

## 2023 Grantees:

**The Afghan Women of Brattleboro (Jennifer Sutton, Elissa Pine, Ziagul Azimi, Negina Azimi)**—In a series of collaborative audio stories, we follow Afghan women who fled their homes after the Taliban takeover, settled in Brattleboro, and are now staking a claim in their new hometown. These stories, collected and interpreted in collaboration with journalist Ziagul Azimi and artist Nagina Azimi, will deepen our understanding not only of their experiences, but also what it means to live in an evolving, diversifying community.

**The Benevolent Busty Scoot (Jocelyn McElroy, Jonas Fricke, Amy Frost, Saturn Millner)**—A beautiful horse-drawn carriage, hitched to THREE bikes welded together to create an old-timey futuristic harbinger of positive change of our DREAMS! A roving apothecary, bike repair service, zine library and art archive, food distribution, spontaneous puppet show, and MORE! ... See us at the Art Walk, Saturdays, and when INVOKED. Collaborators include artists from Buoyant Heart Collective, SuSu Collective, Circle Mountain Farm, and Nik Perry (Sadie's Bikes).

**Boogie Down Kids! (Jessica Dolan, David Longsmith, Shawn Jones, Janet Ryu, Jeff Diehl)**—Boogie Down Kids is a monthly 3-hour DJ dance party for children and their grown-ups to experience the joy of dance and play together. We created BDK to build community, move our bodies, and celebrate children and families, after three years of isolation during the pandemic. We are a multi-cultural collective of parents who have backgrounds in DJ-ing, hip-hop, dance, and event organizing, who believe music and dance are healing and inclusive ways to learn and play as a community!

**The Brattleboro Community Mapping Project (Amber Paris)**—Join The Brattleboro Community Mapping Project and map what's important to YOU! Where do you feel alive? Where do you find belonging? Where are you moved by beauty? You can answer these questions and more on evolving maps of Brattleboro. You can find these mapping activities in the Harmony Lot during Gallery Walk, at Brooks Memorial Library throughout the summer and at select Brattleboro Farmers' Market Saturdays to engage with a new question each month and watch these community maps grow.

**Community LEGO Letterpress Event! (Daniel Chiacchio, First Proof Press)**—Join us for a free and open to the public print day located at Pliny Park in the heart of downtown Brattleboro. Participants will be welcomed to create mixed and matched LEGO letterpress designs, which can then be printed on a traditional letterpress. Multiple printing stations will be set up, welcoming artists of all levels and ages to create a handmade print to take home.

**Counting Pebbles (Taiga Christie and Zoe Batson, Faultline Ensemble)**—Based on EMS provider stories gathered across the U.S. from 2016-2018, this live theater performance grapples with the unique challenges faced by emergency medical responders. Created by a team of EMTs, WFRs, healthcare providers, theater artists, writers, musicians and disaster responders in partnership with the Code Green Campaign, this play tells stories of responders struggling with trauma, burnout, and the aftermath of a coworker's death.

**TRANSCENDENCE: Multidisciplinary Artist Salon (Epsilon Spires and Shanta Lee)**—Epsilon Spires and local artist Shanta Lee present the second installment of the annual Multidisciplinary Artist Salon, a weekend-long residency that brings pioneering artists of color from around the country to Southern Vermont to exchange ideas across a variety of creative disciplines and share their work with the public. The 2023 Salon will explore topics including: the importance of scent in memory and the creative process, cultural

appropriation and repatriation of historical artifacts, racial bias of AI facial recognition programming, and the influence of Rumi's poems within the music of contemporary poetry.

### **Queer Clay Play- Monthly Workshops for All Ages (Julien Majonen and Marcie Freeman**

**Becker)**—The world is a scary place for LGBTQIA+ folk right now. We need a place where we can feel safe, connect with each other, and maybe make some weird, super cool art! We're hosting a themed "clay play" at our pottery studio for LGBTQIA+ folks and their families. We'll explore various handbuilding skills together (for example, self-portrait tiles, animal sculptures, etc), maybe process life a bit, or just play! No experience necessary! Participants will get to create one piece a month to fire and keep.

**Still Life After Winter (Jodie Masterman)**—Still Life After Winter will take testimonies from community members detailing the memories, moments, and objects that help get them through the cold, dark, and isolating months from October to April. These narratives will be translated into mixed media installations. The anonymous written testimonies will be displayed alongside the artwork, allowing members of the community to read and relate to one another's experiences.

