

### **Ann “Sole Sister” Johnson**

Ann “Sole Sister” Johnson is an interdisciplinary artist with a focus on unconventional printmaking methods as she prints on feathers, leaves and raw cotton to produce “work that breathes conversation” and “question humanity.” Johnson occupies that threshold between ancestral legacies and historical futures. Ann is a graduate of Prairie View A&M University where she now teaches.

### **Aris Kian**

Aris Kian is currently the Houston Poet Laureate 2023-2025 and ranked #2 in the 2023 Womxn of the World Poetry Slam. Previously an Inprint C. Glenn Cambor Fellow, she received her MFA from the University of Houston. She is a Houston enthusiast and student of abolition whose poems are published with Write About Now, West Branch, Obsidian Lit, The West Review and elsewhere.

### **Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud**

Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud creates art about the environment in relation to the African diaspora and Gulf Coast, as well as broader themes on memory, geography, and materiality. Her creative practice is a form of stewardship; and her relationship to land, water, the environment, and to community is an act of care. She also leads water justice advocacy at Bayou City Waterkeeper where she collaboratively supports community efforts on water quality, wetland protection, and flood resiliency.

### **Benito Vasquez**

Benito Vasquez is a local producer, director, and actor in Houston. He holds a BS in Applied Mathematics and an MFA in Performance and Pedagogy. Benito is the Founding Artistic Director of TEATRX, a Latinx theatre company established to advance Latinx performance arts to be a vital and prominent part of the artistic identity of Houston. Benito strives to create and present multiethnic, multicultural, and multigenerational stories in English and Spanish that better reflect Houston’s majority-minority population.

### **Brian Ellison**

Brian Ellison is a conceptual artist who believes art is a universal language that can be a catalyst for healing. He pursues the origins of dimensionless expression and emotional inaccessibility, exploring how these have led to cultural misconceptions. His practice includes performance that magnifies the subtleties of the everyday experience with a focus on gentrification, Black love and comradery, the exhaustion of black bodies, and the persistent courage of Black women and men.

### **Daniel Anguilu**

Daniel Anguilu started painting graffiti at an early age. Mostly using freight trains and walls as his canvases, his art is increasingly visible around Houston and highly concentrated in the East End. Anguilu’s style is deeply inspired by his Mexican heritage and mostly manifests itself as large scale, aerosol murals. Anguilu strongly believes in freedom of expression and the need to use this expression to decorate public spaces.

### **Danielle Fanfair**

Danielle Fanfair is a writer, teacher and director of integrated well-being and self-mastery with over twenty years of teaching and training adult professionals. She takes an interdisciplinary approach, weaving together arts, science, meditation, movement and more to create the Confusion to Clarity™ curriculum, a toolkit for personal and professional growth, story-sharing and compassionate understanding.

### **Eepi Chaad**

Eepi Chaad is a practicing multidisciplinary artist, advocate, and environmentalist who tells stories using textiles, fibers, metals, places, and people. Chaad’s work studies humanity’s relationship to both natural and built environments through time. Eepi believes art is for every community and creativity is in every human.

### **Ezra Hezekiah**

Ezra Hezekiah is a visual artist originally from Central America specializing in a variety of mediums. He recently opened Province 8 Art Studio a studio and event space in Cypress.

### **Harrison Guy**

Harrison Guy is the founder and Artistic Director of Urban Souls Dance Company. Guy has captivated audiences across the nation through his inspirational and unique works of passion, beauty, and activism that are rooted in African American history, heritage, and culture. He began his dance journey in the small town of La Marque, TX, and building on his love for social dance and Hip-Hop, he affirmed his purpose and calling by studying dance at Prairie View A&M University.

### **Jasminne Mendez**

Jasminne Mendez is a best-selling Dominican-American poet, educator, translator, playwright and award winning author of several books for children and adults. She has had poetry and essays published in numerous journals and anthologies and she is the author of two multi-genre collections including *Island of Dreams* which won an International Latino Book Award. Her debut poetry collection *City Without Altar* was a finalist for the Noemi Press poetry prize and was released in August 2022.

### **Jose Antonio Diaz**

José Antonio Diaz is the founder/artistic director for the award-winning organization Diaz Music Institute in Houston, Texas. Honored as a Texas UIL Sponsor of Excellence, Country Music Association Foundation's Music Teacher of Excellence, Diaz is a 2017 Grammy Nominated Music Educator Top 10 Finalist, winner of Berklee College of Music's John LaPorta Jazz Educator of the Year Award, LULAC Educator of the Year Award and recipient of the Mayor's Hispanic Heritage Award.

### **J.E. Hernández**

Composer J.E. Hernández is a Mexican-born, Houston-based composer focusing on elevating personal and cultural narrative through his work. J.E.'s work focuses on both traditional and multi-disciplinary mediums, and he has collaborated with directors, choreographers, and playwrights. His process cultivates creativity through stewarding tangible life experiences through an intensive, multi-narrative process that is mathematical, philosophical, and historical. His interest in incorporating his cultural heritage from both his native Tabasco, Mexico, and Houston, Texas led J.E. to create the non-profit ConcertiaHTX.

### **Koomah**

Koomah is an intersex & genderfluid grassroots artist, performer, filmmaker, and educator. Active in the arts since 2003, Koomah seeks to challenge audience's boundaries while encouraging audiences to ask questions, see from new perspectives, be vulnerable, and ponder social norms. A community organizer, Koomah is founder and board member of intersex & trans organizations and BIPOC artist collectives. Koomah has performed, showcased artwork, presented workshops & lectures, and screened films across the US & internationally. Koomah's artwork is held in private collections in the United States and abroad.

