**ACTIVATE Protege: Mentee Bios**

**Ajianna Covington.** I'm a new program director for Global Girl Media, and I am passionate about empowering girls through media and storytelling. I'm particularly interested in mentorship and how it can help girls develop their skills and confidence as they navigate the media industry. I would like to grow my expertise in several areas, including leadership development, program management, and media production. I believe that these skills will be critical in helping me support the girls in our program and achieve our organization's goals. Through my experience with the ACTIVATE mentee program, I hope to gain new insights into effective mentorship strategies and best practices for supporting young women in media. I also look forward to learning from the experiences and perspectives of other arts leaders, which will help me develop a more nuanced understanding of the industry and the challenges it faces. Ultimately, I believe that my experience with the ACTIVATE mentee program will help me become a more effective leader and advocate for girls in media. By building strong relationships with our mentees and providing them with the support they need to succeed, I hope to create a more equitable and inclusive media landscape for all young women.

**Angelene Storey** (she/her) is currently the Prop Coordinator at Center Theatre Group. In 2021, she graduated from Cal State Los Angeles with a BA in Theatre Design and Production. She is also a freelance scenic painter and has worked in theaters all around the Los Angeles area, including Boston Court, A Noise Within, and East West Players. Prior to working in technical theatre, Angelene studied classical voice and music theory for many years. She has always had a passion for various aspects of art and theatre. In her spare time she loves to travel and work on her small business.

**Bryan Arellano** is a Mexican-American illustrator and storyteller born and raised in Southeast Los Angeles and is based in Cudahy CA. He graduated from California State University, Fullerton in May 2021 with a BFA in Visual Art/Illustration and a minor in Marketing. Bryan is passionate about storytelling and believes stories help create a better world through the sharing of thoughts, emotions, experiences, and observations which allows us to understand others. He is currently working on his digital drawing skills through Photoshop and Illustrator but also enjoys traditional mediums such as ink, colored pencil, and oil paint. He enjoys taking note of small details of his everyday life and imagining them into something new by incorporating them into his work. During his spare time, he enjoys exercising, reading, learning new things, and spending quality time with friends, family, and of course his dog Bruno.
**Chanel Wayne** is a literacy advocate, digital media strategist, and creative facilitator focused on delivering community impact through education. To date, she has developed several writing and early literacy programs aimed at helping young people successfully navigate the world around them. Through her experience, she has learned that the only way to do business is honestly, in negotiation there is always an option for win-win, and when creating anything that matters we are better together. Put simply; authenticity, balance and collaboration are key pillars in her approach to life.

**Chantal Odalys Santoyo** is a first-generation college graduate, arts advocate, community organizer, and artist who is passionate about using the arts as an educational tool to uplift youth voice. She joined the Create CA team with a desire to make a change in her community because she believes the arts foster fierce leaders who are creative, collaborative, emotionally intelligent, and resilient. As a community organizer she finds innovative ways of creating safe spaces to convene youth, artists, art administrators, art advocates and activists as a way to foster community healing and building through the arts. She is a founding member of The Messy Theater Co., a theatrical production company that embraces the chaos and craziness that is artistic exploration, in the hope of creating a better tomorrow. In 2022 she was the Production Manager for The GRID – a program where students experienced a day of live-streamed student performances, engaged in a series of creativity-exploring workshops, and heard from industry professionals about their journeys! Chantal is a proud advocate for high quality arts education and strongly believes that the arts have the power to heal.

**Cinthia Duran Larrea** is a movement researcher with a decolonial vision, a Latin Social dancer, and an improviser following the legacy of the East Side Institute for Social Therapeutics and Performance Activism. She is currently pursuing a PhD in the Critical Dance Studies Program at the University of California Riverside, focusing her research in Latin Social Dances as resource-building and resource- sharing collective spaces that can be used to advance local social justice agendas. Cinthia currently works at UCR as a Teaching Assistant, Gluck Program of the Arts Fellow and Assistant Coordinator of the yearly gathering Indigenous Choreographers Riverside. In line with her vision as a scholar, her pedagogy activates dance, improvisation and performance as tools to offer individuals the possibility to perform who they want to become and improvise their way into the futures they envision for themselves and their communities.
Danielle Gorodenzik is an independent curator born and raised in Los Angeles. She is the co-founder and director of the annual In Print Art Book Fair, Jerusalem. Danielle has curated group and solo exhibitions focused on feminism, photography, and artist books. From 2018-2022, she served as the Director of Collections at the Africa First Collection by Serge Tiroche, where she spearheaded the Africa First Residency, curated exhibitions, and led acquisitions and sales. In 2020 she was selected as the Artis Video Archive Fellow at the Center for Contemporary Art Tel Aviv-Yafo. Between 2017-2019 she was the Juror and Curator for the Video Focus at the Fresh Paint Art Fair, Tel Aviv. From 2016-2018, she served as Program Coordinator at Artis. Danielle received her MA in Curatorial Studies from Bezalel Academy of Art and Design and holds a BFA in Communication Design from Parsons The New School of Design.

