



NYC Parks

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## **Ecological Artists Begin Year-Long Residency with Scientists and Environmental Practitioners to Explore New Imagination for Sustainable, Resilient, and Inclusive Cities**

As part of the Urban Field Station Collaborative Arts Program, eleven artists have been selected to collaborate with the USDA Forest Service, The Nature of Cities, and local agency teams to explore innovation and new imagination for more sustainable and green cities. The core questions of the program include: how are artists changed when they collaborate with scientists? How are scientists changed when they collaborate with artists? How can collaboration create new ideas and new directions that can inform sustainable, resilient, and inclusive cities?

*"With this new work, I hope to celebrate the presence of Black people in nature, urban forest patches themselves, and how both intersect as organic forms of protest and resistance in our industrialized world." - Krystal C. Mack, 2022 Resident Artist, Baltimore*

*"We can all live better when we listen to and learn from one another, and I can't wait to learn from, and collaborate with, the scientists involved in the Urban Field Station Collaborative Arts Program." - Resident Artist, New York City*

The Urban Field Station Collaborative Arts Program was founded in 2016 to explore the intersection and interdisciplinary nature of the study of cities and urban planning, artistic expression, and scientific ideas through collaborations with artists and urban ecology practitioners. This year, the Urban Field Station Collaborative Arts Program has expanded this year to support artists across the United States and internationally. This year's partnerships include:

- USDA Forest Service:
  - Northern Research Station - NYC Urban Field Station, Baltimore Field Station, Philadelphia Field Station, Springfield, MA Urban Field Station
  - Rocky Mountain Research Station - Denver Urban Field Station

- USFS International Programs in the West Bank
- International Institute of Tropical Forestry in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic
- New York City Department of Parks and Recreation's Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Resources Division and Arts in Parks Program
- State of Hawaii: Kaulunani, Hawaii's Urban & Community Forestry Program

*"I am thrilled to participate in the UFS Arts program for the fifth year here in New York City and to welcome our largest and most diverse cohort of artists and agency teams of researchers and land managers across the United States and now the world. I look forward to questioning, exploring, and learning together on critical issues facing urban ecosystems and city dwellers and how we might imagine, understand, and realize new solutions to those challenges."*

*- Lindsay Campbell, Research Social Scientist, USDA Forest Service - NYC Urban Field Station*

This year's artists were selected from a pool of competitive applications which represent the diversity and creativity of their respective cities:

**Aaron Terry**, Philadelphia, is an Assistant Professor of Art and Design at the University of Delaware. **Amir Campbell**, Philadelphia, is a portraiture artist currently pursuing studies as a University of Delaware MFA Candidate. Aaron and Amir have been selected based on their proposal for a project entitled "Seeding Newtopia," which relies on printed materials in the form of screen printed and origami envelopes containing native seeds to educate and empower local citizens about the importance of maintaining a healthy, natural ecosystem. The project will evolve throughout the year: collecting local stories associated with local plants, from recipes to human relationships to natural areas. These stories will be reproduced on future seed packets to be distributed, recognizing the local, longstanding, historical, and community-based relationships with nature and prompting future relationships with the natural world in Philadelphia.

*"In communities, maintaining a healthy and natural ecosystem is the key to a balanced, proportioned life. Aaron and I would like to build awareness surrounding the importance of seeding the future both as sowers and as constituent members of a native ecosystem. We also would like to give more insightful keys to access history of the community's native land and become more integrated into its bio-information to create a shared sense of humanity."* - Amir Campbell, Resident Artist, Philadelphia

**Krystal Mack**, Baltimore, will spend her residency working on a new literary work that aims to honor the reclamation of urban spaces by the natural world and Krystal's environmental heritage as a Black woman, a Baltimorean, and a second-generation descendant of the Great Migration.

**Franklin Cruz**, Denver, is a queer latin poet who will be working on a project entitled *Grounded Voices*. This project seeks to build small outdoor altars filled with poetry. These altars will also double as shelters for small vertebrates and will be made of natural materials which can bio-integrate with the environment organically and spiritually.

**Nalu Andrade**, Honolulu, will be creating his Ho'oilina (legacy) Project, a three part series. The first part is entitled Keiki Ho'oilina, with the aim of connecting all Hawai'i born children to the 'aina. At birth, a native tree will be planted in their honor. Families will be presented with a geotag of the approximate location of their child's tree, as well as information on how to get involved with the Ho'oilina Project. Part two is Kalai Ho'oilina, to promote growth, learning, and becoming through Hawaiian culture. This project will be open to ages 10 and up and will include the removal of invasive plants and teaching children about wood carving taught with native Hawaiian practitioners. Finally, Graduation Ho'oilina encourages children to continue on their legacy journey, as the child moves into adulthood and takes control of their own legacy. Another tree will be planted, this time by the young adult. This will also be a malama project, as the young adults will help to remove invasive plants to make room for indigenous plants. This program can also be used toward the community service requirement for all high school graduating seniors.

