



**The Interdisciplinary Minor in Creativity, the Arts and
Social Transformation and the Program in Peacebuilding
and the Arts present:**

2017-2018 Annual Report

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Brandeis University

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Note: The students faculty and staff of the Interdisciplinary Minor in Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation are enormously appreciative the contributions of three steadfast donors, whose support has made possible most of the activities described in this annual report: Amy Merrill '68; Elaine Reuben '63; and the Max and Sunny Howard Foundation, with the inspiration of Naomi Sinnreich, P'13.

Section I

Highlights



Decolonizing Approaches to Arts-Based Peacebuilding with Dr. Babu Ayindo

From March 6th-12th, the minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation welcomed storyteller, scholar, artist and peacebuilder Babu Ayindo to Brandeis University. This residency, supported by a generous gift from the Max and Sunny Howard Foundation, engaged members of the Brandeis community in questions surrounding decolonization, arts-based peacebuilding, and community-driven approaches to social transformation.

Before coming to Brandeis, Dr. Ayindo gained over two decades of experience in the design, implementation and evaluation of peacebuilding processes and programs in different parts of the world, and taught courses on arts-based approaches to peace work at peacebuilding institutes in Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and North America. While in residency, Dr. Ayindo guest lectured in a range of classes; led a faculty development workshop; presented his doctoral and professional research to Brandeis students, faculty and the greater community; and personally met and mentored CAST students on their creative practices. Dr. Ayindo's residency supported students, staff, and faculty training at the intersections of community engaged practice and scholarship, theory and creativity.

Launch of the Resource Room

On March 12th, in conjunction with the 20th anniversary celebration of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, the minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation launched the CAST Resource Room.



Designed and installed by CAST senior Marcelo Brociner, and the first space of its kind for CAST and Creative Writing students on campus, the Resource Room is a place to meet and collaborate on projects or work individually. It is

comprised of comfortable chairs, a computer and desk, and a bookshelf of CAST-related books and movies. It is a welcoming, calming space that offers students a place other than the library to get work done and tap into their creativity. Professor Liz Bradfield and Kristin Parker, then Deputy Director of The Rose Art Museum, both members of the CAST advisory committee, helped to design the space.

Mini Festival of the Arts

From April 15th to the 22nd, Brandeis celebrated the centennial birthday of the legendary artist Leonard Bernstein, during which the CAST minor hosted a mini festival of the arts and social transformation on April 20th.

Under the leadership of CAST Undergraduate Departmental Representative Maggie Ziegel '18, CAST students organized an afternoon of installations and performances centered on the theme of art and social change. Students gathered under Ziegel's sculptural installation, *Look Up, Look In, Look Again*, her capstone project for the minor, to engage with racism, sexism, personal struggle and self-realization, as well as the importance of self-reflection in the pursuit of happiness and fulfillment. Students and faculty alike watched the performances and engaged with the themes brought forth throughout the day, and the mini festival demonstrated to the larger Brandeis community the vibrancy and importance of the CAST minor.



Section II

Courses

As part of the CAST minor four-year annual review, the CAST Advisory Committee reviewed criteria and content of the designated CAST elective courses. Emphasis was placed on the need for elective courses to include both creativity / artist practitioner and social change approaches within the curriculum, and for students to gain an understanding of the theory and application of art in social justice movements. The review process led to an overall expansion of options within the CAST elective courses.

In order to achieve a CAST minor, students are required to complete the introductory course, CAST 150b: Introduction to Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation; four elective courses, at least one each from the creative arts, humanities, and the social sciences; and a capstone experience, which can be fulfilled by an internship, a designated capstone course, or an independent co-curricular project.

Core Course

- CAST 150b: Introduction to Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation. Taught by Professor Cynthia Cohen. Fall 2017.

Capstone Courses

Fall:

- ANTH 130b: Visuality and Culture. Taught by Professor Patricia Alvarez Astacio.
- THA 126a: Playing for Change: Community Building and Social Change on Stage. Taught by Professor Jennifer Cleary.

Spring:

- CAST 170a: Documenting the Immigrant Experience. Taught by Professor Azlin Perdomo.
- ENG 139a: Publishing Workshop: Literary Editing and Publishing. Taught by Professor Elizabeth Bradfield.
- FA/NEJS 183a: Breaking Boundaries in Contemporary Israeli Art. Taught by Professor Gannit Ankori and Professor Ilana Szobel.
- SOC 154a: Community Structure and Youth Subcultures. Taught by Professor Diana Camelia Schor.
- THA 138b: Creative Pedagogy. Taught by Professor Jennifer Cleary.

