

2024 Impact Report

THE **ALLIANCE**
FOR MEDIA ARTS + CULTURE



Supporting a vibrant, essential role for
media arts in culture and community

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Cover: From left to right
Awakening directed by James Pakootas, *Reel Love* directed by Gavin Soler
State of Fear directed by Pamela Yates from the Skylight Archive
CIW Crowd Standing Ovation from the Uncuffed Archive
Community Design Lab for Teaching Artists photo by Rahzizi Ishakarah
Jamaica directed by Angelica Quiñonez, *My Only Requirement* directed by Maia Helvy
Awakening directed by James Pakootas, *Kahbir* directed by Daysia Hiller.

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As 2024 comes to a close, we've been thinking about how the nonprofit sector can be seen as stewards of the status quo, rather than the disruptors many of us hope to be. At our Design Lab for Teaching Artists this year in Watts, as we built community, we also started thinking together about the roles organizations can play in upholding oppression, and how we can and must resist. This year, we welcomed new justice system ecosystem-building partners in our Unlocking Creativity Community of Practice. After 30 years in prison, Greg Eskridge, a producer with KALW's UnCuffed podcast, is also a producer with our Digital Archiving Working Group, an integral part of our Innovation Culture Studio and Arts2Work programming.

Looking back on this year, the focus of our work has been service, not services. Yes, there's data in this report about participants engaged, programs launched, and money raised. What matters more are the stories of real growth and transformation, new ways of thinking and operating that have opened doors for our people, shifting from a culture of scarcity to one of abundance. When we set out to create Arts2Work, there was no workforce development funding coming to our sector. This year in Baltimore, our three Arts2Work partners were collectively awarded over \$5,000,000 from diverse government and private sources for operations, programs and apprentice salaries. We have brought the media industry to the table to end unpaid internships in favor of on-the-job training, advancement and mentorship models. This has been a journey to build visibility and entrepreneurial power for artists and community arts organizations as catalysts of mutual aid, job creation and economic resilience.

Looking forward to 2025, it's easy to feel small in the face of forces that seem so much bigger than us—but we at the Alliance have seen firsthand the power of individuals and organizations coming together, of communities organizing to create lasting change. The creative producers, filmmakers, editors, teachers, arts + tech leaders, culture bearers, designers and storytellers in the Alliance network are supporting communities that cannot and will not be erased. Together, we will continue to care for each other and build our field as we build the whole world.



Wendy Levy, Executive Director + the Alliance Board of Directors



From left to right: Mary T. An, Cassidy Arkin, Andy Beach, Edgar Buch, Eric Doversberger, Brian Frye, Chris Johnson, Anula Shetty, Kasandra VerBruggen



Still from *Awakening*, directed by James Pakootas
2024 Power of Storytelling Grantee

Who We Are

The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture is a national arts service organization committed to systems change work; we build new models and opportunities for the media arts field focused on expanding collaboration, providing access to innovation, and deepening cultural impact.

We partner with industry to benefit grassroots community networks and independent artists, centering equity in a suite of programs designed to build power, creativity, and economic resilience.

What We Believe

We believe in building inclusive networks for artists and organizations committed to powerful creative storytelling that engages the collective imagination.

We believe in the importance of gathering together. We believe that artists are leaders

We believe in creating access to technology and mentorship for underserved and underestimated peoples.

We believe in equity, opportunity for all and fearlessly upholding creativity as an engine of social transformation, cultural preservation and economic revitalization.

We believe in preserving and celebrating diverse cultures and intergenerational communities and protecting free expression as the common language of a democratic society.

Data at a Glance

\$5,575,000

Awarded from government agencies and foundations to Alliance member organizations for Arts2Work programming, including Watts Labor Community Action Committee, Wide Angle Youth Media, Joe's Movement Emporium, Action Youth Media, and KSUT Tribal Media Center

\$410,000

Received from California Opportunity Youth Apprenticeship (COYA) program for new Digital Archiving Apprenticeship Planning. Collaborators include The Last Mile, WLCAC Watts Museum of Civil Rights, Skylight, Hip Hop Education Center, Question Bridge Education Initiative, Society of American Archivists Independent Archivists Committee, and others.

