

CULTURAL ORGANIZING FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE

Saturday, Dec 6, 2025 - Mercury Store, 131 8th St, Brooklyn
10:00am - 6:00pm, reception 6:00 - 7:00pm



photo: Edwina Hay

AGENDA

9:30 - 10:00

**REGISTRATION, GATHERING
& LIGHT BREAKFAST**

10:00 - 11:45

**WELCOME
GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER
CULTURAL ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK**

Hatuey Ramos-Fermín, *THE POINT* and NOCD-NY
Caron Atlas, *Arts & Democracy* and NOCD-NY
Paloma McGregor, *Angela's Pulse*
Claudie Mabry, *NOCD-NY*
amalia deloney, Point A Studio and Arts & Democracy

presented by

ARTS & DEMOCRACY

**NOCD
NY**

11:45 - 11:55

GETTING ACTIVATED

with Mikaila Ware, *Urban Bush Women*

11:55 - 12:00

ANNOUNCEMENTS

12:00 - 1:00

LUNCH

Optional lunch time discussions, including a conversation about the NYC Mayoral transition, with Gonzalo Casals and Celina Su, *Lower Studio B*. You are also welcome to suggest and host a discussion!

1:00 - 1:15

ANNOUNCE SESSION 1 AND SESSION 2

1:15 - 1:30

BREAK & MOVE TO SESSION 1

SESSION 1, 1:30 - 3:15 (1 hour 45 minutes)

Calm Name Tree Magic

with Molly Rose Kaufman, Mindy Fullilove,
and Douglas Farrand, *University of Orange*

> Upper Studio A (by the entrance)

Dance for Every Body

with Mikaila Ware, *Urban Bush Women*

> Main Room C

Growth Along the Gowanus

with Michael Higgins Jr, *Social Justice Walks*

> Meet in the amphitheater/atrium

Writing Change: Connecting Personal & Political in Creative Writing

with Andrea Assaf, *Art2Action*

> Lower Studio B

3:15 - 3:30

BREAK & MOVE TO SESSION 2

(snacks and drinks available in the kitchen)

SESSION 2, 3:30 - 5:15 (1 hour 45 minutes)

FROM COMPOST TO CONSTELLATION: Seeding Possibility

with amalia deloney, Point A Studio

> Upper Studio A (by the entrance)

Power Mapping to Develop Effective Campaign Strategies

with Alex Navarro-McKay,

political consultant and educator

> Upper Studio D (end of hall near offices)

Rehearsing Our Future: Poetry, Theater & Democracy in Practice

with Jonathan "Courageous" Clark,

multidisciplinary artist and activist

> Main Room C

Stitching Our Stories: Politics, Collage & Collective Imagination

with Jennella Young

artist & community-based arts practitioner

> Lower Studio B

5:15 - 5:30

BREAK AND CONVENE FOR CLOSING

5:30 - 6:00

CLOSING

Claudie Mabry, NOCD-NY

amalia deloney, Point A Studio and Arts & Democracy

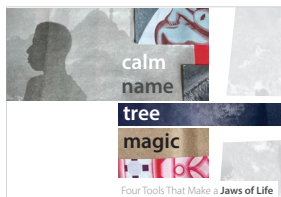
> Main Room

6:00 - 7:00

RECEPTION

SESSION 1 - DESCRIPTIONS

1:30 - 3:15 (1 hour 45 minutes)



Calm Name Tree Magic

with Molly Rose Kaufman, Mindy Fullilove,
and Douglas Farrand, University of Orange

> Upper Studio A (by the entrance)

This workshop will present tools for managing “Shock and Awe” and its consequences.

We will engage with the University of Orange

workbook: *Calm, Name, Tree, Magic*. University of Orange is a people’s free university of restoration urbanism. Over the past 17 years, the UofO has become a center for grassroots research, popular education, and place-based organizing.