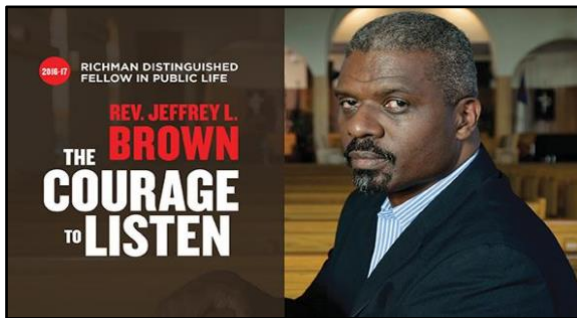
Note: Additional electives can be found on the registrar's website.

Section III

Gentrification Design Lab

In the fall of 2018, the CAST 150b course participated in a three-week process of preparing, designing, and presenting creative solutions to gentrification in the Boston area through the Gentrification Design Lab. The purpose of the design lab was to analyze and address the

challenge of gentrification in a way that created space for innovative and collaborative thinking, and that would result in concrete project ideas and recommendations.



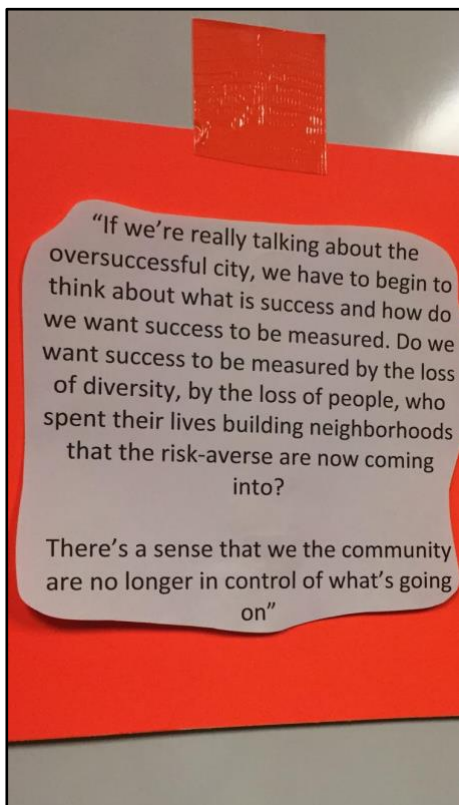
The idea for the design lab was raised by Reverend Jeffrey Brown, the moving force behind ‘The Boston Miracle,’ a successful effort to reduce gun violence through building relationships with young people on the streets of Boston’s neighborhoods.

During a visit to Brandeis in 2017 to receive the Richman Award, Reverend Brown mentioned that in many cases, when community people worked successfully to reduce the level of violence in their neighborhood, the costs of home ownership and rental rose to the point that they could no longer live in the safer community they had created. Through conversations and collaboration with Dr. Cynthia Cohen, the design lab became a part of the CAST 150b course in the Fall of 2018.

The design lab was based on a design thinking approach, which involves three key elements; teamwork, the design process and a collaborative work space. The lab focused on making the human aspect of problem solving the central building block of the process. The issue of gentrification was framed in three ways: housing as a human right; changing attitudes and actions of developers and politicians; and preventing gentrification through community resiliency and culture. Each issue was addressed in a group comprised of students and faculty, visiting artists and community activists, as well as professionals within the fields of housing and urban development. Each group centered their design process on a set of questions, listed below.

Community Resiliency and Culture

How can communities build resilience to prevent and protect against the effects of gentrification? How can community responsibility of those impacted by gentrification be strengthened? How can communities be supported to value their culture and knowledge?



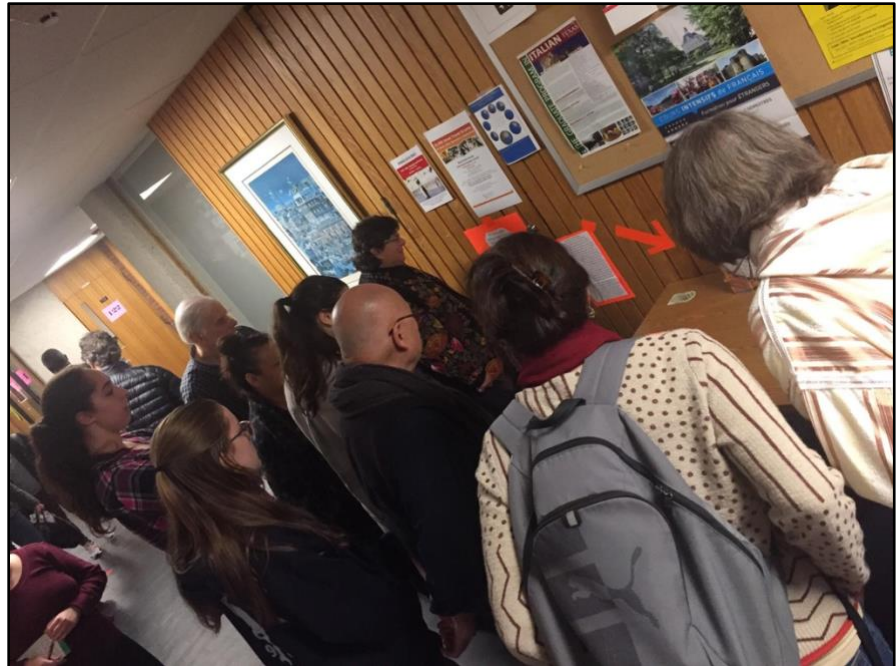
Changing Attitudes of Developers and Politicians

How can art be used to influence the thinking of developers and politicians? How could it invite them to empathize? How could it pressure them to weigh community wellbeing more than desire for profit?

