

**APPENDIX 1: Written Responses to Reflection Questions
Creative Facilitation Cohort**

1. What are the guiding principles that inform your work?

Equity, empathy, participation, inclusion, social imagination, serious play.

The largest guiding principal that informs my work is: Praxis!!

Moreover, specific components to my personal practice are:

I listen more than I speak. How else can I hear stories?

I plan my steps and also leave room for 'mistakes.' It's part of being creative and learning.

I take action.

I reflect again.

I am vulnerable and share my stories. How else can I build trust? Folks have to know that I am safe to share their stories and will keep their secrets.

I cherish working independently and in community. Both. Not either/or.

All living systems from organisms to organizations follow the same patterns

Understanding three levels of nested context is essential to understanding the significance or role of any member of a system or of a system. (work can only happen in specific places/communities)

Change is a matter of tracking where we are in those problems and finding the least change for the greatest effect (shifting the underlying patterns to shift the manifestation)

The Problem is the solution

Problems can only be solved by shifting levels

Three forces are required to bring anything new into being. Our job is to appreciate the source of the two presenting forces to find/or enable the emergence of the third.

I'm an art omnivore, however, I invest my time into helping make art happen that either:

1. Reframes an issue, idea and social inequity/injustice so that the audience might see it in a new way.
2. Poetic work (I'm not into make work that is too serious or too didactic).

Supporting diverse voices in the arts and making rigorous, thoughtful and quality art and art making opportunities approachable and available to audiences who don't typically have access to it.

- Respectful sharing, exchange and continued revitalization of relevance of Indigenous cultures
- Body and movement as carriers of uncategorized ways of knowing
- What truly nourishes body, mind, spirit, emotions, individual, collective, environment and how can that be embedded into all aspects of creative work process and outcome
- Pathways for diversity and inclusion of under-served/under-recognized populations including advocacy for Indigenous involvement including local land stewards and indigenous roots of all visitors to all lands
- Making creative space for multiple perspectives, contributions, experiences, voices
- Bringing intention daily to the work (such as : compassion, inspiration, discipline, empowerment etc..)

- Aspiring to create at a rigorous level of aesthetic that can reach true beauty, wonder, awe, magic, transformation
- Advocacy for the role of artist in society today
- Advocacy for diversity in decision making bodies

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kpBzUQHytM>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kpBzUQHytM>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wThjI5hLE-E>

Connection to, and respect for, this place and the people who have lived in relation to it for generations.

Process is as important as product.

Don't be a jerk.

 I believe that education is about something larger than facts, information, and numbers. It is about developing a way to see and live in the world with deep appreciation for the larger purposes of life – its beauty and grief, its complexity and calling. I believe that relationships matter, that teaching well is honorable work, that Dewey was on to something when he wrote that educators need to have “insight into soul action.” I believe that making things beautiful is a way of honoring people. I believe in seeking out diverse voices and perspectives to help me do my work more fully. I believe in giving thanks and forgiving easily, practices that make it easier to do work that matters.

 That we are creatures of story.

The power of connection. Intent to connect.

Exchange.

Gratitude.

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- Student-centered education – shifting focus from teacher to student
 - Honoring student passion / interest – allowing lesson to take different direction if students discover a thread to explore that isn't in planned content. (You can always make-up the time elsewhere.)
 - A combination of flexibility, humor, and the ability to try new things, fail, and laugh when things work out – and when they don't.
 - Mutually beneficial partnership model – students gain from community partners as they provide volunteer hours.
 - Empathy in the classroom results in empathy when learning new ideas, encountering difference, and understanding fear - our own and that of others.

 Answering the questions:

Why am I doing this?

What is the motivation/Is there an ulterior motive/ How is it most authentic?

What do this work teach me about myself?

“Does it feel good/ bring joy?” is a new question I am considering.

Do I need the work? If I can strip something down to an authentic need, then I can be sure that other people need it also.

Social Justice, Healing, Community, Creativity, Meaning-making, dreaming, caring for one another, learning.

Listening, compassion, foregrounding community voices/taking myself out of the middle, power of story/testimonial, biological imperative of creativity.

Love, integrity, curiosity, authenticity. A desire to enable discovery, joy, empowerment, compassion, kindness, leadership, love. A belief in the imperative of connectivity as a means of creating balance, peace, justice, equity, unity in the world, and in the vehicle of arts, culture, cultural exchange as a means of identifying and fostering such connections.

That the world is a better place and that there's greater resources, enthusiasm, willingness to change and justice if all members of a community have means to participate and find avenues of self-determination.

Learning through engaged practice and a commitment to creating the space for Dreams and Dreaming, Curiosity, Compassion, Empathy, Gratitude, Love, Hope, Beauty, Wonder, Spirit, Soul, Grief, Loss, Risks and Risk-taking, Failure, Being wrong, Laughing.

Explore and learn something new, have fun, create beauty.

Respect, Presence, Diversity, Social Responsibility, Focus

There are many and sometimes it depends on the situation which ones come to the forefront. To me the situation/ site/ space/ participants are my guides. However listening, rigor, empathy, a horizontal approach, sharing, fluidity and holding the question not giving answers are all principals that I try to evoke.

Relentless creativity. I am in pursuit of that. People that create together have much more than an ideological connection with one another, they have a muscle memory, bio-informational, bio-rhythmic, spiritual connection to one another. I like us to be vulnerable together, take risks together...that is just like strengthening a muscle. The muscles between us.

2. Why do you do the work you do?

(Forgive me, but I'm going to pull directly from text that I wrote for the website of the USDAC. This describes what I believe and why I do what I do.)

In this era of broken systems—from healthcare to energy to education to the way our entire economy is structured—citizens must be empowered to imagine and enact positive alternatives. To cultivate effective co-creators of new systems based in equality, non-discrimination, and sustainability, we must provide universal access to empowering creative experiences that build empathy and social imagination.

Active creative participation is a gateway to ongoing civic engagement and the capacity to collaborate is a key element of any resilient community. But for too long, we've believed that everything that counts can be counted, ignoring the vital role that arts and culture play in advancing equity, innovation, and democracy. Everything that is created must first be imagined, yet we've failed to fully invite and support people in every community to step up as artists and agents of change.

And this...

The USDAC is not an outside agency coming in; it's our inside agency coming out. Knowing that we must "be the change we want to see," we recognize that:

- *In this era of broken systems, we must exercise our collective imagination to develop more just and sustainable systems.*
- *In this era of technological domination, we must also connect in the physical world (with each other and the natural world that sustains us) with renewed commitment and harmonious intention.*
- *In this era of ecological and economic peril, we must strengthen our capacity to collaborate so as to respond with resilience to the challenges to come.*
- *In this era of increasing global inequity, we must recognize our common humanity and work to connect and share resources across difference.*
- *In this era of rampant consumption and materialism, we must look for new, creative ways to find meaning and satisfaction that don't involve financial exchange or the destruction of social, natural, and cultural resources.*
- *In this era of globalization, we must recognize our interdependence and connectedness while protecting the customs, languages, stories, celebrations, and artistry that are the wellspring of cultural diversity and of our wisdom traditions.*
- *In this era of uncertainty, we must not lose hope, but rather gain strength through shared rituals of joy, connection, envisioning, mourning, and celebrating.*

We cannot wait for someone else to step in to fix things, but must step up as artists in and of society, working to widen our collective circle of care.

I was raised by cultural worker parents who produced mainstream media and a community of artists and creatives. One of my parents was also consistently involved in formal education throughout his full-time career, so I come by both fields of work pretty honestly. While that is what significantly influenced me to taking up this path, as an adult, however, I have chosen the work that I do because cultural work resonates with me. Academic calendars support my natural seasonal work rhythms, as well as my desire to combine and mix face-to-face teaching time, as well as disciplined, solo story and creative writing work. I am also extremely curious, so the researcher/academic path is a good fit. The reality is that I continue to refine the places where I work and engage.

Because of my love of the living world and the sadness of what a low-level game we are playing knowing the potential beauty of human life we all are capable of.

My careers path was set from the second I enrolled at Working Classroom at 11-years-old. If I didn't have Working Classroom I don't think I would have become an arts administrator. I think

would have become a “leader” in a different sector – probably a school administrator/teacher or an attorney.

