

F.E.A.S.T. 2022

Mutual Aid

Sunday
April 24, 1-3:30 PM

F.E.A.S.T. (Funding Emerging Art with Sustainable Tactics) is a bridge between artists and the community. F.E.A.S.T. is a public meal designed to use community-driven financial support to democratically fund projects that use art and creative thinking to impact the community. Patrons will give a donation for a meal and a ballot. Diners listen to and review a series of project proposals and converse with the artists and thinkers behind each idea. Attendees cast a vote for their favorite proposal, and by the end of the event, the artist who garners the most votes is awarded a grant comprised of the event donations.

F.E.A.S.T. at VisArts is based on F.E.A.S.T. in Brooklyn's (www.feastinbklyn.org) model for sustaining artist projects directly through community participation.

F.E.A.S.T. 2022 encourages artists, thinkers, and organizations to think outside of their everyday practice and create project proposals that address the theme of Mutual Aid. Imaginative, sustainable, and provocative projects that explore "Mutual Aid" as it intersects with social, cultural, political, economic, environmental concerns are welcome. What and who must survive? How do we insure survival? Why is survival



155 Gibbs Street | Gallery Hours
Rockville, MD 20850 | Wed & Th: 12 to 4:00pm
301-315-8200 | Fri: 12 to 8:00pm
www.visartscenter.org | Sat & Sun: 12 to 4:00pm



Schedule of Events

1:00 - 1:30 PM

Presentation by
Sobia Ahmad and Monroe Isenberg

2020 FEAST winners will present on their digital archive project, The More-Than-Human World Library.

1:30 - 2:30 PM

Presentations and proposals from the artists

Presenting artists include:

- Rosa Chang: Indigo Shad Map
- Murat Cem Mengüç: Deep Memory
- Mia Eve Rollow: Ancestral Memory
- Julea Seliavski: National Slavic Museum

2:30 - 3:30 PM

Celebrate, eat and vote together!

After the presentation everyone will go to the VisArts rooftop to eat and celebrate together. People will cast their votes and we will announce the winner at the end of the event.

2020 F.E.A.S.T. Winner



We live in A More-Than-Human World— a world built from intersecting webs of complex relationships and multiple intelligences. We humans are not at the center but a part of an inconceivable greater whole. As author and ecologist David Abram says, “We are human only in contact, and conviviality, with what is not human.”

Supported by VisArts Center, this year-long, global project was developed by Sobia Ahmad and Monroe Isenberg in response to the pandemic and in an effort to expand definitions of community, maintain healthy connections, and develop relationships with ecology. Democratization of the creative process was one of our goals. This was accomplished by inviting people with varying arts and non-arts backgrounds to contribute their multimedia reflections relating to the theme. The submissions coalesced into a digital knowledge bank that articulates multifaceted relationships to land, ritual, material and mythology— which we presented during the International Media Architecture Biennale produced by Queensland University in Brisbane, Australia.

Rosa Chang: *Indigo Shade Map*



“Indigo Shade Map is a research-based interactive storytelling online map and community project that started as introducing four different types of indigo plants. The purpose of developing the Indigo Shade Map, is to compile a reference of indigo art and share how indigo plays a significant role in connecting people, understanding different cultures, and inspiring curiosity and cultural unity. With the online map, my goal is to publish a periodical paper magazine in order to share them with people who have limited internet access. Moving forward, I would like to provide a free in-person indigo dye session and project the online map to the public so people get the chance to interact with it. F.E.A.S.T funds will be used for supporting all of those productions. The map was originally created in 2016 and re-developed during the beginning of pandemic in 2020. The map was being implemented as an online project, including online educational contents and a storytelling series. It was the most effective way of being connected with people during the Pandemic. Online indigo dye workshops and lectures about Asian indigo were provided by collaborating with several local organizations. My ultimate goal is to provide a rich, beneficial, educational, and joyous ecosystem to get through these difficult times. I hope to be continuously connected with BIPOC farmers, Artists, Asian diasporic immigrants and youth communities in order to let them find time to honor their own cultures and have healing moments from the current events.”

Murat Cem Mengüç: *Deep Memory*



Deep Memory will use the act of growing food from seeds to initiate discussions of why mutual aid is essential to society. The project will be interactive. The audience will be invited to watch a brief documentary and select seeds from a drawer cabinet to later grow and share with others in need. The main idea is that mutual aid requires compassion, personal commitment and compromise. Through taking seeds from the cabinet and sharing the resulting food, the audience will become both a recipient and a giver of mutual aid.

The theme of mutual aid will be addressed in the film through contextualizing the concept in terms of contemporary phenomena such as environmental activism. The film will link these themes to the seeds through visual references to grassroots movements like aboriginal seed markets and seed activism.

The seed cabinet will demonstrate the act of mutual aid through sharing packages of seeds. The concept will be reinforced when the audience grows the seeds into food that can be shared with others. Thus, Deep Memory's initial act of sharing will be transformed into subsequent acts of sharing within the community.

