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# **COUNTRY DAY CREATIVE ARTS**

## **THE 2019 ARTIST TEACHERS**



**We wholeheartedly thank  
the 38 CDCA Interns  
for all their help and support!**





**Justine Ades**  
New Orleans, LA

## Dance

Justine Ades began her training at Steps on Broadway in New York City and is disciplined in Hip Hop, Modern, Horton Technique, Ballet, Jazz, and Salsa. She attended Tulane University and majored in Sociology and Dance under the study and mentorship of Ms. Alice Pascal. She was a member of the Newcomb Dance Company her senior year and choreographed and performed annually in the Young Performers recital. Upon graduating, Justine met Executive Director Laura Stein, and began providing administrative support for Dancing Grounds. Since then, Justine has been teaching dance to adults and youth across New Orleans through school programs and workshops. She is currently a member of BUKU, a New Orleans based Hip Hop company, the K-8 dance teacher at Arise Academy through Dancing Grounds 'Rising', the Summer 2016 Kids Hip Hop Instructor, and teaches adult Hip Hop at Dancing Grounds!

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**Hope Amico**  
New Orleans, LA

## Printmaking & Bookmaking

Starting as an intern years ago, Hope Amico finally went to college and is back at CDCA as an instructor. She is a professional penpal, letterpress printer, zine-writer, and the owner of Gutwrench Press. Despite her formal training as a printer, she is terrible at making the same thing twice. For more than 10 years she has been sending postcards through the Keep Writing project, asking friends and strangers a new question every month. She is a collage artist, teaches adults how to draw and loves a monthly meet-up of like-minded people. Though she used to ride her bike every day from the Marigny to CDCA, this summer she might be driving unless she masters teleportation.

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**Michael Arcos**  
New Orleans, LA

## Video

Michael Arcos is a Miami-born, Ecuadorian-American filmmaker who began his career in his adolescent years editing on VHS. His work has exhibited internationally for the past few years. Arcos is currently based in New Orleans, Louisiana where he continues to create new work through film, sound design, and animation. His work has screened at the Los Angeles International Film Festival, Anthology Film Archives, l'Alternativa Barcelona Independent Film Festival, Calgary Underground Film Festival, New Orleans International Film Festival, Maryland International Film Festival, Glasgow Short Film Festival, Lisbon International Film Festival, Borscht Film Festival and others.





**Jeff Becker**  
New Orleans, LA

## Artist in Residence

Jeff Becker is a director, set designer and sculptor based in New Orleans. He specializes in site-specific performance that utilizes innovative kinetic sets, sculpture and machines. He creates narrative installations that transform and shift as the actors and audience move through them. Jeff's work explores racism, abuse of power and environmental justice. From the Louisiana Wetlands to a Fish Market in Ireland, Jeff's original performances have been presented in diverse locations nationally and abroad.

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**Nicole Boyd Buckels**  
New Orleans, LA

Nicole Boyd Buckels began her dance training at NOCCA. She attended UCLA as a dance major and went on to received her BFA in dance from Tulane University. Nicole has been a company member with the Rod Rodgers Dance Company, New Orleans Dance Collective, Mudhoney Dance Collective, Tsunami Dance Company and has performed in the White Wave Dance Festival (Tsunami Dance Company) and Battery Park Dance Festival (guest artist with Happensdance Company). Nicole has choreographed musicals such as The Rocky Horror Picture Show, Ain't Misbehavin', Dog Fight at Delgado Community College under the direction of the late Timothy Baker. She was also the resident choreographer for Cripple Creek Theatre. Nicole is the recipient of two Big Easy awards for choreography. She is currently a full time faculty member at Lusher Charter School and an adjunct professor at Tulane University.