My work is on behalf of cultivating health and harmony for Indigenous cultures, all people, all forms of life, the earth, the elements and the universe.

It helps with social anxiety. I’m a big fan of party tricks---focal points and distractions.

On my father's side my family has lived in New Mexico for more than 10 generations. Despite this, the story of our relationship to the land is one of displacement. Engaging communities in story helps me to heal, it helps our communities--families like mine and other families with their own stories--to re-connect, to re-member.

I taught and was a principal for 20 years in independent schools. I am very grateful for those amazing years, but I was longing to partner with and offer something meaningful to educators in the larger community. I’ve taught and led long enough to know that to do either well requires some crazy balance of knowledge acquisition and imagination, rigorous work and tenderness. It is really the most difficult work. I founded the Sofia Center because I hoped to offer experiences for educators that inspire and support the kinds of educative experiences that matter – the kind that transform us in powerful ways.

Believe it contributes to an amplified impact of the whole.
I have respect, trust, and belief to represent a specific element of the greater story of place.

Every day I feel grateful for the opportunity to introduce youth (6-12 grade) to social justice issues through service-focused community interactions and thoughtful classroom learning. On my father's side my family has lived in New Mexico for more than 10 generations. Despite this, the story of our relationship to the land is one of displacement. Engaging communities in story helps me to heal, it helps our communities--families like mine and other families with their own stories--to re-connect, to re-member.

I used to do the work I do out of curiosity and discovery. Then remarkably found how profoundly it unconcealed a deeper identity of who I am in the context of society and in the context of history. Now so much work is done to heal, to get to know myself, and to connect with others, a need for intimacy.

I can’t imagine not doing work that I do because working towards healing and social justice on an individual and collective level ultimately gives me hope. It is in the most simple, most personal of exchanges that I am able to see our great capacity for healing and connection. Whether it is in the creation of a new song, laughing unexpectedly, or enjoying a bike ride on a summer’s night, hope for me makes life worth living.

I don’t really know how to do anything else. My grandfather was a storyteller and taught us the power of community, art, and healing. It’s in my DNA.

In terms of my work at NHCC - because it affords me an opportunity to create and implement meaningful programming in a setting that is invested in diversity, creative exploration, cultural

exchange and accessibility. Also because I love the potential that exists with a resource like NHCC.

In terms of my theatrical work with Tricklock and beyond – because I enjoy the possibilities of the dynamics created between artists and audiences inherent in live performance. I love the relationships that can be created and explored on stage. I love the visceral and sometimes ephemeral experience of live performance. I love the questions and dialogues that can erupt after live work.

I love it. It is fulfilling. I feel like a positive member of my community and world. I can bring the skills I have to a larger circle.

To actively participate in creating a more just, peaceful, and loving world
To stay moored to infinite possibility in spite of... well so much.

I make things for the sheer joys of making, discovering and inventing.

My current work aims to bring a voice to those who are being deprived a voice and stifled by social inequality. It aims to recognize their being and current situation in life.

I absolutely believe in the power of this social practice/ arts and community engagement work. I have been a practitioner for over 30 years and I am still honing my practice to make sense in this rapidly changing world. I need to keep myself as a learner and an explorer into new territories... This keeps my practice alive and keeps me intrigued and passionate. I have been steeped in this work for such a long time that I have been a witness to radical changes in communities and in individuals. As we know real change/ transformation does not happen overnight, it takes time... so I have been lucky to have been able to follow communities and individuals over a period of time.

To see and feel this transformation and to see and feel that spark lights in someone's eyes and to see and feel the transformation of the earth as seeds begin to sprout is what keeps me doing what I do. It has not always been easy and there are times that I despair that the work that I animate does not do enough. At times like this I have tried to give it up and to go back into my lone world as a visual artist but it never lasts long. The pull of collaboration and community is too strong.

Because I don't know any other way to connect with folks. It is the way I was connected to when I was young. I always gravitated towards the eccentric folks in my family, at my jobs, in my school. I was them, they were me. Some times those random acts of expression were celebrated, sometimes they were disciplined. Both my parents worked two jobs at any given point in my upbringing to send me to a private Quaker school because the public compulsory school system didn't know what to do with my imagination and insatiable curiosity. Sports became an outlet to that energy later when I was in 4th grade and returned to public schools, but earlier than that it was a lower teacher-to-student ratio and an exploratory model of learning that allowed me to learn by experiencing. I lead workshops on experiencing...not poetry, not music, not theater... collective and collaborative experiencing.

3. Who or what has influenced you and how (name three influences)?

Growing up in theater. From a very young age I was immersed in collaborative settings that required unabashed creativity and excellent communication in order to create experiences as a group (often under significant constraints of time and resources) that were greater than any one of us could as an individual.

Culture and cultural groups of Latin America. Whether working with grassroots theater ensembles in Chile, Peru, or Colombia, or simply traveling and experiencing South America, I've been inspired by the liveness of public ritual, a sense of a thriving cultural commons and regional cultural pride, a common culture that encourages creative participation, and the way that Freirian pedagogical principles are deeply embedded in many cultural and community spaces.

Ashoka, social enterprise, and its biases. In working with folks and organizations committed to scaling up solutions to seemingly intractable problems, I was surprised by the lack of understanding of the role of the arts and creative methodologies. This planted a seed and a challenge...

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- Popular education and critical pedagogy leaders such as: Paulo Freire, bell hooks, Myles Horton etc. Their books continue to inspire me, and laid the foundation for my academic work.
 - Curanderas, ie traditional folk healers in Central America, Santeras and Condomblistas in Cuba and Brasil, and the old aunties and grandmas in Black families. They encourage my own individual healing, spiritual knowledge and commitment to community transformation.
 - Cultural and Sovereignty Workers who are personal teachers and can serve up immediate, wise advice over food, laughs and sometimes tears.
 - My lineage/family of origin/ancestors/children/love. The reason why I live.

Permaculture (Bill Mollison)

Tracking/Navigation (John Stokes)

Living Systems Thinking (Pamela Mang/Carol Sanford)

1. **Parents and mentors** that emphasized creativity, culture and the arts in my childhood/adolescence. My mom always took me to museums, enrolled us in dance and sent us to Working Classroom as soon as we turned 11 years old. Then it was my time at Working Classroom.

2. **Arts administrators and curators working on the forefront of increasing representation in the arts and who emphasize inclusive and relevant programming for authentically diverse audiences.** These include Thelma Golden (my former boss) of the Studio Museum. Tom Finklepearl in both his work at the Queens Museum and now as Commissioner of Cultural Affairs for NYC. Jen De Los Reyes who is founder of the Open Engagement Conference.

3. **Artist who engage in social practice and community-based art;** artists who make community participation essential to their practice; **artists who's work addresses social injustices or reinterprets identity, history and collective memory whether the work is sober, playful or poetic.** Artists I don't know but who I follow: Mel Chin, Rick Lowe, Tania Bruguera, Felix

Gonzales-Torres, Doris Salcedo and Christian Boltanski. Artists I know and admire: Joe Stephenson, Kameelah Rasheed and Ronny Quevedo.

My five greatest influences are the natural world, visual and performing art, Indigenous cultures, health/healing, and cultural exchange through travel.

A Cabinet Maker.

An Early Childhood Educator.

A Roofer

A Plasterer

A Duchamp

Rudolfo Anaya: *Bless Me, Última* was the first book I read in which the characters looked and sounded like the people I knew and loved best. His writing gave me permission to write in the language of my parents, to write for, with, and about the people of this place.

Sandra Cisneros: established the Macondo Writers' Workshop as "a homeland" for socially conscious writers. Good writing does not compensate for apathy or bad behavior. Good deeds do not compensate for bad writing.

Chrissie Orr: her authenticity and deep respect for this place and its people enable her to form deep relationships and draw heartfelt, quality expression from a diverse communities.

One. My mom grew up on a farm in Nebraska, and I spent time there in the summers as a child. It was the first place I got to wander whole afternoons alone, and it was there that I remember first pondering how the world came to be and how we are supposed to live in it. Those experiences also planted the seeds for deep love of the outdoors and for wanting to live meaningfully in relationship to the land.

