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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****BERKELEY REP, FREIGHT & SALVAGE, KALA ART INSTITUTE, AND SHAWL-ANDERSON DANCE CENTER IMPLEMENT SUMMER ARTS IMMERSION PROGRAM FOR ALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS DURING BERKELEY UNIFIED'S SUMMER SESSION**

**Celebrated East Bay Arts Organizations Partner with City of Berkeley's Civic Arts Program and Berkeley Unified School District's Extended Learning Program to Bring a Robust Arts Learning Experience to Students for Two Weeks This Summer Free of Charge**

July 8, 2021—Leaders from **Berkeley Rep, Freight & Salvage, Kala Art Institute, Shawl-Anderson Dance Center, City of Berkeley's Civic Arts Program** and **Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) Extended Learning Program** are proud to announce a new two-week summer arts immersion program. Through support from **Berkeley Public School Funds**, and **The California Arts Council**, 330 elementary school students enrolled in BUSD's summer program will receive hands-on theater, visual arts, dance, and music learning experiences at no cost from July 12 through 23. The program will be held at three BUSD elementary sites (Washington, Silvia Mendez, and Rosa Parks schools) where BUSD's summer school and summer programs are taking place. Grants for the immersion program were obtained by the Berkeley Civic Art Program in partnership with the four arts organizations and BUSD's Extended Learning Program, as part of the implementation of the [City of Berkeley's Arts and Culture Plan](#). A goal of the Summer Art Immersion program is to provide equitable access to high quality and culturally relevant arts learning experiences for Berkeley public school students who are currently enrolled in BUSD's summer session.

"We are excited to partner with Berkeley arts providers to offer our students multiple arts experiences this summer," said **Aaron Jorgenson**, Program Supervisor of Extended Learning for BUSD. This past school year brought on a lot of change and trauma for our students and these experiences will provide joy, fun, and healing."

The Art Immersion Program includes four workshops in one arts discipline for each student—Berkeley Rep's **Kimiya Shorki** will use an ensemble and improvisation method to dramatize a story, **Jamey Williams & Bryan Dyer** of Freight & Salvage will lead spoken word and music. **Korea Venters** from Shawl-Anderson Dance Center will explore multiple dance forms (hip-hop, modern, and creative movement). In addition, Kala Art Institute's **Jocelyn Jones** will explore storytelling and narrative art through mixed media visual art activities. The content taught by these artists is aligned with the art-making they do professionally in the Bay Area, and these teaching artists all share the approach of integrating creative exploration with discipline-specific skill-building and are committed to centering youth creative voices.

## **TEACHING ARTISTS BIOS**

### **Bryan S. Dyer, Freight & Salvage**

Bryan S. Dyer is a musician, vocalist, recording artist and educator who plays and teaches several instruments, writes and arranges music, conducts choirs and groups, and works in television, radio and film. A veteran of some of the Bay Area's top vocal groups including SoVoSo, Slammin' All Body Band, Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir and CHELLE! and Friends, Bryan also performs with The Funk Revival Orchestra, Rankin Scroo and Ginger, Juke Joint, and the percussion and dance ensemble Crosspulse. His musical experiences have him taken around the globe and to many legendary stages including the Montreaux Jazz Festival, Kennedy Center in Washington DC, and Lincoln Center in New York. Bryan's talents have landed him alongside legendary artists like Al Green, Bobby McFerrin, Michael McDonald, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, and countless more. Along with Zoe Ellis he is the Co-Director of the **Freight Singers Community Chorus**, and he is also a Voting Member of the The Recording Academy/GRAMMYS. In late 2020, he released an acclaimed all-voice album, **Power of One**.

Learn more: <https://bryandyer.wordpress.com>

### **Jocelyn Jones, Kala Art Institute**

[Jocelyn Jones](#) is a teaching artist from Berkeley, California. She studied fine art at San Francisco State University, graduating in 2009 with two Bachelor of Arts degrees in art studio practice and cinema production. She is a multi-disciplinary artist, working primarily in painting and drawing figurative work. She teaches art to youth of all ages throughout the Bay Area.

