

## Episode 2: Fellows Call in Transcript

**Ladi'Sasha:** [00:00:00] Hi everyone. My name is Ladi'Sasha Jones and I'm the artist engagement manager at the LP.

**Hatuey:** [00:00:10] And I am Hatuey Ramos-Fermín and I'm the director of programs at the laundromat project. Uh, welcome to the LP documents about a podcast where we explore how artists and neighbors and communities of color are creatively enacting societal change.

This season, we're focused on the themes of affirmation, belonging, and community building through art making. As we continue to be in remote connection with one another and reflect on life before the pandemic life now, and what keeping community relationships look like during this time, we ask artists in our create change fellowship program to call into our podcast to share a story.

**LadiSasha:** [00:00:46] The Create Change program equips artists of color with tools to build and deepen community through art. This usually takes shape via public art projects across one's local context, involves workshops on the topics of community, asset, mapping, race, and power, and building community partnerships.

We were interested in hearing how our current cohort of fellows are applying what they've learned and how they're staying in community and building community through their creative practices. Especially as the pandemic continues. Some of the guiding questions that are shaping this episode are how have they created a sense of connectedness, affirmation self-determination or hope within their communities or what's the personal experience they've had around feeling connected to their communities.

**Hatuey:** [00:01:32] And now let's hear from the artists.

**Anjelic:** [00:01:36] Hello, I'm Anjelic, I'm an artist and agricultural worker for me personally, starting my project. Working with black and brown students talking about inhabiting a predominantly white space and just asking them about their experience. And a lot of these conversations, either turn into laughter or sadness, or just really tense moments.

But I think what, what it felt like was just like a warm blanket of comfort from those interviews out. I started making installations in my studio and working with. How can I tap into those emotions abstractly in a way where it's not objectified by the white gaze, but, um, that, that is felt and experienced openly in installation work, working with sound, working with those materials within the same vein of working with this community project and trying to engage with a community of Bed-Stuy and think about like, what does the future of education look like?

What is even the conversation intergenerationally really look like, um, operating within the same type of technique of just listening and gathering information and just being present. And I think I really want to cultivate and just take time with, um, and engage in and hopefully the future of this work and sound piece in a way and create more of like a sense of together.

**Ayling:** [00:03:04] My name is Ayling Zulema Dominguez. I am a poet and community artist and an abolitionists mindset. I'm from Bronx, New York as a youth educator, as a teaching artist, I am always affirming my students. And it feels like opening up a portal with them whenever there's a breakthrough. Whenever they see that their voice has power, that their imagination can birth, beautiful things, beautiful words, poems.

Um, when I see that spark and that breakthrough, it feels incredible. It feels like a seed has been planted and. You see the eventual flower or the eventual tree or fruit? But I saw the planting. I saw the sewing and I took part in that, you know, um, I'm showing them how they can water it and how they can see it to fruition.

And so I feel so blessed to be able to do that with them. So it's been a really wonderful experience. I see that as much.

**Ladi'Sasha:** [00:04:13] I really like Anjelic's youth engagement work, uh, and it's focused around the white gaze. And inhabiting white spaces is it's, it's, it's a really strong conversation to have with young people, uh, in particularly the interpretation of these conversations and listening sessions, as she puts it into these like abstract audio installations.

I'm really curious to see how that work unfolds. And similarly, I, I greatly appreciate aliens interest and planting portals as she so beautifully, um, puts it. The, uh, working in the space of the imaginary with, with young people. It's, it's, it's quite interesting.

**Hatuey:** [00:04:54] I feel like the opportunity to have this intergenerational conversation, uh, where, you know, on the one hand, uh, and Julie has this.

Product, which is the installation and being able to share the voices of youth through that art, uh, art work. I feel like there's a great opportunity there to, you know, bridge potential, you know, further conversations around race, around, you know, uh, agency. And so I really appreciate the way that she, um, talks about that.

And I lean, I think, you know, I really appreciate the way that the process is so. The core of, of the, um, work. So being able to plant seeds with the students' voices, um, and being able to, um, No. See that kind of walk through a process of sharing stories, listening. And I think that it's really great to engage young folks.

**Kimberly Tate:** [00:05:55] Hey, my name is Kimberly Tate. I also go by Galaxy. I use she, they, and we pronouns. I'm an artist embodied design. Yeah. Design educator with the center for architecture and faculty at Parsons school of design. I'm also a mother and an organizer of healing spaces that center black indigenous and people of color, our bodies, our experiences, and our wisdom traditions.

