

2025 Sachs Program Grant Awards

*The Arts Lounge
at the Annenberg
Center for the
Performing Arts*

*Monday, April 28
5-7 PM*





2025 Sachs Program Grant Awards

*The Arts Lounge
at the Annenberg
Center for the
Performing Arts*

*Monday, April 28
5-7 PM*



Intro



Welcome to our 8th Annual Grant Awards Celebration. On behalf of everyone at The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation, it is my great pleasure to share with you our newest grants in support of artistic and creative expression at Penn and beyond.

These forty-two awards support students, faculty, staff, artists, and community partners from the Annenberg School, Penn Nursing, Penn Medicine, School of Arts & Sciences, Weitzman School of Design, and Wharton—in addition to Penn Libraries, the College Houses, the Health System, and multiple arts and cultural centers—emphasizing the broad reach and integration of the arts across the University of Pennsylvania.

We are humbled and honored by the depths of creativity these grants represent and the commitments demonstrated by the grantees to the many communities they care so deeply about.

We remain ever grateful to Keith and Kathy Sachs for having the vision to provide such generous and ongoing support for the arts at Penn. I'd also like to express our heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in making these awards possible, including the many panel members who reviewed the applications, the Sachs Program Board of Advisors, and our incredible staff. We also want to acknowledge the record number of individuals who applied this year. The decisions made about what to support were difficult and not taken lightly.

Thank you for joining us tonight and for your continued support and commitment to the arts. Congratulations to all the grantees, and we hope you enjoy the celebration!

John McInerney
Executive Director
The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation

2025 Grant Awards



- 8 *Artist Residency*
- 10 *Community Partnerships*
- 12 *Project Support*
- 14 *Independent Creative Production*
- 16 *Curricular Support*
- 18 *Student*
- 22 *First-Year Seminar*

Artist Residency

up to \$25,000 to bring artists, curators, and collectives (formal or informal) to Penn as Artists- or Curators-in-Residence.

Penn Press

Builders, Shapers & Independents: A Residency with Daniel Tucker

Daniel Tucker will develop a series of roundtable interviews focused on artists and arts administrators in Philadelphia ages 60+, grouped into distinct but overlapping categories, "Builders, Shapers & Independents," intended to ultimately culminate in a publication.

Community Partnerships

up to \$15,000 to support collaborations between Penn community members and community arts and civic organizers and non-profit organizations.

Asian American Studies (ASAM), Center for Latin American and Latinx Studies (CLALS), the Centro de Cultura, Arte, Trabajo y Educación (CCATE), and Southeast by Southeast

Migrating Lives: Celebrating Communities Through Participatory Murals

Bringing together the Latin American communities of CCATE and the Burmese, Karen, Bhutanese and other communities of Southeast by Southeast in collectively depicting and honoring their history and culture, emphasizing the critical role of immigration in the United States and in Philadelphia.

Heather Love and Juno Rosenhaus (Founder, Dyke+ ArtHaus) with support from M.C. Overholt and S.E. Eisterer

Bridging Dyke and Trans Feminisms: An Intergenerational Salon Series and Exhibit

A curated exhibit of Dyke and Trans artists, and an accompanying salon series, focusing on the intersection of lesbian-feminism and transfeminism in the context of today's fight for queer and trans civil rights.

Kelly Writers House (KWH) and Philadelphia High School for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA)

CAPA + KWH: A Writing Partnership

A year-long collaborative project connecting high school students with career- and college-oriented resources and mentors at KWH and the University of Pennsylvania.

Dyan Castro (Penn Praxis) and Dante Leonard (Smart Futures CDC)

Lex Street Garden Stewardship Project

A collaboration with local organizers to revitalize a vital neighborhood asset with public art and improved infrastructure, engaging the community and youth to strengthen its role as a gateway to the historic New Freedom District (NFD).

Project Support

up to \$7,500 to support engagement with the arts and humanities through projects directed towards the Penn community or broader public.

Common Press

The Typography of Independence

A year-long exploration of the materiality of the Declaration of Independence culminating in a marathon letterpress printing of the historical document using the original type.