10

EMERGING FILMMAKERS

Emerging filmmakers receive Power of Storytelling grants totaling **\$50,000**

7

NEW APPRENTICES

Multimedia Producer, Editor and Graphic Designer Apprentices enrolled in federally-registered Arts2Work program

51

YOUTH MEDIA PRODUCERS

Completed Arts2Work Pre-Apprenticeship programs

75

PRE-APPRENTICE TRAINEES

Enrolled in career-connected Arts2Work programs across the country

531

ACTIVE USERS

on the Alliance Arts2Work Learning Hub

7000+

SUBSCRIBERS

to Alliance for Media Arts + Culture eBulletin and Arts2Work Newsletter

55

FREE VIRTUAL

Labs, Workshops, Webinars and Roundtables produced serving filmmakers, photographers and teaching artists

47

Filmmakers, Journalists, Artists and Creative Technologists paid for services and program work totalling **\$233,341**

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U.S. APPRENTICESHIP AMBASSADOR CERTIFICATE

Received in the White House from the U.S. Department of Labor

People with Impact

Alliance Producer/Mentor Martha Diaz



Senior Producer + Mentor, Alliance for Media Arts + Culture, Senior Civic Media Fellow at the USC Annenberg Innovation Lab, Director of the Hip Hop Education Center, Member at Large, Independent Archivists Section, Society of American Archivists

Colombian-American futurist Martha Diaz (MD) is an award-winning community organizer, media producer, archivist, curator, educator, creative social entrepreneur, and founder of the Hip-Hop Education Center. MD has traversed the Hip-Hop entertainment industry, the public arts and education sector, and the academy over the past 30 years. Martha is a Senior Consulting Producer at the Alliance for Media Arts + Culture, leading Arts2Work and Innovation research and production, and the implementation of global initiatives in community-based Digital Archiving.

At the Alliance, Martha is a Senior Consulting Producer, working on both Arts2Work and Innovation Studio programs. She is the lead Archivist and Program Strategist for the Alliance, and a dynamic mentor to Arts2Work Apprentices. In 2024, Martha also devised and led panel presentations for the Alliance during National Apprenticeship Week in collaboration with Executive Director Wendy Levy, and co-curated a Special Keynote Presentation about the new Arts2Work Digital Archivist pathway entitled, Creating Futures Through Memory Work, for the NYC Archivists Roundtable during New York Archives Week.

Teaching Artists for Arts2Work @ WLCAC Logan Jackson and Tony Chennault



In 2024, Logan and Tony became lead teaching artists and producer/directors with the new, Alliance-sponsored Arts2Work program at the Watts Labor Community Action Committee. The program, funded by LA County Department of Arts and Culture's Multimedia Career Pathways Prototype grant, is the first Arts2Work Pre-Apprenticeship program in Watts. Designed for emerging artists who have faced multiple barriers to employment, trainees receive s learn visual storytelling, media production, collaboration and state-of-the-art technology, while creating both personal projects and client work.

Logan Jackson is an African American filmmaker, writer and artist originally from New Orleans, LA. His latest short film, My Hero, has received national and international acclaim, winning Best United States Short Film Award at Palm Springs International ShortFest 2020 and picking up a Grand Jury Prize nomination at Nashville Film Festival 2020. My Hero has also garnered multiple award wins and nominations in several Oscar and BAFTA qualifying festivals while going on to screen at over 50 film festivals worldwide. He also received an Emerging Director selection from the American Black Film Festival in 2020.

After graduating from Villanova University and working for the Philadelphia 76ers and WHYY, Tony Chennault has been a committed teaching artist, independent producer and entrepreneur. Based in Los Angeles, Tony is CEO/Creative Director at Mike Jay Media (MJM). Mike Jay Films (MJF) houses the scripted and non-scripted film and television units. Mike Jay Digital (MJD) houses audio experiences (podcasts, music, e-books), animation, and gaming. Collectively, MJM's mission is to amplify diverse voices and inspire the next generation of filmmakers.

Programs with Impact

Power of Storytelling: A grant program for emerging filmmakers

We celebrate all the 2024 Power of Storytelling Grantees



Grantee Spotlight Maia Helvy

Maia Helvy is one of ten 2024 Power of Storytelling grantees, an Alliance program for emerging filmmakers, supported by **NBCUniversal**. For most of our applicants, this is the very first grant proposal they have ever written. Grantees receive \$5000, along with professional mentorship, and workshops in budgeting, impact distribution and ethics.

Maia impressed us this year, shooting her project on super 8 and 16mm film. She is an Atlanta-based filmmaker, and program coordinator at RE:IMAGINE, an award-winning youth media training center in Atlanta. Maia is also a mixed media artist, and creative director whose work centers on the vibrant narratives of Black Queer women and Non-Binary individuals. With a foundation in film photography, Super 8, 35mm, and Mini DV video formats, Maia's storytelling combines a textured, nostalgic aesthetic with a commitment to authenticity. Through film, Maia captures the intimate realities of their subjects, drawing from personal connections within Atlanta's underground music and art scenes.