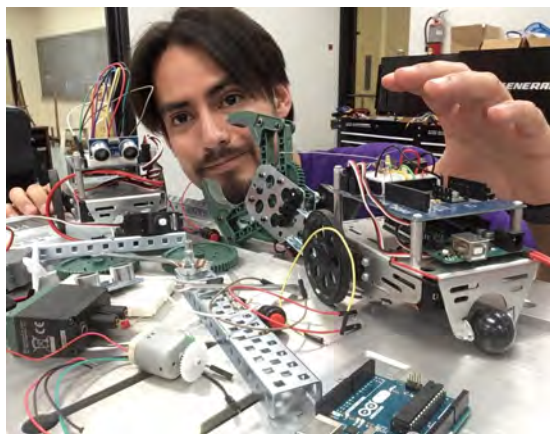
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## Musical Theater

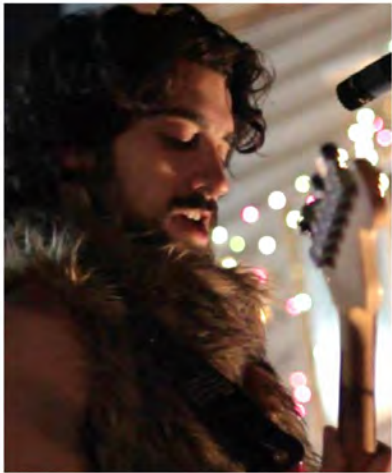


**Joe Cantu**  
New Orleans, LA

## Robotics



Joe is a Houston native, who went to college and worked at a Fab-Lab in Muncie, Indiana, and helped set up a community Hackerspace in York, Pennsylvania. When he found his way to New Orleans, he found a home with the IDIYA Makerspace in Broadmoor, and was involved with the establishment of numerous other educational makerspaces, all over town. He is a student of many different disciplines of making, including the making of music, which seemed natural after moving here. His experiences include work in space vehicle mock-ups, industrial print-shops, design, construction, and IT. He participated in MATE Robotics as a student, and FIRST Robotics as a student, then mentor, now competition judge. While the IDIYA Makerspace may have left New Orleans, Joe remains as an adviser, instructor, and assistant to those who like making. He is a Robotics Instructor at De La Salle High School, and Community Coordinator for Fab Lab NOLA.



**Dan Cardillo**

New Orleans, LA

## Music & Sound Effects

Dan is a musician and educator living in New Orleans. In the past, he's done post production and sound design for features and short films. Currently, he earns his living playing and teaching guitar. He's looking forward to creating wacky noises at CDCA!

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**Ben Cousins**

New Orleans, LA

## Music

Ben is a New Orleans born musician. Starting his career learning the New Orleans tradition through studying clarinet at Preservation Hall. As a high schooler, he furthered his studies at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, where he began exploring a more modern sound. Now Ben is going into his last year at the prestigious Berklee College of Music, constantly pushing the limits of the clarinet and the music he can create within it. Ben is a performer, a creator, and a teacher who is very excited to pass down his passion for creation to young minds at CDCA.



**Mestrando da Silva**

New Orleans, LA

## Capoeira

Rogério Valencio da Silva, better known as Mestrando Cocada in the Capoeira world, began training at the age of 15 in his city of Goioerê, Paraná, Brazil. At the age of 18, Mestrando Cocada began training with Mestre Fran and opened his own academy in 1999. Since coming to the United States, Mestrando Cocada has traveled all over the country as a guest of great Capoeiristas. In 2005, Mestrando Cocada appeared in the Sergio Mendes and Black Eyed Peas video "Mas Que Nada." He also appeared in the video "Miracles" with the group Arrested Development, which features Mestrando Cocada in a one-handed handstand. Mestrando Cocada has trained, taught, and lived Capoeira for over 20 years. He is now in New Orleans with the desire to introduce Capoeira and Brazilian culture to the people of this great city.



**Toby David**  
New Orleans, LA

## Theater

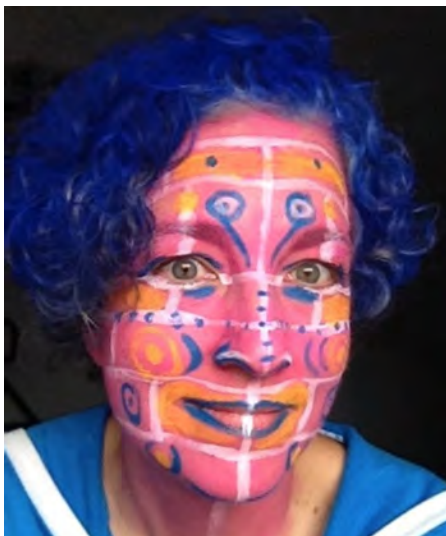
Toby David is a performer, educator, and master of ceremonies in New Orleans. He is the architect and host of a variety show called The Weekly Revue, which has been seen in New York, Miami, and many places between.