Two. There are many writers and thinkers who have rocked my world – and helped me put it back together. The educator whose thinking has shaped my work significantly the last decade is Maxine Greene. Greene writes movingly about teaching and learning always as the site of possibility. Over and over, she asks, “What is possible?” Is there a more important question? She is also unapologetic in making the case that beauty, art, and poetry should lie at the heart of education.

Three. My whole being has been shaped by the education experiences I’ve been privileged and blessed to have. The teachers who asked the big questions are the dearest to me, especially Dr. Thomas Sobol at Teachers College. He asked us to think about the ethics of our work as education leaders. How do we make ethical decisions that hold people up? How does the question of what is ethical inform every decision we make as leaders, as humans? I love Tom Sobol both for the intellectual rigor of his courses and for the kindness he shared so democratically. He showed up in our classroom with his whole self despite deep physical suffering from a severe illness. How would my life be without the teachers I’ve had, including spiritual elders and my extraordinary parents? The most important teachers in my life have always taught me something more than the subject area that was their expertise. They called me to consider the meaning of things and how I wanted to be in the world. They still do.

The last person with whom I had an authentic moment of connection. Reinforced the very why of this journey for me.

All storytellers. Really so humbled and grateful for all those bold, brave, and disciplined enough to shape words into sentences that speak to me and presumably so many others.

My kidlets. Understand so much more about our journey—from the moment we are born we are moving away, thus a parent’s job is to establish a solid foundation for the launch—towards actualization.

(Apologies if you were expecting defined individuals. Always among the above are the individual.)

Clyde Kluckhohn – The Values Orientation Method
Edward T. Hall – High and Low Context Cultures
Parker J. Palmer

Walter de maria, the Earth Room. It was the first contemporary art work that spoke to me, and this gave me permission to like art.
Gandhi. Nonviolent Revolution! wow!
Yoko Ono, simplicity, profundity, and authenticity of her explorations.

From a young age my family instilled in me a desire to be part of a movement of people working towards justice. My mother raised me going to rallies and important political events where I first heard musicians singing about social change. I grew up listening to Holly Near, Victor Jara, and Silvio Rodriguez. These songs and voices inspired me to begin writing poetry and expressing myself through music. My mom’s best friend is a poet and would take time to read my writing and support my early work. In high school my creative writing teacher also wrote long notes in the margins of my painstakingly angst filled notebooks encouraging me and asking me insightful questions. I took refuge in the music of the Indigo Girls, Ani DiFranco, Tracy Chapman and Patty Griffin. I played their music at open mics and felt a sense of belonging that helped me through some difficult high school years. Many of my formative relationships were with women who painted, wrote poetry, sang and danced. Each of these teachers, family members, mentors and lovers illuminate some part of the puzzle I’ve been piecing together over the course of my lifetime.

My grandfathers, grandmothers, mother, and father
Paulo Freire and bell hooks
Ngugi wa Thiong’o

It may sound cliché, but Mother Teresa.
Artists Robert LePage, Peter Brook, Marina Abramovic, Anne Hamilton, Hafiz, ee cummings, Neruda.
Local leaders and activists Shelle Sanchez, Jim Linnell, Valerie Martinez, Toby Herzlich, and Nina Simons and Cultivating Women’s Leadership curriculum.

Anthony Braxton's notions of the creative community (in which by creating together, we are changeable, our identities can become fluid and we can become open to being vulnerable); Molly Sturges (yep) and her notions of the artist ensemble and the potency of creative collaboration; Victor Turner and his notions of the liminal and communitas.

Joanna Macy and the spiral of learning and experience that helps us reconnect and stay connected to the world and one another. At the heart of it is the importance of committing to action, taking risks, improvising, falling down,, seeking and gaining value from the fall, getting up again, re-engaging. "We don't wait for a blueprint or fail-proof scheme; for each step will be our teacher, bringing new perspectives and opportunities. Even when we don't succeed in a given venture, we can be grateful for the chance we took and the lessons we learned." This speaks to the relationship I want to have to my work and the relationship I want to have to the world.

I studied at the École de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq in Paris, where we devised short original theatrical pieces in groups of 5-7 every week for two years. Each week everyone in each group was simultaneously a leader and a follower as there were no assigned directors. While the experience was at times very challenging, I learned how to improvise, collaborate, share leadership roles, and work within an ensemble without losing a sense of my individuality. I draw on the lessons learned at the school on a daily basis in my professional and personal life.

Choreographer/Director Alain Platel – he takes what many would consider the harsh stories of those who on the margins and renders them beautiful, compelling, and noble. After experiencing his work over several years, I find it impossible to take people or places at 'face value'. His work, so visceral and visual, helps me remember not to judge too quickly or harshly.

Poet Seamus Heaney – he transformed my understanding of language and the land in which I grew up. He taught me how to see and feel the world anew. Through language, imagination, wonder, he brought dignity and honour to the land, to those who work on it, to those who engage in physical labour, but also to those who engage with the world through imagination and spirit.

Jim Henson for his impeccable understanding of funny, adorable and thinking different.

Suzuki Roshi for his teachings on Beginner's Mind: seeing familiar things from unfamiliar perspectives; having reverence and awe for simplicity; becoming aware when rut-making and grasping.

Antoni Gaudi for his crazy, playful and fearless sense of design.

Gloria E. Anzaldua, Theaster Gates, Immigration Issues.

The land around me influences me, the air I breathe, the natural way of a certain landscape, the way the light plays with my eyes, sounds, putting one foot in front of the other, the culture of place. New Mexico has been a huge influence on my work now. The culture of this place mixed with the culture of my homeland..... And I have listed more than three but there are people, too... Jacques Lecoq, Susanne Lacy, David Harding, and of course the people I work with they always influence me.

Kenn Rodriguez - My first poetry slam coach, and scored me my first gig as a poetry coach at South Valley Academy. That was my first class of guinea pigs.

Idris Goodwin - Idris brought a theatrical framework to what I do with Urban Verbs. Excellence is key in any artistic engagement, and he took us from spitting poems upright (vertical) to really going horizontal and cutting through a room, creating a space...giving everyone in the room's imagination permission to let loose. He also helps me frame what I am doing in community in an academic and craft-like way.

Littlelobe/McCune - The first investments into my practice of artistic engagement came from McCune, and they advised that we seek out Littlelobe as a fiscal sponsor. It was a perfect fit, what I learned from Littlelobe about community based practice and arts based community development has informed how I work and let me know there is a community of people who work like I do. They have introduced me to that community.

4. Who are your key collaborators? Where are they located?

Key collaborators include:

- Arlene Goldbard, the USDAC's Chief Policy Wonk, writer/speaker/longtime cultural activist, soon to be moving to Santa Fe.
 - Jessica Solomon, the USDAC's Chief Weaver of Social Fabric, awesome facilitator/organizer/artist/consultant, based in DC.
 - Yolanda Wisher, the USDAC's Rhapsodist of Wherewithal, incredible poet/educator, based in Philly.
 - Liz Maxwell, the USDAC's Chief Dot Connector, immersed in the world of social innovation, based in NYC.
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I can answer this question with institution affiliations, not with individual names and locations, as I do not know who will read these responses, or where it may be archived. Moreover, I keep my circle very, very tight, and as one of my closest peer-mentors and sister-friends said in response to me reading this question to her, "Network is sanctuary."

So current institutional affiliations are:

The Aspen Institute – Franklin Project
Columbia University in New York

Love that word:

John Stokes in Corrales NM
Ben Haggard, Pamela Mang, Nick Mang in SF NM
Brad Lancaster Tucson AZ

Depends on how one defines "collaboration" – this word has been used to mean many things. We work on projects with a variety of art-related and non-art-related non-profits, mostly in ABQ, specifically in the South Valley and Downtown. We also engage contemporary artists of color both locally and nationally to create work with us and engage in dialogue about community-based art making and socially engaged art.

My key collaborators are dancers, filmmakers, musicians, costume designers, educators and activists – all of indigenous heritage - located in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Dulce, Shiprock, Gallup, Espanola, San Francisco and Durango as well as culture carriers and activists in Flagstaff /Northern AZ, Bay Area, Southern California, New Zealand, Canada (Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia). I also have associations with non –Native allies here in NM including several artists, filmmakers, educators, permaculturists, farmers or food/seed advocates.

