



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

**2018-2019 Annual Report**  
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**Brandeis University**

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*The students, faculty, and staff of the Interdisciplinary Minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation are enormously appreciative of 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 Memorial Foundation, with the inspiration of Naomi Sinnreich P'13. We appreciate support from Ammad Bahalim, '04, for his visionary support of CAST 170a: Documenting the Immigrant Experience, which this year focused on the stories of immigrants from Muslim majority countries. Many thanks also to the Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice, for its ongoing support of Let's Make a Better World: Stories and Songs by Jane Sapp, a book and podcast; a Brandeis launch event in 2019; and the development of an archive in the Brandeis Library.*

*The global IMPACT community expresses its appreciation to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its support of our 18-month planning process, as well as the Fresh Sound Foundation, the Max and Sunny Howard Memorial Foundation, Amy Merrill '68, Elaine Reuben '63, and other individual donors who are supporting early implementation activities.*

## I. Highlights

### **IMPACT: Youth Focused Design Lab**

In November and December 2018, the CAST minor worked with the Imagining Together Platform for Arts, Culture and Conflict-Transformation (IMPACT) to explore the particular strengths and needs of young people in the Arts, Culture and Conflict Transformation (ACCT) ecosystem. CAST students developed strategies IMPACT could adopt in order to leverage these strengths and to address the needs articulated by young people, which include university-based conferences, social media spotlights of human experiences in ACCT, and, perhaps, a weeklong ACCT festival rotating among various regions. The design lab generated these and other creative and promising ideas (see below for details). Read the full report here:

[http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/impact/2019\\_02\\_21\\_impact-youth-focused-design-lab-report.pdf](http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/impact/2019_02_21_impact-youth-focused-design-lab-report.pdf)

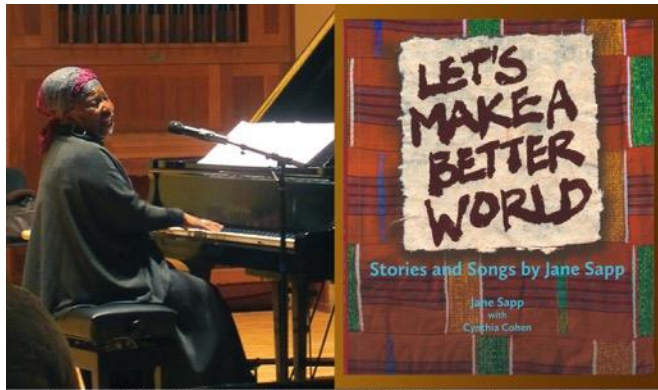
Anna Devere Smith (left) with Professor Anita Hill

### **Hosting Anna Devere Smith**

Anna Devere Smith, a playwright, actor, and educator who uses her singular brand of theater to explore issues of community, character, and diversity in America, came to the Brandeis campus March 21-22, 2019 to receive the Richman Distinguished Fellowship in Public Life, which is given to individuals active in public life whose contributions have had a significant impact on improving American society, strengthening democratic institutions, advancing social justice, or increasing opportunities for all citizens to share in the benefits of the nation. While on campus, she enjoyed a lunch conversation with CAST faculty that focused on the role of the arts in addressing polarization in American society. Smith also spoke to an open-class session of Thomas King's CAST course, "Making Sex, Performing Gender," where she discussed the ethics of and best practices for theatrical works crossing racial, ethnic, class, gender, and ability lines. Students also presented the projects they have been working on, and the session concluded with Anna Devere Smith responding to students' questions.



Anna Devere Smith (left)  
with Professor Anita Hill



April 2, 2019 | 12:30 - 2:30pm | Slosberg Recital Hall | Free and open to the public

**LET'S MAKE A BETTER WORLD**  
**Concert and Book Launch with Jane Sapp**  
 An open session of AMST/MUS 39B - Protest Through Song: Music that Shaped America

"Jane Sapp is a musical and cultural power..."  
 Bernice Johnson Reagon, founder of Sweet Honey in the Rock

"In this political moment, when so much has been challenged, we are going to have to reach deep for the things of the spirit..."  
 Suzanne Pharr, former director of the Highlander Center

featuring speakers  
**Daniel Kryder**  
 Louis Stulberg Chair in Law and Politics  
 Brandeis University  
**Maria Madison**  
 Associate Dean for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity  
 Heller School for Social Policy and Management  
**Sandra Nicolucci**  
 Associate Professor Emerita in Music Education  
 Boston University

Cosponsored by the Minor in Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation, Brandeis University Library, the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Heller Office of the Dean and Sankofa Events, the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, the Division of Creative Arts, the Department of African and African American Studies, and the Department of Politics

Brandeis University

## Let's Make a Better World: Stories and Songs by Jane Sapp

*Let's Make a Better World: Stories and Songs by Jane Sapp* was published by the Brandeis University Press in 2019. Written by nationally admired cultural worker, musician, educator, and activist Jane Sapp, the book is a new resource for music educators, chorus leaders, activists, and cultural workers. On April 2, 2019, Sapp joined an open class session of "Protest Through Song: Music That Shaped America" at Brandeis for a concert, mini-symposium, and book launch. Other speakers at the event included Professor Daniel Kryder, Politics; Heller School Dean Maria Madison; and Boston University Professor Emerita Sandra Nicolucci. The event was cosponsored by CAST, the Brandeis Library; the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences; the Heller Office of the Dean and Sankofa Events; the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; the

Division of Creative Arts; the Department of African and African American Studies; and the Department of Politics. For video footage of the event, visit <https://youtu.be/9PCVXkIKZAE>. For information about ordering the book and accessing an accompanying podcast, please visit [janesapp.org](http://janesapp.org). Over several years, many aspects of the songbook project have been supported by The Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice (<https://www.brandeis.edu/legacyfund/>).

