Justice Arts Coalition is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that unites teaching artists, arts advocates, artists who are or have been incarcerated and their allies, harnessing the transformative power of the arts to reimagine justice.

Initially formed in 2008 as the Prison Arts Coalition by longtime teaching artists seeking to create an online resource hub for those working at the intersection of the arts and justice, Justice Arts Coalition (JAC) is now a national network and resource for those creating art in and around the criminal legal system. Our network now consists of over 400 artists impacted by the carceral system, their loved ones, teaching artists, and allies.

www.theJusticeArtsCoalition.org
Letter from the Founding Director

Reflecting on the past year, and looking toward the future of JAC

Dear JAC Community,

When the pandemic hit in the spring of 2020, we knew it would create an even more urgent need to nurture the relationship-building at the heart of JAC’s mission. We listened to the courageous artists in our network, their families and advocates, and what we heard was just how much more vital the arts had become to their wellbeing and sense of connectedness. Thanks to the ingenuity of our interns, the unwavering support of our Board and volunteers, the trust of our ever-expanding network of artists—and your engaged investment—we have been able to help meet this need.

We shared the creative work of hundreds of incarcerated artists, collaborated with dozens of peer organizations, and supported countless community members. We strengthened our online presence, hosting nearly 100 online events, including our first national convening, Art for a New Future, weekly gatherings for teaching artists, Create + Connect workshops, and ArtLinks, each providing new opportunities for connection through creative expression, and for the arts to serve as a bridge between people inside and outside of prison.

We also transitioned away from fiscal sponsorship after becoming an independent 501(c)3 organization, enabling us to exercise full agency over our financial decisions and qualify for more funding opportunities.

We can’t be certain of what the coming year holds, but one thing is for sure: JAC will continue to be resilient and responsive to the needs of our community. And with your ongoing support, we hope to advance our work through opening a headquarters in the DC area, hiring more staff, and realizing our dreams to create an archive for incarcerated artists’ work and a mutual aid fund for incarcerated and recently returned artists. We have much to be proud of and thankful for, and we will never stop letting our hearts lead the way.

With gratitude and love,

Wendy Jason
Justice Arts Coalition Founding Director
Letter from the Board Chair

Insights from the chair of JAC's Board of Directors

Fellow JAC Community Members,

This last year has been filled with such pain and confusion. Although it is never a good time to be incarcerated, this has been some of the most difficult time I have ever done in prison. Thankfully there is Justice Arts Coalition, a bright spot in a landscape filled with monotony, sickness, and institutional abuse. I am proud at how JAC has continued to provide its absolutely necessary programs during this time while also exploring new and exciting opportunities for system impacted artists.

When I found myself locked in my housing unit, watching friends rushed out to military tents erected in our rec yard because they were CoVID negative, watching other friends rushed to the hospital because they were near death, not knowing if I would see any of them again, I had never been so scared or alone in over a decade of incarceration. During this time, JAC's communication with me never faltered and even provided challenging Calls for Art that kept me focused on creating. When our phones and email access were cut off because of our government's fear of the protests taking place across our country, I was reminded that the system sees the expression of my voice as only a threat. In that moment, I had never been so removed from society, unable to communicate, but I knew there was a community in JAC that placed value in my voice, treated it with care, and was waiting for me on the other side. And when my only taste of fresh air was an hour at a time, every few days, my art found fresh air in online exhibits hosted by JAC. Sitting in my room, I knew a part of me was entering into the world and that bit of freedom was enough to keep me going.

This year is looking much the same in our carceral system. Most of us are still under lockdown, still denied the few programs we found solace in, and still uncertain of our futures. JAC is working hard to provide new opportunities for our voices to be heard and connections to be made.
Justice Arts Coalition is there for over 400 artists across our country, including me, and all of that would not be possible without your support. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. JAC is supported by a collection of institutions that provide grants, and, of course, our individual donors. I am so grateful to all our volunteers, interns, and everyone who has participated in an event or plan to do so this year. With your continued support, we look forward to connecting artists inside and out for the purpose of creating connection, community, and art with our pARTner Project, hosting engaging in-person art exhibits that invite people to think about the true nature of incarceration and the people inside and helping to create opportunities for system impacted artists to be seen as artists and people through publication. That and so much more is possible because of you. Your care and dedication is felt by artists who find themselves incarcerated and together, we are making real, substantive changes in our world.

Sincerely,

Brett Tomás Gonzalez
Justice Arts Coalition Board Chair
JAC's Programs

JAC seeks to increase public awareness around the impacts of mass incarceration, affirm the dignity of people who are or have been incarcerated, and engage artists in envisioning new possibilities for collective care through all of our programming.

ArtLinks

ArtLinks events offer community members opportunities to engage with new work created by JAC network artists and share their reflections with the artists through letter writing.