## **2022 Grantees:**

**ArtLords Mural at Brattleboro Foodworks (Artlords)** A collective of mural painters from Afghanistan have resettled in Brattleboro after fleeing the Taliban. Known as the "ArtLords," these five young artists are looking to continue their craft and paint murals on walls around their new home of Brattleboro. One such project is to paint a large mural on the exterior of the Foodworks building on Canal Street, in the neighborhood where many Afghan families have been resettled. The mural design will be related to food and will celebrate Vermont's agriculture. *This grant was co-sponsored by Downtown Brattleboro Alliance.*

**Chinese Five Elements through Tai Chi and Cooking (Cai Xi)** Explore Chinese Five Elements - Fire, Earth, Metal, Water, and Wood - through Tai Chi and Five Animal Qigong Movement and Cooking. Join with Artist/Chef Cai Xi to hold your body and mind in the center of your heart, practicing tai chi movement every Friday, 9-10am on Brattleboro Common, starting August 12th. Rainy days will be on zoom. Prepare meals with Cai's family recipes at 5-7pm on September 6th, October 4th and November 1st on Zoom.

**An Evening of Afghani Film, Food & Dialogue (Epsilon Spires)** Join Epsilon Spires and the ArtLords for a cross-cultural evening, exploring Afghani art and culture under the stars! The event will feature an exquisite Afghani film, followed by a community discussion, and Afghani foods.

**Sonic Blanket (Jonathan Gitelson)** High above the town of Brattleboro, an invisible blanket of radio waves emanates through the broadcast signal of WVEW community radio. Although we can't see it, this blanket hums above us like a protective spell. Sonic Blanket is a 15-minute sound collage by Brattleboro artists Jonathan Gitelson, Weston Olencki, and Diana Whitney; it is broadcast nightly at 12am on WVEW. This project also includes community-based art installations, art making workshops, radio listening parties, and more. More information at: [www.sonicblanket.org](http://www.sonicblanket.org)

**Ability Arts (River Gallery School)** River Gallery School's Ability Arts program offers educational and entrepreneurial art experiences for disabled individuals in Windham County. Our program provides classes to youth and adults with physical or developmental disabilities to make art and create community.

**REGENERATIONS: Reckoning with Radioactivity (Megan Buchanan)** This interdisciplinary performance project of poetry, dance, projection & live music explores the issue of spent radioactive fuel left behind by Vermont Yankee in our Connecticut River watershed and in many other sites throughout the world. This project will be in residency at BMAC beginning mid-October 2022 through Jan 2023, with Sunday public creation/work sessions with collaborators on-site in the main gallery.

**Krystal Puppeteers (Kenya) - All School Show (Sandglass Theater)** Sandglass Theater's Puppets in the Green Mountains Festival presents Krystal Puppeteers' "Tears By The River," a musical folktale about courage addressing modern-day themes of migration and climate change. Krystal Puppeteers sing, drum, puppeteer and dance in this vibrant and joyous performance, which celebrates the oral traditions of Africa.

**Thrival (Shea Witzberger)** Using community conversations from 2020's Community Safety Review and beyond, this public art project will add story and sound and visual form to Brattleboro area residents' dreams for a thriving, safe community.

**Young Filmmakers Apprenticeship (The VT Suitcase Company)** Vermont Suitcase Films is creating two mentored positions in their upcoming film project. Two New England Youth Theater students/alumni, Django Grace and Esther Martel, will join as production assistants and learn about the profession by being on set and by working with adult mentors.

**Emancipation: Celebrating Ancestors, Land & Self (William Forchion)** Emancipation is an interactive solo theatrical experience crafted of song, chant, poetry and ritual incantation that draws on African and African-American storytelling traditions, as well as the ancestral stories and lived experience of creator and performer William Forchion. In addition to the performance of Emancipation, slated for late summer 2022, William Forchion will offer a community "storyweaving" workshop that will guide participants in creating their own stories.

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## 2021 Grantees:

**Puppet Companions (Shoshana Bass, Sandglass Theater)** Sandglass Theater and Garden Path Elder Living team up to combat loneliness, promote creativity, and inspire story telling in residential care facilities through the magic of puppetry. Sandglass will create a collection of inviting puppets and accessories, along with a series of guided play suggestions for residents at Holton Home and Bradley House. Puppet makers will also bring Sandglass puppeteers and puppets for window visits with residents. [video](#)

**Hearts of Hope (William Forchion)** Artist and performer William Forchion will paint 50 healing hearts of hope on locally-sourced repurposed Guilford slate. The healing hearts will be distributed in locations around Brattleboro for residents to discover and take on a first come basis. The healing hearts are a display of resilience in trying times. Each heart symbolizes the power of love to handle all things. [link](#)