There are so many great people I have been fortunate to co-work with...Many are in this room. Great people to learn from and learn with!

This year I'll be coworking with a Ventureño Chumash filmmaker in Washington State on a film for the Muckleshoot Tribe.

I'm also excited about creating 'quickies' with some former students from Working Classroom--- one is in Albuquerque and the other is in Chicago.

My sister and I are brother and sister so I'm not quite sure if collaborator fits....I think It's just "brother and sister working together".

A performance artist from North Carolina who is currently tossing around the idea smuggling sand from somewhere New Mexico to Chicago-- where she currently lives. We built many things together.

A Freckled dog who is learning tricks. I'm learning so much about patience and observation.

Chrissie Orr, Santa Fe
Valerie Martinez, Albuquerque
Shelle Sanchez, Albuquerque
Michelle Estrada Allred & Valli Rivera, Albuquerque

Since the launch of the Sofia Center in 2013, I've been blessed with an ever-expanding circle of collaborators. These include educators throughout Albuquerque and Santa Fe, as well as colleagues working in education in other parts of the country. I try to collaborate with people working in a wide range of schools and organizations, and I invite colleagues to lead at the Sofia Center. I'm at a point with my work that the vision I have will be possible only through collaboration with others. .

Those willing to dream and scheme. Near, far, and to be discovered.
Those committed to pushing my form of art out to a broader audience, aka Opera for All Ages. Near, far, and to be discovered.
Those with shared beliefs about who we are and with this knowing how we may be better. Near, far, and to be discovered.

Community partners where students participate in service projects, 'guest experts' who bring voices from the field or community into our classrooms (sometimes co-facilitation happens), and other service learning educators around Albuquerque. Also, a cohort of faculty who are 'faculty sponsors'

my daughter! my friends, people in Santa Fe. unsuspecting people in the vicinity...

I'm completing graduate school in counseling this fall, and actively searching for new collaborators. As a touring songwriter I collaborated with many other songwriters as well as singers and musicians across the country. As a therapist I'm exploring creatively minded facilitators, healers, educators and activists with whom to collaborate on transformative work with individuals and groups whether in agency, institutional or non-traditional settings. My current work with Lifesongs as a facilitating artist has introduced me to an incredible new array of talented artists and teachers with whom I'm very enthusiastic to continue collaborating with.

Adam McKinney, NM
Kathryn Ervin, CA
Kwezi Johnson, U.K.
Ty Defoe, NY (Daniel)

Various independent artists predominantly in the Albuquerque area including Valerie Martinez, Damien Flores, Sarita Streng. Plus producers Tom Frouge and Neal Copperman, 516 Arts, UNM, CNM, Tricklock, City of Albuquerque Water Authority.

I have three regions of collaborators: NYC and San Francisco Bay area (my more directly personal and experimental work, with various musicians and performers, with an emphasis on performance and community) and New Mexico (through Littlelobe with a focus on documentary filmmaking and cross-sector/cross-cultural collaborations).

Currently they are Molly Sturges, Chris Jonas, Aaron Stern and the staff at the Academy for the Love of Learning (particularly Alysha Shaw), Chris Sandoval and the activities staff at the Santa Fe Care Center, the Lifesongs facilitating artists, and the engaged members of the Lifesongs Community.

I don't have key collaborators, although I would like to. I collaborate with my partner Jason, occasionally, but our schedules don't allow for this very often.

Santa Fe University of Art and Design – Santa Fe, NM
Accion y Vision – Ciudad Juarez, MX

I have many key collaborators, this cohort, the Academy for the Love of Learning, the SeedBroadcast Collective, Michelle Otero, Molly Sturges, Jeannette Hart-Mann, Sanjit Sethi, Roger Montoya, too many to mention. Most key collaborators are here in New Mexico but I do have some in Europe. I made the conscious choice about 10 years ago to focus my work in New Mexico. It was important to me to get to know the place where I lived in a deeper way and I wanted to cut down on travel.

Carlos Contreras (ABQ, NM), Colin Diles Hazelbaker (ABQ, NM), Mike Gerdes (ABQ, NM), Tricklock Theater (ABQ, NM), Idris Goodwin (Colorado Springs, CO).

5. How do you define “creative facilitation”?

Drawing from an array of artistic, social, and pedagogical tools, creative facilitation is an approach to cultivating the inclusive, expressive, imaginative and authentic participation of individuals and groups in their journeys toward realizing personal and collective dreams.

I define creative facilitation as a process of engaging and encouraging the creative process with oneself or a group of people.

Working with the people and the energy in the room to have a dialog that can grow a field in which effective work can be developed to begin to develop and grow a field in the community so that something new can be brought into being that has been being called for.

I've never used that term. I use "socially engaged art," "art and social practice," and simply, "art." Thinking of art and artistic practices as a framework for creating positive and sustainable social change. See: Rick Lowe's Project Row Houses, Mel Chin's Fundred Dollar Bill Project and Tania Bruguera's as the First artist-in-residence for the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs.

I haven't ever defined it. I am not sure if it means the facilitation of creativity, or facilitating the birth or passage of some kind of concept, entity or intention in a creative way. Either way, I believe my life has prepared me to facilitate creativity itself, or to creatively collaborate in the birthing of new or renewed entities, by teaching me how to be, embody, inspire and cultivate learning, discipline, kinetic forms of understanding.

Creating with participants, rather than explaining how to create.

Loose, but tight: I might walk into a room with an agenda and a goal, but I am open to what emerges and can adapt to participants who would rather paint a self-portrait than write one in poetic form.

Storytelling and creative expression have many applications beyond creating art, building relationships, from helping people heal from trauma to strategic planning for non-profit organizations.

I think of creative facilitation as designing varied and compelling ways for individuals and groups to do meaningful work. I love thinking about how we create the frame or container for good work. We often think of facilitation as activity in the moment – the way one or two of us "facilitate" a discussion or gathering. But I think of creative facilitation as something that extends beyond the individual(s) leading to include the materials we use, the movement we incorporate, the careful design of questions, the arrangement of the physical space, the energy we bring to the experience. Creative facilitation includes having a very tight plan that you are willing to abandon in a heartbeat if a need, opportunity, or possibility arises that is best served by moving in a different direction than you imagined or anticipated.

Critical to the definition is that is generated by all present, albeit with structural integrity.

- Collaborating with co-facilitators (teachers, community partners, sometimes parents, etc.) who bring different experience and skills-set to the conversation. This intentional planning and programming lends diversity in style, content, and connections to the learning environment.

- Using different mediums and modalities for different kinds of learners, as well as for engaging different sensibilities and skills - movement, writing, verbal, artistic, small group work, individual work, freedom to select work space, etc.

- Intentional space and time for reflection and, when appropriate, sharing out to group / classroom community, as well as space and time for actual application of content learned or planning for integration of that content.

Bringing about consciousness, interaction regarding consciousness, perspective through spoken and unspoken communication.

I see this as not only bringing creativity in the form of expressive arts to facilitation, but also in thinking creatively around community building, collaboration, advocacy and group work. I'm passionate about healing and teaching models that ultimately have at their core a desire to transfer facilitation and leadership to participants and communities. I believe creative facilitation takes courage to step outside of traditional models of teaching and learning, and focuses on relationship building between human beings. Often it requires a willingness to challenge current systems of power while continuing to be able to work within these contexts.

Using arts-based/creative approaches to catalyze community dialogue.

"Creative facilitation" to me is mode of facilitating experiences and exploration with use of and an openness to a wide variety of modalities. Creative facilitation has an objective of cultivating and supporting new discoveries in participants of a given project/program through helping them tap into new "voices" within themselves. A process which allows for participants to be in contact with themselves and each other through an endless set of possible lenses used to evoke and loosen up blocks in communication and deep exchange.

A set of tools to (a) hold and define a safe and equitable space for a circle of people and (b) find creative/artistic means to work and create together, across human divides of class, culture, age, ability, power. By doing so, we bring to the surface new stories and perspectives, latent and hard to express feelings (that may be powering the divides themselves) and see one another as new allies, partners, and fellow human beings.

