LiberArte



2025 REPORT

CREATED BY YARA ALY, KATAIKE A. LENNY, & YURA SAPI

where creativity
takes flight



Kim Macharia, Festival Host
Photo by LUMO Studio

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Tanya Alfonso, Festival Producer
Photo by LUMO Studio

A MESSAGE FROM YURA

In numerology, 2025 carried the energy of a year nine—a cycle of completion. For LiberArte, this sense of completion feels deeply real. This year marked three full years as a nonprofit organization, shaped by care and steady growth. I am filled with profound gratitude for the incredible advancements we have achieved together. This moment of completion is also an invitation to reflect, to release, and to transform. Every new beginning asks us to let go of something that came before. Growth requires space. Change asks for trust. We invite you to reflect with us.

What did 2025 mean for you?
What are you celebrating?
What are you ready to release?

At LiberArte, we are stepping into a new chapter. This year, we strengthened our foundation by welcoming new board and team members deepening our organizational capacity. We also supported a major transition as one of our flagship programs, Protectores de la Tierra, began its evolution into its own nonprofit organization in Colombia.

As we look ahead, 2026 arrives with the energy of a year one—a new beginning. For me personally, this threshold has been mirrored in my own life as I step into parenthood. This experience has reshaped how I understand leadership, grounding it more deeply in care, presence, and our relationship to the Earth and to one another.

Through this year's work, one truth has become ever clearer: leadership is not only how we show up professionally. It lives in how we care for our bodies, how we nurture relationships, and how we remain in right relationship with the land and the communities we serve.

Thank you for being part of LiberArte's journey. Your presence and trust make our work possible. We are deeply grateful to walk this path with you. As we close this chapter and step forward together, I offer this blessing:

May you honor all that you have completed.
May you release what no longer serves you.
May you step into what's next with courage, imagination, and love.

