

JUSTICE ARTS COALITION 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



JUSTICE
ARTS
COALITION



Justice Arts Coalition (JAC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that unites artists, art advocates, and allies working in and around the carceral system, harnessing the transformative and liberatory power of the arts to reimagine justice.



JAC launched in 2008 as an online resource for those working at the intersection of the arts and justice. Today, JAC engages with hundreds of organizations, individual artists, and advocates, and provides resources to more than 500 network artists in carceral settings.



Click [here](#) to explore our program directory.

Letter from the Founding Director



Dear JAC Community,

It's hard to wrap my head around how much we've accomplished in the four years since beginning the process of transforming the Prison Arts Coalition, an online resource created 14 years ago, into Justice Arts Coalition. We've developed numerous programs, platforms, and partnerships that harness the unique ability of art to connect us and ignite our collective imagination to further our vision of justice. When we became a 501(c)(3) just over two years ago, our ambition was to develop the infrastructure to sustain these efforts. Our progress has exceeded our expectations thanks to the dedication of our board, interns, volunteers, and supporters and the contributions of resources, time, and trust from our community members.

In FY22 our correspondence programs continued to grow and thrive, reaching more and more people in prison, many of whom are still experiencing increased isolation and a lack of access to in-person programming as a result of the pandemic. CorrespondARTS, our distance learning program, reached people in multiple facilities in Maryland, and more than 40 artists inside and out were paired through the pARTner project, our arts-centered pen pal program. We returned to organizing exhibitions with enthusiasm and resolve, collaborating with over 60 artists to present their work to diverse audiences, and brought together local arts communities and advocacy efforts at seven exhibitions. We continued to build a community of people nationwide to share

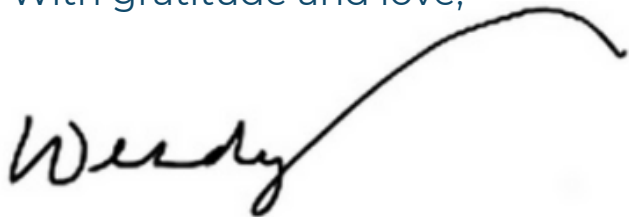
resources, stories, and reflections on justice and the arts through our Create + Connect series and weekly network gatherings. Our Art + Agency working group demonstrated the power of dialogue between people on both sides of the walls, developing a set of guiding principles for ethically sharing and selling work by incarcerated artists.

We received generous grants from the Mellon Foundation, the Art for Justice Fund, and Maryland State Arts Council to ensure the continued growth and longevity of our operations and programs.

We are excited to bring this momentum into the new year as we settle into our first headquarters in Takoma Park, Maryland and hire more full-time staff. These significant steps will enable us to expand our capacity for safely storing, exhibiting, and selling more work by network artists and for finding new ways of supporting and encouraging the artists' ongoing engagement in their chosen crafts. And, we're looking forward to deepening our engagement with our local community through hosting letter-writing, ArtLinks, workshops, and coalition events.

I'm so grateful for the many ways in which our community members have shown up for JAC, for each other, and for the movement to build a more just, equitable, and loving world.

With gratitude and love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. A long, sweeping horizontal line extends from the end of the name across the page.

Wendy Jason

Founding Director

Connecting



“So many people outside of prison have a preconceived idea of who we are in here. Justice Arts Coalition lets people out there know, through my art, that I am much more than what they believe. Through my art I can show them I am a multi-dimensional person and not defined by my offense.”

Dominique, Network Artist

Connecting Across Barriers

JAC believes art serves as connective tissue, weaving its way through prison walls to foster, embolden, and preserve a generative spirit of universal humanity. Our mission compels us to unite imprisoned artists with a larger community of creative allies through interactive correspondence, events, and storytelling. JAC correspondence programs enliven relationships, encourage reciprocal growth, and directly combat the ills of isolation and stigmatization.