For me, Facilitation means the creation and 'holding' of a safe space, for all participants. Authentic and meaningful facilitation, creative or not, requires of the facilitator a deep understanding of who he/she is (our internal motor and capacity), in relationship to the subject matter and the people in the room. Facilitation is all about the relationships in the room and the facilitator creates both the container and the invitation, and this has a huge impact on what can happen.

Also, I see facilitation as what happens before and after, in addition to during a session/project. With creative facilitation, I think of facilitators who are willing to be creative and take risks; can use creative means to go beyond stereotypes and embrace complexity; are receptive to the creativity and inspiration that is in the space, and who have the capacity to invite participants to engage in subjects with fresh eyes/perspective.

Perhaps much of this is true of all good facilitators though?

Helping others (and reminding self) to recognize our own unique potential through creative endeavor. Especially potent are experiences that leave us with greater self-appreciation, that we can achieve more than we thought we could, and that our contribution matters to the big picture. Such is the goal of creative facilitation.

A form or manner in which an individual or group collaborate in a non-traditional sense to disseminate information that can be apprehended and retained to promote personal and communal growth.

To me creative facilitation is what I learned to do when trying to teach, “art” and when trying to engage communities into seeing, feeling and imagining their community in a new way. It is holding a space and intent in an expansive way to allow for a catalytic process. It is a dance of coming forward and stepping back, of being aware, of working like a conductor with an improvised score.

A two dimensional (internal and external), 360 degree facilitation process ... rather than a unidirectional facilitation process. It is in full color and high definition. It includes seeing people before seeing the intended outcome...and if you do it properly, we each as people pull more and more into focus as we pursue our shared, intended outcome.

6. Please describe how the work you do is related to creative facilitation?

I help run a national network of artists/organizers/educators dedicated to the creative transformation of their communities. I’m interested in how we can build infrastructure to share practices and build capacity and collective impact across sites. In addition to supporting our Cultural Agents in bolstering their creative facilitation chops, I’m interested in how we can disseminate creative facilitation techniques through large-scale creative actions. For example, as part of the People’s State of the Union, folks in more than 150 communities received online story circle training before hosting story circles as part of the action. I’m also interested in how we can better use creative facilitation within the organizing team of this initiative.

I curate, write, record, and amplify stories, as well as teach the storytelling process. The research thread I am picking up is a continuation of the work I completed for my dissertation research with cultural workers who use education as a tool for social change. At this time, my current research is looking into the methods oral historians use when collecting narratives for social change, which may be able to draw from and be enhanced by the transformational methods that traditional folk healers use to engage with their clients (as part of the comprehensive remedy).

Everything I do is based on helping us to reflect on patterns within our own lives, families and professions as well as communities to explore the highest expression of ourselves at all of these levels.

We use the arts as a platform to discuss issues that affect our communities. We use art to imagine new solutions. We use art to physically transform our surrounding and to share our stories.

I have grounded my practice with Dancing Earth in various indigenous philosophies, including non hierarchical leadership. Thus, a rehearsal or workshop facilitates creative and cultural collaborations or contributions by each participant – which feels like facilitation rather than teaching of choreographing based on a specific model that must be mimicked or emulated. I do enter the room with a ‘map’ of themes and an estimation of what could be achieved (because I am using working within a set of restrictions such as time, space and budget). I enjoy seeing the confidence, freedom, expression, creativity that comes out of this way of working and have been happy to see how this grows leadership amongst participants far beyond the studio. I appreciate experiencing how this practice grows relationships continually.

Sometimes in the position of “creative director” or “creative facilitator” when I’m teaching a workshop or working on a piece of art, I become excited about ideas and want to dive into those ideas with others. Teaching is always a joy for me (when in the right context) because I enjoy creating problems and teaching has oh so much to do with problem solving, both on the learning end and the learning end-- Oh I love constraints. I see teaching as a space where the assignments are sculptures, platforms for experience and interaction. We see how the other thinks in solving the same constraint we had. “Creative Facilitation” to me is creating a grid on the ground and having people walk on that grid, then introducing new elements.

Storytelling and shared expression are at the heart of my work.

I design and lead workshops, seminars, and retreats for teams within my school (Bosque School) as well for groups of teachers and education leaders who come from diverse schools and organizations. I’m facilitating a very wide range of groups, some with long-established dynamics; some with people who are meeting for the first time; some made up of educators doing very similar work, i.e. a department of English teachers; and some that include pre-K through university educators, classroom teachers, leaders of educational non-profits, and more. I’ve never thought about my work as “creative facilitation,” but this project certainly invites me to think about how much of my time I spend on the “how” of these various experiences, and the “how” is the facilitation; it’s the pedagogy. I’m of course very eager to learn from the experience and wisdom of the others in this group. Thank you for creating this rich opportunity.

Ah, ever striving to be better in that I get out of the way and let in happen. Ideally it is manifest in all that we do, down to a staff meeting, a fleeting encounter with our public.

This happens on different levels: 1. in bringing together people to see what will happen and holding space/intention; 2. in creating public works (like Snow Poems) that change how people interact with the environment; 3. in curating conversations public and private.

My work with Lifesongs as a facilitating artist has led me to be in constant search of new ways of making connection with elders who struggle to remain connected to community and family due to dementia and related cognitive failure. This means I employ poetry, music, songs, and

conversation as a means of bridging that distance. Using the creative arts helps build trust, and works against persistent isolation that these elders face even when they are surrounded by others experiencing similar challenges. Our work is collaborative, and seeks to dignify the stories and experiences of our group participants and individuals in hospice.

All of it, every day – DNAWORKS, IAIA, life...

Every program I facilitate and every theatre piece I create has an agenda related to creative facilitation. I am always working to create experiences in which the participants use their own bodies, hands, minds to create and interact with the subject matter, the artist or facilitator, themselves, and each other. This includes everything from utilizing writing exercises to making art to getting into one's body as a means for exploring the theme of power or vulnerability.

We create means to transcend and/or replace the usual avenues of interaction across communities segmented by difference; we suspend hierarchies – and we do so through storytelling, the sharing of artistic tools of expression and aim towards a joint goal of a culmination (a film, a festival, a community conversation) and by doing so we become kin.

Lifesongs is an arts in community project that holds the dignity of all stages and ages of life as sacred, and sheds light on the importance of holding our aging and dying selves within the embrace of a full understanding of living. Rather than tell people about the importance of dignified aging and dying, we collaborate with elders, community members, and youth, to share the stories and the wisdom of our elders. We create a place for rituals too, public performances of songs and stories, developed by elders in collaboration with artists, and people from the community of all ages, and these allow people to experience and express joy, loss, connection and grief.

I am also engaged in the development of a national arts and climate change project, COAL. We are writing a musical that is intended as a collective prompt, a means for us all to explore the moral and ethical issues that we face in relation to climate change. In addition to the musical production, our goal is that the project will provide new pathways for long-term civic and community engagement.

I am a teaching artist for El Otro lado, where I help students discover what they are made of (i.e. origins and other aspects of themselves) and what they could potentially offer the world. As many kids doubt their own artistic ability, I help them discover way to express themselves, using media, techniques and explorations that they might not have experienced before. I aim to leave them with an eagerness to participate in life whenever possible.

Outside of my formal studio practice I'm interested in engaging with the youth of the community and hearing their stories in order to bring them to a wider audience.

Really all of my work involves creative facilitation at some point.

Urban Verbs and myself as an individual have been called in to create the space for creative collaboration and dialogue around intense community issues, using collaborative artistic creation as the artifact that drives the communication. We can tackle something directly, with

indirect (and subconscious) artifacts and nonlinear thinking (innovation) when we paint, or poem, or sing, or breathe, or dance, or play. We specialize in translating that abstract into a concrete deliverable.

7. What is the potential of our work as creative facilitators in our state/region?

Others will have a better sense of the potential than I do, as I'm newly returning to New Mexico. I see the potential to spread creative facilitation techniques among educators, organizers/activists, and others dedicated to strengthening community, building power within disenfranchised communities, and shifting narratives about what's possible in this state (notably in education and environment/energy).

I have witnessed story collecting and story engagement as tools of transformation countless times. Personally I do not get wrapped up in the particular method of cultural work - visual arts, drama, dance, story, sovereignty/decolonization work, music, circus etc. I am always most concerned by meaning and impact. Whatever method that is significant in facilitating folks getting lit up about transforming themselves and their communities is what holds the greatest, deepest meaning for me, and hopefully will become the fruits of the Academy's newest initiative.