Aldo Merino



Angelica Quiñonez



Darian Jones



Daysia Hiller



Deondre Marshall



Gavin Soler



Hannah Patterson



James Pakootas



Maia Helvy



Mekhi Burton



Partnerships with Impact

The Colorado Partnership

KSUT Tribal Media Center
Arts2Work Four Corners Media Apprenticeship



Colten Ashley, Tribal Media Center



Arielle Brachfeld, Colorado Office of Film, Television and Media



John Van Wyck, Cine Fe

The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture has been collaborating all year with the Colorado Office of Film, Television and Media, Cine Fe, and KSUT Tribal Media Center to design, fund and launch the first Arts2Work program for emerging and mid-career Indigenous artists in Colorado pursuing diverse careers in digital media.

Arts2Work Four Corners will launch in 2025 a new hands-on Pre-Apprenticeship program for adults who are passionate about careers as digital media artists, producers, editors, writers, directors, journalists and creative tech entrepreneurs. The program will offer 21st century storytelling skills for in-demand jobs in documentary, narrative fiction, social media, audio and podcasting, animation and XR, focusing on the problem-solving superpowers of the best producers in the industry. In this earn-and-learn program, participants will receive professional training in pre-production, production and post, and will create one individual and one group project over the course of an intensive 9-week program. Trainees will create short video projects, content for clients, websites, reels and portfolios while attending professional workshops, and participating in conversations with a range of employer partners. The pre-Apprentices become proficient in state-of-the-art digital skills that can lead to Registered Apprenticeships and other job opportunities. The culmination of the program will include a public screening event, a virtual Producer's Roundtable, and Arts2Work certification.



Communities of Practice

As a national Media Arts Service organization, The Alliance is committed to creating vibrant spaces for transformative field-wide conversations, co-creation and action. In 2024, our Communities of Practice Unlocking Creativity and Media/Arts Leaders actively helped mitigate the silos in which we often find ourselves, nurturing connections, supporting creative leadership, and building shared purpose and solidarity.

Unlocking Creativity participants came together as representatives of media organizations collaborating with justice-impacted youth and communities, those creating programs with and for currently and formerly incarcerated artists and storytellers. The conversations in the Community of Practice led to a grant from the State of California Department of Apprenticeship Standards **COYA** program ([California Opportunity Youth Apprenticeship Grants](#)). California is investing in apprenticeship programs that “have the power to uplift opportunity youth across California, including those aged 16–24 who face educational achievement gaps or attend schools in lower-income communities.” The Alliance is one of a small but mighty group of media arts organizations breaking new ground in creative workforce development in California and across the country. In a time when the entertainment industry is facing persistent challenges, Arts2Work focuses on empowering creative entrepreneurship and building diverse opportunities for media production professionals including science and tech, sports, culinary, business, nonprofits, journalism, museums and cultural institutions, government agencies, social media, music, public health and more. Arts2Work works to create jobs for storytellers – and stories live everywhere.



CIW Crowd Standing Ovation from the Uncuffed Archive. Uncuffed is a program of KALW Public Media. Uncuffed staff are part of the Unlocking Creativity Community of Practice, and leaders of the Alliance Digital Archives Working Group



Events with Impact



In 2024, the Alliance created the Multimedia Archival Storytelling Lab to enable 14 participant filmmakers and organizations to grapple with the complexities of archival facilitation and accountability, curating and remixing from archives, and the ethics of archiving and stewarding co-created, culturally and historically valuable media. Jocelyn Arem of Arbo Radiko and Wendy Levy at the Alliance for Media Arts + Culture collaborated to design the Lab and Jocelyn collaborated and facilitated each session. Valentina Vargas provided administrative support and started coordinating the launch of the Alliance Archive project. Each participating organization and filmmaker was paid \$500 for their participation in the Lab.

The Lab consisted of three 90-minute workshop sessions. Topics included:

PRESENTATIONS from Digital Archivists, Creative Technologists and Documentary Filmmakers
DISCUSSIONS of best and emerging practices in the field of Archival Production and Curation
BREAKOUTS for participants to share their archival challenges and brainstorm ideas with experts
COLLABORATIVE WORK to experiment with new platforms, strategize the transformation of archival material into multimedia creative projects and experiences, generating new ideas to revitalize stories, add revenue streams, and deepen community connections.