Expanding Remote Arts Programs

2022 saw the expansion of [CorrespondARTS](#), Maryland's first multi-disciplinary distance learning arts program, from 21 participants in 2 Maryland facilities to 75 participants within 5 facilities. Over 6 month periods, participants diligently worked through packets with themed prompts and creative activities developed by our team of teaching artists before returning their work for feedback. CorrespondARTS continues to provide invaluable connection and learning opportunities that span the vast chasm of in-person programming lost to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



"I love this program...thank you for the ways that you have helped me to get to know myself and my potential. It allows me to feel free."

Lady Bug
CorrespondARTs Participant

Facilitating pARTnerships

Since the [pARTner Project's](#) launch in 2019, JAC has matched over 260 incarcerated artists with free-world collaborators, and this past year we were able to support 20 new inside-out partnerships. The program cultivates connection with artists on both sides of prison walls through written correspondence and the exchange of creative works, thereby catalyzing mutual support and inspiration. For more information, visit the [pARTner Project](#) on our website.

Reflecting Together With ArtLinks

This year, JAC hosted community members at 9 [ArtLinks](#) events in an effort to showcase the talents of network artists and provide an avenue for them to receive feedback. Over 150 people viewed artists' new work and shared their reflections with the artists through letter writing.



Amplifying



"So much of a person goes into the things they create, and in here you are dealing with a lot; each piece becomes a way to escape, a way to process and overcome the adversities in their lives. I've felt alone and abandoned for so long, and knowing that I have found a way to reach people, and to know that I'm seen and acknowledged by someone is the best thing that has happened to me."

Shaun, Network Artist

Amplifying the Voices of Incarcerated Artists

In a system that suppresses free speech and denies humanity, amplifying the voices of those impacted by incarceration is essential to reclaiming narrative control. Through our online platforms and strategic partnerships with media, cultural, and advocacy organizations, JAC connects incarcerated artists with opportunities to share their work and wisdom with the public.



“It’s gonna do something, whether they’re looking at it from an aesthetic [or] for its beauty. Whether they get upset...it’s gonna do something to you. It’s gonna ignite some type of emotional response. And I think that’s the beauty of art.”

Harry Ellis, Network Artist

Building a Digital Archive

Our website features more than [280 portfolios](#) of visual and written work, curated online [galleries](#), [interviews](#) with artists, a national [program directory](#), [resource library](#), and [blog posts](#) by artists and advocates inside and out.

Launching the Recording Project

Our [Recording Project](#) invites artists and writers to share their stories, sources of inspiration, and creative processes through recorded phone interviews with members of JAC’s community. Through the interviews, artists can contextualize their work in their own voices and contribute to public discourse despite barriers to communication within the carceral system.

JAC's First Inside Newsletter

2022 also saw the production and mailing of our first semi-annual newsletter, [ArtConnects Us](#), to network artists who are incarcerated. Our newsletter ensures artists receive regular updates on JAC news and programs, exhibition and submission opportunities, along with other relevant resources, while creating a cohesive sense of community between network artists and the JAC team.

2021 - Volume 1, Edition 1
**ArtConnects Us: JAC
Network News**

RECIP
JAN 7TH MoMa, Marking Time
JAN 18TH January ArtLinks
JAN 28TH Create+Connect: In
28TH Inside&Out Exhibi
Art for a New Fur
ArtLin

7 exhibitions. 60+ artists. 350+ works.

JAC organized 7 exhibitions with partner organizations this year, introducing the work of more than 60 network artists to diverse new audiences and venues. From adding QR codes to the wall text linking to online portfolios and playing soundtracks curated by artists, to teaming with local musicians and advocacy groups at our receptions, we continue to strengthen the bonds between artists and advocates across prison walls.



Busboys & Poets Brookland



York & Penn Gallery



Baltimore County Arts Guild



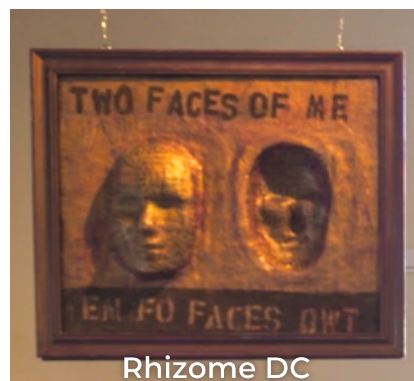
Sandy Spring Museum



LionHeART Gallery



Workhouse Arts Center



Rhizome DC



Workhouse Arts Center

Partnerships

In addition to hosting many of our own vibrant exhibitions, JAC also serves the community by connecting artists to other opportunities. Artists can then advance their works through publication, advocacy, and events.