Not sure how to answer this question. Our state and region face much of the same divisive community discourse as the nation and the world. There is also a different more open way of working and less rigid power-structure than in other areas. Helping communities to develop a vision of the future for themselves is much the same everywhere I have worked though the dynamics are always different. It always has to do with connecting to what people care about and why they love where they live.

So many systems are stuck, creativity and creative community engagement provide a new opportunity to transform our communities and for our communities to transform themselves.

I think we can create a space for deeper respect for temporal arts.

A lot of this work has everything to do with critical pedagogy. Augusto Boal had a huge impact on my life in that his platforms are all about creating spaces to 'rehearse for the real world' and also to recognize that the real world can be sculpted. The theater allows one to see the malleability of reality. This questionnaire is a theater.

Building on the relationships established during our creative sessions/workshops/engagements to impact economic and community development and to spur civic engagement.

When I was a young teacher, it took me a few years to understand fully that if I wanted my students to write moving and beautiful essays, I needed to ask moving and beautiful questions. If I wanted them to create amazing projects, I had to design an amazing platform from which to begin. I love to think that creative facilitators asking rich questions and offering inspiring platforms might contribute to visionary work throughout our communities. The collaboration that could come from our working together also fills me with excitement. What is

possible for us to do together that would be very difficult to do alone? I think I will be able to answer this question more fully after our time together.

Infinite and necessary.

More sharing of skills, voices / experiences, and styles in order to facilitate more effective conversations and learning around race, economics, education, politics, and religion.

I don't know specifically, but there is the hope to effect change in governmental policy, and change in people's perspectives and how they lead their lives.

I believe our potential is limitless in terms of how we might find ways to bring our creative facilitation to countless contexts such as non-profits, schools, prisons, businesses etc. I know that the more rural parts of our state desperately are in need of all types of core services and I am confident that creative facilitation would be an asset toward this aim this as well.

Contradicting geographic and cultural isolation; potential for youth to have a more clearly defined role in society marginalized/isolated people stepping into leadership roles.

We have such a remarkably rich concentration of creative facilitators here in NM who bring an impressive and expansive set of perspectives and practices. It is this concentration that makes the potentials unique. I see us having an ability to create highly charged areas of intentional community ("beloved community") because we are so connected to arts and creativity as a means of transformation.

This work in NM can help to bring people together who regularly struggle to find means of self-determination and connection in a state that lacks means to do so, given the many divides we experience here (we are a state of Borders, of nations, of poverty, of institutional inequity, of low morale); our projects can rehumanize our ossified institutions and be a first step towards resetting a forum for more inclusive decision making.

Creative facilitation offers the possibility for people to engage around traditionally difficult or divisive subjects in a very different way; it can help us get unstuck. This is as true here in New Mexico as it is elsewhere. Creative Facilitation has the potential to bridge cultural and social boundaries/barriers that exist around race, culture, age, power, privilege, and more. If we were more aware of each other's work, there is the potential for greater impact – for broadening the impact of our individual work and for collaboration, cross-inspiration.

When we facilitate giving voice to others, especially the under-represented, we have potential to transform a world of monotony into symphony.

As facilitators we need to be aware and informed of the generation in which we are trying to support and how we might be able to connect and bring them information that affects their current state and future. I would say that as creative facilitators we need to reach out to those whom are not necessarily being seen in society those who aren't necessarily aware of the potential they hold by working minimum wage jobs and attend public schools.

The potential for creative facilitators in the state is huge. The culture here holds the essence of arts and community engagement, it might not be called that but it is at the heart of this state. Often it has been covered up and disappeared under a layer of dust, but if we can activate a cohort of sensitive creative facilitators around this state, from the tiny rural villages to the urban areas of Albuquerque then the potential for sweeping away this dust to reveal renewed potential is vast.

To help our communities (and funders, policymakers and problem-solvers) realize that our goals may be long-term, but there are bridges we can build between each other in the short term that can score wins while we wait. That is where the most innovated ideas will come from if we have enough patience with the problem. It heals us while we wait.

8. At the Academy for the Love of Learning, we distinguish between “transformation” and “change.” What does “transformation” as distinct from “change” mean in the context of your work?

Change implies a shift in course—an alteration based on a known set of possibilities. Transformation suggests a powerful, inner reordering of elements that fundamentally alters what we knew to be possible. Put more briefly we might say that: *Change is a shift in course based on a known set of possibilities. Transformation is the revelation and enactment of radically new possibilities.* Our Imaginings are meant to be spaces of transformation.

I define transformation as meaningful, positive change, akin to evolution and growth. Change, on the other hand, could be positive or negative. It could be a reversion “backwards,” or in a direction that is not headed towards positive outcomes.

I would probably use the word Regeneration, but transformation is about shifting levels, shifting from the larva to the butterfly so that what was once potential becomes actual. It is not about fixing anything as it is, but about transcending paradigms. Change implies a single level of reality like rearranging chairs rather than shifting basic organizing patterns.

In terms of my work I don’t want to change the students I work with. I want to help them grow, to become empowered and to be able to overcome obstacles without having to give-up their culture, identity or language.

I don’t necessarily distinguish between these words but I am interested to hear the Academy’s definitions and premises. To me, all these words in English have only limited meanings and associations that are approximations of concepts that to me are much deeper, wider, more responsive and complex. Words in general – by their specificity and culturally imbued meanings - are rather limiting, in comparison to other deeply instinctive or primal forms of expression and communication such as movement or even scent.

At this stage in my work, I’m not focusing too much on either so much as the feeling and experience of the work. In order to feel it I must do it. The idea of formation for me is always important. Everything is new. It’s all so new. Keep making it new.

I think of change as external and potentially short-lived. A shallow community engagement might lead to facade improvements on old storefronts. I've attended these processes which usually consist of a choosing from a limited number of options that I might not really like, that don't have much to do with this community. This process and its results remind me of a quote by Eduardo Galeano from a Mexican documentary (can't remember the name, and I'm paraphrasing wildly): this system is like a farmer who asks his chickens and cows, "In what kind of sauce would you like to be served? There's red sauce, brown sauce, etc." The cows and chickens say, "We don't want to be cooked and served." The farmer answers, "But you have a choice."

Not to beat a metaphor to death, but I think of transformation as a system in which the metaphorical cows and chickens have agency from the beginning, and once they have experienced this kind of agency, it can't easily be stripped from them.

Transformation seems deeper – something that is full mind, full soul, full body. It's about seeing differently, paying a different kind of attention, shifting a paradigm. My deep longing is that the work of the Sofia Center might contribute, at least in a small way, to the transformation of an education system that is often reductive, that is obsessed with testing and accountability, that allows too little legitimate space for wonder, creativity, wisdom.

Transformation implies a shift in identity. Change is merely a shift.

Transformation happens when students engage their heads, hearts and hands – integrating academic learning with hands-on service and reflection about the experience. Repeated rotation around these touchstones develops a deeper and lasting understanding of self in the world, connection to the world we share, and issues to address.

"Change" can feel superficial, or something that is observed. Transformation seems embodied, felt, and lived. But I think superficial is a part of it all and no less important or profound. Both are equally important.

In collaboratively creating original music with elders each step of the work is personally transformational. As we find a common language whether it be poetry, history, raspberries or our shared love of dogs, our individual stories begin to transform into something shared. Yes I know I am changed by the relationships I form through this work, and yet the word transformation more accurately captures my experience because it speaks to the process. We are less concerned in writing Lifesongs with product, as we are process. Each meeting, I am learning new skills, and hopefully collaboratively creating something with others that has the transformative power to bring color, connection and learning to an otherwise isolating and static moment.

I think change can often land like a "to-do" or an imperative, especially around a particular topic or project. Transformation to me seems like a life-choice – expand or contract. To be open to transformation is an on-going project. I worry about the word being over-used among people looking for an alternative modality to the capital driven system embraced by much of the world – personally I respond more enthusiastically to something like "on-going self-reflection" or "continued growth." Yet I can appreciate its value in attempting to articulate a methodology or approach.

