YOUTH ACTION COUNCIL 2020

#ImagineAwrld

BLACK LIVES MATTER

#ImagineAwrld
YOUTH ACTION COUNCIL (YAC) is a program for youth, ages 14-19, to explore the intersections between art and social justice, led by Curator-Artist-Educator, Augustina Warton. The program focuses on diversity, equity, and cultivating socio-political literacy and professional development, with all activities based on grassroots activism, communication, and critical thinking. This year, YAC began with a focus on the challenges and potential solutions within the topics of mental and disability justice. In response to COVID-19, the program pivoted to virtual meetings where the youth worked to specifically address the current pandemic through creating NLE NYCapsule.

YAC PROGRAM GOALS:
The curriculum for Youth Action Council is designed to be a youth-centered learning program that offers participants the opportunities and platforms to expand their critical thinking, civic leadership, potential as thought leaders, and empower their voices through:

1. Developing an understanding of their desired role within their communities.
2. Expanding their self-determination skills in social justice and political literacy.
3. Learning to identify primary and secondary sources as tools for activism.
4. Understanding how to unpack and apply pedagogical frameworks and texts.
5. Planning community programs to address mental health and disability justice.
6. Cultivating community networks and dialogue that aim to build bridges.
7. Experiencing first-hand art activism strategies that can be applied to their programming.

NO LONGER EMPTY (NLE) curates bold, site-responsive exhibitions in unconventional locations across New York City. We foreground art as a catalyst for community-led conversations about place, and we commission diverse artists at all stages of their careers to expand their practices through site-specific works.

Since 2009, No Longer Empty’s educational programs have inspired New York City’s youth and families to share their voices through collective storytelling and to re-imagine public space through art.
In response to isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, Youth Action Council members invited all NYC youth to join them each week through what they named “NYCapsule,” a city-wide, youth-led, virtual space for NYC youth to work together in documenting their responses to COVID-19 through engaging art projects and discussion.

All sessions were co-led by a Youth Action Council member who offered interactive activities that focused on weekly themes, welcomed visiting artists and cultural workers, and provided an opportunity to create art with accessible resources.

Participating youth met with visiting artists, activists, and civic leaders, including Aja Monet, Frank Antonio Lopez, Dr. Kathryn Ko, and Elise Peterson. Throughout the course of the program, the youth created art-activism responses that were then compiled into a collective video-concrete-poem and manifesto titled #ImagineAwrld.
Statement from YAC Lead Curator-Educator, AUGUSTINA WARTON

#ImagineAwrld began as a writing prompt for one of NYcapsule’s first sessions and developed from there. In the sessions that followed with our guest artists, the youth dove deeper into learning about the power of art and its ability to create social change. As we progressed, it became clear that “imagining a world” was a call to action for us.

We asked ourselves, “If we can’t imagine what comes after COVID-19 or the current uprisings against police brutality, how does anything change?” Our #ImagineAwrld video is our collective call to action, a blueprint in writing, words, and images where we hope you will join us in manifesting a new world, in the words of Youth Action Council, one that is, “Free from violence. Where we promote brotherhood and sisterhood. Where liberation is not dependent on the exploitation of others...just imagine.”

TOP RIGHT: Marvens Volcimus. A brown-skinned figure faces the camera. They wear a green hoodie and their hair is close shaved. At the bottom are the words “we promote brotherhood” in white sans serif.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Catherine Feliz and Augustina Warton. Two figures face the camera, one brown-skinned, the other lighter-skinned. Both wear glasses and have curly hair. At the bottom of the screen are the words “and sisterhood” in white sans serif.
Imagine a world where you are an equal...

For the world, we imagine I will stand with Justice. In order to have that world, we imagine we need peace, because...
For the world, I imagine I am fighting for unity. For the world, I imagine I am fighting for diversity, because diversity is a symbol of unity for all people. Where people would take the lives of others into consideration.