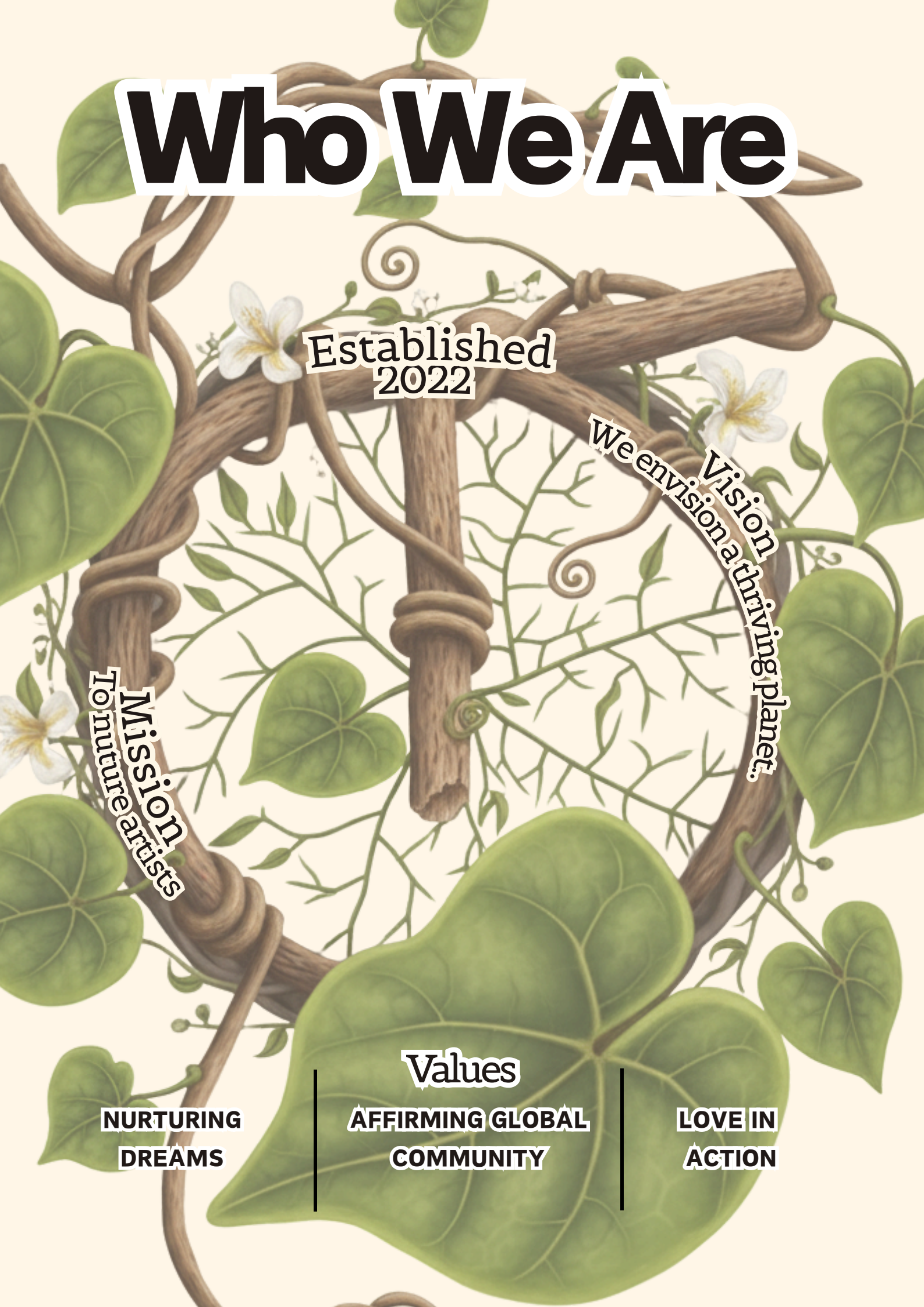
With Love,

Yura Sapi

Your Founding CEO, Yura Sapi



Who We Are



Values

NURTURING DREAMS

AFFIRMING GLOBAL COMMUNITY

LOVE IN ACTION

OUR TEAM


Yura Sapi
CEO


Christiamilda Correa
Board President


Alexandra Peek
Board Treasurer


Tanya Alfonso
Festival Producer


Tobi Miracle Ayeni
Social Media Video Editor


Isa Tenesaca
Board Secretary


Yara Aly
Programs Manager


Martin Mungai
Marketing Manager


Dorcus Kangethe
Graphics Designer

Valentina Gutiérrez
Social Media Manager


Carlota Vargas
Advisory Council


Jasmine Wilks
Podcast Editor


Ashley Villanueva
Festival Graphic Designer


Moshiur Rasul
Bookkeeper


Vanessa A. Cruz
MediaMKRS Intern


Brianna Nicole
MediaMKRS Apprentice


Jahida Seignious
MediaMKRS Intern

OUR ARTISTS



Artists left to right: Hudson Latinx Festival, Cecilia Villar Eljuri, Erlina Ortiz, Isabela Arboleda-Ocoro, Clarivel Ruiz, Milka Rodriguez, Davina Resto, Ron Himes, Lulada Club, Alexandra Meda, Alberto Nunez of Quilombo do Acupe, Krista Speroni, Elisa Bocanegra, Dr. Tahira Mahdi, Theresa Chavez, Jhon Esteban Lasso Mena & Tambacum, Nadia Garzón, Connie Fioriella, Zoe Tamara, Kim Macharia, Bodoma Garifuna Culture Band, Yura Sapi, Mai-Elka Prado, Chels Morgan, Julissa Emile, R. Réal Vargas Alanis, Paul Godete, Aganza Kisaka, Quiana Lewis, Gabriela Sanchez, Taganyahu Swaby & Quilombo do Acupe, Sona Tatoyan

