

Mid-America Arts Alliance Catalyze Grantees Cohort 2

Headshot images courtesy of the artists.



Andy Denton
Sculptor and Potter
he/him/his
North Little Rock, AR

FB: Andistani
IG: @andystani

Andy Denton is a metal fabricator, sculptor, and potter in Little Rock. As a sculptor with over 20 years of experience in the arts industry, he has earned various grants and exhibited his work all over the United States and Europe. When he isn't working on large-scale sculptures, you might find him at a farmers markets selling goofy face-pots. He spent two years as Artist-in-residence at the Armory Art Center in West Palm Beach, FL where he taught sculptural welding and exhibited his artwork. He also served as Interlochen Center of Arts Studio Manager for eight summers. He has earned an MFA from East Carolina University and a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He recently completed the Artist INC program through Mid-America Arts Alliance. He enjoys nature hikes, urban bicycle rides, baking bread and learning guitar. Andy grew up near Richmond, Virginia.



Bethannie Newson-Steelman
Muralist, Painter, Puppeteer, Installation Artist, Exhibition Curator, Graphic Designer, Performer
she/her/hers
Hot Springs, AR

<https://www.instagram.com/beansart>
FB: Bethannie Newsom Steelman
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Arkansas-based artist, Bethannie Newsom Steelman, is known for her vibrant murals that reflect human diversity and promote community unity. Her murals are designed to beautify their environments. She is a prolific artist who also creates giant puppets and immersive art installations. As an advocate for creatives, she organizes and participates in non-profit "Punk Rock Pop Up" exhibitions, offering creative workshops, and collaborative projects in unconventional spaces. Her art embodies activism, community outreach, social justice, collaboration, liberation, and play.



CC Mercer Watson

Alchemizer of Cloth, Culture, and Storytelling
she/they/empress/queen
Little Rock, AR

<http://www.crystalcmercercer.com>

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CC Mercer Watson is a magnetic gem from The Natural State. She has a kaleidoscope of talent that includes being a Textile Artist, Actor, Activist, Poet, Playwright, Published Author, Found(her) of A BLACK SPACE, Lead Designer of Mercer Textile Mercantile, those passions being a conduit for uplifting voices of color and making marginalized populations visible. She holds a BA in Theatre Arts and Dance from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and is a graduate of the Clinton School of Public Service. In every thread of her being, she is weaving a tapestry of her ancestors, draped in Afro-futurism.



Christopher Fulmer

Musician, Vocalist, Songwriter and Actor
he/him/his
Cabot, AR

FB: cfulmermusic1

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Christopher Fulmer is a musician, songwriter and actor. He is the singer and guitarist for the rock band Stays In Vegas and is also a solo artist performing solo acoustic, singer-songwriter and americana style music. Christopher is also an actor performing in film, television, commercials and theater productions.



Cliff Prowse

Music Arranger and Producer

he/him/his

Little Rock, AR

www.cliffandsusan.live

FB: CliffProwse

IG: @CliffProwse

Cliff Prowse: Multi-Instrumentalist, Arranger, and Producer Hailing from Arkansas, Cliff Prowse's journey as a musician has been diverse and impactful. A multi-instrumentalist skilled in the fiddle, guitar, and other instruments, he has won numerous fiddle competitions and produced over 30 artists. His talent extends to songwriting, where he blends country, bluegrass, rock, and pop. Cliff's musical landscape changed significantly after partnering with Susan Erwin Prowse, forming the acclaimed duo Cliff & Susan. Together, they have toured in over seven countries, playing more than 200 shows annually and producing chart-topping music. His nomination for Arkansas CMA Fiddler of the Year 2018 highlights his prowess in the genre. Currently, Cliff's focus includes writing, arranging, and producing, as well as session work and global performances. His contribution to the music industry, especially in country music, resonates through his unique style and dedicated approach.



Doug Burnett

Americana Singer/Songwriter

he/him/his

Donaldson, AR

www.poseyhillmusic.com

FB: Posey Hill

IG: @poseyhillband

An Arkansas born and raised musician, Doug began playing guitar and writing songs while in his teens. Performing solo and with multiple bands well into early adulthood, when he began performing with his daughters in their current band, Posey Hill, which has enjoyed regional success for over 20 years.