Imagine a world where we promote brotherhood and sisterhood. Where there are no strangers, only brothas and sistas. I fight for a world where freedom isn’t a dream but a reality. Liberation means that my freedom isn’t based on the exploitation of others. That we teach the histories of the past to inspire the next generation to feel empowered.

Imagine a world where those who are supposed to protect you aren’t the ones massacring you. The ones who are supposed to care for you don’t neglect you.

Imagine our streets being safe and clean from crime, no police to strip us of our time. It would feel like the warmth of a blanket. Or like the chest of a guardian.

Imagine a world where we respect our origins and end all abuse. We can be like plants that stretch their roots. We can be the lungs that gave life to Earth. Hear the cry from our ancestors like a roar, The hope of a new world, a new start, a beginning to fight to preserve.

Imagine a world where people saw you. The real you, the authentic you, the unbroken you. The beauty that lies behind your unwavering eyes. The strength that’s unknown inside of you.

Imagine a world where you are truly FREE. If you feel like something is holding you back. Emerge above the water and reach and touch the stars in the sky. It can feel like the weight from your chest is slowly floating away.

Imagine a world where everyone is a dreamer, just imagine! #ImagineAwrld
ABOVE: Youth Action Council at The Point (The Bronx). A group of youth listen to a speaker in an indoor setting. Colored strips of tape cover parts of the floor. At the bottom of the screen are the words “supposed to protect you” in white sans serif.

BELOW: An image of a field of tulips. Some are in bloom, red in color, while others are still green. At the bottom of the screen are the words “massacring you” in white sans serif.

ABOVE: A close-up image of a white piece of paper. A red marker spells out the word “imagine.” At the top of the screen are the words “where we respect our origins” in white sans serif.

BELOW: Aurora Sadasy. A brown-skinned young woman wearing a white and black shirt and white hat is looking down reading a book. At the bottom of the screen are the words “inspire the next generation” in white sans serif.
ABOVE: An image of people protesting with their backs to the camera. Some hold signs with messages such as peace symbols and “Black Lives Matter.” At the bottom are the words “world we imagine” in white sans serif. BELOW: Close-up image of leafy green plant being tended by two brown hands in a pale striped shirt with a gray-blue hat. At the bottom are the words “we can be like plants” in white sans serif.

ABOVE: Kalia Asencio and Gige Gordon. Two brown-skinned young women smiling. The one on the left is wearing black glasses and a flower-printed bandana. The one on the right is wearing a blue and white striped top and holds their fingers up in a “rocker” sign with long, painted fingernails. At the bottom are the words “where you are equal” in white sans serif. BELOW: An image of a cityscape with a large rainbow. At the bottom are the words “where we fight ignorance” in white sans serif.
YOUTH ACTION COUNCIL  #ImagineAwrld STATEMENTS

GIANCARLOS ASENCIO \ For me, this video means we are fighting for justice. It applies greatly to what’s going on in the world right now, and this video is a way of voicing how we want to be treated. The video is powerful because it gives us a chance to have our voices heard and make a change. The video can reach many people and can encourage them to join our cause. I hope that people will see the video and that it will spread and make a change in society. This video can help be a turning point, resulting in less brutality and more equality for African Americans.

KALIA ASENCIO \ The #ImagineAwrld video means that my voice is heard by others, respected by others, and validated by others. This video demonstrates our suppressed feelings about the world we will live in. It is our true feelings of what we see around us daily and what we truly want to see in our world. Our video is an unwritten song of my and my fellow youths’ voices. What I hope people get out of our video is to listen before speaking to youth and to actually understand and value our thoughts and beliefs instead of brushing us off. I want people to realize that the youth are caterpillars going through a metamorphosis to become beautiful butterflies, and we want to see the world progress, not regress.

A brown-skinned young woman smiles at the camera. Her curly brown hair is down and she is wearing a white shirt. She is smiling and holding both her hands up with her fingers making “peace” signs. At the bottom of the screen are the words “a new start” in white sans serif.