Portfolios and Exhibitions

JAC hosts in-person and online exhibitions and provides technical assistance to organizations seeking to exhibit the work of artists impacted by the carceral system. JAC’s website hosts individual portfolios for many of the artists in our network, as well as curated galleries of works by multiple artists.

pARTner Project

The pARTner Project provides artists on the outside an opportunity to foster connection with artists in prison through letter correspondence and the exchange of creative works. Unlike typical pen pal programs, the pARTner Project’s focus on the arts provides an immediate point of connection—a common ground shared by all who have felt the power of creative expression in shaping who we are, how we see the world around us, and how we see ourselves. For those participating in the pARTner Project, art and creativity become the catalyst for mutual support, encouragement, and inspiration. For more information, reach out to partnerproject@thejusticeartscoalition.org or visit pARTner Project FAQ. To become a pARTner, fill out this registration form.

My gratitude can’t be expressed enough...praise from the outside world is especially encouraging and an impetus to create more art. Inspirational words add high-octane fuel to our motivation.”

— James, artist
Create + Connect
Create + Connect workshops feature artists, restorative and transformative justice practitioners, advocates, and activists. Reaching over 300 attendees since the launch of the series in the summer of 2020, these workshops promote JAC’s mission and demonstrate how the arts can foster dialogue, ignite change, and create connection. One workshop participant described it as a “perfect blend of inspiration, wise content, active participants, creative time, sharing.”

Weekly Network Gatherings
Since the onset of the pandemic, JAC has hosted weekly virtual gatherings to strengthen our community, provide learning opportunities for JAC network members, and build a bridge of understanding between those inside and outside of the carceral system. Weekly gatherings alternate between group dialogue, guest presenters, and activities that deepen our sense of connection with one another and across JAC’s network. These offerings have also served as a source of support for artists in our network who have been incarcerated.

Find out how to join the next network gathering [here](#)!

CorrespondARTS
CorrespondARTS is JAC’s multidisciplinary, distance learning arts program, a response to prison lockdowns in 2020. Through the CorrespondARTS pilot, the first of its kind in MD, participants at Maryland Correctional Institution for Women received packets with themed prompts and activities in creative writing, poetry, theatre, and visual art every two weeks for six months. Now, CorrespondARTS includes participants at three Maryland prisons. Participants can send their responses back to CorrespondARTS teaching artists Lori Pitts, Carien Quiroga, and Leslie Bumstead for feedback and reflections.

“There’s a collective consciousness of kindness here.”
— Bob, pARTner project volunteer, on JAC’s Wednesday night network gatherings
# By the Numbers

How JAC supported artists in 2020-2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>600+</th>
<th>390+</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letters Exchanged</td>
<td>Artworks Received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists and allies inside and outside of the carceral system connecting through JAC</td>
<td>Artwork entrusted to JAC every year by artists inside and outside of prison</td>
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<tr>
<th>230+</th>
<th>110+</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pARTner Project Pairings</td>
<td>Virtual Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uplifting relationships cultivated between inside and outside artists in 2021</td>
<td>Weekly Network Gatherings, Create and Connect Workshops, and more!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FY 2021 Highlights
Overcoming barriers, and celebrating achievements

Art for Justice Grant
Art for Justice Fund, a sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, awarded Justice Arts Coalition a grant of $100,000 toward general operating support in FY21.

501(c)(3) Status
In October 2020 JAC became an independent 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and in January 2021 we began receiving funds directly through donors. Thank you to our former fiscal sponsor, the William James Association, for two years of support and encouragement.

Maryland State Arts Council Grants
Justice Arts Coalition is grateful to have received two grants from the Maryland State Arts Council in 2020: one providing operational support and one supporting the CorrespondArts Program.

In-Person and Virtual Exhibitions
JAC’s first exhibition in 2020, Iron Cages, took place at President Lincoln’s Cottage in DC and featured over 100 works by 25 artists in our network. Though many exhibitions planned for that year had to be canceled due to the onset of the pandemic, JAC was able to hold our first online exhibition in winter/spring 2021, Inside & Out, featuring work by artists inside of and returned from prison, and teaching artists in our network.