I live in Flatbush, Lefferts gardens, Brooklyn, and my family comes from the island of late there in the Philippines. For this embodied research project, I'm interested in wisdom practices that can build resiliency and keep us connected. As we move into a future of more climate related disruption, I gathered an intimate cohort of artists and organizers of Southeast Asian descent to come into the studio with me.

We were Filipino and Chinese Indonesian and Tai originally, the project is about resilience and climate related disruption, but the pandemic became a living case study to witness our personal stress responses. As modern industrialized society broke down. Our original project goals had to shift because times shifted exploring resiliency.

Prioritized care and connection. In the moment we centered our bodies and acknowledged the native lands we were on and their original stewards over the weeks, we shared family stories and understandings of our ancestors. We traded, adapted and remixed life practice strategies that could help us. We leaned also into our creative practices to help metabolize this tough time among us.

There was a collaborative storytelling, metaphysical crafting video poems, writing movement and making food is medicine.

**Manuel:** [00:08:02] My name is Manuel Molina Martagon. Um, I am an artist I've been working with food for the last few years. Um, it is never about the food itself. Um, it always works more as a device to get people together. Like right before Logan started, I was presenting accord taste. It's a product, uh, that I did with arts Alliance and Fritos gallery at the

It was a product. I started as a part of the more art engaging artist fellowship, and then finally found a place that was perfect to bring together different people. You know, like the, you know, the Essex market vendors, uh, locals, uh, people that came because they saw because he was listed on Eventbrite really random.

Fantastic. Acquire taste. It looks like a cooking class, but it was sort of an open-ended scripting. And we do the participants. Uh, we cook a very, very labor, intense poblano delicacy. Chiles en Nogada, it's a very, very delicious baroque and historically loaded plate from Mexican gastronomy. It is basically a poblano pepper stuff with apples, with, apricots, uh, pine nuts, meat.

Then it's deep fried. And then it's covered with these, uh, Was basically made with a goat cheese and Walnut and, you know, finally it stopped with the seats and some partly, yeah, it's totally over the top and it's very, it's very unexciting. No, this is sort of opens a door to talk about so many different topics.

You know, we, we talk about our relation with food, um, immigration, uh, labor, uh, carried that access health, uh, food justice, and, you know, the list goes on. Many conversations where we're personal. Um, some people talk about what it meant for the parents to always, you know, make sure there was food on the table and the sense of safety and security having this experience right before the pandemic was.

You gave me a sense of patience of hope and something to look forward, you know, whenever it's possible to bring people together again,

**Hatuey:** [00:10:26] With that description without basic plate, I just have to say I've never tried it, but I would love to sounds amazing. Um, I appreciate the way that, uh, you know,

both, uh, they both talk about food, um, and ways to heal and reflect and being able to, um, uh, you know, work with folks that are close to you on, on, on, on, uh Kimberly's m, uh, case.

You know, the very particular community that, you know, uh, that she's working with. And, and, and on the other hand, how Manuel opens up the community. So there's more folks that he may not know, uh, and being able to make those connections, make those personal, you know, relationships, um, And center the stories, um, that people care about through the sharing of a meal.

What are you thinking the Lady'Sasha?

**Ladi'Sasha:** [00:11:21] Yeah, same, uh, both of their modes of working. I, I really love how, uh, it's shaped around igniting collective and shared experiences. Uh, thinking, thinking back to Kim beliefs, methods of embodied research, uh, as she puts it. Um, especially since her practices traced across both architecture and movement-based work, uh, it's, it's kind of special to hear her talk about how this project prioritizes care strategies and collaborative storytelling.

Uh, I think with them both, there's just some really cool approaches towards ideas of togetherness, um, and the collective in general. Um, Uh, I think with many, well, one of the, the things I appreciate most about his practice at large, um, is how participatory it is. Um, and the focus on, on stirring different like food pathways and engagements around food.

Um, and like you brought up outweigh. The cultural nuances that comes up, uh, when one engages with the culinary space. It's it's yeah, it's it's quite special.

**Ella Mahoney:** [00:12:34] \*Ella's introduction in their native language\*. Hi, my name is Ella Mahoney. I am originally from Aquinnah, Massachusetts. I currently live in Brooklyn and I am a member of the Aquinnah Wampanoag tribe. I am an artist, a painter, a mover, and like to tell stories one time that I felt particularly affirmed by my community was when we were all creating together.