BACK LEFT TO RIGHT: Marvens Volcimus, Giancarlos Asencio, Kalia Asencio, Givienna Geneva Gordon, Aurora Sadasy, Amanda Jones, and Dylan Kennedy.
FRONT LEFT TO RIGHT: Augustina Warton and Catherine Feliz. A group of people smile at the camera. They are posed in front of wall text that reads “sickness and health” in a bold pink font. At the bottom of the screen is the word “to feel empowered” in white sans serif.
This video is our voices coming together as a collective to show the world what we want. It makes us and the audience imagine a hypothetical world that isn’t too far off if we all collaborate as we did together in YAC. We need to stop just saying what we want and put our words into actions through small initiatives. I would describe this video as our way of contributing to this growing movement. Though the mission hasn’t changed, the faces have. And it’s time for the new faces to show themselves. This video is also our way of showing how we coped with this unprecedented time. I hope that this video inspires others to take change into their own hands. That will help take the movement into the new generation.

For me, the video means that, as teens, we can change the world. We have our power and our voices, and we can make changes. It also shows how we all came together, and we worked together to make this really inspiring video for other teens out there who are feeling down. This video will always have a special place in my memory because, even though we were in quarantine, this video came out so perfect, and I hope everyone gets to see it.

The video is inspiring and hopeful. I hope the video lets teens and everyone else imagine a world where we will see change, and things will eventually get better; we just have to keep moving. I hope this also inspires them to make videos of their own and have their friends and family make videos too. During this time, the video has helped me keep my head high and kept me doing my work. I hope people will keep their minds open and believe that we can make changes. People should start listening to teens because we are the future, and we all want a good one. Also, I hope teens around the country speak up and inspire change because we all need to work together to get this done. We can’t be quiet anymore.
This video is a chance for us to be heard and for us to leave a trace of our younger selves behind. It is a chance to leave an impact on the ever-changing world around us, and, even more than that, it’s a reflection of our unique moment in time. The video is a sharing of our lives. All these photos, poems, and videos have a personal significance or story behind them. It’s a culmination of our time together. I hope the impact is remembered not for making waves but instead for its ripples. I hope, in 10 years, it is remembered as a line of poetry stuck in a person’s head or the memory of an image they can’t quite place. I hope we live on in the minds of the people who are here to witness our work. I hope all of us remember what we were a part of; I hope we all remember what we made in 2020.

A brown-skinned young woman smiles at the camera. They wear a black shirt and hold their hands to form a heart. At the bottom of the screen are the words “where people saw you” in white sans serif.

The #ImagineAwrld video means a lot. This group has been working hard from the start. Many workshops were done to make many different poems, and they were taken and put together to make one beautiful art piece.

The video describes what we want and need in the world. I’ll even say that this video gives off the idea that change can happen. I hope that this video helps others see that the world doesn’t make us; we make the world.

A brown-skinned young woman looks towards the camera leaning to the right. Part of her face is not visible, extending beyond the viewing area of the photo frame. She is wearing hoop earrings and a dark-colored jacket. At the bottom of the screen are the words “the unbroken you” in white sans serif.
MARVENS VOLCIMUS \ The YAC video, to me, means that, although we have been stuck inside for a few months, we have been doing something. It means that, despite all the events that have been going on in our society, we are still able to have our voices heard. It also means we are sick and tired of racism and that we are not afraid to take a stance.

I would describe the video as a creation of all of our hard work and dedication. Our weekly Zoom calls show that we had a mission, and we completed that mission together. I hope this has a big impact on the world because this video is not only about us but everyone else in the world who is combating racism. I hope it shows some people the errors of their ways and influences them to not judge someone just on their skin color.

A young man sits in the backseat of a car. He is wearing a green hoodie with white graphics. His eyes are closed and his hand is in a tight fist symbolizing power. At the bottom of the screen is the word “free” in white sans serif.