### **Kimiya Shorki, Berkeley Rep**

Born and raised in the Bay Area, **Kimiya Shokri** is an Iranian American activist, educator, and theatre maker, committed to creating equitable theatre and uplifting the narratives of her students. Since graduating summa cum laude from Saint Mary's College of California with a BA in English and Theatre, she has been teaching with ACT, Berkeley Rep, Cal Shakes, and StageWrite, as well as working as a director, writer, actor, and dramaturg in the Bay Area.

### **Korea Venters (she/her), Shawl-Anderson Dance Center**

Originally from Oakland, California, Korea Venters says her love for dance started in middle school while attending Oakland School for the Arts. Korea graduated from the University of San Francisco, majoring in Performing Arts and Social Justice with a concentration in Dance. In the Bay Area, she has taught through Shawl-Anderson Dance Center and Destiny Arts Center. As a current member of both Rae Agency Dance Company and See Through Soul Dance Company, she hopes to continue using her art as a platform for community healing and education. She has worked with many artists such as Amie Dowling, Jackie Piper, Nicole Klaymoon, and Zendaya Coleman.

### **Jamey Williams, Freight & Salvage**

Jamey Williams is a multidisciplinary artist and educator. He has toured internationally, performed at Twitter & Yelp headquarters, published two chapbooks of poetry (**To Be Black is To Love & Breathing Underwater**), and was the first runner-up in the international **Poetry Battles** competition. After winning the Compliment Death Match at the 2017 National Poetry Slam he became the first person to be named "the nicest poet in the country." Jamey is an anchor teacher for the Freight & Salvage's music education program **Playing with Tradition**, specializing in poetry and hip-hop. Learn more: <https://www.jameywilliams.com>

## **ABOUT BERKELEY REP**

Berkeley Repertory Theatre has grown from a storefront stage to an international leader in innovative theatre. Known for its ambition, relevance, and excellence, as well as its adventurous audience, the nonprofit has provided a welcoming home for emerging and established artists since 1968. Over 5.5 million people have enjoyed nearly 500 shows at Berkeley Rep, which have gone on to win six Tony Awards, seven Obie Awards, nine Drama Desk Awards, one Grammy Award, one Pulitzer Prize, and

many other honors. Berkeley Rep received the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. To formalize, enhance, and expand the processes by which Berkeley Rep makes theatre, The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep's Center for the Creation and Development of New Work launched in 2012. The Berkeley Rep School of Theatre engages and educates some 20,000 people a year and helps build the audiences of tomorrow with its nationally recognized teen programs. Berkeley Rep's bustling facilities—which also include the 400-seat Peet's Theatre, the 600-seat Roda Theatre, and a spacious campus in West Berkeley—are helping revitalize a renowned city. Be a Rep.

#### **ABOUT FREIGHT & SALVAGE**

The Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse is a nonprofit community arts organization dedicated to promoting public awareness and understanding of traditional music—music that is rooted in and expressive of the great variety of regional, ethnic, and social cultures of peoples throughout the world. We are supported by your attendance, grants, musicians' benefit performances, volunteer efforts, and your generous tax-deductible donations.

#### **ABOUT KALA ART INSTITUTE**

Kala Art Institute's mission is to help artists sustain their creative work over time through its Artist-in-Residence and Fellowship Programs, and to engage the community through exhibitions, public programs, and education.

#### **ABOUT SHAWL- ANDERSON DANCE CENTER**

Shawl-Anderson Dance Center (SADC) is committed to nurturing and mentoring the growth of dancers and choreographers; cultivating a healthy and supportive atmosphere for creative expression; sustaining traditions essential to excellence in the field; and, fostering the evolution of the art of dance. SADC provides Bay Area dance students of all ages and levels with high caliber training in both contemporary and traditional movement forms in a welcoming, non-competitive environment.

#### **ABOUT BERKELEY CIVIC ARTS PROGRAM**

The Civic Arts Program supports a culturally vibrant and diverse arts ecosystem within the City of Berkeley by: funding grants to artists, arts organizations, and festivals; providing opportunities for artists to create and display work in the public realm; and ensuring equitable access to high quality arts and culture for residents and visitors alike.