## This Place/Displaced

With CAST sponsorship and support from The Max and Sunny Howard Memorial Foundation (through the support of Naomi Sinnreich, P'13), Artists' Theater of Boston (ATB) remounted its original production examining gentrification, housing insecurity, and cultural displacement, *This Place/Displaced*, May 2-4, 2019 in the Merrick Theater (Spingold Theater Center) at Brandeis, following a successful August 2018 run at the Charlestown Working Theater (Boston, MA). Developed through partnerships between Boston-area residents who have experienced eviction and displacement and a diverse group of local playwrights, *This Place/Displaced* celebrates stories of advocacy, change, and resistance, emphasizing the importance of local memories and everyday sharing of knowledge in



the fight to have a home. Director Josh Glenn-Kayden, artistic associate and casting director at Company One Theatre, wove together short works by seven playwrights including Kirsten Greenidge (Obie winning *Milk Like Sugar*), David Valdes Greenwood (IRNE nominated *Bully Dance*), and MJ Halberstadt (Eliot Norton Award winning *Losers, or The Launch Prize*), with original music by composer Max Kennedy.

Each performance at Brandeis was followed by conversations with anti-displacement activists, scholars, and artists advocating for just communities. Community partners were centered in these conversations, speaking about the structural causes of housing insecurity, their experiences, and the capacity of theater to invest their stories with emotional and cultural significance, to give aesthetic resonance to their experiences, and to facilitate the wider sharing of those stories. Speakers included City Life/Vida Urbana members Ronel Remy, Julia Tripp, and Frezzia Herrera; City of Boston Housing Crisis Case Coordinator Dana Mendes; poet-activist-educator Ashley-Rose; Executive Assistant Homestart Inc, Jewel Evans; Associate Dean for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity at the Heller School (Brandeis University) Maria Madison; Lecturer in urban and social policy at Tufts University, Laurie Goldman; Lecturer in the Prevention Science and Practice Program, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Gretchen Brion-Meisels; Master of City Planning (MIT) student Jay Dev; and director of the Arts in Education Program, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Steve Seidel.

CAST sponsorship enabled ATB to present these shows free of charge to the Brandeis community and beyond. Audiences each night consisted primarily of diverse Boston-area residents. Many audience members were engaged in the struggle for housing rights, which enabled grounded conversations and connections among artists, change agents, scholars, and, most especially, affected community members, an unusual discussion opportunity on a college campus.

### **Listen, Share, Create, Connect**

On November 8, 2018, CAST Undergraduate Representative Zoe Rose '20 and CAST minor Anna Cass '21 hosted an evening of conversation and art-making for the Brandeis community. Their aim was to construct a safe space for creative responses and resilient community building in the face of the current political climate.



### ***Proper Bantah!* Series Premiere Party**

On January 18, 2019, CAST minor Rasheed Peters '20 premiered his talk show *Proper Bantah!* for the Brandeis community. The goal of the talk show is to expose Brandeis to new people with interesting stories and facilitate conversation among community members who are different from one another.

Interviewees include Sahra Jaamac '20, a Somaliland feminist, and Jonathan Goldman '19, creator of The Right to Immigration Institute, a pro-bono clinic run by Brandeis students and open to the Waltham community. Watch *Proper Bantah!* here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCp0RV2n5JhV9ZpWJ3retLUw/videos>



## **II. 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; one additional course in each of the three divisions (Creative Arts, Social Sciences, and the Humanities); a fifth course; and a capstone experience, which can be fulfilled by a cross-listed capstone course, an internship, a directed reading, a co-curricular project, or a portfolio reflecting on the five courses taken for the minor.

Fall 2018:

### **Core Course**

- **CAST 150b: Introduction to Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation.** Professor Cynthia Cohen.

### **Capstone Courses**

- **ANTH 130b: Visuality and Culture.** Professor Patricia Alvarez Astacio.
- **FA 181A: Housing and Social Justice.** Professor Muna Guvenc. This class visited DSNI (Dudley St. Neighborhood Initiative) in Boston, a wonderful opportunity for the students to see in practice the ideas they were studying in class, as DSNI's mission is to empower Dudley residents to organize, plan for, create, and control a high-quality neighborhood in collaboration with community partners.
- **THA 138b: Creative Pedagogy.** Professor Jennifer Cleary.

Spring 2019:

- **CAST 170a: Documenting the Immigrant Experience.** Professors Jenny Alexander and Daniel Mooney. The 2019 course took as its focus members of the local Muslim



Students and interviewees from CAST 170A, Spring 2019

community and their particular challenges and experiences in contemporary US society. The course this semester was supported by the Bahalim Fund, a donation from Brandeis alum Ammad Bahalim '04 that lent support to campus programming intended to combat Islamophobia and

explore Islam as a tradition of learning and critical thinking. The final project was the creation of documentary films based on interviews students conducted with members of the Muslim community. The films were presented to a large audience of Brandeis and Waltham residents on April 30, 2019.

- **ANTH 159a: Museums and Public Memory.** Professor Ellen Schattschneider.
- **ENG 139a: Publishing Workshop: Literary Editing and Publishing.** Professor Elizabeth Bradfield.
- **ENG 181a: Making Sex, Performing Gender.** Professor Thomas King.
- **SOC 155b: Protest, Politics, and Change: Social Movements.** Professor Gowri Vijayakumar.
- **THA 126a: Playing for Change – Community Building and Social Change on Stage.** Professor Jennifer Cleary.
- **THA 132a: Devising Theater.** Professor Adrienne Krstansky.