**Michele Brody**, NYC, is a place-based public artist from The Bronx. Her work “Nature in Absentia; Monarch Migrations” is a framework for a series of multimedia installations illustrating how the loss of natural biodiversity in New York is in stark contrast to the City’s ever expanding cultural diversity. The project will consist of a series of free community paper making workshops, which will eventually become part of an immersive installation titled “Monarch Migrations”. This new work will focus on comparing the life cycles and migratory patterns of monarch butterflies with the migrations of humans and the plants that support the life cycles of these butterflies.

**Tommy Cheemou Yang**, NYC, is an indigenous Hmong designer, researcher, and educator focused on insurgent urban and architectural transformations. His residency, partnership with NYC Parks, will focus on the importance of storytelling and ethnography in the production of socio-natural-based solutions in a project entitled “Reflective Urban Ecologies - The Ecology of Four Chinatowns”. The intended outcome of this project will be a live digital humanities archive of how Chinese Americans and immigrants have remade and embedded a larger ecosystem in the city, providing a Just model and transition to how we think, write, and map urban fields.

*"Two years ago at the height of the pandemic, I spoke of my grandmother during my commencement speech at The New School - how she was my shade and umbrella in a world filled with uncertainties. As part of the incoming family for the 2022-2023 Urban Field Station Collaborative Arts Program, I hope to nurture and care for a way of making, mapping, writing, and communicating with the communities, colleagues, scientists, and localities I meet in hopes that we can*

*grow into shades for each other." - Tommy Cheemou Yang, Resident Artist, New York City*

**Ania Upstill**, NYC, is a queer and non-binary artist who will be working with the NYC Urban Field Station on a project entitled "Applying a Queer Lens to Scientific Narratives". Their project will focus on the questions of how we write and make art about the world in ways that make individuals feel connected to their natural environment. In particular, their work will examine how a queer arts lens can encourage people to notice and appreciate the social-ecological systems they are a part of in a new way.

**Richard Johnson**, Springfield, is a visual artist based in the United States. He graduated from MCLA with a degree in sociology 2014. He is president of an art based nonprofit founded in 2018. His goal is to promote positive youth development, positive family relationships, and economic prosperity in the community through visual art. His work for the residency will focus on community engagement and aims to reflect positive culture, values, and environments within the community through visual art.

**Kilia Llano**, Santo Domingo, will be continuing her mural series from her time as a member of the 2021 residency cohort. The series is entitled "Connection" and focuses on the migration patterns of the Cape May Warbler. Her work focuses on engaging community members, specifically kids, in art. Each mural in the series is embedded with a QR code leading to resources on conservation and the Cape May Warbler. Her website on the series will be available through the UFS Arts website shortly.

**Hector Resto**, Guaynabo, is a muralist and graphic designer from Puerto Rico. He is planning a mural themed around migration for the purpose of positively impacting the place, the surroundings, and the life of everyone who passes by. As an artist who uses a wheelchair, he likes the fact that people can see that great things can be achieved even when going through difficult and "permanent" situations.

**Samih Abu Zakieh**, Hebron, is an artist and Director of the Palestinian Children Arts Center (PCAC). He is also responsible for many programs for raising awareness and dealing with art and graffiti issues. The aim of these programs is to explore how to use art in a peaceful way, and keep the children of Palestine safe. His project for the residency is related to place making, mural works, and art exhibitions that encourage children to join art activities in their schools and create community-based environmental awareness.

*"I will work with all my efforts to exchange ideas and Art projects and link them to environmental projects which we made..... and my happiness will be great when we reflect the new experiences on my city and the children of (PCAC) the Palestinian Child Arts Center." - Samih Abu Zakieh, Resident Artist, Hebron*

The New York City Urban Field Station (<http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/nyc>) is a unique scientific collaboration between the NYC Parks, the USDA Forest Service's Northern Research Station, and

the non-profit the Natural Areas Conservancy. First launched in 2006, the Urban Field Station provides a location for this long-term research partnership promoting applied science on urban ecology, conservation, stewardship, and ecological literacy to support ecosystem management and human well-being. The facility is designed as a shared office and lab where city and federal scientists work hand-in-hand to address critical land management questions relevant to NYC and other cities across the country.