Housing as a Human Right

How can consciousness be shifted to center housing as a human right? How can the voice of those impacted by gentrification be strengthened? How can the individual and community-level costs of dislocation be given more weight in housing policy?

The groups then presented their thoughts and findings in three distinct and creative ways. Those who addressed the task of supporting communities in building resiliency and preservation of culture performed an improvised scene, presenting their idea of creating a community resource center, and the resources and activities that would be available in it. Those developing ways to change the minds of developers and politicians invited the class to create a community mural during their presentation, and asked participants to reflect on the meaning of home and belonging in a changing environment.



The group addressing the concept of housing as a human right took the class through a tour of the building, having decorated the floors and walls with symbolic imagery and quotes from students and faculty on the significance of each place in their eyes, which meaningfully reconceptualized the space into one of community.

The three-week long process was founded on notions of creative and participatory approaches to gentrification, involved stakeholders from various and diverse backgrounds, and focused on the themes of human rights, culture, community, and belonging. The recommendations made during the Gentrification Design Lab are being compiled into a report and given to Reverend Jeffrey Brown.

Section IV

Dr. Babu Ayindo Residency

The CAST Minor Presents:
De-colonizing Approaches to Arts-based Peacebuilding with Babu Ayindo

EVENTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC MARCH 6th-12th

TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2018
"STORYTELLING AND PEACE BUILDING: ARTS FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION"
OPEN SESSION OF: DOCUMENTING THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE, PROFESSOR PERDOMO
2:00PM – 4:50PM, OLIN-SANG 112

THURSDAY 8 MARCH 2018
"ENGAGING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH COMMUNITY THEATER"
OPEN SESSION OF: AFRICAN LITERATURE AND HUMAN RIGHTS, PROFESSOR DIOUF
12:00PM -12:50PM, RABB 119

FRIDAY 9 MARCH 2018
"SHAKESPEARE AND DECOLONIZATION"
OPEN SESSION OF: ADVANCED SHAKESPEARE, PROFESSOR KING
11:00AM – 12:20PM, SCHIFFMAN 219

MONDAY 12 MARCH 2018
ARTS, PEACEBUILDING AND DECOLONIZATION: A CONVERSATION WITH BABU AYINDO
12:00PM-2:00PM, HELLER SCHOOL, G1

MONDAY 12 MARCH 2018
"PERFORMING DISLOCATION"
OPEN SESSION OF: REFUGEE STORIES, REFUGEE LIVES, PROFESSOR DIOUF
3:30PM – 5:00PM, BROWN SOCIAL SCIENCE CENTER 218

MONDAY 12 MARCH 2018
A POWERFUL FIRE: PERFORMANCES TO ENERGIZE OUR NEXT TWENTY YEARS
THE ETHICS CENTER'S 20 ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
7:00PM – 8:30PM, MANDEL ATRIUM

Storyteller, artist, teacher and scholar in the arts, peacebuilding and social transformation

Supported by the Max and Sunny Mendelsohn Foundation

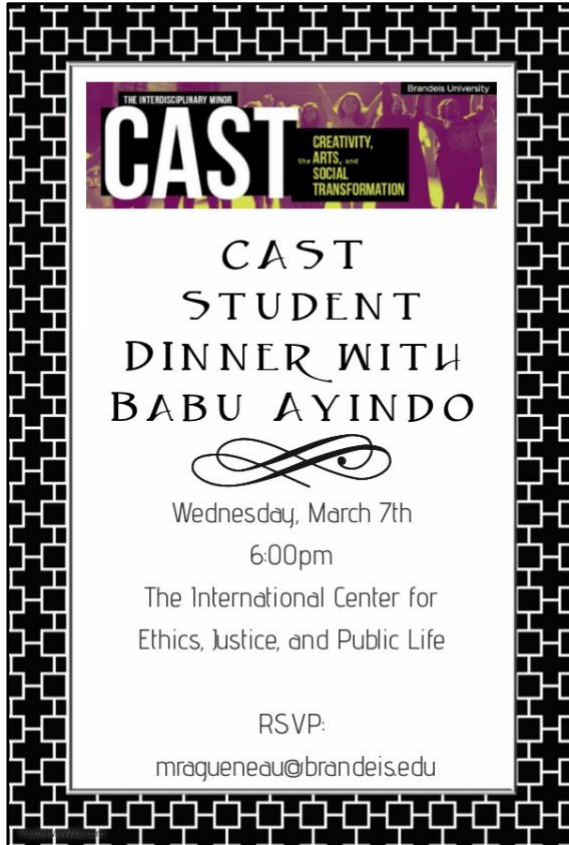
While in residence at Brandeis University from March 6th-12th, scholar, artist and peacebuilder Babu Ayindo explored the nexus of art, social transformation and decolonization. The residency began with a guest lecture in Professor Perdomo's *Documenting the Immigrant Experience* CAST course, in which Dr. Ayindo examined storytelling and the arts as media through which social transformation can be achieved and outlined the impact of his own work, as well as the ethical considerations he encountered along the way.