Curating the Art of Grief

JAC partnered with the [Institute for the Development of Human Arts](#) in an effort to unify the voices of artists in prisons, jails, psychiatric facilities, nursing and group homes around the theme of grief. Artists submitted works about the myriad shapes grief can take and the ways that we can tend to our grief. By collecting and sharing art around this central concept, our hope was to transmute collective grief into new narratives which celebrate the power of mutual support and community action.

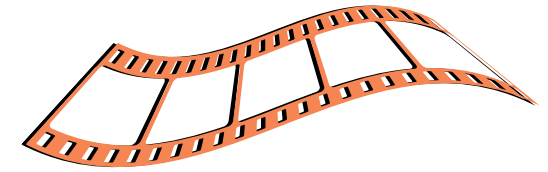


Artists Featured in Marking Time

"[Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration](#)," a landmark traveling exhibition featuring work by 7 JAC network artists, was exhibited at the Abrams-Engel Institute for the Visual Arts in Alabama and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Ohio. The exhibition, organized by Nicole R. Fleetwood, explores the impact of the carceral system through the visual work of system-impacted artists and events with artists, performers, and advocacy groups.

JUSTstories Screening

JAC partnered with the DC-based social impact production company [Unchained Stories](#) to bring their curriculum, JUSTstories, to 8 system-impacted artists, building their capacity for dynamic visual storytelling and content creation. This exciting partnership culminated in a screening and discussion of participants' moving short films.



Advocating to End the Exception

[End the Exception](#) is a public art project that tells the story of the 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution — which abolished slavery except in the case of a crime — from the deeply personal viewpoint of those in prison.

We worked with [Mural Arts Philadelphia](#), [Worth Rises](#), and [California Lawyers for the Arts](#) to bring this vision to life by commissioning incarcerated artists to create visual, written, or recorded accounts detailing their labor. The commissioned works were displayed in a traveling exhibition and teach-in in a powerful call for the complete abolition of slavery across the country.

Convening



"Teaching artists working inside the prison system need all the support they can get. It's a lonely job, and a heartless environment to experience, week after week, year after year... JAC has been helpful in keeping our spirits up, keeping us connected and better-informed."

Julie, Teaching Artist

Convening Artists and Allies to Transform Justice

Transformative justice approaches envision a world where structures of violence are eradicated and responses to harm are non-punitive, repair-focused, and community-led. Making and sharing art is a form of storytelling that can challenge dehumanizing perceptions of people who are incarcerated and ignite collective action against punishment. We bring together those involved in this vital work for resource-sharing, reflection on best practices, and opportunities for mutual support.

Create + Connect

More than **250** people attended our virtual **Create + Connect** workshops facilitated by artists, restorative and transformative justice practitioners, advocates, and activists. These workshops foster dialogue, galvanize change, and create connection through hands-on activities, presentations, discussions of creative and academic works, and reflections on transformative arts efforts.



Art + Agency

JAC brought together a group of system-impacted artists to develop guiding principles intended to combat the exploitation of incarcerated artists by empowering them in the marketing, publication, exhibition, decision-making, and sale of their artwork and writing. This project will result in the distribution of a zine to artists inside and will be available online for those working with artists in confinement.

