, is Artistic Director of the multi-faceted Dancing Through Prison Walls project, serves on faculty at Scripps College and Cal Poly Pomona, and is a community gardener and prison abolition activist.

Shonda Buchanan

Shonda Buchanan is a poet and memoirist. She has published two books of poetry, a memoir and two Los Angeles anthologies. As a daughter of Mixed Bloods, tri-racial and tri-ethnic African American, American Indian, and European-descendant families who migrated from North Carolina and Virginia in the mid-1700s to 1800s to Southwestern Michigan, and a Los Angeles transplant, her work explores identity, ethnicity, landscape, gender, and loss. Her memoir, Black Indian, won the

Indie New Generation Book Award for Memoir. To learn more about her work, visit www.shondabuchanan.com.

Jibz Cameron

Jibz Cameron is a performing artist, playwright-actor. She has been making work for over 15 years, mainly under an alter-ego Dynasty Handbag, which incorporates absurdist humor, physical comedy, and feminist ideologies. She writes full length theater shows, produces video, and also hosts Weirdo Night, a popular monthly Los Angeles performance and comedy event. To learn more about her work, visit www.dynastyhandbag.com.

Design and Visual Artists

Nancy Baker Cahill

Nancy Baker Cahill is a visual design artist. Her first language is abstract graphite drawing and her process is deeply physical. In immersive digital and analog mediums, her mark-making underscores temporal transitions while isolating simultaneous moments of exertion and stillness. All of her drawings locate the human body as a vulnerable, ephemeral, and resilient territory, briefly located in time and space. She aims to offer an embodied understanding of both the urgency and opportunity of the moment we are in. On paper and in digital space, she provides a portal to an imagined near-future, altered by human intervention. Accessibility, public engagement, and interdisciplinary collaboration are crucial to her practice. To see more of her work, visit www.nancybakercahill.com.

Sharon Louise Barnes

Sharon Louise Barnes is a visual design artist. Her work draws upon current and historic references to the Black experience in which meaning can often be complex and deeply layered. By favoring the use of abstract visual languages without literal figuration, she can open alternative ways of seeing through sensory and intuitive modes of communication that cross cultural boundaries. Exploring the medium of Social Abstraction and the poetics of materiality, she enjoys moving freely between two-dimensional and three-dimensional space, often blurring the lines between painting and sculpture to explore metaphors of fracture, displacement, healing, and rebuilding. To learn more about her work, visit www.sharonlouisebarnes.com.

York Chang

York Chang is a visual design artist. He makes conceptually driven work which, most recently, considers the shifting relationship between images and text, and how collective belief is manipulated by spectacle and fractured narratives in evolving forms of propaganda. He works across disciplines and media, presenting photographs, sculpture, painting, performance, artist books, videos, and plays in his projects. These works are often put into relation with each other in larger, immersive narrative installations. He uses mixed-media strategies, such as appropriation, collage, and decollage, as interventions into information storage systems as well as modes of display and public address. He foregrounds the labor of looking in these works, through searching, sorting, and organizing images, rather than traditional skills or craft. To learn more about his work, visit www.yorkchang.com.

Danny Jauregui

Danny Jauregui is a visual design artist using interdisciplinary media that utilizes archival documents as source materials. Within this, he uses data visualizations, maps, artificial intelligence, GIF animations, and 3D modeling techniques to tell stories about Los Angeles and the city's queer geography.

Yoshie Sakai

Yoshie Sakai is a video, installation, and performance artist. Her past and present work has always created an uneasy environment that embodies her love-hate relationship with consumerism and pop culture and how they simultaneously perpetuate both ecstasy and extreme anxiety in quotidian life. The style of her performative video work and immersive installations reveals this via a blend of childlike wonder and humor with a dark psychological and social undercurrent achieved through low-fi green screen techniques and DIY costumes, props, and sets. She plays with exaggerated melodramatic television tropes in her videos, and the corresponding colorful and vibrant installations are equally over the top. Her work at first glance may appear to be a YouTube parody and in conflict with creating something of impact, but for her the exploration of this fine line is where the most meaning is created. To learn more about her work, visit www.yoshiesakai.com.

About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)

As a leading, progressive arts and cultural agency, DCA empowers Los Angeles's vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists.

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA's residents and visitors, and ensure LA's varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA's mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.

DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grant-making; public art; community arts; performing arts; and strategic marketing, development, design, and digital research. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles.

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