Ebony Blevins

Fine Art Photojournalist
she/her/hers
Little Rock, AR

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Ebony L. Blevins has taken her childhood love of pictures and turned it into her lifetime career. Since the age of five, she was determined to become an artist and at age eight, photography became her main medium of choice, thanks to her beginnings with the 4-H Clubs of America. She went on to continue her photography curiosity through high school yearbook staff, and in college, she earned her bachelor's degree in photojournalism. She currently is still freelancing for local publications, and last year had photos published in the *New York Times* for a couple of articles. Her work has been focusing more on fine art photography with her photojournalistic style. In December of 2023 her commissioned work was included in the newly-renovated permanent exhibition at the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center.



Faye Hedera

Portrait Artist and Composer
she/her/hers
Conway, AR

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Faye Hedera is a visual artist living in central Arkansas. She paints portraits with a primary focus on creating a visual connection to the exploration of female resilience, power, and intuition. Vibrant color and intimate perspective draw the viewer in, allowing them to experience an interior world that is constantly evolving. She is the acting president of the Central Arkansas Collective, is receiving training to become a disability advocate, and is currently working to produce a documentary film centered on raising awareness of Functional Neurological Disorder.



Glenda McCune

Teaching Artist and Visual Artist

she/her/hers

Bismarck, AR

FB: glendamccune

IG: @gmccunepaintings

I, Glenda L. McCune was born in Hamburg, Arkansas, on May 19, 1950 to the parents of Mr. George Winthrop Lewis and Carrie McLamore Lewis. I discovered my artistic talent in the sixth grade while attending Pine Street Elementary School. While art education was not initially part of the curriculum, during this time, I continued to find various avenues to showcase my artistic ability. I attended A&M at Monticello, but transferred to the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, where I received a BA in art education. I later studied at the University of Arkansas, at Little Rock where I earned a MA in Education. I continued to spread my passion for, Art at Jacksonville High School, where I taught Art Foundations, Painting 1,2,& 3, sculpture and crafts and pottery for 37 years. I have one child, a son named Michael G. McCune.



Jasmine Harris

Poet and Essayist

she/her/hers

Benton, AR

<https://jasminemharris.weebly.com>

IG: @dr_harris

Jasmine Harris is an educational specialist, Arkansas Arts Council teaching artist, published poet, and essayist featured in the Hidden Sussex Anthology, Prometheus Dreaming, Syndrome Magazine, and several others. She most recently served as the 2023 Arts and Science Center of Southeast Arkansas Arts in Education Artist in Residence. Jasmine focuses her writing on intersectional identity, aspects of community, and popular culture. Harris frequently quotes her inspirations as Maya Angelou, Ntozake Shange, and Tupac Shakur. Stay updated with her work and projects through her website www.jasminemharris.weebly.com or by following her on Instagram @ dr_harris.



Jason Weinheimer

Music producer, songwriter, and musician
he/him/his
Little Rock, AR

fellowshipallsound.com
IG: @fellowshipallsound

Jason Weinheimer is a songwriter, producer and musician based in Little Rock. He writes and releases records under the moniker The Libras, hand-picking collaborators from the hundreds of musicians he's befriended over the years both on the road and in the studio. As a producer, he has attracted some of Americana's most lauded songwriters and performers: John Fullbright, Hayes Carll, Shinyribs, John Moreland, Jesse Aycock, Pony Bradshaw, and Jim Mize, among many others. As a musician, he has toured the US and the world with Shelby Lynne and Allison Moorer, Isaac Alexander, Steve Howell, and Jim Mize.



Jimmy Cunningham

Voiceover artist and a curator of community art
he/him/his
Pine Bluff, AR

<http://jimmysvoice.weebly.com/voice-actor.html>

At two years old, he wasn't talking. His parents thought something might be wrong developmentally. Then one day it happened. He began talking in full sentences . . . and he never stopped. Born at the height of the Civil Rights movement in the Delta town of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, he was surrounded by the winds of change. The slow molasses-paced rhythms of black preachers and the echoes of "amens" became the earliest platforms conveying the power of storytelling and communication. They also helped develop in him a sense of social justice. Community theater swept him into its orbit as a child and before he knew it he was in college acting. Here he discovered his voice and its distinctiveness. Afterward, he began creating voiceover work focused on stories of the blues, the Delta, and African Americans. Later, he commissioned and curated visual works by local artists focused on these themes.