The following day, Dr. Ayindo held a CAST Faculty Development Workshop, recounted here by participant Ilana Szobel, associate professor of Modern Hebrew Literature at Brandeis University:

“On Wednesday, March 7th, 2018, we had a four-hour interactive workshop for CAST faculty and staff, lead by Dr. Babu Joseph Ayindo. Dr. Ayindo is a Kenyan conflict-transformation expert, theater artist, and traditional storyteller. He has pioneered work at the intersection of arts, politics and peacebuilding. The workshop focused on de-colonizing approaches to arts-based conflict transformation.



The workshop integrated academic, artistic, and emotional approaches to the topic of art and social change. By integrating storytelling, group-writing exercises, and case studies from Africa, Dr. Ayindo presented non-Western and indigenous approaches to peacebuilding. The workshop was not structured as a conventional academic meeting, but rather as an interactive artistic workshop, in which the participants took an active part. Thus, through art and discussions about concrete examples from various conflict contexts, Dr. Ayindo created a safe space for the participants to leave their own comfort zones, and to think and rethink the role of art, academic research, and activism in peacebuilding.



I’m sure that the workshop contributed a lot to all of the participants, and that it will enrich our teaching and scholarly work at Brandeis, as well as strengthen us as a community. I hope that this wonderful workshop was the first of many other Faculty Development workshops to come in the future.”

Dr. Ayindo also had the chance to meet with CAST students during a dinner held at the Ethics Center, and through individual office hours, during which he mentored and advised CAST seniors on their capstone projects and their creative pursuits in the field of art and social change more generally. Throughout the remainder of the week, Dr. Ayindo guest lectured in open sessions of CAST courses, and presented his doctoral research at the Heller School of Social Policy and Management.

In a special session of Professor Emilie Diouf's *African Literature and Human Rights* class titled *Engaging with Human Rights Through Community Theater*, students examined the use of popular theater in Kenya to promote, educate, motivate and move people to action regarding human rights, with special attention paid to issues of gender and sexuality. In addition to discussing indigenous theater as a powerful tool for human rights work, Dr. Ayindo explored Shakespeare through a decolonial lens in Professor Tom King's *Advanced Shakespeare* course. Students and visitors had the chance to critically examine both the colonial history of the texts and those elements of the plays that have made them attractive to theatre companies and adaptors in decolonial settings. Dr. Ayindo also considered the work of storytelling in confronting conflict, and led an interactive exercise in adapting the central plot of *Much Ado about Nothing*, as a way of reflecting on complex issues of gender, sexuality, consent, and conflict today.

Dr. Ayindo's powerful and meaningful residency ended with a conversation at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management, where he presented his dissertation, "Arts, Peacebuilding and Decolonization: A Comparative Study of Parihaka, Mindanao and Nairobi". Co-sponsored by



the master's program in Conflict Resolution and Coexistence, the lunchtime conversation was a rich exchange on the role of creativity in peacebuilding, and the necessity of decolonizing the conflict resolution field through individual and collective action. Students expressed gratitude for the unique, and oftentimes unheard, perspectives Dr. Ayindo presented. These sentiments were echoed throughout the residency by students and faculty alike, demonstrating the importance of Dr. Ayindo's visit and the significance of exploring creative approaches to social change.

Section V

Mini Festival of the Arts

The Festival of the Creative Arts at Brandeis University was founded in 1952 by the American composer, conductor, and Brandeis faculty member, Leonard Bernstein. This year, from April 15th to the 22nd, Brandeis celebrated the centennial birthday of the legendary artist, showcasing music, dance, theater, film and artwork by Brandeis students, staff, and alumni.

This year's festival was dedicated to the belief that "the art of an era is a reflection of the society in which it is produced, and through creative endeavors the thoughts and expression which characterize each generation are revealed and transformed". In this spirit, on April 20th, the minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST), hosted installations and

performances centered around the theme of art and social change. Students questioned, reflected on, and envisioned the meaning of social transformation through creativity and art.