"JAC offers my students a place to transcend their confinement and appear in our society, not as an inmate, or offender, but as an artist."
– Peggy Rambach, Teaching Artist

American Dream, Gary Harrell

Visiters at the Iron Cages exhibition

Untitled, Danny Ashton
Art for a New Future National Convening

In the Fall of 2020, when the thought of a national convening was still a budding dream, we knew we wanted to take a forward-looking and unique path. After many months of planning, we welcomed over 400 attendees from across the country and abroad! Over the course of the 3-day online event, participants had the opportunity to learn from and engage with over 85 speakers across 28 sessions. Our team of organizers were guided by 4 core values:

- **Art as Abolition**: the arts as a pathway for communities to imagine and build worlds beyond policing and incarceration; art as a tool for advocacy, nurturing community.
- **Art for All**: increasing access to creative opportunities within carceral institutions; pedagogy; funding; trauma-informed arts education.
- **Solidarity and Community**: building and nourishing connections and resilient relationships across our network.
- **Participatory Learning**: learning through and within community, through embodiment, through creative practice; artistic practice as a tool for healing, growth, connection, and fueling our radical imaginations.

“I feel so lucky to have been a part of this experience and want to thank you for bringing all of these incredible people, creators, and sources of inspiration together! Each panel and workshop was so unique and REAL, it is hard to express how moved I felt by each one.”

— Convening attendee

Read more reflections on the Art for a New Future National Convening on [JAC’s blog](#)

“There are limited resources dedicated to helping inmates and it means a lot knowing there are extraordinary people out there who haven’t cast a blind eye to us behind bars.”

— Corey, artist

Artwork displayed at the Sandy Spring Museum in Fall 2021
Partnerships

Highlights of the many collaborative projects central to JAC’s work

**PEN America's Prison + Justice Writing Program**

In 2021, PEN America’s Prison and Justice Writing Program was awarded a grant through the Art for Justice Fund to develop a partnership with JAC, leveraging important knowledge from each organization in building volunteer communities. JAC has worked closely with PEN to cultivate an active, engaged community of advocates and volunteers, and bring more creative work from behind prison walls into the public. Last summer, PEN partnered with JAC to commission original art from artists in prison within JAC’s network to accompany the awarded literary works in their 2020 Prison Writing Awards anthology.

**MoMA PS1**

In 2020, JAC partnered with MoMA PS1 to facilitate connection to and correspondence with seven artists in prison within JAC’s network whose work was selected to be featured in *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration*. As described on MoMA’s website, “This major exhibition explores the work of artists within US prisons and the centrality of incarceration to contemporary art and culture.” Read more about the exhibition on MoMA’s site.

"Maybe my work can inspire something great in someone else, if that is the case I feel that I am doing my part to make a better community that I will be released back to."

— Conor, artist
Support for Justice Arts Coalition

FY21 Financials

Major Funding Sources

Revenue: $88,866

- Grants 48%
- Individual & Corporate Donations 39%
- Art Sales 6%
- Events 7%

Expenses: $76,232

- Program Operating Costs 74%
- Fundraising & Development Costs 9%
- Administrative Costs 17%

Donate Online at theJusticeArtsCoalition.org
Institutional Supporters

Fiscal Year July '20-June '21

Art for Justice Fund

Cornelia Bessie Memorial Foundation

Fringe Foundation

Maryland State Arts Council

Wenig Family Fund

nil database
### Sustaining Members

JAC’s generous monthly donors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richael Faithful</td>
<td>Peter Merts</td>
<td>Layne Garrett</td>
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<tr>
<td>TJ Mathews</td>
<td>Jack Bowers</td>
<td>Catherine Futter</td>
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<td>Julia Mascioli</td>
<td>Poetic Justice Project</td>
<td>Matt and Jenni Malyon</td>
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<td>Jessie Glover</td>
<td>Youth Arts: Unlocked</td>
<td>Shehara W</td>
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<td>Allison Kirkegaard</td>
<td>Mid-City Community Music</td>
<td>Christopher Dum</td>
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<td>Corina Dalzell</td>
<td>Bechtler Museum of Modern Art</td>
<td>Spencer Reinhard</td>
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<td>Robin McNulty, Project PAINT</td>
<td>Oakdale Community Choir</td>
<td>Micaela Foreman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson Smith</td>
<td>Leslie Bumstead</td>
<td>Charlyn Moss</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louis Postel</td>
<td>Treacy Ziegler</td>
<td>Cherie Hacker</td>
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<td>Elisha Caterisano</td>
<td>Niel Rosen</td>
<td>Kamran Afary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sam Nelson</td>
<td>Penny Earls</td>
<td>Quincy Struss</td>
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<td>Bruce Levitt, Phoenix Players</td>
<td>(no name) Art Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Paul Johnson</td>
<td>Museum for Black Innovation and</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kate Kenney</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cathy Nugent</td>
<td>Paul Critz, Pelican Bay Unlocked</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hannah Viederman</td>
<td>Nathalie Applewhite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leia Squillace</td>
<td>Gregory Sale</td>
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<td>Anthony Peyton Porter</td>
<td>Whitney Wakimoto</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tsukumo Niwa</td>
<td>Judy Dworin Performance Project</td>
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<td>Rosita Hopper</td>
<td>Dede Lillian Fox</td>
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<td>Nancy Yamahiro</td>
<td>Corina Dalzell</td>
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<td>Bridget Berrigan</td>
<td>Ethel Feltham</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Jolliffe</td>
<td>Adele Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Russell</td>
<td>Jason Chung</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Cashion</td>
<td>Jeannie Thompson, Alabama Writers’ Forum</td>
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Become a Sustaining Member at theJusticeArtsCoalition.org
Members of the Board of Directors, FY21