Francisco Barcena makes music and art that explores themes of political defiance, empowerment, resilience, and overcoming adversity. He was raised in south east LA and has a degree in math from UCSB. He has released over 40 music projects where he has collaborated with local and international artists. He currently works full time as a software engineer in the machine learning space. In his free time he is exploring ways to leverage his technical background in order to create art at scale and inspire people. He wants to inspire people to think differently, strategically, outside traditional expectations, and outside the sometimes misconceived frameworks that others unintentionally impose upon us.

Jen Krebs is a curious and adventurous soul who spent a decade in government and food policy before the pandemic spurred her to pursue a more artistic career in Los Angeles. Jen currently works at an advertising agency where she relishes being surrounded by inspiring people and ideas. In her free time, she explores all kinds of creative endeavors (currently, ceramics) and immerses herself in nature. With a drive to create and a zest for life, Jen hopes to inspire others to boldly pursue their own creative passions and harness the power of art to transform the world for the better.
**Julie Navarro** (she/they) is a creative artist, active volunteer, and community organizer for the People of South Gate, a collective focused on mutual aid plus social-political empowerment of the Southeast Los Angeles county area. Since graduating from Humboldt State University with a bachelors degree in Critical Race-Gender-Sexuality studies, Julie has organized free-food distributions alongside providing paintings, murals, photography, videography, as well as digital-graphic designs for various causes. She is also a worker-owner and founder of the live musical performance production company: Chilldust TV, that employs these services to local musicians. Julie looks to apply her experience as an artist to her education in critical theory so as to make an impact in learning to better educate others, especially youth in social-program deprived disenfranchised working class BIPOC areas.

**Keana Jackson Alfred.** I am the 1st Assistant Treasurer at Center Theatre Group and have worked on and off the stage for over ten years. As an arts administration professional for Los Angeles's most prominent theatre company, I aim to work behind the scenes on behalf of artists and creatives everywhere, providing resources, support, and structure for their projects and practices. I fell in love with theatre as a child actress, and my passion for storytelling developed into a career as a fashion and costume designer. I enjoy combining my zeal for the arts, deep affection for people, and expertise in communication to serve and support the theatre community locally and globally. I want to deepen my leadership, organization, teamwork skills, and networking. These skills will allow me to be the most productive and effective leader possible and manage a thriving arts organization. I am a Los Angeles native who enjoys writing everything from poetry to stage plays; I live in the Crenshaw/West Adams area of Los Angeles.

**Reda Yahoum** is a passionate arts professional dedicated to promoting cultural understanding and community engagement through storytelling. Having transitioned from a career in performing arts, Reda now collaborates with LACMA's Docent Council and School Tours program to create engaging educational experiences for visitors. With a strong interest in project management, Reda is keen to lead an oral history project that bridges political divides. As an immigrant and Muslim-American, Reda brings a unique perspective to his work and is committed to producing public programming for the South/West Asian and North African diaspora. His training in anthropology at UCLA has enabled him to explore the fascinating stories of his fellow human beings. When not working, Reda enjoys film, storytelling, and travel, and values quality time with his close friends despite being naturally reclusive.
Ree Magaña is a second-generation Mexican-American artist, curator, and marketing professional born and raised in Los Angeles County. After graduating from California School of the Arts-SGV, they studied marketing at Portland State University’s Honors College before transferring to Mt. San Antonio College to study Film, TV, and Electronic Media. Ree has a passion for making arts and education accessible to marginalized groups; founding CSArts’ Cultural Alliance group, creating a Thrift/Donate Center to aid unhoused individuals, promoting attainable career resources for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ students at PSU’s Career Center, aiding professors with online teaching accessibility at Lumen Learning, working with community outreach at Center Theatre Group, and currently supporting artists as an Art Share L.A. team member. Their recent curatorial projects include LA Underground Fashion Walk (Society of Art Los Angeles), Our Art LA exhibition (Art Share L.A. x Angel City Brewery Curator Program), STN Art Gallery (Long Beach Convention Center) and Pasadena Unified School District Youth in Foster art activation project (PUSD).

Sara Castro (she/her/ella) calls the San Gabriel Valley and East Los Angeles home. As a culture worker and aspiring public educator, Sara is passionate about using history and arts education to build and invest in cultures that can withstand injustices. She is interested in the power of archives and public history to shape stories of self and community and is grounded by her Mexican-American culture and family storytelling traditions. While receiving a B.A. in History at Grinnell College, Sara was a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow and focused her research on the role of interpersonal relationships in social and political movements through activists’ origin stories. Sara currently works as a Visitor Services Associate at LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes where she enjoys connecting with guests about their stories of Los Angeles.

SHI enjoys a challenge - which is why, for nearly a decade, she has been developing photorealistic paintings on wood. Inspired by years of international jet setting, SHI finds experimenting with traditional painting processes + focusing on minute abstract details a journey as interesting as the final piece. Most recently her process has evolved to include a film grain effect from resin + energetically charged materials giving each piece a unique appearance + palpable aura.