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

<https://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/bulletin/provisional/courses/subjects/1475.html>

### III. Advisory Committee

CAST engages interdisciplinary arts at Brandeis while retaining its own distinct identity that emphasizes a rigorous study of power relations, conflict and peace, and the dialogue between change agents, peacebuilders, and artists. The work is supported by an advisory committee that involves professors and staff members from different fields. The current advisory committee:

- Cameron Anderson, Theater Arts
- Elizabeth Bradfield, English and Creative Writing

- Jen Cleary, Theater Arts (on hiatus)
- Cynthia Cohen, Director, Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life; CAST Advisory Committee Co-Chair (stepping down fall 2019)
- Emilie Diouf, English
- Judith Eissenberg, Music
- Dan Feldman, Vice President for Planning and Institutional Research
- Robin Feuer Miller, Humanities
- Dorothy Kim, English
- Thomas King, English, CAST Undergraduate Advising Head, CAST Advisory Committee Co-Chair
- Kristin Parker, Associate, International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life; formerly with Rose Art Museum
- Fernando Rosenberg, Romance Studies
- Toni Shapiro-Phim, CAST and Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life; CAST Advisory Committee Co-Chair
- David Sherman, English
- Faith Smith, African and Afro-American Studies and English
- Leigh Swigart, Programs in International Justice and Society at the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life
- Ilana Szobel, Hebrew Literature
- Sabine von Mering, German and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies

#### IV. Faculty Search and Hire

This academic year, the CAST community conducted a search for a new faculty member to begin in the Fall of 2019. This 9-month position was advertised in numerous networks as one of leadership for the CAST minor and support for the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, with the accepted candidate teaching, coordinating faculty development, advising students, conducting research, and planning CAST events. There is a possibility for the position to become year-round. There were 47 applicants, narrowed down to 7 semi-finalists who were interviewed via Skype. Three finalists then came to campus to meet with the CAST advisory committee and students, and to present their creative and scholarly work to the campus community.

The three finalists presented on the following topics:

**Applied Theatre and its Tensions: Community-Based Devising with British Muslim Youth**  
Monday, April 8, 2019

Finalist Asif Majid drew from his theater-making fieldwork with British Muslim youth in Manchester, and excerpts from the radio play that resulted from it, for a presentation that



considered the tensions that applied theater practice must negotiate as it engages various communities.

### **She's Acting Up Again: Creating Activist Performances with Teenage Girls**

Monday, April 15, 2019

Finalist Dana Edell shared selected challenges and strategies and the ethics of creating anti-racist, feminist theater with girls of color. She presented a theoretical, ethical, and personal analysis of how girls can use theater for social, political, and personal transformation.

### **Critical Artist-Scholar Collaborations in the Aftermath of War and Displacement**

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Finalist Toni Shapiro-Phim discussed artists as public intellectuals, and scholars as creative contributors, in efforts to counter the shattering of self and community that results from mass violence.

### **Toni Shapiro-Phim was offered and accepted the position.**

She was hired July 1, 2019 as Associate Professor of Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation and Assistant Director of the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts. Beginning fall semester 2019, Professor Shapiro-Phim will co-chair the CAST minor, offer its core course (CAST 150b), develop two new CAST-designated courses, and support the program in Peacebuilding and the Arts.

With a Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from Cornell University, Shapiro-Phim is a leading scholar and practitioner analyzing and building the role of the arts in conflict/post-conflict situations and in response to mass violence and sudden traumatic loss. A central theme of Toni's work over many decades is that of long commitment to, and respect for, diverse populations. While her area of personal and professional expertise is dance and human rights, her research and professional activities have included ethnomusicology, documentary filmmaking, videography, and the study of expressive forms as diverse as domestic altars and women's klezmer "culture" (<https://www.klezmerinitiative.org/about>) in the Philadelphia area and beyond. Toni's international work has focused on Cambodia, where she lived for many years and acquired fluency in Khmer; she has worked in other Asian countries, including in refugee camps. Her recent work with the Liberian Women's Chorus in Philadelphia has also allowed her to extend her knowledge to the contemporary African diaspora; she documented the work of the Chorus in her film *Because of the War* (see Visiting Artists section below). Toni's co-edited volume, *Dance, Human Rights, and Social Justice: Dignity in Motion* (2008), has made her a leader in this field, and her other book-long publications, as well as shorter articles and reviews, all show Toni to be deeply committed to exploring the critical intersection of human rights, peace and justice concerns, genocide studies, migration, and the arts and other forms of cultural expression. Toni's long experience in non-profit management, most recently as Director of Programs for the Philadelphia Folklore Project, will be a great asset to the administrative and fundraising needs of the program, as CAST continues to develop its profile and increase its visibility on campus.

Toni brings ongoing work on issues of human rights and conflict resolution, as well as the documentation of transitional justice institutions, to her role as Assistant Director of the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts. She holds a leadership role in IMPACT – Imagining Together: Platform for Arts, Culture and Conflict Transformation.

## V. Youth-Focused Design Lab

As part of the planning process leading to its emerging structure, IMPACT hosted a design lab in September 2018 with 26 people from 18 countries from across the arts, culture and conflict transformation (ACCT) ecosystem. This experience generated many creative and promising ideas, one of which was to further amplify youth voices and leadership in IMPACT by creating a design lab focused specifically on the strengths and needs of young people working in the field. The Brandeis University undergraduate course Introduction to Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST 150b) offered an opportunity to put young people at the center of designing youth-focused strategies to include in IMPACT’s emerging platform.

In November and December 2018, CAST 150b students participated in a youth-focused, worldwide design lab. They were connected to young people around the world via the participants in the September lab. CAST 150b students interviewed the young people and then reported back to the class about what the youth expressed were the particular strengths and needs of young people in the ACCT ecosystem. CAST 150b students used this feedback to develop strategies that IMPACT could adopt in order to leverage these strengths and address these needs. The following strategies were advanced:

**Virtual Platform:** A platform for ACCT that incorporates different social media elements, spotlighting human experiences in ACCT, networking, hosting a digital marketplace, mapping and highlighting ACCT efforts, and conducting telethons. The platform would be searchable across different categories, and ideally, have the capacity to translate postings in to several languages, facilitating communication across cultures and regions.