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**Julianne D Lagniappe**  
New Orleans, LA

## Costuming & Adornment

Julianne Lagniappe is a native New Orleans artist and lifelong maker specializing in costume and garment design. She works on spectacular Mardi Gras projects including royalty costumes and a Krewe du Vieux float, Burning Man wardrobes, and custom dress making for the fabulous New Orleans lifestyle. A well-made garment is key to any successful adventure!



**Courtney Egan**  
New Orleans, LA

## Stop Motion Animation & Digital Photography

Courtney loves photography, animation, and mixing the two up! She's a full time artist who occasionally teaches, and is also a mom. For 16 years she taught Media Arts at NOCCA, and before that, she taught Visual Art in Jefferson and Orleans Parish Public Schools.





**Ursa Eyer**

New Orleans, LA

## Comics

Ursa is a comic book artist and illustrator working out of New Orleans. She first began studying art at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts and went on to receive a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. She spent time abroad at the Osaka University of Art, studying what would soon become her passion, comic book making. Her work explores social issues through depicting her own personal experiences in comic form. Ursa's work has been featured in The Huffington Post, Bustle, MIC, BuzzFeed, and published in New Orleans Living Magazine and Amandla Magazine.

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**Lauren Gehman**

New Orleans, LA

## Assistant Director

Lauren is the head of the counseling department at Metairie Park Country Day, where she enjoys teaching psychology and helping to coordinate community service projects. Lauren is also part of the adjunct faculty of Tulane's School of Social Work and maintains a small private practice. Lauren is drawn to Country Day Creative Arts year after year due to the inspiring teacher and student artists!



**Susan Gisleson**

New Orleans, LA

## Director of CDCA

Susan Gisleson taught art for eighteen years before becoming the director of Country Day Creative Arts. She is a New Orleans based artist and educator and a founding member of the literary and visual arts non-profit Press Street, Antenna Gallery, and the 24 Hour Draw-a-thon. Susan has also designed signature floats for the Krewe of Muses as well as some of their throws. She believes that CDCA is a place where dreams become realities and realities become dreams.



**Dom Graves**

New Orleans, LA

## Sculpture

Dom Graves builds crazy things with and for crazy people including but not limited to Mardi Gras floats, contraptions, haunted houses, tiny robotic tree frogs, paintings, sculptures, cyborg wookiee themed little free libraries, turtle ponds, experimental instruments and more. Dom also likes to weld, mache', paint, make costumes, tinker, play piano, and DJ on the radio.

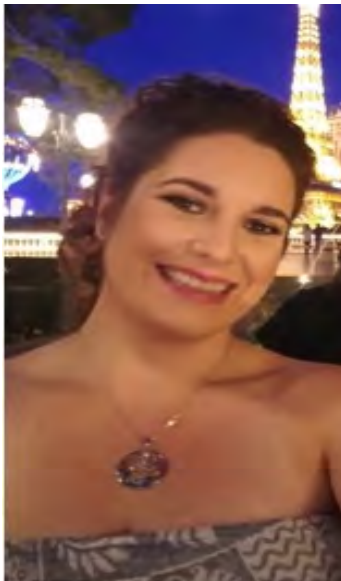
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**Jon Greene**

New Orleans, LA

## Theater

Jon Greene is a director, producer, and theater-maker based out of New Orleans. He holds a BFA from Boston University, trained with Italian Maestro Antonio Fava and is a Kennedy Center Directing Fellow. Nominated for over 12 Big Easy awards his oversized, and imaginative work has been seen at The Shadowbox, The Besthoff Sculpture Garden, Le Petite Theater, and most recently with The Radical Buffoons, of which he is Artistic Director. Prior to living in New Orleans he traveled the world as a working theater maker and found homes (and gigs) in such far away places as Buenos Aires, Reggio Emilia IT, Singapore, Deadwood South Dakota, as well as in New York, Boston, Washington DC, and elsewhere. When he's not in the theater working he's in the theater playing - as in the world around him. He's a firm believer that everything is fodder for our art, but more so -as a true clown -that everything around us is an opportunity for play!