One of the physical and philosophical backdrops of this year's Mini Festival of the Arts was CAST senior Maggie Ziegel's capstone project entitled "Look Up, Look In, Look Again," consisting of rainbow colored umbrellas suspended from trees across the main campus sidewalk between the Library and Usdan Student Center. Maggie's installation engaged the Brandeis community in exploring notions of happiness and the meaning of self-reflection through written questions, contributed by many student groups and academic programs on campus and inked on the underside of the umbrellas so that they could be read and



discussed by people gathering beneath them.

Other students collaborated to create an hour of performances, including plays, poems, artist talks and raps. As Hauke Ziessler explored the complexity of thought as both natural and man-made processes, Hangil Ryu explored the complexity of his own identity as an Asian-American with his poem titled “The Bridge.” In her short play, Zoe Rose explored the meaning of being a woman in a world impacted by patriarchy and sexism. Marcelo Brociner used his spoken word and rap to highlight his search for a sense of belonging and



happiness when suffering is ever-present. Holding the event outside meant that people stopped by on their way throughout campus and watched as well as participated in the performances and installations as they unfolded. As the day came to a close, people reconvened under Maggie Ziegel’s installation and shared their thoughts on what happiness meant to them and what they have done to leave an impact on earth. The discussion ended on a hopeful note and some expressed feeling nourished and motivated by the talent in the space and the desire to find answers. The festival gave students a platform to address personal and political questions, to share their vulnerabilities, and to express themselves through performance and in conversation with each other.

The Brandeis mini-festival of arts and social transformation was supported by Elaine Reuben, ’63.



CAST junior Hangil Ryu (R) speaking with Brandeis students after performances.

Section VI

Visiting Artists and Student Grants

Visiting Artists and Scholars in the Classroom

Many distinguished artists and scholars visited CAST core and elective courses during the year, adding expertise and insight to the various classes they joined.

The core course in *Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation* (CAST), taught by Professor Cynthia Cohen, hosted musicians and cultural workers Jane Sapp and Michael Carter, who led the class through a musical storytelling exercise on the power of music in social change movements. Jane Sapp drew from her experiences in the Civil



Rights movement to recount the power of music in bringing hope to those who were fighting injustice amidst institutionalized racism. Michael Carter described how music allowed him to connect with his students as an educator, and the platform this provided for students to find the necessary strength to face their challenges. The class was also visited by artists Wen-ti Tsen and Will Chalmus, as well as Reverend Jeffrey Brown during the course's Gentrification Design Lab; and by Kevork Mourad, a Syrian artist and art educator whose work was showcased at the Rose Art Museum in the fall, in his solo exhibition *Immortal City*. Kevork Mourad led the class through the conceptualization of the exhibition and the painting *Strata of Memory* in particular, and spoke about memory in the face of trauma in the context of the Syrian war, his home in Aleppo and his identity as a descendent of Armenian genocide survivors. Students discussed the power of creativity in rebuilding social ties after conflict, and how imagining futures outside of war is an integral part of reconstruction and social cohesion efforts. Kevork responded to an interpretation of his work based on the notion of a "permeable membrane" between art and society.

Professor Azlin Perdomo's *Documenting the Immigrant Experience* course welcomed two filmmakers, Jenny Alexander and Daniel Mooney, who both shared their experiences with the ethics of storytelling in the context of migration. The class was also joined by Community

Supported Film, a documentary film organization that supports new immigrant filmmakers tell their own stories through the New Immigrant and Refugee Visions project. Students in Professor Perdomo's class learned how films about the immigrant experience can be supported on an organizational level when planning for their own film releases at the end of the semester.

Throughout the year, Professor Liz Bradfield hosted writers Melissa Tuckey and Alicia Ostriker in her *Publishing Workshop: Literary Editing and Publishing* course. Writer Dorit Rabinyan joined Professors Gannit Ankori and Ilana Szobel in *Breaking Boundaries in Contemporary Israeli Art*. Will Chalmus performed and lectured in Professor Jennifer Cleary's *Playing for Change: Community Building and Social Change on Stage* class. CAST also sponsored visits to Professor Tom King's *Advanced Shakespeare by Actors'* Shakespeare Project Artistic Director Chris Edwards, who discussed *Othello* and *The Tempest* with text-based interactive exercises, and resident acting company members Mara Sidmore and Michael Forden Walker, who performed scenes from *The Tempest* and discussed playing comedy, cross-gendering in Shakespeare, and what it means to be part of a resident acting company.

The CAST minor was able to host this impressive array of artists and scholars thanks to the generosity of Naomi Sinnreich P'13, and the Max and Sunny Howard Foundation.

Faculty Development

The minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST) was pleased to host artists and scholars who engaged the Brandeis faculty at the nexus of art and social change. During his residency, Dr. Babu Ayindo led a faculty development workshop on decolonization and creative approaches to peacebuilding (see above). Composer Kurt Rohde collaborated with Professor Judy Eissenberg on the Songbird Project, and environmental poet and activist Melissa Tuckey met with Brandeis faculty in addition to giving a reading on campus.