**Inclusive Learning Spaces:** University-based yearly conferences that rotate among regions and aim to reduce divisions between people in the ACCT ecosystem through reciprocity, homestays, and access to university resources.

**Transformative Consciousness:** A weeklong, holistic retreat/festival that rotates among regions, is live-streamed, and plans for follow-up small-scale local replications.

Read the full report generated by the youth-focused design lab and prepared by Emily Forsyth Queen here: [http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/impact/2019\\_02\\_21\\_impact-youth-focused-design-lab-report.pdf](http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/impact/2019_02_21_impact-youth-focused-design-lab-report.pdf)

*Special thanks to those who made this youth-focused lab possible. This included:*

***The artists who shared their experiences and perspectives as young people in the ACCT ecosystem:*** Victoria Gandini, Tatiana Cricun, Nicolas Gulluni, Guido Pérez Orue, Nataly Salas, Carlos Alberto Troncos, Julieta Cejas Sabaris, and Jorge Luis Barrios from Argentina; Nefeli Kentoni and Olgu Tosun from Cyprus; Vincent Mutwiri, Dennis Ngige, and Oscar Churchill Oduor from Kenya; Liselot van de Geer, Pauline van Leeuwen, and Jordy Dik from the Netherlands; Nayab Faiza, Hina Tariq, and Sibt-i-Hassan from Pakistan; Sara Cardenas, LaShawn Simmons, JJ El-Far, and Marcelo Brociner from the United States

***The IMPACT players who connected the young artists above to this youth-focused design lab process and guests who provided feedback on final design lab presentations:*** Ellada Evangelou, Carmen Olaechea, Cynthia Cohen, Armine Avetisyan, Jasmina Ibrahimovic, Shahid Nadeem, Kitche Magak, Bryson Omwalo, Leigh Swigart, Maria Madison, William Chalmus, and Daniel Feldman

***The students at Brandeis University who connected with the young artists above, shared their own experience as young people in the ACCT ecosystem, and engaged actively in the design lab process as part of the Creativity, Arts, and Social Transformation course:*** Aviva Davis, Ben LoCascio, Cassipea Stith, Eddie Friedman, Gemma Curnin, Jay Schwartz, Leah Sagan-Dworsky, Leah Teichberg-Sabath, Margo Sobel, Nicole Zamora Flores, Sarah Nzisabira, and Sophia Seufert

## VI. Student News

### ***Ebony Axis***

Current CAST student Sarah Nzisabira '20 reflected on the work of CAST alumni in her final paper for CAST 150b: Introduction to Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation. Nzisabira wrote about CAST alum LaShawn Simmons '18 and her work with *Ebony Axis*:



“I am forever grateful for the spaces I have shared with real poets, particularly poets of color. An individual who I am particularly appreciative of would have to be Brandeis and CAST alum, LaShawn Simmons '18, who cultivated one of the most culturally impactful and transformative spaces I have ever been in - *Ebony Axis*, a literary magazine dedicated to women of color on Brandeis' campus. With each annual publishing comes a coffeehouse-esque sort of open mic/reading/celebration which I have attended each year since my start at Brandeis. *Ebony Axis* has been a literal and metaphorical healing space for many women of color, particularly Black women, as it allows us to take a physical and mental break from all that comes with being a Black woman studying on Brandeis’

campus and provides a space dedicated specifically to sharing, communing with and celebrating ourselves.”

### **American Academy of Poets University and College Prize to CAST Minor**

A poem by CAST Minor Sarah Terrazano '19, “Fire in the Woods,” which examines the layers of occupation at Walden Pond (challenging Thoreau's primacy), was the selection for the 2019 Academy of American Poets Prize. The award was given as part of Brandeis’ 2019



University and College Prize for the Academy of American Poets. Read the poem here: [https://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/library-authors/2019\\_02\\_sarah-terrazano\\_poem-fire-in-the-woods.pdf](https://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/library-authors/2019_02_sarah-terrazano_poem-fire-in-the-woods.pdf)

### **Alumni Update**

One of the first CAST minor graduates, Bronte Velez '16, reached out to the CAST community about the work she has done with her CAST education. She moved to Oakland, California and joined the organization Lead to Life, which is based on guns-to-shovels and tree-planting practices. The work with Lead to Life has led to features in *Emergence Magazine*, *Huffington Post*, and *Upworthy*. Velez lives at Cantic Farm, which is an intergenerational community committed to exploring restorative justice, reparations, prison abolition, climate justice, food justice, and new economies.

Sarah McCarty '16, a CAST student who completed the core course and maintained a strong connection with the CAST and Peacebuilding and the Arts programs, was one of three students in the visual and fine arts to win a Mortimer Hays-Brandeis Traveling Fellowship. The fellowship provides \$19,000 to students in the visual and fine arts for travel and living expenses outside the United States. With the support of the fellowship, McCarty will live in Germany and conduct field and historical research in supremacist ideology. This research will lead to the creation of video works, writing, and collaborative community gatherings. Funded by the Mortimer and Sara Hays Endowment, Mortimer Hays-Brandeis Traveling Fellowships are highly competitive and open to recent graduates of Brandeis, Boston University, The City College of New York/CUNY, Columbia University, Connecticut College, Gallaudet University, Harvard University, Rochester Institute of Technology/NTID, Wesleyan University and Yale University. (story: BrandeisNOW; photo: BrandeisNOW/Shantré Pinkney)



### **Poetic Justice**

The CAST minor supported Poetic Justice, the Brandeis Slam Poetry Team, in their travel to Texas for CUPSI (National Poetry Competition). The team competed against Barnard, NYU, Oberlin, and the University of Miami on Friday, April 12, 2019, and is among the top 20 teams in the country.