Workshop participants will receive a printed workbook. Digital version:



Photo: Lawrence Sumulong

Dance for Every Body

with Mikaila Ware, Urban Bush Women
BOLD (Builders Organizers, and Leaders through Dance)

> Main Room C

This movement jam/dance class embraces the ideas that each individual has a unique

and powerful contribution to make, and that our bodies are a powerful source of agency. The goal is for “every body” to find their level of challenge and comfort and partake according to their abilities, and to appreciate the group’s diversity as an attribute to their community. This is a movement class designed for the community, so no prior dance experience is needed. Participants explore UBW’s technique with close attention to the use of breath, weight, call and response and polyrhythm.

Share your experience with UBW:

<https://tinyurl.com/cultorgubwworkshop>



photo: Edwina Hay

Growth Along the Gowanus

with Michael Higgins Jr, *Social Justice Walks*

> Meet in the amphitheater/atrium

Four years after the rezoning of the neighborhood, the landscape of Gowanus has transformed dramatically—but is this what we asked for? Join local guide Michael Higgins Jr. for an exploration of the area and its newest developments as well as a historical framing for this moment's local politics on housing as they begin to shift again into a new mayoral administration.

The walk will shift indoors to a virtual experience if inclement weather.

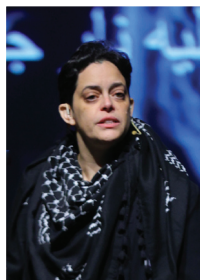


Photo: Yasser Hemaya, 2025, Cairo

Writing Change: Connecting Personal & Political in Creative Writing

with Andrea Assaf, *Art2Action*

> Lower Studio B

The Writing Change workshop, facilitated by poet, playwright and essayist Andrea Assaf, invites participants to explore the connections between transformative moments in their personal experience and pivotal moments in political history, and to write creatively from those intersections. How do we express or document changing times, even as we navigate our own experiences and feelings about what is happening around us? How can our writing catalyze or contribute to change-making and movement building? Through a series of guided exercises, personal reflection, and facilitated group dialogue, the process takes participants deeper into inquiry and leads to unexpected discoveries. All welcome! Sharing is encouraged, but not required.

SESSION 2 - DESCRIPTIONS

3:30 - 5:15 (1 hour 45 minutes)



photo: Edwina Hay

FROM COMPOST TO CONSTELLATION: Seeding Possibility

with amalia deloney, Point A Studio

> Upper Studio A (by the entrance)

Through ecological metaphors and participatory exercises, we'll explore what needs to be composted, sense the small shoots of possibility already emerging, and identify the deeper patterns taking root in our communities. Together, we'll co-create "constellations of possibility"—future images grounded in care, relationship, and place—and each participant will leave with one micro-practice to seed in their own work. This workshop blends reflection, imagination, movement, and collective sensemaking, offering a grounded and hopeful way to navigate change and cultivate the futures our neighborhoods deserve.

Resource on Hospicing the Future:

<https://seedandsignal.substack.com/p/hospicing-the-future>



Power Mapping to Develop Effective Campaign Strategies

with Alex Navarro-McKay, political consultant and educator

> Upper Studio D (end of hall near offices)

This workshop introduces power mapping as a strategic tool to identify and analyze the decision-makers, influencers, and allies who can advance your goals as cultural organizers working toward community change. Through guided exercises, participants will practice mapping relationships between key stakeholders, understanding their motivations and interests, and identifying leverage points for influence. Whether you're campaigning for policy change, community resources, or institutional accountability, power mapping helps you answer critical questions: Who has the power to give you what you want? Who influences them? Where should you focus your organizing energy? Leave with practical frameworks to strengthen your campaign strategy and build winning coalitions that center community voices and cultural organizing approaches.