GRACE WANG \ The #ImagineAwrld video is the world that I dream about and view as my haven when life becomes overwhelming. It is a source of direction for me: no matter how chaotic the world may seem, we still have a goal of an ideal world, and we have a vision of what that world would look like. The video serves as a reminder of my time working with YAC and being a part of a strong and loving community. It calls up the memories of my time in quarantine and still having the ability to work and communicate with different teens around NYC.

A young woman with black bangs and a pink shirt looks at the camera smiling. Behind her is a teal room with a bright window and a bookshelf on the left-hand side. At the bottom are the words “imagine a world” in white sans serif.
YAC SOCIAL CONTRACT \ Prior to being quarantined due to the pandemic, Youth Action Council met up at the Clemente Soto Velez Cultural Center, where they drafted together a social contract. This contract became a key source in how the program would progress over the next few months, outlining what values are most important to the youth.

TOP: Image of an art piece constructed of brown paper. On it, are pasted smaller pieces of paper of varying sizes with both images and text printed on them. The words “Social Contract” are hand written at the top in capital letters separated by a heart.

FACING PAGE TOP: A screenshot of a Zoom session where participants are smiling at the camera and raising their hands to form hearts.

FACING PAGE BOTTOM: An image of a brown-skinned individual with long black hair facing the camera. They are wearing a black shirt with multi-colored patterns and gold hoops.

LAUNCH OF NYC CAPSULE \ March 23, 2020

AJA MONET \ Youth Action Council kicked off NYCapsule, a youth-led response to COVID-19, with renowned poet and activist Aja Monet as the first in our ongoing series of visiting artists. Aja led the youth in poetry writing exercises and the articulation of their voices. Thank you, Aja, for being so inspiring, generous, and warm, as well as for helping us to remember who we are during this pandemic. @ajamonet
FRANK ANTONIO LÓPEZ \ Youth Action Council welcomed visiting artist and activist Frank Antonio López as part of NLE NYCapsule. A performing artist, educator, organizer and filmmaker, Frank is also the co-founder of The Peace Poets—a collective of artists that celebrate, examine and advocate for life through music and poetry.

Frank shared both songs and poetry with the youth, showing how these mediums can be used to express their individual reactions to the world around them. Frank then led the youth in developing their own manifestos, identifying what is most important to them while living through the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you, Frank, for teaching us to envision our hopes through a creative outlet!

@franklopeznyc
@thepeacepoets

DR. KATHRYN KO \ Youth Action Council welcomed neurosurgeon and artist, Dr. Ko as part of NLE NYCapsule where she shared her journey through the worlds of science and art. During her session, Dr. Ko stressed the importance of the bridge between the arts and science and motivated the youth to envision their futures with the “passion, dedication and discipline” to realize their goals.

She also invited NLE NYCapsule youth to lead her #whitecoatchallenge, an initiative to build solidarity and support for our COVID-19 fearless front-liners in healthcare through the “blank canvas” of the white coat as a symbol of care and healing. To find out more or to participate, please visit NLE’s website or @doc_ambidexter

Thank you, Dr. Ko, for being such an inspiration!

ABOVE LEFT: Dr. Kathryn Ko (aka artist K2O). A light-skinned woman with blonde hair dressed in a doctor’s white lab coat faces the camera. The background shows a series of brains printed in a Warhol-like screen print style. 

ABOVE RIGHT: Image of a white lab coat with the words “white coat challenge” and a yellow-orange heart replacing the “o” in coat.

LEFT FACING PAGE TOP: Frank Antonio López. An image of a brown-skinned young man facing the camera. He is wearing a black t-shirt and cap and has a brown mustache and beard.

LEFT FACING PAGE BOTTOM: Graphic featuring a black background and text in yellow and white.

“When we sang you would hear the children. The youth and livelihood in us all.

SAMANTHA RODRIGUEZ
Youth Action Council NLE NYCapsule participant
Youth Action Council welcomed multimedia artist Yako, as part of NLE NYCapsule. He showed the youth how every day culinary ingredients such as turmeric can be used in lieu of traditional materials to create art.