## VII. Capstone Projects

The capstone project is a core part of the CAST minor. It can be fulfilled as an internship, directed study, special topics course, or capstone series. All projects were presented to the advisory committee and guests on April 30, 2019. The 2019 CAST minors and their projects:

### **Gemma Curnin**

On April 18, 2019, Gemma Curnin collaborated with Professor Gannit Ankori to lead a tour of Howardena Pindell's *Self-Portrait, Untitled #16*, and *Free, White & 21* at the Rose Art Museum. After the tour, Gemma engaged participants in a discussion of Pindell's *Autobiography: Water (Ancestors/Middle Passage/Family Ghosts)* using visual thinking strategies and open-ended, thought-provoking questions. Gemma presented her project to the advisory committee April 30.

### **Kiaina Gomez**

Kiaina Gomez completed a portfolio summarizing her intellectual journey through the CAST minor, commenting on the contributions of each of her five CAST courses.

### **Remony Perlman**

Remony Perlman's capstone project was part of the course *Playing for Change: Community Building and Social Change on Stage*. The course was based on the teachings of Augusto Boal, the Brazilian theater educator who created Theatre of the Oppressed. Among Remony's takeaways from the course were how theater can be used for social change, not only through traditional methods, but also through the creation of community spaces for forum and image theater that center specifically around social issues. As her capstone project, Remony led a class workshop and discussion involving a theatrical scene she'd written about Slut Shaming.

### **Jean Poulard**

Jean Poulard did an internship in Mexico at Yaxunah Centro Cultural, a center that educates about Mayan culture, including indigenous approaches to health and wellness. During and following his internship, Jean conducted research on how cultures can foster positive perceptions of health through illustrative media and respect for the cultural perceptions conveyed in these works. He explored how images can bring people together and inform them, in a holistic way, of the importance of many health-related topics. In addition to the final presentation to the advisory

committee, Jean engaged members of the campus community in his project during the Brandeis Festival of the Arts, April 10, 2019.

### **Sarah Terrazano**

Sarah Terrazano created a Campus Poetry Initiative, in which she posted poetry around campus in unexpected places and created opportunities for students to write their own poems. First, she taped poems across campus in locations such as academic hallways, bathroom stall doors, water fountains, and announcement boards in both humanities and science buildings. A few poems were her own, but most were submitted by other students after she put out a submission call. In the library, she used several giant whiteboards to encourage student creative expression. Her goal was to disrupt a stressful environment with the opportunity for creativity through encounters with poetry. One of the whiteboards was a haiku fill-in-the-blank, where she provided 5-7-5 line templates for students to fill in the words. Another whiteboard asked, “Are you a poet?” Students answered yes or no, but many also wrote poems on the board, motivational sayings, or doodles. Throughout the week, Sarah took pictures of the whiteboards, erased them, and waited for them to fill up again. She received emails from various students, some whom she had never met, saying that they appreciated seeing poems around campus.

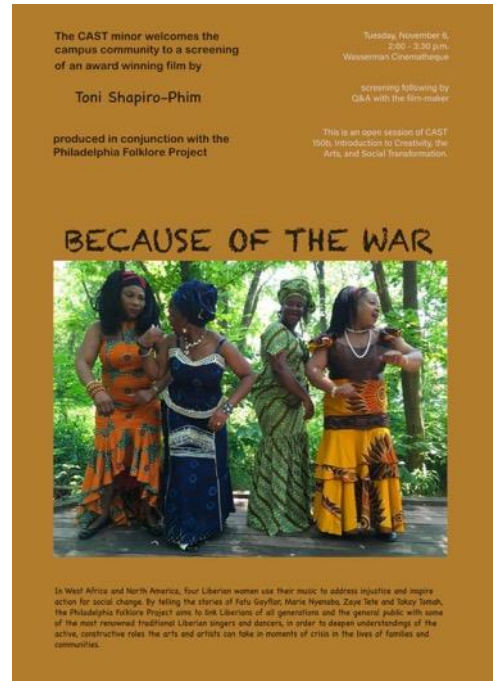
## **VIII. Visiting Artists in the Classroom**

Distinguished artists and scholars visited CAST core and elective courses during the year, adding expertise and insight to class discussion.

The **CAST core course, CAST 150b: Introduction to Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation**, taught by Professor Cynthia Cohen, hosted a number of guests throughout the 2018 fall semester:

- On September 4, 2018, Dr. Babu Ayindo, a storyteller, artist, teacher, facilitator, researcher, peacebuilder, and writer from Kenya, engaged students in a conversation on creative approaches to peacebuilding by sharing his own story and demonstrating the power stories have in peacemaking. Dr. Ayindo helped the students to discover their creative capacities by involving them in a poetry writing exercise in small groups and having them perform the poems they created.
- On October 9, 2018, Jane Wilburn Sapp, musician, educator, and cultural worker, engaged in conversations with CAST students about issues of social justice, a sense of community, polarization in US society, and the role culture and music can play in social movements and activism.

- On October 30 and November 6, 2018, Dr. Toni Shapiro-Phim visited the CAST program. Toni is a scholar and cultural worker who focuses on the history and cultural context of dance and music around the world, particularly in relation to violence, migration, conflict transformation, and gender concerns. In fall 2018, she led two sessions of the introductory course, CAST 150b. During the first session, she led discussions on the intersection of dance, music, human rights, and trauma healing based on her research in Cambodia. During the second session, she presented her documentary film, *Because of the War*, about four brilliant singers – mothers, refugees, immigrants, and survivors of Liberia’s civil wars – who use their music to address injustices at home and in exile. As reported by *The Brandeis Hoot*, “Despite the brutality of the Liberian Civil War, Shapiro-Phim is dedicated to showing a full picture of Liberian life and culture.” (Full *Hoot* article here:



<http://brandeishoot.com/2018/11/08/because-of-the-war-highlights-liberian-musicians/> )  
 The film was produced in conjunction with the Philadelphia Folklore Project, which works to link Liberians of all generations – as well as the general public – with some of the most renowned traditional Liberian singers and dancers. Toni Shapiro-Phim has been hired as the new co-chair of CAST and will begin teaching this fall. (See Faculty Search and Hire section above for her full bio.)