**Kelsey Jacobsen**

New Orleans, LA

## Sign Language

Kelsey Jacobsen is a Sign Language Interpreter who moved from San Diego, California last year. She has been interpreting American Sign Language and English for 2 years and LOVES New Orleans. She has always been fascinated with languages. Her love of Sign Languages comes from the beauty and diversity of the language and the culture. She is looking forward to another wonderful summer at CDCA!



**Sienna Kuykendall**  
New Orleans, LA

## Horticulture & Yoga

Sienna grew up on the West Coast but has been lucky to call New Orleans home for the last 6 years. She loves being active, moving and grooving on the dance floor, in nature and around the world with her friends and family. At any given time you'll likely find her reading, cooking, learning a new language or nerding out about yoga therapy, student-centered learning, and the healing powers of people-plant interactions. In her life outside CDCA Sienna is a gardener and garden educator with the Edible Schoolyard New Orleans and yoga instructor at the Youth Study Center and yoga studios around the city. She is excited to connect, build, and grow with the CDCA community.

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**Austin Laugand**  
New Orleans, LA

## Culinary Arts

Austin Laugand is a chef and works for Metairie Park Country Day School. Austin has worked at Country Day for the past 7 years and counting. He has conquered different skills in all parts of the kitchen from the Prep Room to the Kitchen Manager. Besides his love for the Culinary Arts, Austin also loves his kids and beautiful wife for the past 19 years. He has been exploring the world of baking and is look forward to sharing what he has learned with CDCA!



**Don Lewis**  
New Orleans, LA

## Theater

Donald Lewis, Jr. is a graduate of N.O.C.C.A. and attended the College of Santa Fe, NM and UNO. He performed in the New Orleans premier of "Fragments." He has performed with the Alliance for Community Theaters and received their "Big D" Lifetime Achievement Award. He has performed with the Anthony Bean Theater Company, Chakula Cha-Jua Theater Company, Cripple Creek, Young Audiences, Tulane Shakespeare Festival, Jefferson Performing Arts Society, and many others. His writing credits include co-writing, "A Dose of Reality" by Cast Productions and "On one Foot" with Dr. Michael Chafetz, which premiered at Dillard University for their annual conference on African-American Jewish Relations. Donald was the Head of the Theater Department of the Recovery School District's Gifted and Talented Program. He is the current Stage Manager of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival's Kids Tent.







**Eric Lind**

New Orleans, LA

## Woodworking

Eric Lind believes in building things. After moving to New Orleans in 2010 he developed the habit of collecting discarded treasures from dumpsters. From this found material he started building things and realized it felt good. These accumulated actions grew into a preoccupation as well as an occupation in woodworking. Eric is excited to be at CDCA this summer building forts.

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**Jonathan Myers**

New Orleans, LA

## Painting

Artist, writer, and independent curator, Jonathan Mayers, was born and raised in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Mr. Mayers earned his BFA degree in Painting and Drawing from LSU in 2007 and his MFA degree from UNO. He received scholarships to attend French Immersion at Université Sainte-Anne in Church Point, Nova Scotia, Canada from both the Université Sainte-Anne (2015) and CODOFIL (2016). Mr. Mayers has exhibited works in Prospect.1-4+ Satellites, multiple Surreal Salons, Notes from the Artistic Underground, ART I-10, and Tiercé. In Fall 2018 he was an artist-in-residence at A Studio in the Woods for Adaptations: Living with Change. Currently Mr. Mayers is represented by Arthur Roger Gallery in New Orleans, Louisiana, where his most recent curatorial project, Mythologies Louisianaises, accompanied by a trilingual catalogue in International Louisiana French, Kouri-vini (Louisiana Creole), and English was on display in August and September 2018.