Projects supported in the Lab include: Surveillance Films of the "lost" Handschu Files, The Henriquez Family Database & Community Archive, ENTRE Film Center & Regional Archive, Cataloguing the Protect Mauna Kea Movement, Lede New Orleans "My Park, My Place, My Peace," and many others.

Community Design Lab for Teaching Artists

An Alliance Community Design Lab is a deeply intentional gathering that is an essential part of our process when launching a new program or initiative. In May 2024, a few months in advance of the beginning of Arts2Work@WLCAC, we held the Community Design Lab for Teaching Artists to bring a diverse group of teaching artists and local arts leaders together to explore and co-create a media arts training experience designed especially for emerging artists facing multiple barriers to employment and self-actualization. It began with a tour of the WLCAC campus and the Watts Museum of Civil Rights led by Tina Watkins-Quaye, followed by a 2-day workshop for the teaching artist community in Watts and the Southern California region.. The goal was to offer collaborative models of community-based media arts training with a focus on youth and justice-impacted communities. Sessions were co-designed and led by a team of Alliance producers, partners and advisors working with Alliance Executive Director Wendy Levy, including Martha Diaz, Lauren Stevenson, Veronica Corzo-Duchardt, Shawn Jackson, and Tea Vickers. The two days were full of powerful conversations about creativity + justice, sharing challenges and best practices in the community and career-connected classroom, and learning about the mission, vision and potential future of Arts2Work at WLCAC, and beyond. It was a vital piece of a multi-year collaboration that lead to the successful launch of the first Arts2Work Pre-Apprenticeship program at WLCAC in November 2024. Lab Funding generously provided by SNAP Foundation.



Future Impact

Through the lens of equity and justice, and a commitment to service that will not waver, the Alliance for Media Arts + Culture will be working in 2025 to strengthen more inclusive coalitions of industry, cultural institutions, individuals, and creative communities to foster transformative opportunities for under-resourced artists and organizations in all phases of their careers and life cycles. We will continue cultivating international collaborations, expanding the Alliance network in the US and across borders, supporting non-extractive models of cultural exchange that center economic and environmental sustainability and human rights. We will uplift emerging as well as best practices for work at the intersection of storytelling, culture and technology, providing spaces for exploration and implementation. We will be leading initiatives that include ethical approaches to AI, ensuring access to culturally-relevant knowledge and practice across broad networks. We will leverage non-traditional industry resources on behalf of communities everywhere. We will help connect those who want to do some good in this world with new ways to co-create the projects, organizations, and futures they dream. Charitable contributions, sponsorships and program-related investment is welcome to support any or all of this work in 2025 and beyond:

Arts2Work: our flagship workforce development model, winner of the MIT Solve Prize for Reimagining Pathways to Employment in the US. We are adding Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship opportunities with partner organizations across the country, as we reimagine what a career in the media industry looks like.

Innovation Studio: the place where research and working prototypes for new tools and methods are explored and developed, like the AI-powered Digital Community Archive platform and the Alliance XR Culture Gallery.

Communities of Practice: the Alliance model for gathering aligned organizations and individuals around shared visions for change. Unlocking Creativity is one such Community where we host monthly meetings offering peer support, wisdom-sharing and funding opportunities for creative organizations and artists working with justice-impacted youth and currently and formerly incarcerated artists.

The Labs: Whether in-person or online, our participants report that events like the Multimedia Archival Storytelling Lab and the Community Design Lab for Teaching Artists provide needed mentorship, inspiration, new strategies, job opportunities and funding for their work. We are planning more Labs for 2025, along with a new speaker series called ILLUMINATING, a webinar/discussion forum for some of the newest and boldest ideas impacting our field.

Still from the *Question Bridge: Black Males* archive, used with permission from Question Bridge Education Initiative, a project in the Alliance Digital Archives Working Group.



Thank you

Senior Producers, Advisors + Mentors

In 2024, an incredible group of consulting producers were activated to provide core programming and guidance for **The Alliance for Media Arts + Culture** and our network, working in Creative Workforce Development, Innovation Studio, Archive Research, Communities of Practice, Communications and Storytelling, and Policy and Program Development. These incredible people brought their expertise to the Alliance and supported the development and implementation of our signature capacity-building programs and services to artists and creative organizations and communities.



From left to right: Martha Diaz, Jocelyn Arem, Olivia Evans, Priscilla Genet, Saki Bowman, Shawn Jackson, Sonia Dowuona, Taylor Jett, Valentina Vargas.

Visionary Partners and Funders



THE ALLIANCE
FOR MEDIA ARTS + CULTURE