**Lost Frequency - Sci Fi Podcast (Doran Hamm, Ben Stockman)** Imagine two separate timelines diverging in the year 2020. In ours, we have been beset by an uncontrollable virus, are reckoning with centuries of institutional racism and oppression, and are living in an ideologically divided nation. What is happening in the other? And what if that one is even stranger? Lost Frequency will be a scripted

science fiction podcast in the vein of 1950s radio anthologies, and television programs like *The Twilight Zone*, written and voiced by members of the local theatrical community. The pilot episode will be a double-feature, consisting of two 15-minute tales designed to thrill, amuse, and delight the listening audience.

**PenPal Your Neighbor (Lauren Harkawik)** PenPal Your Neighbor is a project aimed at connecting neighbors to neighbors from inside their homes this winter, through the power of snail mail. Participants will be paired with another Windham County resident and encouraged to write five letters back and forth to one another. The project is free to participate in. In addition to a penpal, participants will receive postage, stationery, and ideas for what to write about.

**Daydreaming: Windows of Imagination (Laura Lawson Tucker & Darlene Jenson, Theatre Adventure)** Challenges during the pandemic have given Theatre Adventure students with disabilities an opportunity to expand their creative pursuits. Puppetry will be introduced to Theatre Adventure performance troupes as a new storytelling medium using themes of inspiration, imagination, and connectivity. This project will provide art boxes with puppetry materials to support continued engagement in online learning and will culminate with three online performances.

**Wishing Well (Em Hexe)** The Wishing Well serves as a conduit for the lost wishes of this past year, as well as space to offer wishes for what is to come. Community members are invited to call an anonymous hotline with a wish they would like to put forth into the ether. These recorded wishes will be played inside an ice shanty on the Retreat Meadows, within which a creative wishing well will be found. The Wishing Well will be on view as part of BMAC's Art Shanty Project, February 13-28.

**Snow-Heads Competition (Rolf Parker-Houghton)** This winter, Brattleboro community members are turning piles of snow in parking lots and near driveways all over town into "Snow-Heads." Three \$100 Prizes will be offered to snow-head creators, whose creations will be judged based on artistry, goofiness, or level of delight their snow-head inspires. All snow-heads will be celebrated.  
[universityofbrattleboro.com/f/snow-heads-of-brattleboro](http://universityofbrattleboro.com/f/snow-heads-of-brattleboro)

**Folk Duo Video Concert (Lissa Schneckenburger, Corey DiMario)** When fiddler and folk singer Lissa Schneckenburger joins tenor guitarist Corey DiMario for a live performance, they deliver a great mix of fiddle tunes and classics from the American songbook. The duo will film two video concert specials for the residents of Holton Homes and Bradley House in Brattleboro, aimed to get toes tapping, audiences smiling, and voices singing along.

**Adventures with Super Bee: Project Laugh Leaves & Tickle Grass (Cyndal Ellis)** is an interactive dance / theater show for young children and their families, to be held outdoors, picnic-style. Laughter has mysteriously gone missing! Join Super Bee and her friends on a whimsical journey to solve the mystery and restore laughter to the world. Leading up to and following the show, take part in the online Local Laugh Challenge by posting jokes or games that give you the giggles. Your jokes may be selected and performed at the live event on June 19th, 4pm at the Brattleboro Commons.

**Bollywood Night at Backlot Cinema (Epsilon Spires)** On August 27th, Epsilon Spires presents a free socially-distanced outdoor screening of the Bollywood film *Ship of Theseus* (2012, 150 mins). The film centers on connections between an experimental photographer, an ailing monk, and a young stockbroker to explore identity, justice, beauty, and the meaning of life and death. Guest-curated and introduced live by Vidhi Salla, host of *Vidhi's Bollywood Jukebox* on Brattleboro Community Radio,

WVEW 107.7 FM. For a multi-sensorial experience, cuisine will be available from Shital's Vegetarian Indian Food. The film begins at Sundown, and will be made available to watch online after the event for those unable to attend.

**Brattleboro Artist Movement (BAM) Project (Jonas Fricke, Saturn Ladyheart Millner, SUSU Healing Collective)** Inspired by a virtual and live "CommUNITY Ritual" hosted by SUSU and the Root Social Justice Center in July 2020, this project will create a large mural on fabric, accompanied by custom-created flags, signs, and banners. These elements will amplify the voices of BIPOC activists and community members who shared their voices as part of the July event, build spirit, and energize future actions and events.