### **Lupe Mendez**

Lupe Mendez is a writer, educator, and activist originally from Galveston, TX. He is the author *WHY I AM LIKE TEQUILA* winner of the 2019 John A. Robertson Award for Best First Book of Poetry from the Texas Institute of Letters. He is the founder of Tintero Projects which works with emerging Latinx writers and other writers of color within the Texas Gulf Coast Region. Mendez is the 2022 Texas Poet Laureate and has 20+ years of experience as a performance poet.

### **Abuela M'api Rainflowa**

Abuela M'api Rainflowa, also known as Lady Binx/Kiawitl Xochitl, founded Calmecac Indigenous Arts Organization, helping to establish a foundation of consistent Native American arts and cultural presence in Houston. A nationally recognized teaching and performance artist, she is a patron of Aztec dance in Houston and is an elder Abuela-part of the grandmother Moondance council of Mexico City since 2017.

### **Monica Villarreal**

Monica Villarreal is an interdisciplinary artist native to Houston. Her art explores ethnic identity, gender roles, migrant and environmental issues. She is a recipient of multiple awards in photography and filmmaking, and has participated in installation and performing art productions. Monica wears various hats, as the founder of Creative Women Unite, a local feminist arts collaborative and as a traditional Aztec dancer with Danza Azteca Taxcayotot, a local group that practices Mexican indigenous traditions through spirituality, and community engaging performances.

### **Miriam Damaris**

La puertorriqueña Miriam Damaris Maldonado es una activa promotora de eventos culturales en Houston y fundadora/miembro de la Colectiva Feminista Colibrí. Además de escribir y recitar su poesía en festivales literarios, también es ensayista, narradora, bailadora de bomba y activista. Tiene estudios en Trabajo Social, Diversidad y Género y Escritura Creativa. Ha trabajado en España, México, El Salvador, Puerto Rico y Houston en favor de los derechos de la mujer.

### **Rabéa Ballin**

Born in Germany, raised in Louisiana, Houston-based artist Rabéa Ballin earned her BFA in design at McNeese State University and her MFA in drawing and painting at the University of Houston. Her multi-disciplinary works explore the uniqueness of self-identity, hair politics, and social commentary. She documents these themes primarily through drawing, digital photography and various printmaking practices. In addition to working as an independent artist, she has been a member of the all-female ROUX printmaking collective since 2011.

### **Rathna Kumar**

Rathna Kumar is a dancer, choreographer and teacher of international repute, with over 5000 stage performances all over the world in her 67-year dance career. Established Texas' first Indian dance institute, Anjali Center for Performing Arts, in 1975 and trained more than 5000 students from all over the US in the past 48 years. Founding member and Artistic Director of Indian Performing Arts Samskriti, established 1995 Curated and conducted the first international dance conference in North America in 2001.

### **Sergio Sandoval**

Sergio Sandoval, actor, promotor cultural y de productos, nació en Matamoros Tamaulipas y llegó a Houston en 1980. Se dio cuenta de la necesidad e importancia de preservar la lengua y los valores culturales, y trabaja para promover los valores culturales a través del teatro, la música y la poesía. Cree firmemente que la comunicación, la comprensión y la aceptación de todos los seres humanos, vengan de donde vengan, es un requisito fundamental para la convivencia y el desarrollo de los pueblos.

**Sister Mama Sonya Lucas-Roberts**

Weaving tales of herstory/history from Third Ward, the South, and the African diaspora, SISTER MAMA SONYA, aka Sonya Lucas-Roberts, JD, is an “edutainer” poet, playwright, actor, storyweaver, motivational speaker, author and minister of the gospel. Her storyweaving and poetic expressions have been shared across the United States, Bahamas, Bermuda and Ghana, West Africa. Along with her sisters, Ms. B & the late Lori Lucas, 3sisters in the spirit Theatre Ministry, a Psalms 150 ministry, was birthed to “harvest hope, healing & harmony thru theatre.”

**Stacey Allen**

Stacey Allen is a dance/performance artist, curator, and advocate for arts education all while being a wife and mother to three beautiful children. She is founder of Nia's Daughters Movement Collective and also serves as the Director of Artistic Programming at Harris County Cultural Arts Council. She created “The Fairytale Project” a historical fiction dance theatre centering the story of the Texas Freedom Colony, Shankleville. Learn more about her work at [www.staceyallencde.com](http://www.staceyallencde.com) IG: @theblackartysmom.

**Tarsha M. Gary**

Chef Tarsha M. Gary is a culinarian, painter, quilter, writer, farmer, speaker and an award-winning Executive Chef-Owner of “CRAVE” Gourmet Catering. Chef Gary is the Founder and Chief Educator of ECOTONE World – an urban sustainability model advocating urban agriculture, food education, organic commerce, and global enrichment. In this capacity Gary has designed and project managed construction of several community gardens for public utilization in Houston.

**Trisha Morales**

Trisha Morales is a storyteller, activist, and multi-media artist. Morales is the co-founder of Lualo Studio where she collaborates with AAPI organizations across Texas to amplify movements, film legacy videos, and create intentional programming. She and her team are filming and advocating for Asian American Ethics studies k-12 in Texas while centering those most affected: the students.