Deep Memory will target both the local and broader community through the distribution of seeds and fruits. Deep Memory will last indefinitely because it uses dormant beings like seeds which can travel in time and space.

teleocene.com

Mia Eve Rollow: *Ancestral Memory*



“This project will fall under the banner Urgent Art, a term that was developed by a collective I am part of in Chiapas, Mexico. Urgent Art projects, like the one I propose here, respond to the cultural, social, personal, and political conflicts that occur and need art to alleviate the spiritual burdens. Urgent Art uses the landscape and body actions to poetically address class, ableism, inherited trauma, and barriers to personal liberation. In short, it uses art as a tool in the mutual aid toolkit.

My project *Ancestral Memory* is inspired by a work I recently collaborated on in Dakar, Senegal, and will be presented at the Dakar Biennial this May. The project is centered around the notion of African Memory as experience by living Africans.

This grant would support a correlating work which looks at ancestral memory here in the US, specifically from African-American and European-American perspectives in Washington, DC. In 2021, I held weekly workshops at the Veterans Hospital in DC with three African American amputee veterans. I will work with these individuals again, and would like to recruit several more people with multicultural backgrounds to diversify the piece and the topic of lost ties to our past.

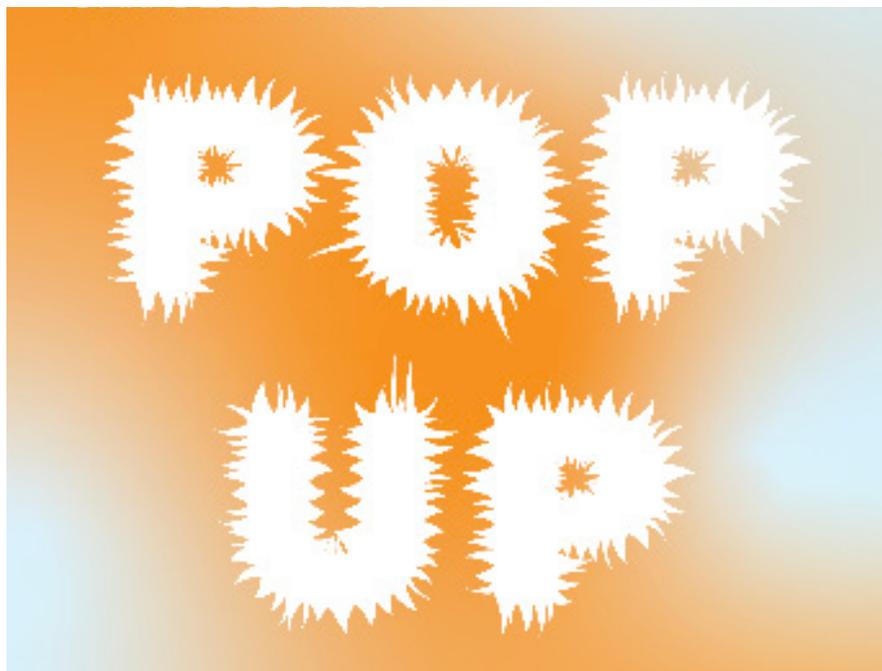
African-American lineage was systematically erased in slavery, but less explored is how Europeans also have blurred memories of our immigrant ancestry, an erasure that was part of the systematic establishment of American White Supremacy.

This cross-cultural erasing of our past can be a point of connection, as can be the quest of connecting to our distant ancestors, whether they be fleeing from violence or with quests to colonize, we need to confront our lineage in-order-to heal.

The DC section of the piece will take several workshops and performance days. The funds will provide stipends to the differently-abled participants, as well as subsidizing props for the performance, transportation, and food.”

miaeverollow.org

Julea Seliavski: *National Slavik Museum*



“The National Slavic Museum was established in 2003 to preserve the history of Slavic people on the East Coast and Baltimore city. In 2021, the museum launched a full scale rebranding initiative to continue the history of mutual aid and community archiving that was established under the Polish Social Club, Sokolnia. The museum sits in the historic building of the old Polish Social Club, Sokolnia, a place where the community gathered to hear political debates, access english literature, and have social occasions. This fall we are launching a new initiative that aims to provide opportunities for local artists and to create a hub for social gathering and resources at the museum.

When the museum existed as a Social Club members of the club donated large collections of novels so that the community could come and read at any time. This act of giving knowledge became a form of mutual aid for non-english speakers to access the resources to learn the english language. When the owner of the National Slavic Museum acquired the museum, he did so to acquire it for the Slavic community. A space of preserving history, as well as providing cultural interactions that are often hard to find in the center of Baltimore. It hosted a Thursday night music night that had local singers come and perform for the community, free of cost. When we think of mutual aid, we often think of a monetary exchange, but a resource exchange is just as valuable. When communities have the access to spaces of their cultural heritage for free they have access to their history they are able to thrive as individuals and continue to share this history for our futures.

If we are granted funds from F.E.A.S.T. we aim to put the funds towards creating an archive that community members can access online and in person. At this time, we are archiving each object but need the resources to properly preserve the artifacts and the ability to make an online search platform. In addition, we would like to use the funds to upgrade some of the books in the library for the Slavic and Fells community to access. Individuals will be able to come to the museum and view documents based on their last name. We will be able to share this knowledge with the community for free so that we can continue to preserve our histories and stories.”

nationalslavicmuseum.com