Student Capstone Grants

Student seniors enrolled in the minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST) were allocated funding to complete creative works. This year, seniors Rachel Geller and Maggie Ziegel received funding to create their culminating capstone projects. Rachel Geller gathered and presented stories on how people change their thinking about controversial issues, while using frameworks and methods from *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Maggie Ziegel created an installation of umbrellas on campus, with each umbrella posing questions on the meaning of happiness and the necessity of self-reflection to those passing underneath (described above).



Maggie Ziegel, CAST '18



Rachel Geller, CAST '18

Section VII

Events

Fall 2017



Kinan Azmeh and Kevork Mourad: *Home Within*

November 4, 2017, 7-9 p.m.

Slosberg Music Center

On November 4th, Kevork Mourad performed live painting during *Home Within*, an ongoing reflection on the Syrian revolution and its aftermath, with the acclaimed Syrian jazz clarinetist Kinan Azmeh. The performance was preceded by a talk given by Boston Globe music critic Jeremy Eichler.

Dorit Rabinyan: Book Launch and Signing with Iranian-Israeli Author

November 1, 2017, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Rapaport Treasure Hall

Dorit Rabinyan, one of Israel's most acclaimed young novelists, discussed and signed copies of her international bestseller and award-winning *All the Rivers*, the controversial love story between an Israeli writer and a Palestinian painter.

Ebony Axis Launch

October 23, 2017, 7:00–9:00 p.m.

ASAC Atrium

Ebony Axis, a poetry zine for Black women founded by LaShawn Simmons '18, was published with help from a CAST grant. It featured poetry, narratives, and illustrations that showcased the experiences and challenges of Black women, and uplifted themes of self-love and joy. This year marked the third installment of Ebony Axis, and was particularly special because Kimberlé Crenshaw – the acclaimed scholar who coined the term “intersectionality” – was in attendance of the zine’s yearly launch. She was at Brandeis University and at the Ebony Axis launch as part of her Gittler Prize residency. Crenshaw is pictured to the right.



Alicia Ostriker: Poetry Discussion and Reading

October 17, 2017

ASAC Atrium

Alicia Suskin Ostriker, a renowned poet and critic, was at Brandeis in October where she participated in two highly anticipated events. Ostriker has published 15 volumes of poetry, including *The Old Woman*, *The Tulip and the Dog*, *the National Jewish Book Award winner The Book of Seventy*, and *The Book of Life: Selected Jewish Poems 1979-2011*. She has received the



Paterson Prize, the San Francisco State Poetry Award, the William Carlos Williams Award, and has twice been a finalist for the National Book Award, among other honors. As a critic, Ostriker is the author of the pathbreaking *Stealing the Language*; the *Emergence of Women's Poetry in America*, and other books on poetry and on the Bible. The two events in which she read her work are listed below.

Discussion: Writing the Holocaust

Tuesday, October 17, 5:00 pm

Pearlman Lounge

Alicia Ostriker shared some of her poems stemming from an engagement with the Holocaust. An open discussion led by Dawn Skorczewski, who taught "Writing the Holocaust" during the fall semester, followed.

A Reading by Alicia Ostriker

Thursday, October 19, 5:30 pm

Berlin Chapel

Alicia Ostriker read from her work in an event co-sponsored by the minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation; the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies department; and the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute.

Open Screening of 'Third Ward TX'

September 19, 2017, 2:00-4:50 pm

Shiffman 125

A public screening of the film "Third Ward TX" was held as part of Professor Cohen's CAST 150b introductory course. Third Ward is a historically black neighborhood in Texas where Project Row Houses breathed new life into an inner-city community by converting the neighborhood's row houses to represent its strong legacy of history and culture. The

screening was followed by a discussion on the effects of gentrification on neighborhoods around the country, and the role of art and creativity in addressing these issues.

**Meet the Minors**

September 12, 2017, 5:30-7:30 pm

ASAC Atrium

The Meet the Minors event featured artwork and presentations by CAST minors, while students and faculty were available to talk about the department and the process of enrolling in the introductory course and CAST minor.

Spring 2018



A Reading by Poet Oliver de la Paz

Wednesday, February 28, 5:30pm

Bethlehem Chapel

On February 28th, Oliver de la Paz read his poetry to the Brandeis community. Oliver de la Paz is the author of four poetry collections: *Names Above Houses*, *Furious Lullaby*, *Requiem for the Orchard*, and *Post Subject: A Fable*. A founding member of Kundiman, de la Paz serves as the co-chair of the organization's advisory board. He also serves on the Executive Board of Trustees for the Association of Writers & Writing Programs. De la Paz teaches at the College of the Holy Cross and in the Low-Residency MFA Program at Pacific Lutheran University.