A multi-instrumentalist, beat maker-producer, human beatboxer, and visual artist, Yako has traveled the world both as a student and educator. He has composed music and visuals for theater performances, co-curated large scale art exhibitions, and co-founded the Hip Hop/Spoken Word collective SOUL INSCRIBED.

Thank you, Yako, for encouraging us to think outside the box and to expand on our creativity! @yako440

Youth Action Council welcomed multimedia artist, poet, performer and educator Intikana Kekoeia as part of NLE NYCapsule. In addition to sharing insights into his practice and the importance of music therapy, Intikana helped the youth finalize the audio portion of their #ImagineAwrld video.

Thank you so much, Intikana, for your time and wisdom! @intikana

Youth Action Council welcomed artist Elise Peterson as part of NLE NYCapsule. A multimedia artist with a focus in the visual arts and community building, Elise shared her passion for social justice and making art accessible for all.

She encouraged the youth to have a realistic and serious approach to art, while never losing sight of their passion and the joy in creating. Thank you, Elise, for sharing your brilliance and expertise in the art world! @eliserpeterson

**ABOVE:** A handwritten poster in yellow and black ink-like materials that depict, in all capital letters, the words “IMAGINE... COMMUNITY. CONNECTED. HOPES and DREAMS. LIFE. POWER...TOGETHER!” On the bottom are the words “as one” in white sans serif.
**NYCapsule: Arts + Activism Panel**

**Friday May 22, 2020 4PM-6PM**

**ARTS + ACTIVISM PANEL**

Youth Action Council’s Lead Curator-Educator Augustina Warton organized and hosted an Arts + Activism panel in collaboration with the Reimagine: Life, Loss, & Love World-Wide Festival along with Curator-Educator Catherine Feliz and YAC members. Over 150 international attendants—from Hawaii to The Bronx—came together to discuss art, embracing life, facing death, and loving fully in the face of COVID-19.

We are grateful to our partner Reimagine for allowing us to be part of this amazing event. In addition, we have profound appreciation to the brilliant artist and activist panelists Chanel Matsunami Govreau, Gabriel Ramerez, Lizbeth Ibarra, Dulce Arias, Shyvonne Sanganoo, and JoRee Lafrance who participated in the panel forum.

**CHANEL MATSUNAMI GOVREAU**

Interdisciplinary artist and activist. @queengidrea

A light-skinned person wearing bold red lipstick smiles at the camera. They are wearing a light pink top. Behind them is a gray couch.

**GABRIEL RAMIREZ**

Poet, activist, and teaching artist. @RamirezPoet

A brown-skinned person looks off to the right gesturing with their right hand. They are wearing a white turtleneck sweater and glasses. In the background a bookcase filled with books is visible.

**SHYVONNE SANGANOO**

Singer, activist and teaching artist. @shyyvonne

A brown-skinned person with shoulder length black hair and gold hoop earrings looks up while smiling. They are wearing a bright floral top and sitting on a blue batik covered chair. The background is multi-colored with bold prints.

**JOREE LAFRANCE**

Director of Apsaalooke Voices and Stories and a doctoral student and activist at the University of Arizona. @joree_violetta

A brown-skinned person with tied back black hair faces the camera while speaking. They are holding up a book with the title: “I am, who I am.”

**DULCE ARIAS**

Youth Vs. Apocalypse artist and activist. @youthvsapocalypse

A brown-skinned youth smiles at the camera. They have long black hair with lavender and green highlights. Behind them are images of individuals of varying skin tones holding signs with large hand drawn letters.