Within the context of my work at NHCC I tend to see them less distinguished from each other. However, in terms of my work as an artist, for me transformation tends to carry the idea of a long lasting shift born of major examination of an outdated mode, much hard work, and an emergence into new form. A rebirth, if you will, into something new. Transformation implies something positive, growth following some kind of major period of work. I think of the word very much in the ways a caterpillar transitions to butterfly. With a period of major building of a space in which to take oneself to a state of liquefied reflection and reordering before organizing all the parts into something radically full of new potential. Change can be more immediately accessed (though not necessarily easily). Change can be important, necessary, long lasting or temporary. Change is more mutable.

One of my own core principals is that these domains are personal and defined uniquely for each member of the circles in which I participate. So I can speak to these only in terms of my own personal life and how the work itself changes me. For me, then, I would imagine “transformation” is more of an evolution of preexisting elements into a new configuration (nothing is lost but finds a more harmonious formation); “change” is the mechanics of the exterior of this transformation, the list of items changes, the revised scaffolding.

For me, transformation is meaningful change that lasts. It means that something (or many things) fundamental has/have changed, such that a return to a former way of being/relating is no longer possible. In that way, transformation is about the kind of change that an individual and/or group can experience, and can lead to meaningful social, cultural and/or political transformation. With transformation, form (outer) and essence (inner) are changed.

I think of change as necessary for transformation, but change is relatively small, not always consequential or noticeable. Transformation is permanent change. A participant in my class may learn to change her thoughts or habits, but my aim is to transform her beliefs about what she, herself, can do through self-investigation, self-awareness and self-acceptance.

Transformation in the literal sense for my work is the motion in which an object is altered but still retains its natural state. It remains informed by its past and possibly future, but without changing its visible appearance. Its content might have changed, not having the original focal point of departure, but its intentions and concept as a whole has grown and transformed opening itself for grander conversation among its community.

Change to me is easier than transformation, Change can happen in a flash but does it always remain... sometimes the change reverts back to the old patterns, transformation demands a turning inside out and upside down. Think of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly or the seed that eats itself up to become a plant. It is a deeper more sustained process to achieve transformation.

Transformation is something gradual, internal, wholly new. Change is simply different, unlike it was before. How's this for a metaphor? A moving car changes direction from straight ahead to right by making a sharp turn (wheels screeching, whiplashed bodies inside, etc.). A moving car transforms direction from straight ahead to flight by transforming into a plane (gradual liftoff, reclining seats, bathrooms, etc.). One is just going in a different direction, the other has totally

altered its composition and is a whole new entity as a result. It has an entirely new constitution as a result.

9. Do you see your work as transformative? Please describe how.

I sure hope it may prove to be. It's difficult to see all the ways in which our work is unfolding and to know how transformative it is when you're not on the ground and in the room. Imaginings have now taken place in 25 cities. Some Cultural Agents have certainly described transformative results. Examples abound. Others less so. I'd like to raise the bar across the network... Collectively I think our work can be transformative, given that it is national, intergenerational, and drawing participation from thousands of folks of all different cultural backgrounds. It is also propositional/generative rather than defensive/reactive, which I think may be a key for transformative work.

Yes, especially when I teach, though I may not see all of the transformation within an academic term or a project's duration – in fact, I usually will not. That said, I have been blessed to encounter past students and mentees who are: still free/not incarcerated after experiencing that in the past; continuing to write, perform and amplify their own stories; and finishing undergraduate and graduate degree programs as the first generation in their paternal and maternal families while navigating the oftentimes oppressive environment of academia, with their soul, dreams and mental health in tact.

Transforming underlying organizing patterns is the only way to create lasting change. I work not on helping to create change but to help develop capacity and capability so that individuals, groups, and communities can transform/regenerate themselves.

Absolutely, yes.

Students who attend WC find their “people” (a.k.a. fellow artists and activists) here – even across generations. Alumni are tremendous mentors and contributors to our program. We support and train the next generation of artists, activists, engaged citizens and giving them a network of mentors and peers.

The mainstream art world is very white and very privileged, so we continue to chip away at this inequity by giving students of color and students from low-income families a path to leadership in the arts (see this: <http://hyperallergic.com/226959/the-diversity-problem-at-american-museums-gets-a-report/>) The leadership of our cultural institutions must become more reflective of and deeply committed to our diverse and changing nation in a real way. Also so that “creative facilitators” are trained and come from diverse communities and are 100% bicultural/culturally competent.

Movement by nature is transformative, requiring nothing more than what we come into this earth with. The very act of shifting from stillness to movement and back and forth exemplifies the power that we have to make change, in a world where so many feel powerless. I have been gifted with profound Indigenous teachings shared by many culture carriers. Some of these teachings have been gifted with permission to transform into movement exercises, metaphors and performance, specifically for outcome of socio-environmental transformation. The ultimate expression of my work is performance ritual which often is the outcome of years of community engaged cultural research and exchange creative process and collaboration, and is named as

performance ritual because the intention of ritual is to transform: time, space, conditions, understanding, consciousness etc. I also carry countless anecdotes of students, dancers, community, audience, collaborators, mentors who have been positively transformed by interaction with the work of Dancing Earth, and this strengthens me through the seemingly endless challenges.

I do not see the work as transformative. I see it as something I'm doing at the moment with other people as we are growing older. I believe it's all worthwhile and very entertaining.

I want my work to be transformative. I'm struggling right now to connect the deep relationships and trust that come from an intense period of shared creative expression to economic/community development and civic engagement. I believe that this is a natural next step, that it can happen but have yet to take part in a project like this from the ground up.

Oh, goodness, it's certainly my hope and dream that it is! I also know that for most of us transformation takes time and deep work. This is especially true for institutions and systems.

For example, we are doing committed work within my school around diversity and equity, work that is life-long. This is on my mind every second these days because I'm designing and leading an upcoming three-day faculty and staff event that I hope will engage everyone in this work. I've been thinking so much about where transformation might be possible at both the individual and institutional levels and also where change will serve transformation. Sometimes I think we have to make changes – as individuals and as organizations – for transformation to be possible. It's like a spiritual practice. You do the practice, which requires a change. You hope for transformation. I've been so grateful for the educators who've shared that their experiences at the Sofia Center have been transformational. I hesitate to write this because it always amazes me to hear this. I often feel that it speaks more to educators' deep need and hunger than to anything else.

Yes, deliberately, however over time. Recent focus is the importance of audience and amplification of their importance in our storytelling. Cannot happen without audience.

Yes, I see my work as transformative through the model of service learning our school community has committed to. Moving away from one-time, one-off interactions, our students are exploring various perspectives about one issue while simultaneously participating in service projects, followed by reflection about those experiences.

Yes!! It has transformed me, and so I believe it transforms others.

I believe previous questions have spoken to this question, however to clarify, yes. I believe the very nature of relationship is transformative to both individuals or to a group. This core of relationship and community building is at the core of the creative facilitation I have done and continue to work towards professionally.

I think any time people come together with the opportunity to get closer there is the potential for transformation, both internal and societal. However, it is not for me to say if my work does this – only the people who have participated in the work can decide that.

I do. I believe that contact with and through the various arts stimulates us on so many levels that we are bound to be impacted in ways that have long term ripple effects. I believe that work in arts and culture begins and furthers a twining of ideas or recognitions or familiarities or commonalities or all of the above thereby building community.

Here too, the work itself is a set of tools and how they define/affect the inner transformations of individuals and systems is more the business of those I work with. The potential is in its capabilities to temporarily suspend hardened modes of interaction, of power, of identity and by doing so, allow new and updated formations to replace the old ones.

Yes, in the context of Lifesongs, I do. I believe that is at the heart of what we are doing with Lifesongs. Through the stories and songs, through the relationships and deep connections that are nurtured over time, through the communities that are sustained, and continue to expand, those engaged experience a transformation of self, a transformation of their relationship(s) to others, and often times a clarification of their deepest held values.

I'd like to think so, but it's hard to know, because I rarely stay in contact with my students, and I have no control over what messages she receives outside of her experience with me.

I aspire to see my work as transformative. I'm necessarily sure if it's at a point where I can say its transformative as its not, for myself, talking to the greater audience that I would like. At this current moment I feel like my work is being chattered to particular social class and I'm trying to understand how I might be able to bridge multiple classes, races, genders, and society into one object to where they might share a communal transformation.