Eva Pensis

Citywide Special: An Oral History of Philadelphia's Drag Communities

In-depth interviews with veteran Black and brown drag entertainers and mothers to the Philadelphia trans community, culminating in an exhibition of Bob & Barbara's Drag Show, the longest-running drag show in the nation.

Hakimah Abdul-Fattah and the Center for Experimental Ethnography

Senegalese Archival Film Project: West African Film Heritage (working title)

A series of public activities celebrating four recently restored Senegalese film newsreels from the 60s and 70s examining a critical period of artistic and political history in West Africa.

Jack Drummond and The West Philadelphia String Music & Mentorship Program

Playing Tunes—Healing Wounds

The West Philadelphia String Music & Mentorship Program introduces young boys and men of color to string instruments within a culturally rich and educational framework.

Melodee Arevalo Mendoza and the Board of the Bahay Kultura Filipino School of Philadelphia

Bahay Kultura—Filipino American School of Philadelphia

Artist led workshops for children to experience and discover Filipino culture through play, language, history, and the arts to grow a deeper connection to their cultural identity.

West Philadelphia Sanctuary

Storytelling through Art at the West Philadelphia Sanctuary

A new core component of the West Philadelphia Sanctuary, which provides shelter and respite during the daytime for those that need it, a community of neighbors with whom to gather and socialize, and an opportunity to access needed resources, aiming to address the growing challenges of loneliness and social isolation.

Independent Creative Production

up to \$7,500 to support faculty and staff in the production of their own artistic work.

Amalia Daché

Orisha Tales: Preserving Afro-Cuban Heritage Through Stories for Young Readers

A series of three children's picture books—in English and Spanish—that reflect the culture and resilience in Afro-Cuban religious traditions and heritage.

Ekaterina Derysheva

Poetic Prisms

A new manuscript in Russian that merges language, perception, and art into a cohesive, boundary-pushing poetic form.

Patricia Renee' Thomas

Oil Baby

A body of work—paintings, drawings, and sculpture—which explores the incredible true story of Sarah Rector, the “Richest Colored Girl in America,” who inherited oil-rich land in the Osage Nation (Missouri) in 1913.

Rob Buscher

KIYOSHI (working title)

A feature-length documentary on the life of Kiyoshi Kuromiya, a third-generation Japanese American born in a WWII prison camp, whose Philadelphia-based activism fueled a variety of progressive movements until he succumbed to medical complications of AIDS in 2000.

Sara Kazmi

Songs of Protest from South Asia

A musical album that showcases anticolonial and anti-dictatorship poetry from India and Pakistan.

Syd Zolf

Neutrøis

Syd Zolf will complete their sixth book of poetry, *Neutrøis*, a project that marks a major new turn towards a trans poetics of possibility.

Curricular Support

up to \$3,500 for non-standing faculty, for the implementation of arts-based activities in a course that is currently running or expected to run or for research and professional development related to a course they are teaching.

Alicia Kachmar and The Barbara Bates Center for the Study of the History of Nursing

Disability & Art in Nursing Education

Penn Nursing will host Wendy Elliott-Vandivier, a Philadelphia-based artist whose work explores her experiences as a disabled woman, to present a series of classroom lectures, workshops, and an exhibit of her work.

Lisa Ann Britton

Caves, Cathedrals, and Curiosities: Unearthing Stories of the Chemin des Dames in France

The creation of a video library of interviews supporting object-based learning methodologies for this Penn Global Studies seminar exploring past and present narratives of the Chemin des Dames region in France.

Mélanie Péron

Paris under the German Occupation and its Places of [Non-]Memory

Artist Lisa Rosowsky, whose work focuses on the Holocaust, family trauma, and history, will lead a workshop and share her critical making-pedagogy, while students will create work for a corollary collaborative exhibition.

Student Grants

up to \$3,500 to support creative practice, from independent projects, to thesis and dissertation-related work, to programs and initiatives intended to engage the student body or broader public.