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

HOWLROUND THEATRE COMMONS

Materials for the Arts
NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

MM MEDIAMKRS
A REEL WORKS PROGRAM

NYC Parks

CREATIVE DISRUPTORS LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

WE MAKE CHANGE

afrolatin@ forum

LARUBEYA COLLECTIVE

RAICES NUEVAS

QUILOMBO DO ACUPE

Qarte

CULTURAS FOODWAYS

acoustic memories

Terraza 7

MAYDAY

OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

Flowering Circle $10,000+

NEW YORK STATE Council on the Arts

NYC Cultural Affairs

NEW MUSIC USA

DAUGHTERS FOR EARTH

FLUSHING TOWN HALL

echoing Green

Rooted Circle $2,000 – $9,999

Berkshire Taconic COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

GLOBAL GREENGRANTS FUND Where change takes root

·· LABORATORY ····
···· FOR GLOBAL ··
···· PERFORMANCE & ··
POLITICS ····

NYFA New York Foundation for the Arts

Wave Farm

FARMERS OF COLOR LAND TRUST



LiberArte's programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature. LiberArte is funded in part by the Howard Gilman Foundation administered by Flushing Town Hall. LiberArte was supported by New Music USA's Organization Fund, with support in part from Fifth House Ensemble and legacy contributions to the New Music USA endowment. The Afro-Diasporic Ocean Festival is made possible (in part) with public funds from the Queens Arts Fund, a re-grant program supported by New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and administered by New York Foundation for the Arts. The Afro-Diasporic Ocean Festival is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the city council. LiberArte's 2027-2029 Strategic Plan is made possible, in part, by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature through the Media Arts Assistance Fund, a regrant partnership of NYSCA and Wave Farm.

Impact In



100+

Artists Served



5000+

Audiences Served



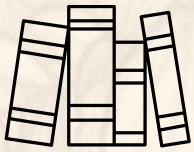
20+

Community Partners



10+

Programs created from festivals, courses, podcast episodes, to workshops



150+

Content shared online from posts to emails about our programs



76,206+

Reach and engagements on social media and website visits

Numbers



4,027

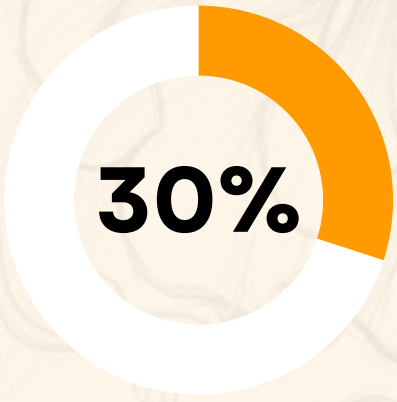
All-time Podcast Downloads



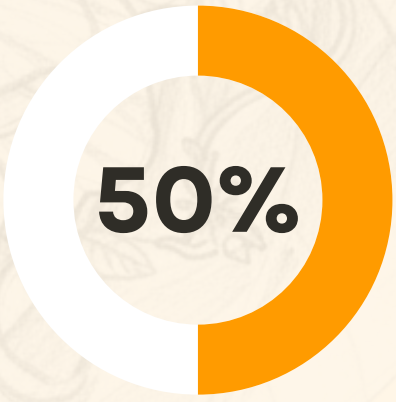
1,771

Total Social Followers

Increase in Audiences Served



Increase in Artists Served



Volunteers Participating Increase



Community Partnerships Increase



A multidisciplinary outdoor celebration designed to uplift the sacred relationship between the people of the African Diaspora and the ocean, which is held at the Rockaway Beach Amphitheater every year in Queens, New York. The theme of the festival this year was to celebrate the International Day of Afro-Descendant Women, which was on July 25, 2025.



Melvis Santa & La Rumba de Santa, Photo by LUMO Studio

Afro-Diasporic Ocean Festival

The festival's 2025 lineup featured visionary participants whose work embodies ancestral memory.

Kim Macharia, our event host and ocean steward beautifully connected us to the power of nature through her words and songs. Quilombo do Acupe used Capoeira as a tool for empowerment and community building, symbolizing a history of resistance and autonomy found in the escaping enslaved communities of Brazil. Tanzanian-American Afro-soul artist Koku Gonza opened the event with a culturally immersive fusion of Afrobeat and neo-soul. Panamanian Mai-Elka Prado Gil journeyed us through the Afro-Latinx cultural memory. Melvis Santa, a Grammy-nominated artist, lifted us with Afro-Cuban jazz brilliance.