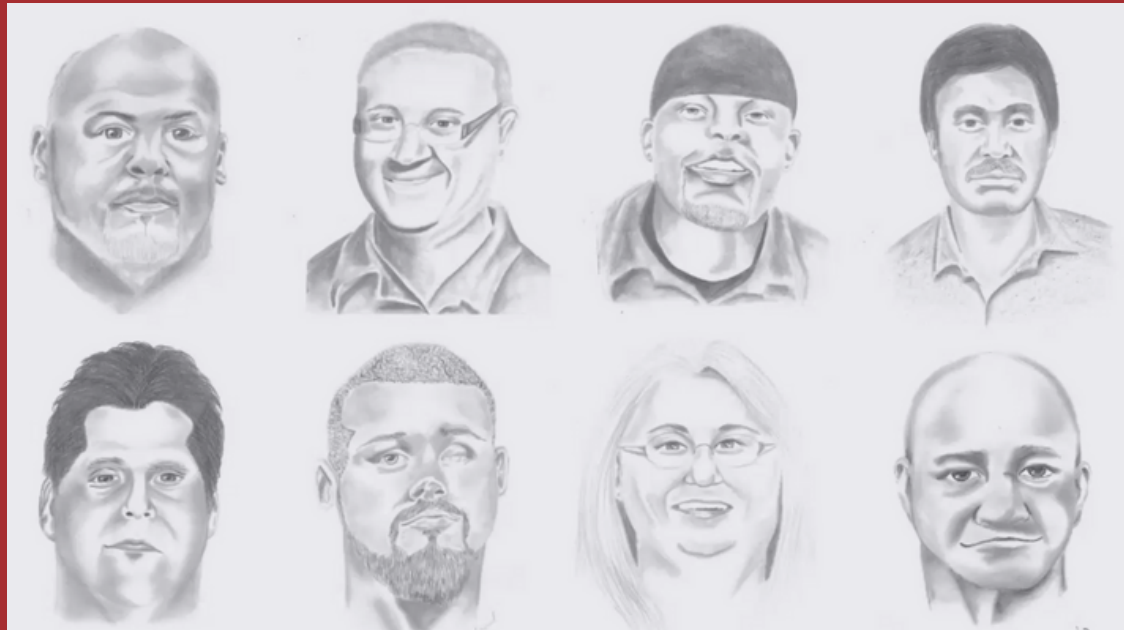
Wednesday Night Gatherings

We continued our weekly virtual community gatherings featuring group dialogue, guest presenters, and activities that deepen our sense of connection with one another and across JAC's network. These gatherings have also been a source of support for artists who have returned home following incarceration.

"It's so critical for these voices to be put forward, and for people to be compensated and elevated and not feel like we are just required to do things for free in order to have any visibility."

Carole Alden
Art + Agency Contributor





Our primary purpose was to create a space where people could express their disenfranchised grief ... I see memorialization as liberatory in that not only does it free up space for people to grieve, but it also is a resistance to the ways that mainstream ideas about people who are in the carceral system are supposed to be talked about."

Susie Bannon
Mourning Our Losses

"You look at this piece, and the only thing that has color is the crane because Moyo uses his art to impact others out here, and that beautiful crane is how he uses art as a medium to connect with us out here, to let us know that we're together as one."

Ryan "Flaco" Rising
Underground Scholars



Letter from the Board Treasurer



Dear JAC Supporters,

It's been remarkable to see the impact that the team has achieved on an extremely limited budget. Last year, our budget was less than \$100,000; in FY22 – our first full year as a 501c3 – we grew our top line to \$376,000 and increased programmatic spending to \$200,000.

We were fortunate to receive multiple grants from the Art for Justice Fund, who has become a key supporter of JAC and many network artists, to launch two new projects and provide operational support. Near the end of the fiscal year, we were awarded a 3-year grant from the Mellon Foundation.

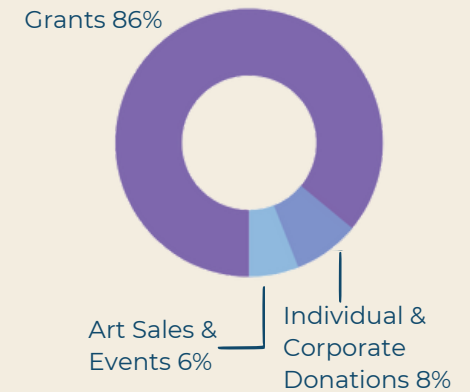
This growth is a tremendous accomplishment and enables us to begin making several key staff hires. Still, our budget does not yet meet the demands of expanding programs. Our current focus is on shoring up infrastructure for our existing programs.