Andrew Burke

School of Arts & Sciences, Music Composition,
PhD Candidate

The Most Human Human (working title)

Alvin Luong

Weitzman School of Design, Graduate Fine Arts,
MFA Candidate

Before I was Coral, I was a Refugee

Azsanee Truss

Annenberg School for Communication,
PhD Candidate

What World?

Celine Choi

College of Arts & Sciences, Political Science and
English, C'25

South Korean Feminist Poetics: Gender, Han, and
the Violence of the Archive (Mundan)

Darren Tindall

Weitzman School of Design, Landscape
Architecture, MLA Candidate

Psycheprocity: Designing for Psychedelics and
Psychedelics for Design

Ejun Mary Hong and Justin Nam Duong

College of Arts & Sciences, Fine Arts, Cinema
and Media Studies, C'25, College of Arts &
Sciences, Physics, Music, C'27

Footprints in the Sand

Farrak Rahaman

Annenberg School for Communication,
PhD Candidate
Palimpsest

Katie Hindle

College of Arts & Sciences, English, Fine Arts,
and French, C'26

Philadelphia through copper: intaglio depictions
of contemporary histories

Lavanya Neti

Wharton, Statistics and Finance, W'25

Beneath the Surface: Amplifying the Voices
of Divers

Lucila Rozas Urrunaga

Annenberg School for Communication,
PhD Candidate
Contra-Archivx

Max Johnson

School of Arts & Sciences, Music,
PhD Candidate

Web of Sound

Mira Kwon and Taj Swaminathan-Sipp

College of Arts & Sciences, Cinema and Media
Studies, C'25

College of Arts & Sciences, Philosophy, Politics,
and Economics, C'25

Voices of Kakuma: A Collaborative Curation with
FilmAid Kenya

Monolith (Student Group)

(Sade K. Taiwo) College of Arts & Sciences,
Health and Societies, C'25

(Abigail Florestal) College of Arts & Sciences,
Biochemistry, C'25

Monolith Annual Spring Exhibit

Penn Ballet (Student Group)

(Lisa Slattery) College of Arts & Sciences,
Neuroscience, C'26

Penn Ballet: Winter Showcase

Sithabo Mathe

College of Arts & Sciences, Fine Arts, C'25
Penn Engineering, Computer Engineering,
SEAS'25

Naive Photographs

First-Year Seminar

up to \$2500 to support arts activities and arts-driven pedagogy within first-year seminars.

Awarded in partnership with the Penn College of Arts & Sciences.

Carol Muller

On Belonging: Music, Displacement, and Well-Being

Elizabeth Collins

Decolonizing French Food

Hardeep Dhillon

A History of America's Children

John Kanbayashi

Rivers, Culture, Power

Jonathan Zimmerman

Why College? Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

Robert Aronowitz

Why Medical Interventions Work or Fail: A Search for Answers

Su Yeone Jeon

Social Inequality and Health: Global Implications

Mission Statement



The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation's mission is to support and inspire creative practice and practitioners across the University of Pennsylvania—in all twelve schools, in the university's artistic and cultural centers, and through the many partnerships and collaborations that connect Penn to the world at large. We aim to foster a vibrant, creative community where all members are valued and supported in an environment that enables them to thrive.

We seek to support artists and practitioners in the creation of work that grapples with current issues and ideas relevant to our time, as well as in contextualizing scholarly and historical research in topical ideas and innovative approaches to practice and pedagogy. We are committed to equal opportunity and welcome individuals from a variety of backgrounds, including marginalized peoples and those whose voices have historically been silenced.

Experimentation is a core value of The Sachs Program, as is collaboration within and across disciplinary and institutional boundaries. We are committed to a holistic approach to enriching the arts at Penn, investing in schools, centers, and creative practitioners, and contributing to collective efforts for the growth and expansion of arts-driven activities and spaces.

The Sachs Program does not place greater value on one art form over another but aims to support a range of innovative and experimental practices across disciplines, departments, centers, creative groups, and peoples.