De-colonizing Approaches to Arts-based Peacebuilding:

Dr. Babu Ayindo, Kenyan conflict transformation expert, theater artist and traditional storyteller, was in residence at Brandeis University from March 6th – March 12th. Dr. Babu Ayindo engaged members of the Brandeis community in activities and conversations on questions surrounding decolonization, arts-based peacebuilding, and community-driven approaches to social transformation. In addition to sessions with members of the CAST advisory committee and students, he lead sessions open to the Brandeis community.

Storytelling and Peace Building: Arts for Social Transformation

Open session of Professor Perdomo's Documenting the Immigrant Experience

Tuesday, March 6, 2:00pm – 4:50pm

Olin-Sang 112

This workshop examined storytelling and the arts as a medium through which social transformation can be achieved. Dr. Babu Ayindo, renowned artist-peacebuilder, outlined the impact of his own work and the ethical considerations he encountered along the way.

Engaging with Human Rights Through Community Theater

Thursday, March 8, 12:00pm – 12:50pm

Open session of Professor Emilie Diouf's African Literature and Human Rights

Rabb 119

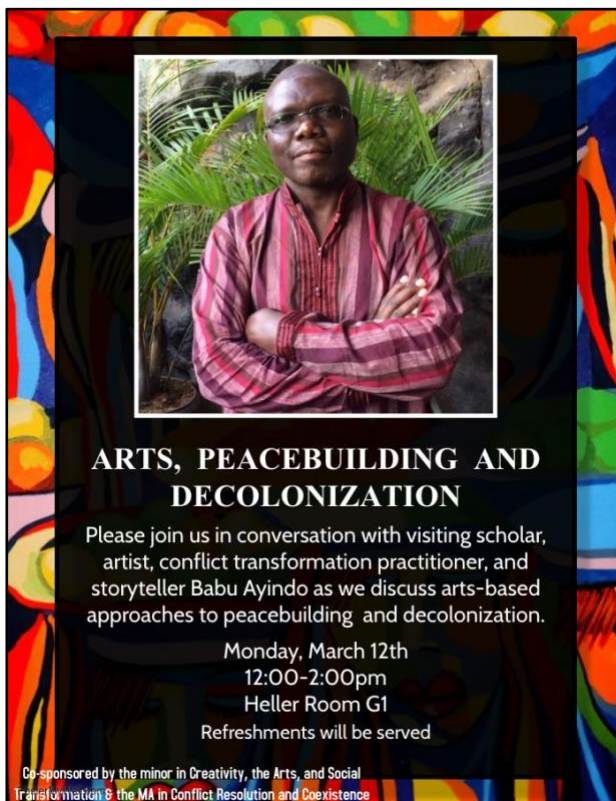
This session examined the use of popular theater in Kenya to promote, educate, motivate and move people to action regarding human rights, especially in relations to gender and sexuality issues. As the featured resource practitioner, Dr. Babu Ayindo shared stories of how indigenous theater is used as a powerful tool in human rights work.

Shakespeare and Decolonization

Friday, March 9, 11:00am – 12:20pm

Open session of Professor Tom King's Advanced Shakespeare
Schiffman 219

Dr. Ayindo joined students and visitors in a discussion of Shakespeare in decolonial contexts. The class was able to critically think about both the colonial history of the texts and the elements of the plays that have made them attractive to theatre companies and adaptors in decolonial settings. Dr. Ayindo also considered the work of storytelling in confronting conflict, and lead an interactive exercise in adapting the central plot of *Much Ado about Nothing* as a way of reflecting on complex issues of gender, sexuality, consent, and conflict.



Arts, Peacebuilding and Decolonization: A Conversation with Babu Ayindo

Monday, March 12, 12:00pm – 2:00pm
The Heller School for Social Policy and Management: Altman Amphitheater G1

Scholar, artist, peacebuilder, and storyteller Babu Ayindo presented his dissertation: "Arts, Peacebuilding and Decolonization: A Comparative Study of Parihaka, Mindanao and Nairobi". The event was open to all Brandeis students, staff, and faculty.

Performing Dislocation

Monday, March 12, 3:30 – 5
Open session of Professor Emilie Diouf's
Refugee Stories, Refugee Lives
Brown Social Science Center 218

This session examined the role of storytelling and performances as means for empowerment and advocacy in refugee camps in Kenya. Dr. Ayindo specifically focused on theater's

potential for cultivating peaceful cohabitations in refugee camps.

A Reading by Akhil Sharma

Tuesday, March 27, 5:30 pm
Harlan Chapel

Akhil Sharma engaged the Brandeis community through reading his work on March 27th in the Harlan Chapel. Akhil Sharma is the award-winning author of two novels and a collection of short stories. His work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, and *Best American Short Stories*. Sharma who was born in Delhi and raised in New Jersey, has received international recognition for his work and won the Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award, the Folio Prize, and the International Dublin Literary Award. He has studied at Princeton, Stanford, and Harvard Law School and teaches Creative Writing at Rutgers University.