Overall, we were grateful to finish another year in good financial standing and with resources to grow. I know I speak for the entire board when I say we're incredibly proud that JAC has started to receive substantial grants, especially our first multi-year grant. It's a testament to the strength of JAC's staff, volunteers, and network artists. Thanks to all of you who contributed to JAC this year – we feel the impact of every dollar donated, letter written, and hour volunteered.

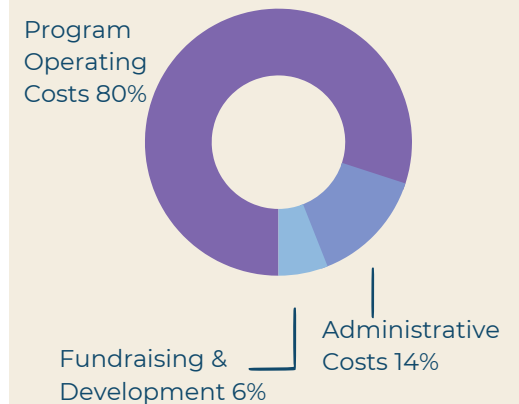
Sincerely,

Theo Mendez
Board Treasurer

Revenue: \$376,335*



Expenses: \$201,104



* Note: A surplus of \$176k is due in part to a grant that was awarded and recognized at the end of FY22, but was not spent until FY23.

Our Supporters

Donations of money, talent, and time from our community members are essential to ensuring sustainability. We are so grateful to our donors and volunteers for your contributions and belief in our work.

Sustaining Members

Sustaining members make recurring contributions, ensuring reliable support to sustain our work. Become a sustaining member [here](#).

Corina Dalzell
Christopher Dum
Diana Friedman
Arlene Thorner

Catherine Futter
Layne Garrett
Jessie Glover

Allison Kirkegaard
Matt Malyon
Julia Mascioli

TJ Mathews
Sandra Miller
Chris Shira
Shehara Wickramarachchi

Major Donors

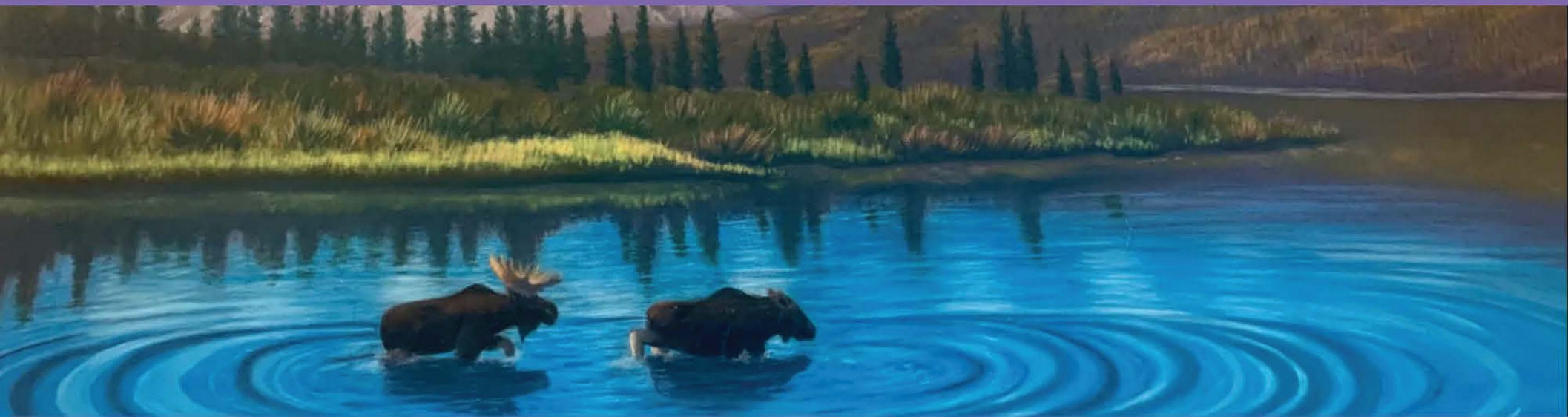
Major donors who make contributions of over \$500 allow us to build a strong foundation to bolster our programs.