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**Allison Mott**

New Orleans, LA

## Graphic Design

Allison was born in New Orleans, LA on Father's Day, 1985. When she was 4 she started introducing herself as "Rainbow Unicorn Mott" and was baffled and insulted when the name did not stick. At age 6 her favorite doll was Lil' Miss Magic Hair, and she remains Allison's most influential style icon to date. After years of "rotting her brain" and "sitting too close to the television" she started playing softball. In her 8 year-old season she earned a Power Wheels Barbie Corvette for her efforts. Tragically, a growth spurt made the enjoyment of her winnings impossible. At 13, Allison lost her eldest sister's opal ring for fourteen hours and it is still the most afraid she has ever been in her life. At 16, she famously stood up to the meanest girl in her class and was stuffed in a garbage can. At 18, Allison left New Orleans for Oxford, Mississippi where she earned a BFA in graphic design. At 21, Allison found a cooked steak in her purse and mistook it for a human heart. At 25, she married semi-famous printmaker Ross Turner because of his quick wit and ribeye grilling prowess. After deciding that a lifetime of working retail was slowly going to suck the remaining good will from her soul, she applied to the MFA program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi where she specialized in graphic design and found-object sculpture. In April 2019, Allison and Ross welcomed their first human child, Terah into the world.





**Carlos Ochoa**  
New Orleans, LA

## Fencing & Gymnastics

Carlos Ochoa is a native of Lima, Peru and has been a physical education teacher and fencing coach for over 25 years. Carlos started fencing when he was 7 years old and his specialties are teaching fencing, gymnastics, and soccer. Carlos started the first fencing club for children in the city of New Orleans. He has had several fencers participate as Junior Olympics' qualifiers and he himself is a former member of the Peruvian National Fencing Team. Carlos also introduced the first portable/mobile rock climbing wall in the greater New Orleans area.

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**Jeanie Osborne**  
New Orleans, LA

## Mosaics & Mixed Media

Jeanie has been teaching Mosaics and Mixed Media at CDCA for over a decade now. She grew up in Upstate New York and attended Syracuse University for her BFA in Sculpture and later attended Newcomb College/ Tulane University for her MFA in Sculpture. She was recognized last year for 30 years of teaching art at Louise S. McGehee School. During the school year, she teaches with 3rd- 6th grade girls. She enjoys the opportunities at Country Day Creative Arts Program to work with young artists every day to nurture and develop art and ideas. She likes the atelier atmosphere, the community, and camaraderie that manifests each summer. She makes mosaic art throughout the year, likes to sew, bead, garden, and take photographic adventures.



**Margaret Parsons**  
New Orleans, LA

## Visual Arts

Margaret Parsons is a mixed media artist from Covington, LA. In 2016 she received her BFA at Pacific NW College of Art in Portland, OR, where she studied animation, painting, and apprenticed with a professional sign-painter. She is currently the art instructor for all grade levels at St. Andrew's Episcopal School. Margaret makes line drawings of dancers, and loves the poetry of simple things like watermelon.





**Jess Pinkham**  
New York, NY

## Swimming & CDCA Newsletter

Jess Pinkham would rather live underwater; until that's figured out, she uses photography and the postal service to remain entertained on land. Her habits include sending daily postcards, finding a new body of water to swim in on every birthday, and making sure to leave the country at least once a year. She loves animals and kids, and her dream company is a combination of the two.

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**Keri Pollock**  
New Orleans, LA

## Business Manager

Keri is so happy to be a part of CDCA for another glorious year! She is the Business Manager and can be found working, but really having fun, in the office. Prior to working at CDCA, Keri lived in Atlanta and worked at Eileen Fisher for 7 years selling clothing to boutiques in the Southeast. She wears her Eileen Fisher samples that she was busy hoarding during her working hours whenever she can. Outside of CDCA, Keri is busy being a mom to Max and Sarah.