Joshua Asante

Multidisciplinary artist

he/him/his

Little Rock, AR

<https://linktr.ee/joshuaasante>

IG: @joshua_asante

Joshua Asante is a multi-disciplinary artist who explores themes of identity and possibility from an Afrofuturist perspective. His often ethereal visual work incorporates elements of photography, graphic design, painting, & sound. As a musician and composer, Asante describes his sound "astral soul", a blend of electronic and soul music that fuses many stylistic influences. He released two singles in 2021, a collection of eighteen field recorded songs in 2022 called *I Don't Act Like I Used To*, and released his debut full length album, *All The Names Of God At Once*, earlier this year. Asante is currently the keyboardist for the Shreveport based band Seratones. His photographs and designs have found homes in both private and museum collections as well as arts and news outlets including *The International Review Of African American Art*, *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *ProPublica*, *Objectiv*, *MSNBC*, *Oxford American*, *The Arkansas Times*, and others.



Kimberly O'Bannon

Swamp Rock Singer-Songwriter, Musician, Videographer, and Content Creator

she/her/hers

Hot Springs, AR

www.hillestadtheband.com

FB: hillestadtheband

IG: @shillestadtheband

Kimberly Hillestad (she/her/hers) is the bassist, keyboardist, lead vocalist, content creator, and an award-winning songwriter for Hillestad, L.L.C. Notably, her song "Best Views" won the Henry Glover Songwriting Competition in 2022. She is known for her unique, Janis Joplin, raspy vocals paired with her delta lyrics of back home in Louisiana. Currently, Kimberly also does graphic designing, photography of the band and shows, videography, and all content creation for social media and their website. She will be directing and producing their upcoming music videos to be released this year with the album *Everything That Is Us*.



Korto Momolu-Briggs

Fashion designer and 3d art creative

she/her/hers

North Little Rock, AR

www.kortomomolu.com

FB: KortoMomolu

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Inspired by her African roots, Liberian-born fashion designer and stylist Korto Momolu (pronounced Cut - Toe - Mo - Mo - Lu) is stamping her global brand with fashion-forward women's wear. Korto launched her custom line while working as an independent fashion designer in 2006. Advancing her field experience, she auditioned for and earned a spot on the 5th season of Bravo TV's hit show, *Project Runway*. Throughout the season, Korto's primary signature use of color and diversity in style earned her first runner up. The Korto Momolu brand has expanded to include creating an accessory line for Dillards Incorporated department stores; producing an eco-friendly jewelry line for the Smithsonian museum stores; designing the uniforms for the Walton Family Museum (Crystal Bridges); serving as the Cheerios ambassador for the Shoprite Partners in Caring "Knock Out Hunger" campaign; and contributing her time and talents to countless charitable and philanthropic endeavors.



Kourtlynn Pinkins

Visual Arts, Filmmaking, Acting, Theatre, Technical Theatre & Rug Making

she/her/hers

Pine Bluff, AR

FB: Kourtlynn Brejai

IG: @kbrejai

Kourtlynn Pinkins, a Pine Bluff, Arkansas native, is a Broadway World-nominated director and actress, a creative filmmaker, and dynamic rug maker. Armed with a Film bachelor degree from Full Sail University and technical theatre training from the Artx3 campus in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Kourtlynn seamlessly navigates both the limelight and behind-the-scenes realms of theater and film. Recognized for her portrayal of Shelby in *Steel Magnolias* and directing *Charlotte's Web*, Kourtlynn passionately serves as a young entrepreneur who is dedicated to inspiring, educating, and entertaining through the visual arts. Her influential brand, Before You (B4U), a media marketing powerhouse, empowers young artists to 'BELieve in YOURself' and grow authentically in their chosen mediums, disciplines & styles. Kourtlynn Pinkins' artistic journey resonates as a testament to the rich creative spirit thriving in the heart of Arkansas.