Brett Gonzalez*, Chair
Julia Mascioli*, Vice Chair
Theo Mendez*, Treasurer
Tiffani Bolden
Jaren Crump
Shiloah Coley
Patrick Burns
Alison Dunn*
Savannah Kumar*
Anderson Smith
Becca Pickus
Carla Allison
Katie Owens-Murphy

*Current Board Member

Staff & Volunteer Leadership Team, FY21

Wendy Jason, Founding Director
Jayme Epstein, Volunteer Coordinator and ArtConnects Team Advisor
Cat Quinlan, Communications + Network Engagement
Robin McNulty, Events Team Advisor
Cait Campbell, Web Team Advisor

Advisory Council

Spoon Jackson
John R. Whitman, PhD
Aimee Wissman
Matt Malyon
Laurie Brooks
Marc Mauer
Lateef Mtima
Carole Alden
Chris Wilson
Judy Dworin
Annie Buckley

Learn more about Volunteer Opportunities at JAC
Intern Staff

Highlighting the Intern Staff for Fall 2021

Web + Fundraising Team
Clare Walker
Hunter Isenstein
Ian Trawinski
Quincy Hoff
Rene Spiewak

ArtConnects Team
Iris Lin
Jesse DeMeglio
Jake Pilsbury
Kambria Lockett
Maia Pramuk

Events Team
Janie Ritter
Katherine Frost

"Working with this team has been like an artistic collaboration. Every part fits together to create a beautiful whole."
– Rene, Intern

"I felt like I was seeing and understanding something I’ve usually studied in abstract about the power and impact of art in creating change"
– Jhenna, Intern

Learn more about Internship Opportunities at JAC

[Image of people]
Summer 2020
Joslyn Lapinski, Ally Beljan, Jhenna El-Sawaf, Adam Kluge, Emily Kombe, Mya Steir, Adeena Syed

Fall 2020

Web Team
Isa Berliner
Melissa Wang
Molly Wooliver
Anna McGuire

ArtConnects Team
Joslyn Lapinski
Ava Dennis
My Nguyen

Events Team
Hailey Lanford
Norah Chapman

Spring 2021

Web Team
Isa Berliner
Melissa Wang
Hailey Lanford
Hannah Teich
Absa Fall
Kanyinsola Anifowoshe

ArtConnects Team
Joslyn Lapinski
Ava Dennis
Maia Pramuk
Jenan Cameranesi

Events Team
Katherine Frost
Katie Wilhelm

Summer 2021

Web Team
Hunter Isenstein
Isa Berliner
Melissa Wang
Hannah Teich
Hailey Lanford

ArtConnects Team
Joslyn Lapinski
Ava Dennis
Maia Pramuk
Jenan Cameranesi

Events Team
Katherine Frost
Alden Eckman

"It was, and continues to be interns' determination, ingenuity, and care that keeps JAC’s engine running."
— Wendy Jason, Founding Director
Glossary of Artworks Featured

In Order of Appearance

- **Cover:**
  - *Lost at Sea*, Mark Parsch

- **Page 1:**
  - *My African American Stuck Dream*, Moyo

- **Page 4:**
  - *Desire*, Tomás

- **Page 5:**
  - Letter by Joshua Earls
  - *Strawberries*, Cuong “Mike” Tran

- **Page 6:**
  - *Untitled*, Kenneth Reams
  - *Free Bird*, Shaka
  - *Untitled*, Christopher M. Garza

- **Page 8:**
  - *American Dream*, Gary Harrell
  - *Untitled*, Danny Ashton

- **Page 9:**
  - *The Bridge*, Conor Broderick

- **Page 10:**
  - *Life or Just Living*, William B. Livingston III
  - *Pair of Eastern Bluebirds*, Joshua Earls

- **Pages 12-14:**
  - Untitled pieces by Amber Daniel

- **Page 16:**
  - *Untitled*, Chris Trigg

- **Back Page:**
  - *Not My Brush*, Brian Hindson

View all JAC Network Artist portfolios
Justice Arts Coalition is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that unites teaching artists, arts advocates, artists who are or have been incarcerated and their allies, harnessing the transformative power of the arts to reimagine justice.

www.theJusticeArtsCoalition.org

info@thejusticeartscoalition.org | PO Box 8261, Silver Spring, MD 20907