Joseph Furey
Linsley Heiser
Meredith Jason

Robert Manning
Stephen Milliken
Craig O'Brien

John Sener
Theodore Sittther
Cindy Sullivan

Seekers Church



Our Supporters continued

Volunteers

Our volunteers enhance our programs and exhibitions by generously sharing their time and skills. Fill our our volunteer form [here](#).

Chloe Anderson	Caitlin Cowan	Aidan Ibrahim	Joslyn Lapinski	Allison Parker	John Sener
Vivian Bauer	Bailey DeSimone	Meredith Jason	Jennifer Martinez	Louis Postel	Sarah Shin
Ann Bracken	Christine Hippeli	Rebecca Kenaga	Deborah Menke	Cat Quinlan	Emma Sutton

Individual Supporters

We feel the collective impact of every contribution in support of our mission. Donate [here](#).

Gail Baker	Katharine Black	Kim Burgess	Emily Daroga	Patrice Ficklin
Vivian Bauer	Anna Blautzik	Kate Campbell Stevenson	Gabriela DeAnda	Melissa Fiori
Erika Berg	Deborah Bloch	Helen Castleman	Robin Driscoll	Dana Fronczak
John Berman	Tiffani & Gregory Bolden	Scott Clugstone	Judy Dworin	Linda Ganister
Maya Bernstein	Jack Bowers	Jason Cohen	Hanzal Egator	Alan Gephart
Barbara Beynon	Ann Bracken	Brett Wilson Cook	Carolyn Ellison	Brett Gonzalez
Beth Bienvenu	Sarah Broderick	Sarah Craven	Jayne Epstein	Todd Gordon
Jerrilyn Black	Lesley Rae Burdick	Brian Daldorph	Ethel Feltham	Busy Graham



Individual Supporters continued

Vanese Grant	Bruce A Levitt	Carolyn Orsi	Angela Sevin
Marc Gunther	Barbara Liesenfeld	Alex Ortiz	Riz Shah
Janice Haas	Corinne Lytle Bonine	Cathy W Parr	Aadya Sharma
Jon Hadfield	Emma Macdonald-Scott	Marie Partin Livingston	Noelle Sharp
Karen Hamer	Alexandra Mallon	Joseph Pedro	Scott Sherman
Bernard E Harcourt	Mandel-Anthony Family	Louis Postel	Jake Smith
Joe Hatcher	Trust	Kristan Pramuk	Amy Spiewak
Ted Helprin	Anne Manuel	Carien Quiroga	Shelley Spivack
Brad Hesselbrock	John Manuel	Laurie Radovsky	Quincy Struss
Christine Hippeli	Sophia Manuel	Rowan Renee	Xinyi Sui
Ashley Hunter	Bill Mascioli	Evi Rezmovic	Emily Summers
Cerise Jacobs	Nora Mascioli	Adam Rice	Heather Tannenbaum
Kimberle Jacobs	Lily Mather	Janie Ritter	Nicole Taylor
Shilpa Jain	Leticia Mauriello	Randy Rosenblum	Meg Thibodeaux
Wendy Jason	Anna McGuire	Michael Rubin	Jean Thompson
Nick Jensen	Julie McNiel	Mia Ruyter	Curt L. Tofteland
Leah Joki	Robin McNulty	Gregory Sale	Holly Vitale
Shawn Jones	Deborah Menke	Melissa Sarris	Matthew Walker
Brian Keefe	Caroll Michels	Mary Margaret Sasso	Christie Anne Walser
Rebecca Kelly	David Michels	Jane Schmidt	Devin Wenig
Parag Khandhar	Amanda Miller	Patrick Schneider	Laura White
Vail Kohnert-Yount	Kenny Moore	Rebecca Schumacher	Steph White
Rick Kowalewski	Ava Morgenstern	Victoria Sciulli	John Whitman
Jessica Landman	Kristen Murphy	Lauren Segal	Claude Williams
Judy Lapinski	Nina Nabizadeh	Boris Senatorov	Elin Zurbrigg
Erin Lawler	Timothy Nicholson		
	Mie Omori		

Our 2022 Interns

JAC Interns are essential team members; they actively contribute to daily operations and have helped launch several initiatives.