**The New Normal Brass Ensemble (Riley Goodmote)** The New Normal Brass Ensemble invites you to enjoy fresh, artful brass music in unexpected places this summer. Online and in downtown Brattleboro, the brass quartet will be performing open-air, guerilla chamber music concerts for all to listen. With trumpets and trombones, it's a bright fanfare for a breath of fresh air! So keep your ear to the ground, get out in the world, and revel in The New Normal!

**Community Mural Project (Nina Nabizadeh, Emily Tatro)** Brattleboro is a unique town made up of the land, spaces, and people that create a kind and loving atmosphere. Co-sponsored by the Downtown Brattleboro Alliance, this project envisions the creation of a community mural that expresses "what makes Brattleboro a special place." The mural is proposed for the High Grove parking lot in Downtown Brattleboro (pending Town approval) alongside the existing AIDS quilt mural. Share your ideas about what makes Brattleboro Brattleboro, and/or help paint the mural! Open to participation from people of all ages and abilities, this project will culminate in a community celebration with music and food.

**Songs From Tin Pan Alley (Susan Rosano, Green Mountain Strummers)** The Green Mountain Strummers bring back the music of the good old days through a sing-along ukulele concert with songs from the Great American Songbook. Audiences can share in the joy of singing together and learning familiar songs from the past. Three outdoor concerts will be performed for three senior audiences / residences in the Brattleboro area.

**Kindred Spirits (Erin Scaggs, Zach Weinberg)** Our community of young people has lost a long list of bright, beloved friends in recent years. This project aims to create a work of art and physical space for those in our community experiencing grief and the loss of family and friends, as well as those impacted by mental illness, homelessness, and isolation. Local metal artist Zach Weinberg will draw on input and words from community members to create a decorative bench which will be installed in a publicly accessible location. The bench will offer a sacred space for folks to sit with grief and support others who may be struggling.

**Main Street Flea @ Gallery Walk (Julia Tadlock, KariLyn McLellan)** Main Street Flea is a local makers market and collective of largely young makers and craftspeople. On the first Friday of the month from May through October, up to 40 vendors will set up on the west side of Harmony Parking Lot to sell their wares as part of Downtown Brattleboro's Gallery Walk event. These monthly markets showcase the vibrancy of the local arts community and provide an accessible venue for artisans to show and sell their work. TAF funding will support the cost of producing this series of events and help to keep vendor fees to a minimum.

**Petal it Forward (Vermont Center for Photography)** "In joy or sadness, flowers are our constant friends." Vermont Center for Photography has selected a group of local fine art photographers to create works that center around the theme of flowers, to be exhibited for and gifted to seniors living in local care facilities. Each elder living at Holton Home and Bradley House in Brattleboro will be able to choose a print created by a local photographer to adorn their living spaces. The project will also support 3-5 local photographers by sharing their work within the community.

## **2020 Grantees:**

**Handy Stations Project** (Erin Maile O'Keefe): This project brings together local artists and community partners to support the vibrancy and healthy hand hygiene in Downtown Brattleboro. Handy Stations are attractive, durable, mobile hand sanitizing units, each designed as a unique collaboration between a local musician, artist, business and/or local organization- to make hand sanitizing fun. More info at [www.humanconnectionproject.com/handy-stations](http://www.humanconnectionproject.com/handy-stations).

**Analog Art Kits** (HB Lozito / Out in the Open): Out in the Open is excited to be using TAF funding to support a creative mutual aid project. OITO will work with an artist to design and distribute 2-4 "art kits" that will include materials and instructions for analog projects that can be completed at home with little guidance or as part of an artist-led virtual workshop.

**Art for Social Change** (Jess Weitz / River Gallery School): River Gallery School used their TAF grant to offer three sessions of a free online Meditation and Art class that was made available to the greater Brattleboro community. The class included a combination of live and recorded class resources, and had 50 participants.

**Adoption Stories** (Jo Dery and Tamara Evenson): Originally conceived as an in-person animation workshop and storytelling project, Adoption Stories will now be produced as a podcast about foster/adoptive families living in southern Vermont. Created collaboratively, the goal of Adoption Stories is to promote individual, familial, and communal healing through storytelling. More info at [www.adoptionstoriesvt.com](http://www.adoptionstoriesvt.com).

**Brattleboro Faces Project** (Ezra Distler): The Brattleboro Faces Project is an ongoing series of portraits that shed a loving and inclusive light on all members of our community. Ezra has adapted his setup to allow for socially-distanced, outdoor portrait sessions and is exploring portraits with essential workers. TAF funding will support the development and presentation of this series.