- On November 13, 2018, the drum and dance group “A Taste of Ghana” met CAST students for a session of music making and conversation. Attah Poku, Gloria Nyame, Francis Akotuah, Comfort Tetteh, Koblavi Dogah, and Ben Paulding hosted a drum workshop with the students in small groups, which later came together for a common performance and a Q&A session. This event was part of the MusicUnitesUS intercultural residency series.

Visitors to CAST electives:

**CAST 170a, Documenting the Immigrant Experience:** Alexandra Pineros Shields, Heller school, Brandeis and director of Essex County Community Organization; Sumaiya Zuma, Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR); Yasmin Yousof, CAIR, Community Organizer and Brandeis Alumna; Fatema Ahmad, Deputy Director of Muslim Justice League

Sumaiya Zama and Yasmin Yousof from CAIR spoke to CAST 170a in February about the experiences of Boston’s Muslim Somali community. Zama and Yousof are activists and writers whose work focuses on community organizing. They discussed “Islamophobia redefined,” explaining how racism and Islamophobia have intersected in the present day. Of their many

examples, they highlighted Muslim representation in the media and the role of the Department of Homeland Security in fostering Islamophobia in some of its strategies of countering violent extremism. They also spoke specifically about the Somali community in Boston, and the generational differences they have observed in reactions to Islamophobia and xenophobia. After their presentation, students asked questions and for advice on their filmmaking projects (see Courses section above). Zama and Yousof advised students to consider how their films could consciously combat Islamophobia. Yousof spoke about the transformative power of storytelling and advised students to think about how their films' stories could become a healing process.

**ENG 139a, Publishing Workshop:** Elizabeth Winston visited the class to discuss grants and fundraising in the scope of her role as the Development Associate at the Andrew Keegan Theatre in Washington, DC.

**ENG 181a, Making Sex, Performing Gender:**

On March 22, 2019, Anna Deavere Smith, Brandeis Richman Fellow

(<https://www.brandeis.edu/richmanfellow/recipients/index.html>) and American actress,

playwright, and professor, held an open session with the students of English 181a, Making Sex, Performing Gender.

The students shared their creative projects featuring the ethnographic memory of place (*Mapping Brandeis* project), the script of behavior (*I am ok Memory as Interruption* project), the stories of students at Brandeis (*Proper Bantah* project), creation of welcoming spaces for different bodies (*Shirtless Masculinity* project), the capacity of spaces in

accommodating different types of bodies (*Academic Bodies* project), and the agency of the skin (*Flexible Interwoven Skins* project). (For more information on these student projects, please contact CAST Undergraduate Advisor and professor of ENG 181a, Thomas King ([tking@brandeis.edu](mailto:tking@brandeis.edu)).



Smith then elaborated on her experience of “verbatim theater,” a form of documentary theater based on real-life events, through which she has focused on racial oppression in particular. She discussed how she researches, collects materials, and performs verbatim theater pieces to show various perspectives and incorporate different interviewees’ personas, manners, and language.

**SOC 155b, Protest, Politics, and Change:** Sabrina Barroso and her colleague Reina from the Student Immigrant Movement (SIM) came to speak about their work advocating for undocumented students in the Boston area. They discussed some of the key organizing strategies SIM has pursued. Students were particularly interested in talking with Sabrina and Reina about sustaining energy as activists. Sabrina and Reina talked about how they create spaces of mutual support and friendship within their activist work.



Aja Antoine, a Brandeis alumna who was involved in the Ford Hall occupation in 2015 and now works for the Op-Ed Project in New York City, spoke with the class over Zoom. She reflected on what worked and didn't work during the occupation, shared her own experiences of leadership and collective decision-making as an activist, and reminded students of the importance of remembering the legacy of Ford Hall at Brandeis.

The class also had several other speakers who are current Brandeis students/staff. For example, Sam Leonard and Ann Ward, doctoral students in sociology, came to talk about art and activism and facilitated an exercise in which students developed their own artistic interventions for a climate justice march.

**THA 132a, Devising Theater:** Dror Keren, Israeli actor, playwright, director and dubber, led the class in a discussion about what “home” means to a writer, as well as the challenge of finding artists who give voice to the stories of PTSD and other effects of war. Students gained tremendous insight from Dror regarding the intersection of the personal, political, and artistic in his work. His sharing helped students recognize that the creation of a personal mission as an artist is central to generous and transformative creative work.

## **IX. CAST-Sponsored Events (see Highlights section above for more)**

Fall 2018:



### **“Toxic” Performance (pictured)**

September 2, 2018

The Imagining Together Platform for Arts, Culture and Conflict Transformation (IMPACT) convened a design lab on the Brandeis campus Friday, August 31 – Monday, September 3, 2018 (see Peacebuilding and the Arts section below). The lab brought into conversation leading thinkers and practitioners in the arts, culture and conflict transformation field. Sunday

evening, an intimate dinner was held for design lab participants, members of the Brandeis community, and Boston-based socially engaged artists. Toxic, a majorette dance group at Brandeis, performed a routine, creating a literal and theoretical space for empowerment. Toxic was introduced by Ebony Axis founding editor LaShawn Simmons '18, who was also an alumni participant in the lab.