**LIZBETH IBARRA**

Youth Vs. Apocalypse artist and activist. @youthvsapocalypse

A brown-skinned youth with straight, long, black hair and glasses is speaking. Behind them is a medium gray wall and a corner of a poster visible in the frame.
SKY CUBACUB \ Youth Action Council and Young Exhibition Makers welcomed Sky Cubacub and collaborator-photographer Sandra Oviedo to host their culminating event! Sky Cubacub is a nonbinary queer and disabled Filipinx artist from Chicago, IL. Their fashion line, Rebirth Garments, aims to create gender non-conforming wearables and accessories for people on the full spectrum of gender, size, and ability. Sky maintains the notion of Radical Visibility, a movement based on claiming one's body and, through the use of bright colors, exuberant fabrics, and innovative designs, highlighting parts that society typically shuns.

Thank you Sky and Sandra for showing us the importance of challenging mainstream beauty standards that are sizest, ableist, and conform to the gender binary!
@rebirthgarments

SANDRA OVIEDO (A.K.A.) COLECTIVOMULTIPOLAR \ Sandra is a Chicago based photographer who loves the dance floor, artists, and their creative spaces. Inspired by a diverse collective of artists that she often sees, she began to use ColectivoMultipolar in honor of that diversity. @colectivomultipolar

A figure is looking to the side while holding a zine titled “Radical Visibility: A QueerCrip Dress Reform Movement Manifesto.” They are wearing headphones and a pink and black geometric patterned top and a multi-colored headpiece. Their makeup consists of purple unevenly applied lipstick and black crystal shaped eye liner on their right eye.

TOP: Sandra Oviedo.
A figure with a black hair in a ponytail and round sunglasses is facing the camera, speaking. They are wearing a checkered black and white shirt with hands together. The background is flooded in blue light.

BOTTOM: Artist TransFat and Sky Cubacub.
Two figures are standing next to each other. The one on the right is turned towards the second figure on the left who is looking into a full length mirror, adjusting their outfit. Both are in brightly colored, high-contrast outfits with geometric forms. In the background are abstract colorful paintings.
GIANCARLOS ASENCIO \ Brooklyn, (he/him)
Giancarlos Asencio is a 15-year-old 9th grader of Hispanic, Puerto Rican and Panamanian descent. He plays basketball and likes to listen to music in his free time. His favorite basketball players are Carmelo Anthony, Stephen Curry, and Russell Westbrook, and his favorite musicians to listen to are Lil Uzi Vert, Trippie Redd, and Juice WRLD. When Giancarlos was younger, he had surgery on his appendix. It was his first time getting surgery.

KALIA ASENCIO \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Kalia Asencio is a person of Puerto Rican and Panamanian descent. Kalia loves to learn about new things and being able to apply it to her own knowledge and understanding. She is a native Brooklynite and believes that it’s the best borough. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends and getting to meet new people.

I want people to realize that the youth are caterpillars going through a metamorphosis to become beautiful butterflies, and we want to see the world progress, not regress. – Kalia Asencio

I hope that this video helps others see that the world doesn’t make us: we make the world. – GiGe Gordon

AMANDA JONES \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Amanda Jones is a 16-year-old Afro-Latina girl living in Windsor Terrace, Brooklyn. She is a fashion major at the High School of Fashion Industries in Chelsea, Manhattan and loves to sew. Her favorite things to do are going thrift shopping, hanging out with her friends, and watching movies with her mom. Her favorite movies are “The Apartment,” “Cinema Paradiso,” “Adaptation,” and “Fantastic Mr. Fox.” Movies let her escape into another world. Amanda likes to do a lot of teen programs, mostly in social justice work, because she gets to learn new things, meet new people, and have a sense of community.

SAMANTHA RODRIQUEZ \ Queens, (she/her)
Samantha Rodriguez is a junior at All City Leadership Secondary School. She is fully committed to exploring everything her city has to offer and leaving a lasting impact in her wake. As a graduate of both NYU’s High School Law Institute and the Sadie Nash Leadership Institute, she is well versed in maneuvering through professional settings. But her passions lie in the emotional power of activism, which has led her into the ranks of NLE’s Youth Leadership Council. As a young adult in the current political climate, she was shaped by the rising movements taking action around her. From the Dreamer movement to Black Lives Matter, to the Women’s March, to the March For Our Lives, Samantha has grown into the strong individual she is today.