Andy Arias

Isa Berliner

Jenan Cameranesi

Ava Dennis

Jesse DiMeglio

Alden Eckman

Katherine Frost

Quincy Hoff

Hunter Isenstein

Hailey Lanford

Joslyn Lapinski

Iris Lin

Kambria Lockett

Sara Medwin

Maia Pramuk

Jake Pilsbury

Janie Ritter

Sarah Shin

Rene Spiewak

Hannah Teich

Ian Trawinski



Organizational Support

JAC is deeply grateful for the support we receive from foundations to create meaningful impact

WENIG FAMILY FUND

THE FRINGE FOUNDATION

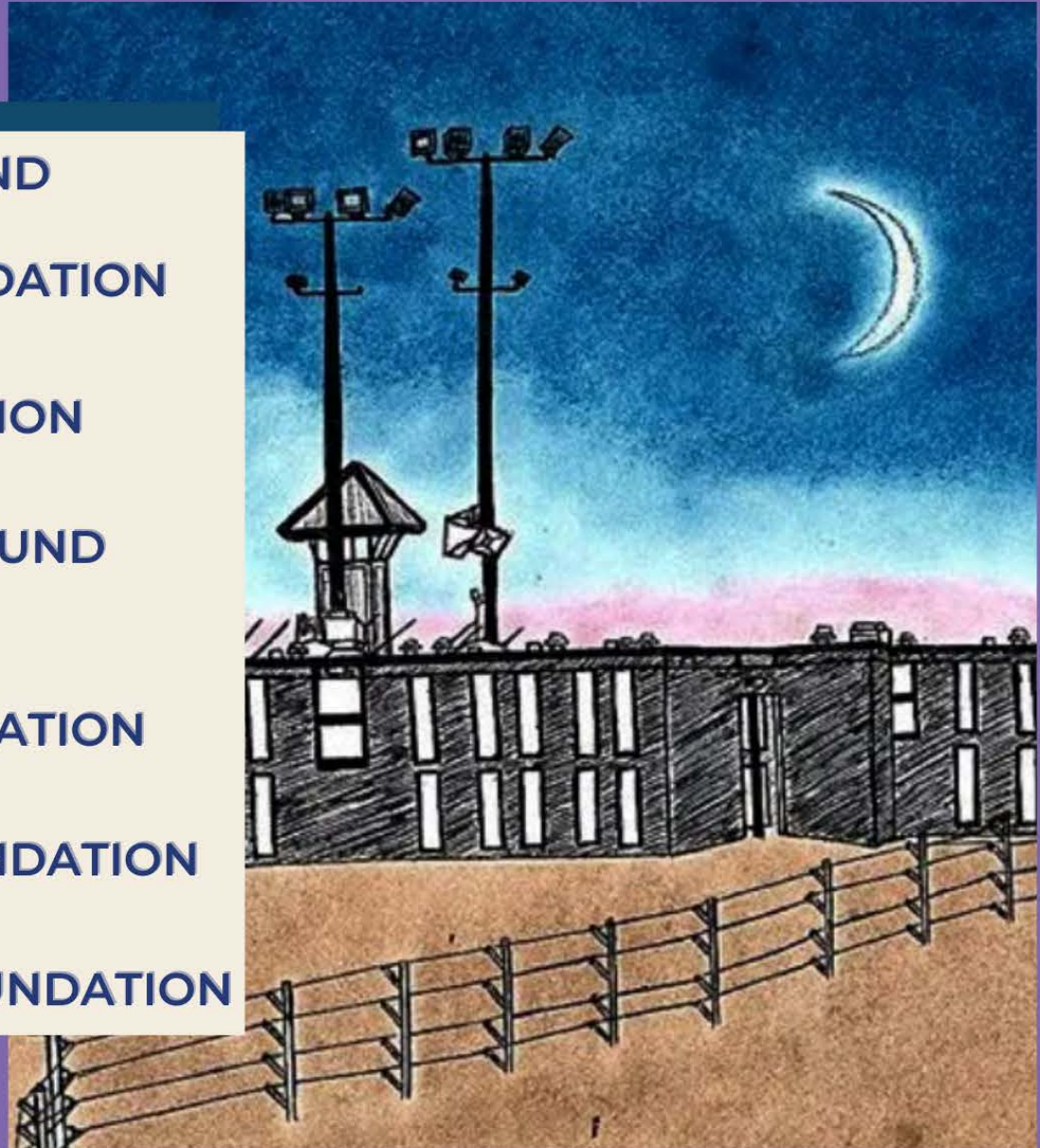
MELLON FOUNDATION

ART FOR JUSTICE FUND

**CORNELIA BESSIE
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION**

THE TAKOMA FOUNDATION

CHRIS WILSON FOUNDATION



Looking Forward

This year we are taking big steps to ensure the sustainability of our operations, continue our growth, and increase our advocacy efforts, starting with a few exciting projects.

1

Settling Into Our New Home

We recently moved into our first-ever headquarters in Takoma Park, Maryland! The space will enable our team to work more collaboratively and root ourselves within our local community through on-site exhibitions, ArtLinks events, and volunteer engagement opportunities.



2

Growing the Team

As JAC's creative network flourishes, we hope to build our team to further foster this growth. Thanks to support from the Mellon Foundation and Art for Justice Fund, we're excited to begin hiring more part-time and full-time staff, beginning with an Operations Director in late 2022. This expansion in personnel will be invaluable as we work towards increasing our programming capacities and deepening our impact.

3

Building a Coalition

