ACTIVATE: Protege, 2022 Mentees

Alexandria Bingham: Born and raised in Metro Detroit, MI, I have always been involved in arts and culture in all its forms. I have a B.A. in Art History and am studying to obtain a dual masters in Art Business/MBA. My background is primarily within the visual arts at contemporary art museums. Art and activism are my passion; as such I feel it crucial to be an active proponent in starting necessary conversations, challenging societal norms, and pushing the boundaries of what’s considered art and who it’s for. I chose to pursue a master’s degree because I was interested in challenging myself, expanding my reach and knowledge, and gaining more opportunities and resources to propel my career forward. I am an innovative creative professional and leader with a drive to create equity, start necessary conversations, create and sustain creative communities, and enrich and educate through art.

Ayu Tanaka is a communications and marketing professional that has worked at various nonprofit arts organizations across her career including Center Theatre Group, The Broad Stage, and The Levitt Foundation. She graduated from the George Washington University in Washington, DC in 2018 with a degree in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and American Studies. She cares deeply about social change and performing meaningful work in her community. In 2020, Ayu founded Happy Hour Fund (@happyhourfund), a grassroots mutual aid organization that provides $200 financial assistance grants at the end of the month to excluded workers—workers who did not have access to unemployment/stimulus checks, healthcare, and other social services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Since its inception, HHF has raised over $50,000 and has collaborated with numerous community organizations across Los Angeles and Washington, DC. She is very excited to be a member of the 2022 Arts for LA Mentee Cohort!

Isabel Ngo is an arts administrator and editor with experience in publishing, visual and performing arts, and justice organizing. Isabel was born and raised in the San Gabriel Valley and currently works at Antaeus Theatre Company in fundraising and development. She graduated from Loyola Marymount University in 2018, where she studied theatre arts, English, and studio arts. Isabel is excited to be part of this year’s Protege cohort, and hopes to learn more about career pathways in arts and literary organizations, build community with fellow mentees, and continue developing her own artistic practice.

Jean Young (they/she) is a second generation Taiwanese American artist and storyteller who is inspired by the relationships around them. Their foundations are in visual arts and use illustrations, printmaking, photography, zines, ceramics, and more as materials to build narratives. Based in Los Angeles, they are currently the Marketing Coordinator at the Chinese American Museum, the Social Media Manager for Tuesday Night Project, and a Digital Publication Intern for the Smithsonian “Folklife” digital magazine. Through these roles, they focus on how digital media usage facilitates community building, informing the ways they create content and branding for the organizations they are a part of. As an arts advocate, they continue to utilize
digital strategies to create connections and access to resources within a community for more equity within the arts.

I’m **Jorge Vargas** (pronounced Hor-Hey), and I am an artist and licensed clinical social worker. I was born and raised in Los Angeles, CA, and my parents migrated from Michoacán, México in the 70’s. I identify as Chicano/Latinx, Queer, Cis-Male, First Generation college student, and as being from a low-income background. As an artist I create relief prints, digital graphics, and write poetry. My artistic work focuses on themes of healing, spirituality, and identity; all topics that overlap with my work as a therapist. Currently, I work in private practice as a clinician, while also creating a career as an artist; neither is a "side-hustle", both are core pieces of my professional and personal identity.

My name is **Kathya Lopez**, I was born and raised in Los Angeles, with an interest in museum education and arts administration. I have a B.A. in Art History and Spanish/Latin American Studies from Gettysburg College and a M.A. in Museum Studies from San Francisco State University. My hobbies include watching films, concert-going, and playing video games with friends. As an emerging museum professional, I want to continue learning about museums and cultural organizations alike and their untapped potential as we continue into the 21st century. While I was born and raised in Los Angeles, it does not mean I know everything that there is to be offered, especially in the arts sector. My intention with this mentorship program is to not only learn from my mentor but also from the mentees in the program through listening and reflecting about their experiences within this field.