The evening program also included a performance by Artists' Theater of Boston (ATB). Artistic Director Anneke Reich introduced an excerpt from Boston-area playwright Kirsten Greenidge's “Feather and Board,” developed in partnership with a community member and housing justice advocate who had experienced eviction and displacement. “Feather and Board” is part of ATB's original production, *This Place/Displaced*, which examines gentrification, housing insecurity, and cultural displacement. Following its successful August 2018 run at the Charlestown Working

Theater (Boston, MA), ATB would remount *This Place/Displaced* in Brandeis's Merrick Theater (Spingold Theater Center) in May 2019 (see Highlights section above). Reich and ATB Managing Director Stephanie K. Brownell then joined conversations with IMPACT design lab members about the role of the arts in supporting just communities and shared a booklet addressing these issues, "From Displacement to Place-Making and Place-Keeping," developed by ATB Connectivity Manager, professor of English and CAST, and design lab participant Thomas King. Friend of ATB, Ashley-Rose, an award-winning Haitian-American educator, organizer, and poet from Boston, shared her own family experience of housing insecurity and performed her poem "The Other Side of Ruggles," addressing a key racial and cultural dividing line between those who have the basic resources for success and those who do not in the Boston area. Ashley-Rose's poetry has been featured in *The Anthology of Liberation Poetry*, alongside the work of Tony Hoagland and Black Arts Movement co-founder Askia M. Touré. Ashley-Rose was honored by Mayor Marty Walsh with the OneIn3 Impact Award recognizing the most influential people under age 35 in Boston. In 2016 she was awarded Boston's Extraordinary Woman Award for her work in arts, education, and community development in Boston.

### **CAST Welcome Back**

September 4, 2018

The CAST community welcomed students and faculty to a new semester with a discussion and reception featuring international artists and peace builders who were visiting Brandeis as participants in the IMPACT design lab. Participating figures included Babu Ayindo (Kenya); Ellada Evangelou (Cyprus); Mary Ann Hunter (Australia); Catherine Muhoma (Kenya); Shahid Nadeem (Pakistan); Carmen Olaechea (Argentina); and Lee Perlman (Israel). Read an article about the event in the *Brandeis Hoot*: <http://brandeishoot.com/2018/09/07/activists-speak-about-the-power-of-art/>

### **La Batea – Book Presentation**

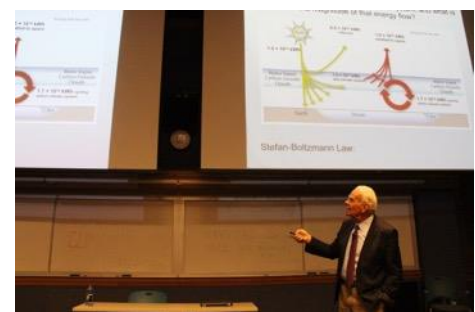
October 19, 2018

Professor Elizabeth Ferry (Anthropology) and her brother Stephen discussed their book, *La Batea*, which explores the varied lives of small-scale gold miners in Colombia. *La Batea* reveals the many histories and contexts of small-scale gold mining that include violence and exploitation but also long-lived, self-determining anchored communities. Many of the documented miners have been in conflict with transnational gold mining companies that seek to remove them to make room for open-pit projects. *La Batea* breaks the traditional boundaries of documentary photography and anthropological writing.

### **Climate: Human Consequences of Irreversible Change**

October 29, 2018

Harvard University Professor Jim Anderson came to Brandeis to give a talk on the effects of global warming and climate change on the planet. He discussed the deleterious effects on Greenland, North Africa, and the Middle East. He also talked about the economic, political, and military effects of climate change, as well as how we can revise curricula to teach about climate change more effectively.



## **20 Years of the Miseducation of Lauryn Hill: A Conversation with author Joan Morgan**

November 7, 2018

Joan Morgan discussed the relationship between hip-hop, feminism, and musician Lauryn Hill, and the political and social climate that hip-hop was born into at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



## **Flawless: More than a Single Story**

November 16, 2018

This was the annual coffeehouse event to celebrate *Ebony Axis*, a community journal that features the work of self-identifying black women in the Brandeis community (see Sarah Nzisabira's reflection in the Student News section above). The night featured readings from this year's contributors, as well as members of Poetic Justice, Brandeis' Slam Poetry Team.

Spring 2019:

## ***The Sign for Love* Film Screening**

February 12, 2019

In conjunction with Professor Ilana Szobel's course "Disability Cultures: Art, Film and Literature of People with Disabilities," the documentary *The Sign for Love* was screened on campus. *The Sign of Love* explores being gay, deaf and Israeli. The event featured a discussion with filmmakers Elad Cohen and Iris Ben Moshe.

## **From University to Pluriversity: The Fair-Trade/Decolonial Education Model Presentation and Workshop**

February 25, 2019

Pachaysana Institute Executive Director Daniel Bryan came to Brandeis to discuss the work of the program Rehearsing Change, which responds to the need for more participatory dialogue – such as theater and performance – in discussing fair trade and decolonization. Bryan fleshed out the mission of Pachaysana, which is to reconcile the worlds and epistemologies from the West and South through participatory theater, in order to decolonize high school education. After his presentation, Bryan led a workshop that combined individual and reflective exercises, pair activities, and collective dynamics to bring awareness to decolonization. The activities were followed by a space for guided discussion on how to address hurtful legacies of colonization.



Participants in the Fair-Trade/Decolonial Education workshop

## Poetry Reading and Choreopoem Performance with Ashley-Rose Salomon (pictured) and Melissa Alexis

April 8, 2019

Award-winning Haitian-American educator, community organizer, and poet Ashley-Rose Salomon came to Brandeis for a reading and workshop. Her work has been featured in *The Anthology of Liberation Poetry* and in one of the



first TEDx talks in Boston. Ashley-Rose has also been honored with the Boston Mayor's office ONEin3 Impact Award and the Boston's Extraordinary Woman Award. While at Brandeis, she performed alongside Melissa Alexis, a dance artist/educator and founder of Cultural Fabric and The Healing Arts Institute. After the performance, Ashley-Rose led "Rhythm, Rhyme and Revolution: A Workshop on the Arts as a Tool for Resiliency." Participants read and discussed Tupac Shakur's poetry collection, "The Rose That Grew from Concrete."