GIVIENNA GENEVA GORDON \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Givienna Geneva Gordon (GiGe or Trip) loves to draw and is very protective of her friends and those close to her heart. She is willing to get to know anyone that wants to know her. She loves making connections with people close to her and will do anything for them.

I want people to realize that the youth are caterpillars going through a metamorphosis to become beautiful butterflies, and we want to see the world progress, not regress. – Kalia Asencio
MARVENS VOLCIMUS \ Brooklyn, (he/him)
Marvens Volcimus is from Haiti and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. One of his favorite hobbies is playing basketball. He enjoys the game because it’s a lot of fun and requires a lot of team-work to win. Also, he enjoys being creative and going through the whole creative process in order to make something.

GRACE WANG \ Queens, (she/her)
Grace Wang is a sophomore at Eleanor Roosevelt High School. She is a first-generation Chinese American. Her favorite hobby is creating art, whether it’s digital, design, collages, or portraits. She has a very imaginative mind, which helps her express herself, as it is not always easy for her to communicate her feelings verbally. Grace is also a YAC member, and is passionate about social issues that are affecting her every day. In the future, she hopes to make a change in this world and gain justice for those who are overseen and oppressed by representing emotions through her talent in creating contemporary art.

AURORA SADASY \ Brooklyn, (she/her)
Aurora Sadsdy is 17 years old and lives in New York City. She is currently a junior at the High School of Fashion Industries, majoring in visual merchandising. Aurora loves the arts, and most days, she is drawing, painting, writing, or refining her modern and lyrical dance training. Besides this, Aurora spends most of her time researching different social and political issues. As a firm believer in working for a better tomorrow, she likes to actively make changes instead of waiting for someone else to do it for her; She believes that the children of her generation should take the vast amount of knowledge they have—and stop unquestionably accepting the information given to them by previous generations—to build new ideas that are uniquely theirs. It’s only through the deconstruction of old ideas that real change can happen.

Amanda Jones. A brown-skinned person with an oversized light gray New York Yankees t-shirt raises their left fist, looking at the camera. Behind her are various posters, with one on the left that reads “Panic! At The Disco.” To the right is a mirror reflecting the bright sun and the hanging wooden letters “A” and “M.” The text on the frame reads in white sans serif: “I would stand with justice.”
LAURABERTH LIMA, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (she/her)
Lauraberth Lima is a New York based educator, health advocate and activist who works to create equitable spaces in cultural institutions that empower families and youth, at the intersection of health and art. With 10 years working as in education and community engagement, Lauraberth brings a social justice lens to arts programming through an interdisciplinary expertise in intergenerational engagement, health equity, youth development, early childhood education, museum and art education, and programming for LGBTQI+/gender non-conforming communities.

MY VISION FOR NO LONGER EMPTY’S EDUCATION PROGRAMS IS ONE THAT BOTH EMPOWERS PARTICIPANTS TO REALIZE THEIR POTENTIAL AS AGENTS OF CHANGE AND CENTERS THE AGENCY OF COMMUNITIES WE WORK WITH. – LAURABERTH LIMA

AUGUSTINA WARTON, Lead Curator-Educator YAC, (she/her)
Augustina Warton is an experienced educator, artist and curator, with a passion for social justice teaching and community organizing through the arts for social change. She has worked on a wide range of projects offering support to organizations in NYC and around the country wanting to strengthen their ability to offer high quality educational and public programming based in the arts and social justice.

CATHERINE FELIZ, Lead Curator-Educator Y.Ex, (they/them)
Catherine Feliz is an interdisciplinary artist, educator, curator, and medicine person, born and raised in Lenape territory (NYC) to parents from Kiskeya Ayiti (Dominican Republic). As a curator-educator, Catherine works to synthesize contemporary artist works and historical legacies in creative ways for the next generation of change-makers.