**Matthew Raetz**  
New Orleans, LA

## Circus Arts

This is Matthew's 3rd year with CDCA and his first year as the senior teacher of the juggling class. Matthew has been juggling for almost 10 years and has extensive training in multiple elements of circus, like acro-yoga, acrobatics, trapeze, partner juggling and much more! He has co-founded a Circus Troupe known as YellowBoxCircus that performs all across New Orleans, at private events and festivals. Matthew Loves cats more than any other animal and believes that in a past life he was a House cat himself. When he's not juggling, he's probably beatboxing or Acting in a show somewhere in New Orleans. He is so excited for CDCA this year and thinks it's going to be one of the best ever!





**Annie Rankin**  
New Orleans, LA

## Sink Manager

Annie is a New Orleans native that grew up in the beautiful whirlwind that is CDCA. She is an art educator, freelance graphic designer, and kitten enthusiast. She believes CDCA embodies the philosophy that creativity is inside everyone, and that kids have the potential to do ANYTHING. When she's not art teacherin', Annie keeps busy with her foster dogs and her pet pig, Gloria. She CANNOT WAIT for this summer at CDCA.

**Mike Seely**  
Marrero, LA

## Team Games

Mike has been an educator and coach in the New Orleans area for the last 18 years. He spent 10 years in Jefferson Parish schools as a physical education teacher and head coach of both baseball and football. Mike currently teaches science and coaches football and baseball at Hahnville High School. He believes that team sports can bring out the best in people and show how creative they can be to overcome the obstacles set out before them. Mike also enjoys the teamwork aspect of sports and helping people to learn to work together to overcome adversity. For Mike, "it's one of the greatest parts to being a coach and educator."



**Michael Skinkus**  
New Orleans, LA

## Music & Radio

Michael Skinkus has spent the last quarter century in New Orleans working as a band leader, recording artist and sideman as he deepened his studies of African Diasporic drumming styles. Over the past 25 plus years, Michael has apprenticed himself to many master drummers from Senegal, Haiti, Brazil, and Cuba. A dedicated player of Batá drums, Michael was sworn to the drums of his teacher in Havana, Cuba in 2001, earning the title of Omo Aña. Michael earned a Master's Degree in Latin American Ethnomusicology from Tulane University in 2003. A popular recording artist, Michael can be heard on recordings by the late Johnny Adams, Cubanismo, Dr. John, Irma Thomas, and the Radiators, to name just a few. Presently, Michael continues to perform and tour with many Latin and Jazz music ensembles, and leads his own band, Moyuba.



**Rahsaan Thomas**

New Orleans, LA

## Culinary Arts

Rahsaan Thomas, a cook at Metairie Park Country Day, developed his passion for cooking as a preteen while on summer vacation. Watching his grandmother command the kitchen was both awe inspiring and intriguing. He loves cooking New Orleans favorites and putting his own spin on traditional Creole and Cajun staples. Weekends you'll find Rahsaan sharpening his culinary skills in his kitchen at home, preparing fun favorites for his wife and two daughters. After graduating from O. Perry Walker Senior High School, Rahsaan earned diplomas from the New Orleans area Job Corps and The Culinary Institute of New Orleans. Throughout his twenty plus years in culinary arts he's worked at English Turn, The Creole Queen, and on offshore vessels.

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**Jeffrey Thurston**

New Orleans, LA

## Ceramics

As well as being an active studio artist, Jeffrey Thurston teaches at Tulane University as an adjunct professor of ceramics. His work has been exhibited throughout the United States and most recently exhibited at the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts. His work is also part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Northern California Art.



