

RECIPIENTS OF BOSTON CULTURAL COUNCIL ARTIST FELLOWSHIP AWARD ANNOUNCED

The pilot program invests a total of \$50,000 in the advancement of five individual artists.

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Mayor Martin J. Walsh and the [Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture \(/departments/arts-and-culture\)](#) today announced the recipients of the City's first-ever Artist Fellowship Award, designed to support the advancement of artists living in Boston.

Five local artists have been selected to receive a fellowship award worth \$10,000, designed to recognize exceptional original artistic work while helping recipients advance their careers and continue their work in Boston.



From left to right: Mayor Walsh, Marilyn Arsem,

Michelle Fornabai, Dariel Suarez, Julie Burros, Mary-Jane Doherty, and Councilor At-Large Annessa Essaibi George.

"Keeping artists in Boston is a key goal of the Boston Creates Cultural Plan," said Mayor Walsh. "The artists receiving the awards today have all made essential contributions to the City. We are proud to invest in these artists and help them continue to create the high quality work that makes Boston a thriving community."

The five artists receiving the Artist Fellowship Award include:

Marilyn Arsem, a performance artist who creates live events ranging from solo performances to large-scale site-specific works incorporating installation and performance. Arsem has presented work at festivals, alternative spaces, galleries, museums, universities and conferences, in 28 countries in North and South America, Europe, in the Middle East, Oceania and Asia. Arsem received her BFA from Boston University and is a founding member of Mobius, Inc., an interdisciplinary collaborative of artists. Arsem lives in Jamaica Plain and was the 2015 recipient of the Maud Morgan Prize at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Mary-Jane Doherty is an Associate Professor at Boston University. Over several decades she has worked with her students to develop the Narrative Documentary, a reshaping of traditional single-handed filmmaking so that technique becomes part of the story itself. After many years producing works for major corporations, Doherty began producing her own films in 2014, creating two films that follow young dancers growing up within Cuba's world-famous ballet system. Doherty lives in the Back Bay and is currently assembling a series of short films on the Boston Children's Chorus.

Michelle Fornabai, is a conceptual artist from Roxbury. Fornabai forms ideas in ink and concrete, exploring art mistakes made within architectural standards of practice, eliciting unexpected results and poetic experiences from banal aspects of conventional construction. Trained as an

architect, Michelle Fornabai received her Masters of Architecture from Princeton University. Her work has been exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria, the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Storefront for Art and Architecture, Contemporary Art Center New Orleans, the Bruce Museum and the Yuan Art Museum, Beijing, China.

Jason Palmer is a trumpeter, composer and educator who has performed with such greats as Roy Haynes, Herbie Hancock, Wynton Marsalis and many more. Palmer was a recipient of the 2014 French American Cultural Exchange Jazz Fellowship and was named a Fellow in Music Composition by the Massachusetts Cultural Council in 2011 and 2017. In addition to performing, Palmer is a board member at JazzBoston and an Assistant Professor of Ensembles and Brass at Berklee College of Music in Boston and served as an Assistant Professor at Harvard University. Palmer resides in Roslindale.

Born and raised in Havana, Cuba, **Dariel Suarez** immigrated to the United States with his family in 1997 and currently resides in Brighton. Suarez earned his M.F.A. in fiction at Boston University, where he was a Global Fellow, and is one of the founding editors of Middle Gray Magazine. He has taught creative writing at Boston University, the Boston Arts Academy, Boston University's Metropolitan College, and is now the Head of Faculty and Curriculum at GrubStreet. His writing has received honors from Glimmer Train, Nimrod International's Katherine Anne Porter Prize for Fiction, and Gival Press. Dariel's story collection, *A KIND OF SOLITUDE*, was a finalist for the New American Press Fiction Prize and the Autumn House Press Fiction Contest.

The recipients will collaborate with the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture on an event to showcase their individual work. In addition, recipients will receive professional development support, and mentorship specialized to their needs.

"Boston has a deep community of talented artists who have been creating extraordinary work," said Julie Burros, Chief of Arts and Culture for the City of Boston. "We are thrilled to be

able to provide these artists with support that will help them continue to grow and develop while highlighting their commitment to the city"

The Artist Fellowship Award process was open to all individual artists who work professionally in art disciplines and are a City of Boston resident. The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture received over 300 applications in four languages. The Artist Fellowship Award is an unrestricted award that can be used at the discretion of the recipient, providing the support they need to be able to continue their work. Today's announcement supports the goals of both [Boston Creates](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001Jv3rLvKE98u23rwlplp6WmxNQONgXAC2yiR7JEYurUmnorkSLmz7tMddojPwy2-Qe3wkFjQxZic54R7hNaL-PpYZE8JR_mBj4XVI_hw6PYhkoAMQ3H1zbATIQ-o8eFMc6MkMOh0cvyfj0NZzKXoUj9VXXGZdG7OndZJT8KXdqWpRoFrdCU4ow==&c=qIUeyDDRBCqKYLedxeoXiI8SRG91wS9D8nxc_LcSA4nAz0LAUIJ8H4n3vr5GeL9naD1rDdrIzGw==) (http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001Jv3rLvKE98u23rwlplp6WmxNQONgXAC2yiR7JEYurUmnorkSLmz7tMddojPwy2-Qe3wkFjQxZic54R7hNaL-PpYZE8JR_mBj4XVI_hw6PYhkoAMQ3H1zbATIQ-o8eFMc6MkMOh0cvyfj0NZzKXoUj9VXXGZdG7OndZJT8KXdqWpRoFrdCU4ow==&c=qIUeyDDRBCqKYLedxeoXiI8SRG91wS9D8nxc_LcSA4nAz0LAUIJ8H4n3vr5GeL9naD1rDdrIzGw==),