Our national coalition building efforts amplify and unite the voices of those working at the intersection of the arts and abolition. We are currently assembling a team of organizers to develop a more formal structure for the coalition to bring more people into the fold. By bringing our national network of activists into a shared virtual space beyond professional or regional siloes, we hope to stimulate much-needed action inspired by the integral role of arts in abolitionist efforts.

Who We Are: JAC's Team



Board of Directors

Johnsenia Brooks
Interim Chair

Victoria Siciliano
Vice Chair

Theo Mendez
Treasurer

Marissa Gutierrez-Vicario
Secretary

Keisha Ann Lopes

Brett Gonzalez

Julia Mascioli
Former Vice Chair

Staff

Wendy Jason
Founding Director

Erica Gaines
Operations Director

Clare Walker
Program Assistant

Volunteers

Robin McNulty
Fundraising &
Communications Advisor

Jayne Epstein
Volunteer Coordinator &
Art Connects Advisor

Marilana Rufo
Communications Advisor

Melissa Wang
Inbox Volunteer

Interns

Isa Berliner
Norynne Caleja
Courtney Daub

Tessa Delgo
Jesse DiMeglio
Alden Eckman

Liz Fieschko
Liv Galbraith
Olivia Hochstadt

Lucy McAuliffe
Sara Medwin
Janie Ritter

Artist Credits



pg 1



Untitled by Jesse Kruze



pg 2



Multiple Personalities by JEFF-FREE



pg 6



Desert Bloom by Gary Farlow



pg 8



Untitled by Spoon Jackson



pg 9



Applejack by Harry Ellis



pg 11



Grief #1 by Brian Hindson



pg 12



Untitled by Lionel Lewis Rogers



pg 13, center



Public Property by Aimee Wissman



pg 13, right



Chameleon Hogle Zoo 2018 by Carole Alden



pg 14, left



Various Portraits by Elisabeth "EJ" Joyner



pg 14, right



My African American Stuck Dream by Moyo



pg 16



Untitled by Chris Trigg



pg 17



Untitled by Billy Van Court



pg 20



Tehachapi Prison by Lawrence Smith



pg 22



To Be Free Again by Rick Spooner



pg 24



Shipping on the Long Island Sound by Jon Jay Arnold



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