Information & Inspiration: Why Art and Science Need Each Other

March 28, 5:30 pm

Pearlman Hall

Without photographs, drawings, or well-written description, science can be difficult for a general audience to fully understand. Artists and writers can't explore the world's particularities without understanding them. Information and inspiration feed one another. On March 28th, a panel discussion of how art, science, and activism can converge animated Pearlman Hall. Panelists included a whale biologist trained in scientific illustration, the editor of an anthology of Eco-Justice poems, a naturalist who lectures on expedition ships, and a citizen science advocate.



Special Event: The Rosenbergs

April 27 at 7:30 p.m., April 28 at 8 p.m., April 29 at 2 p.m.

Theater Building

The Rosenbergs' love affair broke out of all bounds. Recognized as Denmark's Best Opera of 2015, this tragic love story was adapted from the Rosenbergs' letters from jail. As seen through the lens of the McCarthy witch hunts, echoes of which can still be heard today, it begged the question to the audience: "Would you die for love?"

The CAST Mini-Festival of Arts and Social Justice

April 20, 2018

Outside of Shapiro Campus Center (SCC)

The interdisciplinary minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST) held its annual Mini-Festival of the Arts and Social Justice on Friday, April 20th, during the Brandeis University Festival of the Arts. The mini-festival featured an interdisciplinary array of art and

social change, with collaborations from CAST students working in the creative arts, humanities, and social sciences.

The Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts

The program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, directed by Cynthia Cohen, is part of Brandeis University's International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. The program supports the contributions of art and culture to the transformation of conflict, and collaborates with various departments at Brandeis, such as the Peace, Conflict and Coexistence Studies (PAX) Program and the School of Creative Arts. The program in Peacebuilding and the Arts enjoyed an active and productive 2017-2018 year. Highlights include:



IMPACT: Imagining Together

In the fall of 2017, the program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, in partnership with the Baker Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at Juniata College and Maseno University in Kisumu, Kenya, began an 18-month planning process to create an infrastructure for the arts, culture and conflict transformation field.

This process, supported in large part by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is considering a range of possible organizational configurations for the field, with a vision of university-based and cultural institutions providing stable anchors for a multi-faceted field, an ecosystem that includes artists and cultural workers, peacebuilding practitioners and organizations, researchers, policymakers, funding organizations and philanthropic professionals.

Research is currently being conducted on key stakeholders working in the arts, culture and conflict transformation field, and information coming from the findings is informing how a global network will be formed and who it will include. So far, three learning exchanges have and will continue to take place in the spring and summer of 2018. On April 25th, 12 practitioners and thought leaders convened to discuss the field of arts for social change and peacebuilding, and to discuss current and future monitoring and evaluation efforts in the field. An additional two virtual learning exchanges will take place in May and June, with the first exchange focusing on scholars, practitioners and policymakers from institutions based in the peacebuilding world, and the second exchange focusing on diverse players from institutions based in the arts. The IMPACT planning process has also created partnerships with developing art, culture and conflict transformation projects in Cyprus, Mali, and Colombia. In the fall of 2018, the IMPACT team

and participants will convene a design lab in which learning from the research, field-mapping, learning exchanges, and one-on-one consultations will be synthesized into practical recommendations for strengthening the overall field.

Let's Make a Better World: Jane Sapp's Cultural Work Approach to Organizing for Change

Further progress has been made this year on *A Way Out of No Way*, an initiative to document the 40+ year career of Jane Wilburn Sapp. A contract for publication a *Let's Make a Better World: Stories and Songs by Jane Sapp* was secured with the Brandeis University Press. Publication is expected in the fall of 2018. The book will include twenty-five songs, most of them written by Jane Sapp in collaboration with young people, beautifully designed by artist Wen-ti Tsen. It will be accompanied by a seven-episode podcast series which explore Jane's approach to cultural work and to music education.



Plans are now being made the launch of the songbook, as well as its accompanying podcast series, in collaboration with community partners. The series of events will bring together artists and activists to experience Jane Sapp's approach to community cultural development, and to plan collaborations adapting her work to the needs of their own constituencies and communities. The songbook and its launch will engage organizers working on issues of economic, racial and climate justice, racism in the criminal justice system, immigrant rights, rights of people with disabilities, and LGBTQ issues. Jane will also lead workshops for music teachers and community chorus leaders.

20th Anniversary of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life

As part of the 20th anniversary of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts organized an evening of performances entitled "A Powerful Fire: Performances to Energize Our Next 20 Years." In addition to Jane Sapp and Michael Carter, the event included dance and spoken word by Germaine Ingram, and poetry by Marcelo Brociner and Elizabeth Bradfield.