Shunn Berry

Film and Performing Arts (Theatre)

he/him/his

Little Rock, AR

IG: @Officialshunn_b & @Shunnbfilms

Terrance "Shunn" Berry (he/him/his) is a writer, director, cinematographer, photographer, and actor in both film and theatre. He is the co-founder of the annual "REEL Black" film showcase that provides a safe place for creatives of color to showcase their work in central Arkansas. Terrance is also the founder of B. Squad Media Group, a collective group of individuals in all aspects of media and film that provide community services. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas Little Rock. Terrance has a bachelor's degree in Mass Communications with a minor in Theatre Arts. Terrance started his film company Shunn B. Films in 2019. Since then he has filmed and produced several short films, web series, and music videos. Several of his projects have led him to collect several awards in various film festivals, a Micheaux award recipient and being nominated best Filmmaker for *URBANE* magazine in 2023.



Simeon Norfleet Jr.

Documentary Photographer & Filmmaker

he/him/his

Little Rock, AR

IG: @simmy.sosa and @simmy.sport

Simeon Norfleet Jr. is a documentary style photographer and filmmaker. Born and raised by two artists in Chicago, Illinois, Simeon has applied their influences to his work in his second home of Arkansas as a creative entrepreneur for five years. He has built a reputation in his community for being a do-it-all storyteller, operating at the intersection of corporate america, sports & entertainment, social commentary, and the inner mechanisms of the underworld. His work is a striking depiction of the Black American experience for better or for worse.



Steve Spencer

Painter and Three Dimensional Painter / Sculptor

he/him/his

Little Rock, AR

<http://spinadelic.com>

FB: SteveSpencersPaintings

IG: @spinadelic

Steve Spencer didn't get serious about creating art until he was well past forty. Then he dove headfirst into creating exuberant acrylic paintings and three-dimensional assemblages that mash together folk and pop art in a musical fashion. As a child, Steve's art was shown in museums in Little Rock and Memphis, but his school only offered two years of art class. After careers in investment banking and advertising, free-lancing gave Steve pockets of time to explore painting again. His unique outsider style and storytelling bent have drawn regional and national attention, and presented him with a range of expressive avenues.



Susan Erwin Prowse

Singing Piano Entertainer

she/her/hers

Little Rock, AR

www.cliffandsusan.live

FB: Susan Erwin Prowse

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Susan Erwin Prowse (she/her/hers) is an internationally acclaimed singing piano entertainer from Little Rock, AR. With over two decades of a music career, Susan has captivated audiences worldwide with her dynamic piano performances, blending various genres into high-energy, interactive shows. Her artistic journey has been marked by the self-produced, Top 40 charting debut album *Fiddle & Keys*, showcasing her significant influence in the country music scene with her husband and duo partner in the formation of "Cliff & Susan." Susan's career highlights include appearances on national television, such as the Huckabee Show, and opening for legendary acts like ZZ Top. As a co-founder of Big Red Dog Productions, Susan is pivotal in mentoring emerging talents through the Entertainers Academy. Her commitment to music, mentorship, and engaging stage presence has solidified her as a distinguished figure in the international music community.



Tawanna Campbell

Singer, Voice Teacher and Stage Actor

she/her/hers

Little Rock, AR

FB: Tawanna Campbell-Berry

IG: sgrhodeva3

For years Tawanna Campbell has been a beacon, leading the way for Arkansas' burgeoning soul musical scene. An all-encompassing performer, Tawanna possesses a heavenly sound, amazing stage presence and a style all her own. Sparking comparisons to everyone from Patti LaBelle to Alicia Keys to the queen of soul herself, Aretha Franklin, Tawanna does not allow herself or her music to be pigeonholed. Tawanna's unique musical gifts know no bounds. A devoted protegee of musical luminary and veteran Broadway performer the late Lawrence Hamilton, Tawanna never fails to impress. She even provided the musical backdrop for another Arkansas gem, Nancy Steenburgen. A little known fact is that in addition to being an award-winning actress, Steenburgen is also a songwriter and has collaborated with Tawanna on several songs for Universal Records. Tawanna is a talented star representing not just for Arkansas but for music lovers everywhere.