**Sierra Torres**

New Orleans, LA

## Culinary Arts

Sierra Torres is a "bayou girl", a Louisiana native born in the Crescent City. If growing up in the swamps of the Mississippi Delta can teach you anything, it's how to love your family, the food that brings you together, and the farmers, fishers, and animals who made it all possible. After completing four years of Culinary Arts training at NOCCA and working in fine dining restaurants around the city, Sierra moved up to Massachusetts to receive a B.S. in Sustainable Food and Farming. Not only was it important for her to cook the rich and flavorful food of her culture, but to understand the implications of where that food was coming from and how it was being produced. In Massachusetts, Sierra has worked with farmers, chefs, and educators across the state, specifically within public schools working to integrate garden and culinary arts education into everyday classrooms. Between school, Sierra has spent her summers either in Italy, working with farmers to understand the importance of food in culture and communities through natural cheese making, or in the Northeast, working on and managing organic vegetables farms. Now returning home, Sierra is excited to combine her love for agriculture and cooking to teach the next generation of New Orleans' Chefs and Farmers.



**Ross Turner**

New Orleans, LA

## Visual Arts

Ross Turner's parents won him as the 2nd place prize in a watermelon-eating contest at the Yockanookany County Fair in 1986. He grew up in Chickenbone, Mississippi, subsisting on a heart-healthy diet of fried catfish, fried okra, and fried Dr Pepper. Ross spent his days chasing frogs in shallow creeks, wrestling with dogs, building forts, and drawing stuff; and his nights sleeping in the greatest tree house ever built. It's a crying shame he had to grow up.

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**Sam Van Tassel**

New Orleans, LA

## Puppetry & Stirling

Sam was born and raised in the snowy land of Minnesota where he studied architecture and art at the University of Minnesota. Upon graduation he discovered the world of cardboard art and worked on shows and parades at In The Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theater and built cardboard kingdoms with talented young artists at Adventures in Cardboard summer camp. He moved to New Orleans in 2017 and has been a professional Carnival sculptor and float builder with The Royal Artists ever since.



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**Alison Wells**

New Orleans, LA

## Photography

Alison Wells, a CDCA artist since 1994, is an art educator who spends her school year at McGehee School where she teaches Pre-K through 2nd grade art and in Bywater where she has been raising a family, tending gardens and catching lizards. Her passion for the intersection of art and science never leads to boredom.







**Abby Wetsman**  
New Orleans, LA

## Fabric Art

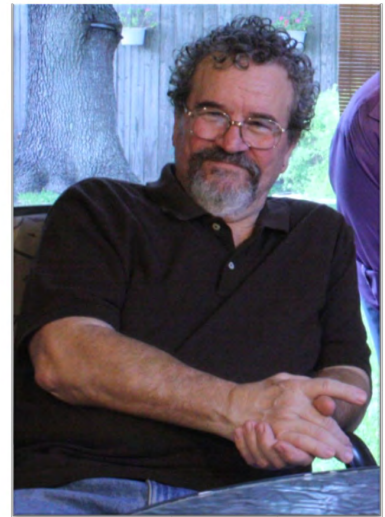
Abby Wetsman stepped into the world of CDCA as a 7 year old, constructing beds out of match boxes for the fairies that lived in one of her classrooms (there were tiny blue foot prints to prove it). She then continued, not missing a year, as an intern for 9 years. She graduated with a BFA in Fibers from Savannah College of Art and Design. As a collector and analyzer of objects, words and ideas, she continues creating, often utilizing the processes of natural dye and embroidery to transform fiber and found material. She is excited to embark upon her 5th summer as senior staff.

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**Tom Woodin**  
New Orleans, LA

## Ceramics

Tom Woodin taught in the gifted visual arts program in Orleans Parish for 14 years. He teaches carpentry and woodworking at Chalmette High School. With an MFA in sculpture from the University of New Orleans, Tom uses a wide array of materials in his work, which manifests in organic forms and man/nature themes.



**Andy Young**  
New Orleans, LA

## Creative Writing

Andy Young is a poet, essayist, educator, mother, dreamer, and rambler who is very excited to join the CDCA experience. She teaches at New Orleans Center for Creative Arts and has published one full collection of poetry and four chapbooks. Her poetry, essays, and translations have been published in literary journals such as Waxwing, Prairie Schooner, and Southern Review, the Norton anthology Language for a New Century, and in publications in Egypt, Ireland, Lebanon, and Mexico. She has lived in Egypt and spent several years visiting live volcanoes. She has also recently become obsessed with cobalt blue.