For the past couple of years, I've been involved in this performance called we still dance where members of my tribal, a community and a dance company from Boston have been creating a piece that tells the story of our past present and future the piece, um, has been a process of listening to everyone's stories and.

Figuring out how we can all use our talents to benefit this project. For me, that's painting for some people at strumming storytelling, verbally or singing. Um, I think that this is so affirming because it allows us all to tell the stories in the way that we need to and getting together allows for a lot of laughs for a lot of honesty and deeper feelings and just getting to be in a space with the community to produce something that we're all really proud of.

**Angela:** [00:14:19] My name Angela Miskis and I am artists and community organized surveys in Southeast. The artwork. I create center, some honoring my family upbringing, especially lessons and memories of my grandparents. Back in Ecuador. I am currently a create change fellow with an LP.

I have been developing my art and stewardship project called abuela neighborhood maintenance, where I connect neighbors in Queens through the common goal of respecting and improving our quality of life. I use texts, craft, photography, and design to call attention to the volunteer work. During the cleanups, I felt affirmed and connected to my community.

After I organized my second large group community cleanup, about 20 people came to help pick up litter along the sidewalks of the Hollis long island railroad station. Parents brother, kids and clean as a family, multiple local organizations send representatives to help and elected officials stop by to say hi together with collected over 700 pounds of trash.

And everyone was just so happy to have helped. It was the first time I acknowledged my role as an organizer and not Joseph's and artists. This event made me realize that I could be. Yes. All of my skills to continue to create events that will bring joy to my neighborhood.

**Ladi'Sasha:** [00:15:48] Wow. Yeah, for me, Ella's story of affirmation as an absolute thoughtful reflection around the power of cultural production to not only bring community together, but the power, it also has to heal um, and in thinking about with. Proposed and shared in that story, really, over the course of this fellowship, it has been an absolute treat to learn more about her practice, um, both her social practice, but this very deep community practice that she shared, um, and how it's inspired by and shaped by the practices of her grandparents and particularly her grandmother.

Um, and that it's so much more than you know, a community beautification project or community cleanup project, but that it's, it's an opportunity, um, to kind of shine some light and highlight, uh, what it means to do collective public actions and direct actions of community care, um, in ones in one's neighborhood.

**Hatuey:** [00:16:51] yYah, I would agree. Yeah. With, um, what you're describing. I think also, um, the beauty, uh, when a witness to someone else's story, uh, on Ellis, you know, case, uh, where there's something so important, you know, to write your own history, you know, tell the story, uh, and bear witness. I think there's something so powerful about that, uh, that I appreciate about, you know, uh, Ella's, uh, practice and, and, and with Angela I think, you know, yeah, it's the action, you know, it's more about being inspired by her grandmother and having an action.

That would connect folks in a way that, you know, feel like they're taking care of their own neighborhood. Um, and the simple act of, you know, picking trash and just cleaning up and doing, you know, all the posters are things that she's doing it's, it's, it's such a simple thing and a great gesture of care.

**Ladi'Sasha:** [00:17:59] So Hatuey what's, what's a time that you felt affirmed or particularly connected within your community.

**Hatuey:** [00:18:06] Thank you for that. There's been a couple of moments where I've been able to hang out with some of my neighbors, uh, from the park where I live.

Uh, it has been more spontaneous there. They were there and they're there. Oh, wait, we're here all together. Let's just take a moment to share some space and that's been really nice,

you know, impromptu thing. So two days ago, the city. Paid for, you know, having musicians in the park, uh, and that wasn't even the circus, you know, uh, act.

And, um, it was just beautiful to be able to experience that again, in public space with folks that, you know, are my neighbors, um, in a way that it felt like, wait, This is great, you know, seeing culture, uh, you know, in, in space being able to just be, you know, joyful. I think that we needed that, uh, here. So it was nice to see that anything for you.

**Ladi'Sasha:** [00:19:04] Yeah, no, that, that, that all sounds absolutely wonderful. I love the, you know, those moments of joy and togetherness and those like small acts of just coming together that you shared and that's been popping up for you during this time. Um, Yeah, they are incredibly important. Um, insignificant, um, definitely during a time when we've been isolated and apart, um, that's pretty cool that not only, uh, as this pandemic kind of, uh, Opens to some sort of end in sight, but also as the weather has broken here in New York city that, uh, you all able to convene together, um, that's quite, that's quite wonderful.

Okay. That's our show folks. If you want to keep up with what we're doing here at the laundromat project, you can find us [@laundromatproject.org](mailto:laundromatproject.org) and across all social media platforms.