JUSTIN PEREZ, Education Intern, (he/him)
Justin Perez is a Latinx 17-year-old student living in the borough of Queens. He was born and raised in Puerto Rico and moved to the United States with his mother when he was 14 years old in order to further his education. He is currently an 11th-grade student at the International High School of Health Sciences. With an interest in psychology and drawing, Justin works with NLE as a Youth Advisor for content development.

DYLAN KENNEDY, Education Intern, (he/him)
Dylan Kennedy is a 19-year-old Brooklynite. He brings a wealth of training and experience to NLE from his internship with Exalt. Dylan is passionate about writing music, cooking, and his family. With an interest in learning about art networks and media, Dylan leads the No Longer Empty Education media development.

ANDRIN DIAZ, Education Intern, (he/him)
A.J. Diaz is a 17-year-old, Afro-Dominican Taino from Bushwick, New York. He is a recent high school graduate from the Brooklyn School for Social Justice. He was recently accepted to LaGuardia Community College, and he will begin as a freshman this September. A.J. loves to read, acquire knowledge, and advocate for social justice. As a spiritual person who feels connected to nature, Andrin enjoys studying various religions. He also loves animals.

WORKING WITH NO LONGER EMPTY ALLOWS ME TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE COMMUNITY AROUND ME AND WORK ALONGSIDE IT IN THE PATH TO A BETTER SOCIETY FOR ALL. – JUSTIN PEREZ
TARANEH FAZELI, Invited Artistic Director, (she/her)
Taraneh Fazeli is a curator and educator living between New York City and Detroit. Her curatorial practice engages art as a site to interrogate the techniques of representation and dream of more just ways of being together. After a decade of leadership positions at NYC-based arts organizations, such as e-flux, Fazeli has worked primarily as an independent curator. Her peripatetic exhibition “Sick Time, Sleepy Time, Crip Time: Against Capitalism’s Temporal Bullying,” addresses the politics of health and disability while “I let them in. Conditional Hospitality and the Stranger” used hospitality as a lens to understand how racialized “white benevolence” operates.

DANilo MACHADO, Invited Curator-Educator NLE Lab, (they/them)
Danilo Machado is a poet and curator born in Medellín, Colombia currently living in Brooklyn, New York. Their writing has been featured in Hyperallergic, Brooklyn Rail, ArtCritical, TAYO Literary Magazine, and elsewhere. Machado is an Honors graduate of the University of Connecticut and currently a Producer of Public Programs at the Brooklyn Museum. Machado curated the exhibition “Otherwise Obscured: Erasure in Body and Text” at Franklin Street Works and is curating the forthcoming support structures at 8th Floor Gallery. Machado co-founded the poetry series Maracuyá Peach and the zine project Already Felt: Poems in Revolt and Bounty.

CHRISTINE LICATA, Executive Director, (she/her)
Christine Licata has a wealth of experience in strategic leadership and social justice arts and education initiatives with artist-led, diverse, intergenerational local engagement at its core. A staunch artist advocate and community builder, her focus is expanding NLE’s transformational impact and contributions towards equitable social and cultural advancement. She has a B.F.A. from Parsons The New School for Design and an M.F.A. in Art Criticism and Writing from the School of Visual Arts.

TAHERA TAJBHAI, Executive & Program Coordinator, (she/her)
Tahera Tajbhai has a B.A. in Art History and a B.A. in Psychology from CUNY Brooklyn College, as well as an M.A. in Art History from CUNY Hunter College. She has worked in various art-based institutions over the past six years. As a first-generation U.S. American, her culturally-diverse background has had a large impact on how she approaches the world. She is a firm believer in mental health awareness and the power of art to heal.

There is a massive need for healing on and to our planet. While many communities have been seeking avenues of relief, repair, and liberation for some time, the COVID-19 global pandemic has illuminated these needs for many others. – Taraneh Fazeli
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