**Kevine Ecliserio-Velez** is an independent artist, travel writer, and mental health advocate in East Los Angeles, California, born and raised as a Mexican-American. As a first-generation woman, she is passionate about developing community initiatives, enriching students in the K-12 sector, and assisting students pursuing higher education. After earning her Bachelor of Arts in Asian American Studies from California State University, Northridge, in 2018, she was also awarded a Community Builder Award within her academic department. Kevine has been working as a Community Engagement Coordinator at the Chinese American Museum for the past few years, building and sustaining community partnerships across the United States and Canada. She has also developed a workshop series for an Upward Bound TRiO program that focused on the college-going culture and developed English writing workshops. In addition, she facilitated a lecture at the WESTOP Student Leadership Conference, which focused on informing participants about the importance of soft skills and applying them in their day-to-day life to develop networking skills as they progress through their personal journeys. In her free time, Kevine loves to spend time with her family, loves to try new food, and enjoys playing tennis. She one day hopes to create an impact in the community and inspire others to achieve their goals.
My name is **Kiani Wish**, I’m a pinoy/caucasian, queer-identifying artist. Born and raised in LA. I attended LACHSA to study visual fine arts, then Long Beach City College, and finally transferred into UCLA’s Design Media Arts BA program. Seeking to round my skillset into an emerging virtual landscape, gain a deeper understanding of art's intersection in the "net" and exploring multiple notions of "user experience"- while discussing my conceptual intrigues that umbrella motifs of "SPACE" (proximity/amateur interior design/negative space in a room) and "COMFORT" (where cultural heritage intersects bildungsroman/mental tensions/illusions of safety) and more. Since graduating in 2021, I’ve interned for ESMoA under the Getty Marrow Undergraduate Internship program and now work part-time with the non-profit-art-space curating their internet presence. I’m interested in this opportunity because I feel I need guidance in focusing my practice to a focused place that can harmonize the "stories" I want to tell with my technical interests in spatial artworks (new & mixed media installations in real-life and digital-space), video art, illustration (my original love), AND experiential design. I would like a mentorship to help realize my authentic voice, because I know it is within reach. I would be incredibly grateful to work with an industry professional who has likely been in my dilemma and has developed tools that make them into the arts leader they are today.

**Lilia Jiménez** (she/her/ella) is a Los Angeles-based queer, first-generation Chicana arts administrator and a passionate advocate of education equity and racial justice in the arts. After graduating from Occidental College with a B.A. in Sociology and a minor in Latinx/Latin American Studies in 2018, she supported the Autry Museum as the Education Intern through the Getty Multicultural Undergraduate Internship program before spending a year in Mexico as a Fulbright Fellow. Upon returning to Los Angeles, she has worked in various capacities at arts institutions and non-profits spearheading community engagement efforts and supporting grant initiatives. As a 2022 Protege mentee, she is excited to grow her expertise in social entrepreneurship and equity work in the arts while bridging her experiences in program management with her passion for large-scale institutional impact that centers BIPOC communities.

Hi! Name's **Sofia Lugo** (She/They) I am an East Los Angeles Native and part of the BIPOC community. I am a person who loves storytelling and am a strong believer that art heals ! I love to create performance art, devised theatre, herbal teas, candles, soaps, and plant based foods to name a few. I would love to empower, educate, and disrupt structural barriers that obstruct the influence and growth of BIPOC individuals. I would love to have guidance/ a mentor that can help me find opportunities/ sharpen my skillset for the long run - I graduated with a BA in Theatre Arts - Have leadership skills, Stage Management Skills, Breathwork/Vocal Skills (Facilitation), and Guidance skills. I would like to grow more in leadership skills not limited to Community Engagement and organizing, Communications and Marketing, Directing, and Curating. I do consider myself as a Multidisciplinary- Theatre has taught me to work with what you have and remain resilient and keep moving forward. When the pandemic hit - it has been difficult finding my place in the arts- no longer eligible for internships due to my age and how long I've been out of school. Though I continued to move and build- I am teaching myself Adobe Creative as of right now- and work as a server. This experience can help me expand opportunities in other fields of entertainment and also a mentor to help guide me along the way.