Rehearsing Our Future: Poetry, Theater & Democracy in Practice

*with Jonathan "Courageous" Clark,
multidisciplinary artist and activist*

> Main Room C

This immersive workshop is designed to explore the powerful intersection of poetry, theater, and story circle as processes to cultivate democracy and community. Participants will transform personal narratives into poetry, and poetry into ensemble theatrical performance, while practicing deep listening, and experiencing shared authority throughout. By the end of the workshop, attendees will be equipped with practical, adaptable tools to foster connection, amplify diverse voices, and build collective power within your own communities; rehearsing the future we wish to create, one story at a time. A Southerner and Appalachian from East Tennessee, Clark writes, creates, facilitates, and performs nationwide.



Stitching Our Stories: Politics, Collage & Collective Imagination

*with Jennella Young,
artist & community-based arts practitioner*

> Lower Studio B

In this hands-on workshop, we'll explore how simple bookbinding and collage can help us preserve memory, confront erasure, and imagine new possibilities for our communities. We'll stitch together small pamphlet books and then use images, paper scraps, and guided prompts to build collaged pages that speak to the stories we carry and the futures we're working toward. Together, we'll also begin a collaborative handmade book that gathers our shared vocabulary of change. Inspired by writers like Toni Morrison and Edwidge Danticat, we'll consider how art helps us remember, resist, and reframe the narratives shaping our lives. You'll leave with a handmade book, creative tools, and new ways to bring art into community work.

WITH OUR DEEPEST APPRECIATION

Thank you to:

Mercury Store, including John Del Gaudio, Claudia Zelevansky, Anthony Dean, Maya Lopez, Carter, and Sarazina Stein for hosting us. Fairfield Inn & Suites New York Brooklyn and Lily White for accommodations.

Hatuey Ramos-Fermín, Claudie Mabry, Paloma McGregor, Roohi Choudhry, Emily Ahn Levy, Ryan Gilliam, Judi Jennings, Andrea Assaf, Mindy Fullilove and Jonathan “Courageous” Clark for contributing to the morning program; and Gonzalo Casals and Celina Su for morning contributions and hosting a lunchtime conversation.

Session facilitators previously listed, Jaimé Yawa Dzandu and George Emilio Sanchez, F.A.C.T; plus the day’s production support team: Rosemary Avila, Cynthia Fortozo, Ella Denham-Conroy and Rishauna Zumberg. And thanks to you for participating!

Edwina Hay, photographer.

Our food today comes thanks to Brooklyn neighborhood vendors: Zaytoons, Principles GI Coffee House, Runner & Stone, Four & Twenty Blackbirds, and Everybody Eats.

The Cultural Organizing for Community Change team is Tom Oesau, Caron Atlas, and amalia deloney. Program design by Tom Oesau.

Arts & Democracy

Arts & Democracy helps build a movement of work that cross-fertilizes arts and culture, participatory democracy, and social justice. We do this through cultural organizing, capacity building, artist residencies, and by shaping policy and creating spaces for reflection and connection. Our focus is on historically disenfranchised communities. We put arts and culture on agendas where it hasn’t been before, connect artists, activists, and policymakers who wouldn’t otherwise know each other, and create the connective tissue and generative environment needed for transformative collaborations to succeed.

www.artsanddemocracy.org, email: info@artsanddemocracy.org

Facebook: [ArtsandDemocracy](https://www.facebook.com/ArtsandDemocracy), Instagram: [artsanddemocracy](https://www.instagram.com/artsanddemocracy)

Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts NY (NOC-D-NY)

NOC-D-NY is a citywide alliance of cultural networks and community leaders that has joined together to revitalize New York City from the neighborhood up. NOCD-NY came together in 2010 in response to the vision, sustained needs, and resiliency of NYC communities. Our asset-based approach recognizes the powerful culture that already exists in communities and the importance of working across communities to make citywide change.

www.nocdny.org, email: nocdny@gmail.com

Facebook: [nocdny](https://www.facebook.com/nocdny), Instagram: [nocdny](https://www.instagram.com/nocdny)

This program is supported by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, City Councilmember Shahana Hanif, and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature. Also thank you for supporting this workshop.