Te'Arra Stewart

Multidisciplinary Visual Artist, Entrepreneur, and Teacher
she/her/hers
North Little Rock, AR

<https://tearrastew.art>

FB: Te'Arra Stewart

IG: @tearrastewart

Te'Arra Stewart, a 25 year old artist, educator, and entrepreneur, is an Arkansas native. She has lived in North Little Rock, Arkansas, for the majority of her life. She grew up in an urban unartistic neighborhood known as Pike. Her love for art was nurtured in her undergraduate years of school at The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff where she obtained her Bachelor of Fine Arts. She diligently learned and labored over art fundamentals for four years to be eligible and competitive enough in skill to pursue fine art professionally. Shortly after graduating she was accepted into The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Te'Arra is now a recent graduate of PAFA with a Master of Fine Arts; currently working as an Assistant Professor at UAPB in the Department of Art and Design. She desires to continue her studio practice and gain exposure as an artist, gallerist, and entrepreneur.



Tig Kashala

Interdisciplinary afro-cultural costume artist
they/he
Little Rock, AR

<https://tigsstudio.wordpress.com>

FB: Tig Kashala

IG: @qupid_xashala

Tig Kashala (they/he) is a theater artist and community organizer with an interest in how cultural arts strengthen communities through imaginative world building. He is a Director at Lucie's Place, a grassroots non-profit for LGBTQ young adults experiencing homelessness. There he created a "transfuturistic" live community fashion show in collaboration with unhoused artists—who co-designed and modeled their own interpreted looks. Tig has costumed 20+ theater productions, focusing on projects that highlight African, African American, and queer stories. Their creative practice uses clothes to examine issues of racial, economic, and gendered disparity; and its utilization in revolutions and the building of identity. As a writer they have contributed to Et Alia Press' "Closet Cases: Queers on What We Wear". Speaking at conferences, corporate offices, and youth Summer camps etc. on

housing justice, Black, and queer issues, they host collective conversations with the goal of advancing justice for marginalized people.



x freelon

Blues Aesthetic Artist and Multimedia Storyteller

they/them/theirs

Little Rock, AR

x freelon is an 8th generation Black Queer southerner—storyteller, from the Mississippi Delta whose work prioritizes the expressions, aesthetics and traditions of black folk from the Delta and Deep South. Describing their work as a Southern Gothic archive informed by afro-spiritualism, Black feminist theosophy, and black surrealism, their work displays the ineligible forms of knowing, and being innate to Black southern life and death, and frames such existence as queer. They work in malleable forms, often utilizing immersive performance, oratory tradition, poetry and poetics, and sensory theatrics as their primary mediums, while also manipulating visual and textile devices. Their work is deeply informed by their ancestors—slaves, who's freedom was always contested—and the afterlives and legacies of Black folks who have been unabashedly pessimistic and unable to be policed. Their work has been recently published by Kashif Incubator as a part of their 2023/24 Screenwriting Fellowship.



Y. Hope Osborn

Creative non-fiction author; editor; ecological, architectural photographer, researcher; web designer; digital and mixed-media artist

she/her/hers

Little Rock, AR

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Y. Hope Osborn publishes ecological experiences that bring pleasure and overcome pain and personal traumas that encourage survivors and expose victimization. She photographs jewels of landscapes and black and white abstract and documentary studies of historic and timeworn architecture alongside texts of history and her story, weaving art with how she/we think, feel, believe, connect, and care. Hope has a writing MA and is published with *Woods Reader*, *Plants and Poetry Journal*, *Whitefish Review*, University of Arkansas at Little Rock Writers Network, *Awakenings*, *Arkansas Living*, and *The Sunlight Press*. Her works are awarded through Monovisions, Neutral Density, Julia Margaret Cameron, Not Real Art grant, and SWOP 2024 and exhibited online and off in Oregon, New York City, California, Arkansas, and Barcelona, Spain. Hope believes being a great author and artist is to be entrusted to express reality and imagination that captivates, inspires, or informs while enriching lives.