I do see my work as holding the potential for transformation. I am not sure that I can totally say that it does create transformation. For sure it animates change. I have a dear friend that always says to me "Chrissie you have ben doing this work as long as I have known you (that is now over twenty five years) and the world is getting worse". It is always good to question and not to get overly convinced that what you are doing is always for the best.

I think after we work with people they see themselves differently. Whether we actually transform them, I don't know. I prefer to think they transform themselves and we introduce a process that helps them do that work. At the end of the day, even if we just make them see themselves different (And give them a process for interrogating that difference within), that perceived difference is a precursor to actual transformation.

10. What questions do you sit with at this time in your work?

How to sustain, how to balance depth and breadth, how to more fully support groups in moving from imagination to action, how to maintain personal creative practice while building the network...

How do we democratize transformative creative practices that widen our circle of care?

I am in transition at this very moment, so I am most curious about the blend! How I am architecting my life; weaving and balancing all the strands that make up my creative work, right now. I spend considerable time looking at and addressing the various ways that my particular work-life balance can be supported and reflected in the different components of the work that I do, and the daily, weekly, monthly, seasonal and annual schedule that I craft and live. And to be sure, as it relates to energy/time/money – that I am crafting a life where I consciously, consistently thrive.

How do we develop the will to actually implement all of the fantastic functional solutions we've created to all of our ecological, social, and economic problems?

How do we shift our basic environmental message from one of guilt, shame, and fear to one that makes us feel proud to be humans and rise to the occasion of all of the challenges facing us?

Lots.

How do we make our work sustainable (financially and self-care)?

How do create a model that can be replicated and shared to close the achievement and opportunity gap for our low-income students state-wide?

How can collaboration work so that it's not just lip service to the concept but so that we're working toward shared goals not just inviting each other to participate in our individual projects?

What would my world look like if the transformation and change that I invoke through my work comes into full manifestation?

How can I continually deepen my practice with more and more Indigenous values?

Constantly working on how can Indigenous values be shared and translated in a way that is respectful and appropriate, and not appropriated by those with whom I share

Can the cultural values of people who have been reduced to less than 1% of the US population be understood, appreciated and respected, and incorporated to influence the necessary changes of the dominant value system on which harmonious survival and continuance rests?

How can I continue to deepen my practices with words and intention of positively and kindness (loose translations of principles from other languages)

How to move from token-ism into equal representation in decision making and equal access to equal resources in local, regional, national and global forums – from my perspective as an artist/ woman/ person of color/ person with disability?

Why in the USA are Native peoples consistently and systematically left out of so much? There was a Presidential Apology made to Native Peoples several years ago, that was buried. While other countries with colonizing histories have offered apologies followed by very real reparations, bringing Native people into decision making about steps for Truth and

Reconciliation. A basic example: at every public gathering in New Zealand or Canada, there is a thank you made to the specific original land stewards in the name by which they call themselves, and in most of the gatherings, representatives these land stewards are invited as honorees (paid) to open the day with a welcome. Where and when have you experienced this here in the USA? (FYI this is a protocol that Dancing Earth has undertaken in our touring of 15 states and 6 countries, re-introducing an almost lost and forgotten protocol)

Can conversations about apologies, reparations and reconciliations be made without engendering recoil due to dominant guilt because the dominant culture has not been fully educated or self educated about oppression. Thus, is the first step still unlearning oppression trainings, so reps of dominant can be better allies to grow critical mass for widescale transformation, or can we simultaneously and effectively also envision and begin to shape the world we are trying to usher in?

Even though music and dance have been at the core of every movement of social change for centuries, why now does it require evaluation of deliverable outcomes and statistics in order to receive appropriate funding for performing artists? Is it because the cost of living is so high, which means even starving artists require much more than nothing to live? Why is there an assumption that artists don't need to be paid? What would it feel like to have appropriate resources for the work I/We are doing? Why is there so much talk about honoring of the feminine, the importance of diversity, the importance of embodiment in so many gatherings – yet the circles are still dominated by men, under-representative of variety of ethnicities/sexual orientation/gender/economic class, and movement is thrown in as an icebreaker as a last minute add on without the respect or compensation that a speaker would get. Yet it is constantly requested, because deep down everyone knows its needed.

Currently I'm sitting with the idea of making. How can the creation of physical objects be a teaching tool? How can artists fully embrace their 'selfish practice'? What are the benefits? Are there any Nabokovian examples?

How do I make time for my own creative work which requires blocks of solitude and quiet?

Is my work making a difference? How do I really know?
Is what I am creating and offering meeting the needs of the educators I'm hoping to serve?
How do I want to grow our programs in wild and innovative ways?
What is possible that I haven't yet considered?

How do I make time to do the creative, expansive thinking and collaborating I know is necessary to manifest the vision I have?

What role do devices in their divisive nature play in our ability to express story or our inability in getting people to our venue?
Other barriers known or unknown and how to mitigate?
How do we orient back to story and shared story knowing that individual struggle(s) are potent, painful, and all-encompassing at all economic levels?

What is my responsibility?

What is my gift? What is my dream?

How do I bring together my eclectic interests and experiences to do my work?

I think one of the greatest challenges I've faced as an artist, student, activist and therapist in training, is how to continue to do meaningful work in a way that also can financially support me as a professional. I've often piece-mealed together a variety of diverse jobs that have creativity and healing at their core, but struggle to find balance at times because of this. I'm interested in working with other artists to develop a network of financially sustainable initiatives that can help to support creatively minded facilitators.

How to be effective in partnering with other organizations that may not have the same ethos or attention to detail; how PWIs can open their optics and do better work to welcome POCs on equal ground and not expect POCs to do all the cross-cultural reaching across the aisle. ie, are PWIs willing to learn new cultural worldviews, mores, and languages?

How can I have a greater impact? How can I provide tools/arena for the participants in the programs I facilitate to create a next layer of level of transformation (in terms of major community and world issues)?

This work (be it a personal artistic practice or a community creative practice) for me is a process of constant reevaluation, of finding new and fresh approaches to the old ways of operating (ironically, this work too can become overly formulaic, can become surface "grant language," can become a method of reexerting old power structures) and therefore requires constant turning over, rethinking, letting go. So I ask: how do I keep the newness, vitality, curiosity and adventure alive in this practice such that it stays fresh, potent and relevant?

How can the work we are doing be more sustainable? Are the principles at the heart of it powerful and clear enough that the work, via the communities that have been fostered, the connections that have been made, would continue with or without us over time? Are we nurturing the desire, commitment and capacity?

How can we broaden the impact of our work, so that it extends beyond the immediate communities with which we are working?

How can the work that we are all doing connect to larger social and political concerns? How can we bring about greater socio-cultural transformation?

What does the education (which I understand as ongoing transformation, emergence, becoming) of the whole being look like? What forms might it take at different stages in life? How can we stay so connected to our own essence that we are constantly transforming and becoming more fully, wholly and beautifully ourselves?

How can we as artists create the means for more people to feel our inter-existence, that is how deeply connected we all are to everything else, such that we transform our relationship to ourselves, one another, and the living planet and build the capacity to take care of ourselves and the living world which makes life possible for us? Are stories enough – and what do we mean by transformative storytelling / sharing / making?

As a species, we have a seemingly endless capacity for innovation and adaptation and an equally powerful capacity to resist change and deny what we know to be true and see happening around us. For me, everything right now revolves around our capacity to protect and sustain our home here on planet earth.

To love is to recognize yourself in another (E Tolle)

Too many questions, always...

The main one is: How can I do better next time?

How is this holding or carrying that individual's story? Is it open enough to let other experiences and knowledge explore the object?

How do location, position, stance, and movement relate or interact to the human body? Is this going to help anybody?

How can I create a piece that isn't necessary always self-indulgent? Will the audience I'm making work for accept or reject what I am attempting to do?

Is my medium connecting to the land?

How does color relate to individuals? How can craft be connected to the fine arts?

Is it possible to create a piece that helps share an emotional state that is felt by all?

Once we give someone some tools or process to initiate their own or their community's transformation, we just have to let them go back into the wild of their life...we need to have sustainable support groups for this kind of work and for the people willing to invest in this kind of personal work. A support group, of sorts. How do we do that?