Advisory Board

Josephine Park, Co-Chair

Associate Dean for Arts & Letters
President's Distinguished Professor
of English

Matt Neff, Co-Chair

Director of Undergraduate Fine Arts
and Design

Al Filreis

Director, Center for Programs in
Contemporary Writing
Faculty Director, Kelly Writers House
Kelly Family Professor of English

Christopher A. Gruits

Executive & Artistic Director,
Penn Live Arts

Deborah A. Thomas

R. Jean Brownlee Term Professor
and Chair of Anthropology
Director, Center for Experimental
Ethnography

Grace Sanders Johnson

Associate Professor of Africana Studies

Jasmine Elizabeth Johnson

Assistant Professor of Africana Studies

Melissa E. Sanchez (on leave)

Donald T. Regan Professor of English
and Comparative Literature

Michelle Lopez

Associate Professor of Fine Arts

Sharon Hayes

Professor and Chair of Fine Arts

Sonal Khullar (on leave)

W. Norman Brown Associate Professor
of South Asian Studies

Sachs Program Staff

John McInerney,
Executive Director

Chloe Reison,
Associate Director

Elizabeth Shaw,
Administrative Assistant

Cindy Stockton Moore,
Grants Specialist

THE SACHS PROGRAM FOR ARTS INNOVATION

UNIVERSITY *of* PENNSYLVANIA

A complete list of the 2025 Sachs Program Grants Evaluations Committee Members will be shared with the online public announcement of the 2025 Sachs Program Grant Awards on sachsarts.org.

The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation is supported by an endowed gift from Keith L. and Katherine Sachs.

Event photography by Jaime Alvarez

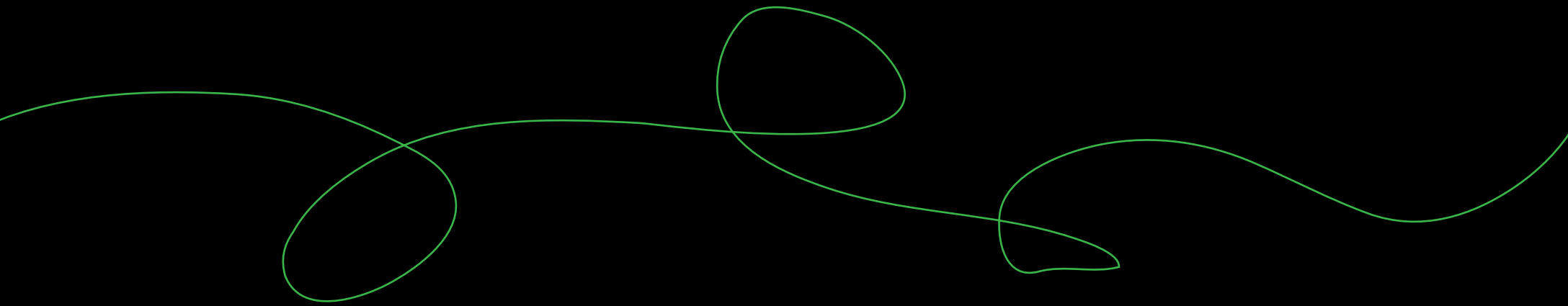
Design by Elaine Lopez

Communications support by equivocal.studio

Currently on view:

Makoto Fujimura: Transfiguration (main lobby);
I Dread to Think by Nina Chanel Abney (upper ambulatory);
Selected works from Betty Gold (lower ambulatory).

Other permanent installations on view include Frank Stella, Isaac Tin Wei Lin, and Jayson Musson.



Agenda

5:00 PM

Open Reception with music by DJ Skeme Richards and food by Honeysuckle

5:15 PM

Grant Awards Program

- *Welcome Remarks by Vice Provost for the Arts, Timothy Rommen*
- *Program Remarks by Sachs Program Advisory Board Co-Chairs, Josephine Park and Matt Neff*
- *2025 Grant Awards Announcements by Sachs Program Staff and Advisory Board Members Grace Sanders Johnson and Jasmine E. Johnson*

6:00 PM

Reception continues with music by DJ Skeme Richards