## Admitted Students Day

April 14, 2019

Professor Thomas King spoke with admitted students at the academic fair, informing them about the opportunities afforded by the CAST program and Brandeis in general.

## 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 2018-2019 year.

## IMPACT: Imagining Together Platform for Arts, Culture and Conflict Transformation

IMPACT is a collaboration among the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University, the Baker Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at Juniata College, and Maseno University in Western Kenya. The global IMPACT community expresses its appreciation to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its support of our 18-month planning process,



as well as the Fresh Sound Foundation, the Max and Sunny Howard Memorial Foundation, Amy Merrill '68, Elaine Reuben '63, and other individual donors who are supporting early implementation activities. It is charged with designing a set of structures and processes to strengthen the field of Arts, Culture and Conflict Transformation.

Highlights include:

A report, “Imagine IMPACT: An emerging strategy to strengthen the arts, culture and conflict ecosystem” has been completed. The report makes the case for the unique contributions of arts and culture to the transformation of conflict, including creative approaches to address the complex challenges facing humankind in the 21st century (climate change, gross inequalities, extremism, polarization, the unaddressed legacies of past violence, etc.) and argues for a platform – a series of structures and processes – to strengthen the “ecosystem” of artists, scholars, funders, and policymakers working in this field. Read the full report here: [http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/impact/2019\\_04\\_imagine-impact-full-report.pdf](http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/impact/2019_04_imagine-impact-full-report.pdf)

In the first year of the project, IMPACT has connected with some 500 individuals and organizations and produced an “Emerging Story of the Arts, Culture and Conflict Transformation Field” (<https://tinyurl.com/y48twurv>). This document was used as the basis for the design lab held at Brandeis August 31 – September 3, 2018. Participants included IMPACT Steering Committee Members Toni Shapiro-Phim, Germaine Ingram, Babu Ayindo, and Madhawa Palihapitiya, among 25 participants from 13 countries around the world.

The design lab began with an introduction to the IMPACT initiative. This involved looking at questions and concerns regarding IMPACT and examining the project’s goals. The session saw a lot of cross learning and openness to new ideas, which will help IMPACT grow in the future. Other events throughout the design lab included the activity “Identifying Challenges in Field-Building,” which worked to develop a frame for discussion that would suit a group of people who come from diverse backgrounds. There was also an evening of collective experience where participants shared artwork, video clips, and conversations about their work. Ellada Evangelou, a theater director from Cyprus with ties throughout the Middle East and North Africa, has produced a semi-informal account of the design lab in the form of an illustrated diary (<https://tinyurl.com/y6oqhxm2>).

Other recent IMPACT work has included a free global online learning exchange on April 26, 2019 on *Higher Education Engagement in Arts, Culture and Conflict Transformation*. The goal of the learning exchange was to further the understanding of the role that higher education organizations play in supporting ACCT practice by fostering research, designing teaching and learning, and enhancing regional and global networks in the field.

## *Let's Make a Better World: Stories and Songs by Jane Sapp*



*Let's Make a Better World: Stories and Songs by Jane Sapp* was published by the Brandeis University Press in 2019. Written by nationally admired cultural worker, musician, educator, and activist Jane Sapp, it is a new resource for music educators, chorus leaders, activists, and cultural workers.

Sapp shares her approach to social transformation and its roots in African-American musical traditions. She shares stories from her childhood in the Jim Crow South, her participation in the Black Power movement, and her mentors. The book includes 25 songs and the story behind each song, and offers suggestions for teachers and chorus leaders. The songs can be heard on the free podcast *Let's Make a Better World*, which explores Sapp's cultural work

through conversations with activists, cultural workers, and music educators (<https://www.janesapp.org>). The podcast was created to coincide with the release of the book.

On April 2, 2019, Sapp joined an open class session of “Protest Through Song: Music That Shaped America” at Brandeis for a concert, mini-symposium, and book launch. Other speakers at the event included Professor Daniel Kryder, Politics; Heller School Dean Maria Madison; and Boston University Professor Emerita Sandra Nicolucci. For video footage of the event, visit <https://youtu.be/9PCVXklKZAE>. For information about ordering the book and accessing an accompanying podcast, please visit [janesapp.org](https://www.janesapp.org)

## *Acting Together: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict*

In 2011, the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts published a two-volume anthology *Acting Together: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict*, accompanied by a documentary and toolkit. Between then and now, educators and trainers on every continent have recognized *Acting Together* resources as key. With support from Elaine Reuben '63, member of the Ethics Center's International Advisory Board, translations of the documentary have been produced in Spanish, Hebrew, Arabic, Japanese, Sinhalese and Tamil. With help from Brandeis Library and Technology Services, the Hebrew and Arabic versions have been made available online for use by Ethics Center colleague Chen Alon who incorporated them into a final exam in his course on Theatre and Peacebuilding in Tel Aviv. With ongoing support from Elaine, the documentary and 18 short “toolkit” videos have been reformatted for online access. View a trailer and the toolkit videos, organized according to different themes, at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcF\\_JDhvEboAEheWbZuXzCQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcF_JDhvEboAEheWbZuXzCQ). Preparations are also underway to make the full documentary available online on a sliding scale basis. The documentary can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TRfMn6yXZY>. *Acting Together* colleagues are the inspiration for the *IMPACT* initiative. Once revisions to these sites and to the print documents that comprise the toolkit are complete, discs will no longer be produced and disseminated; these products will all be available online, including the multi-lingual versions. At that point, a re-launch for added visibility will be conducted.