the City's cultural plan and also [Imagine Boston 2030](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001Jv3rLvKE98u23rwlplp6WmxNQONgXAC2yiR7JEYurUmnorkSLmz7qonDKXouNgKCaJskNFqX9Dg5tZ-cBWhx1fYQRrOfq6DHBa-S64JumkGmhoVMMcNbOH2VkPLPEzDu1tcQgW00Ij7B3AMTnJpHfaWLK1At8MZHNLt9K0kt2oi8GMfjtYcQ==&c=SRG91wS9D8nxc_LcSA4nAz0LAUIJ8H4n3vr5GeL9naD1rDdrIzGw==) (http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001Jv3rLvKE98u23rwlplp6WmxNQONgXAC2yiR7JEYurUmnorkSLmz7qonDKXouNgKCaJskNFqX9Dg5tZ-cBWhx1fYQRrOfq6DHBa-S64JumkGmhoVMMcNbOH2VkPLPEzDu1tcQgW00Ij7B3AMTnJpHfaWLK1At8MZHNLt9K0kt2oi8GMfjtYcQ==&c=SRG91wS9D8nxc_LcSA4nAz0LAUIJ8H4n3vr5GeL9naD1rDdrIzGw==),

the City's first citywide plan in 50 years.

All applications were reviewed by a distinguished panel of jurors comprising members of the Boston Cultural Council and local arts leaders. Jurors included Boston Cultural Council members Pat McSweeney, Hanah Fadrigalan and Marie Fukuda; Boston Artists-in-Residence Charles Coe and Jenn De Leon; Jabari Asim, David Howse and Claire Andrade-Watkins of Emerson College; Bill Banfield and Scott Wheeler of Berklee School of Music; Nicole Terez Dutton, Somerville's Inaugural Poet Laureate; Melinda Lopez, Playwright-in-Residence at Huntington Theatre Company; David Henry of the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston; Louise Kennedy of WBUR; Debra Cash from the Boston Dance Alliance; F. Philip Barash of Sasaki Associates; Fabio Fernandez of the Society of Arts + Crafts; Elsa Mosquera Sterenberg of Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción; Camilo Alvarez of Samsøñ Projects; Jen Mergel, an Independent Curator; Fred Liang of Massachusetts College of

Art; Sabrina Aviles of the Boston Latino International Film Festival; Valerie Linson of Facing History and Ourselves; Lyda Kuth of the LEF Foundation; Justina Crawford of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston; Matt McArthur of The Record Co.; and Greg Valentino Ball of KillerBoomBox.

"It was an honor to serve on this jury," said playwright and actor Melinda Lopez. "Our exposure to the breadth of talent in this city was inspiring. We hope to celebrate our Fellowship Artists, as well as the deep pool of applicants."

ABOUT THE BOSTON CULTURAL COUNCIL (BCC)

The [Boston Cultural Council \(/departments/arts-and-culture/boston-cultural-council\)](/departments/arts-and-culture/boston-cultural-council), under the umbrella of the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, annually distributes funds allocated by the City of Boston and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, to support innovative arts, humanities and interpretive sciences programming that enhances the quality of life in our city.

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF ARTS AND CULTURE (MOAC)

The [Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture \(/departments/arts-and-culture\)](/departments/arts-and-culture)'s mission is to support artists, the cultural sector, and to promote access to the arts for all. The office houses the Boston Cultural Council, the Boston Art Commission, the Poet Laureate program, and the Mayor's Mural Crew. Responsibilities include leading the City's Cultural Plan, Boston Creates; managing the [Boston Artist-in-Residence program \(/departments/arts-and-culture/boston-artists-residence-air\)](/departments/arts-and-culture/boston-artists-residence-air) (BostonAIR); overseeing the [Artist Certification process \(/departments/arts-and-culture/artist-certification\)](/departments/arts-and-culture/artist-certification); curating [exhibitions in City Hall \(/departments/arts-and-culture/city-hall-galleries\)](/departments/arts-and-culture/city-hall-galleries); operating the historic [Strand Theater in Dorchester \(/departments/arts-and-culture/strand-theatre\)](/departments/arts-and-culture/strand-theatre); and supporting artists and arts organizations in Boston.

ABOUT THE BOSTON CREATES CULTURAL PLAN

The cultural plan is a ten-year plan for supporting arts and culture in the City of Boston. It was created out of a year-long community engagement effort designed to help local government identify cultural needs, opportunities, and

resources and to prioritize, coordinate, and align public and private resources to strengthen Boston's cultural vitality over the long term. [The full cultural plan can be found online \(http://plan.bostoncreates.org/\).](http://plan.bostoncreates.org/)

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