A cornerstone of the programming was by afrolatin@ forum, which hosted the panel discussion "AfroLatina Wisdom: Guiding the Future of Ecojustice," centering Blackness within Latinidad to explore the leadership of Afro-Latinas in environmental movements. Julissa Emile, poet and healer, touched hearts and minds with her stunning performance.



Koku Gonza, Photo by LUMO Studio

> Creativity is a key for problem solving and transformation to a new world.



Isabela Arboleda-Ocoro, Panel Moderator, Photo by LUMO Studio



Julissa Emile, Poet, Photo by LUMO Studio

We were graced with live painting by Quiana Lewis, herbal healing/seed swapping with Jawhara and Terri from Nos Cuidamos Community Garden, and beautiful work from Afrotika Arts showcased in our vendor village. Finally, DJ Agent DMZ, closed the night with a high-energy set that transformed the boardwalk into a dance floor powered by diasporic beats and community rhythm.

We would love to thank all visionary artists who could shared incredible performances that inspired and shared ancestral experiences, memories and culture. The festival is powerful thanks to you!

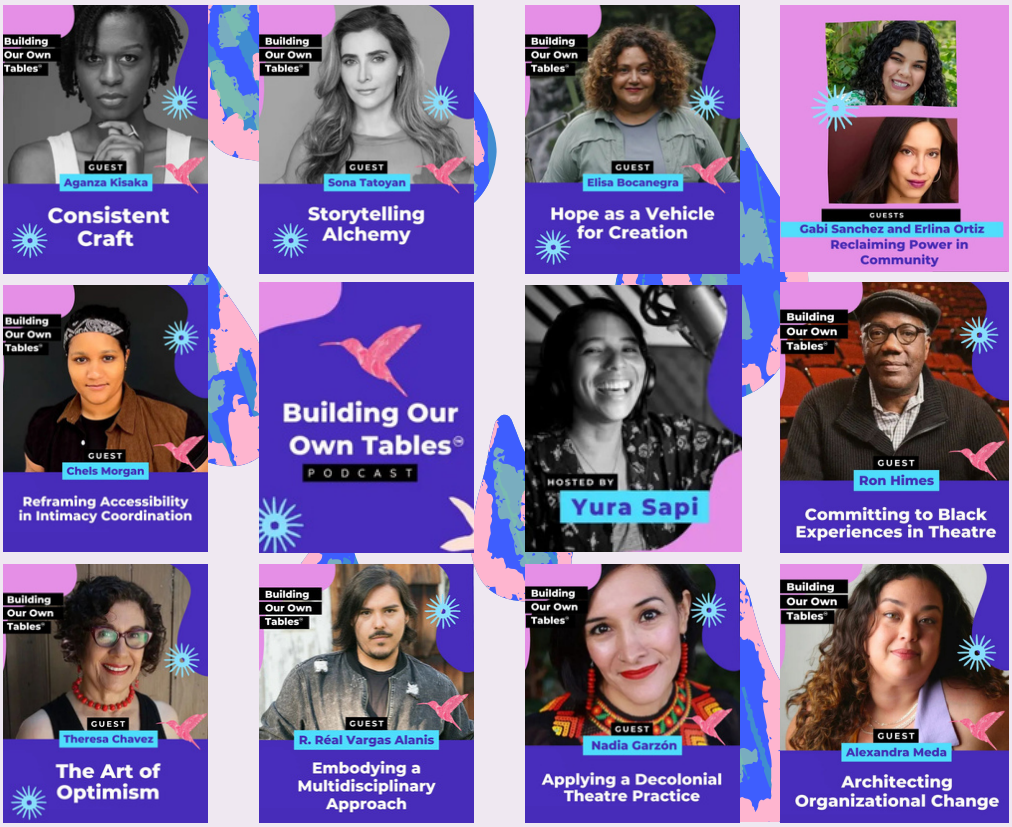
Racial, social, and climate justice work through the arts is indispensable. It's what translates complex issues like the slow-burn shock of climate change into personal and actionable community rituals. By celebrating the International Day of Afro-Descendant Women and linking cultural memory directly to land stewardship, the 2025 Afro-Diasporic Ocean Festival acknowledged Black women as wisdom-keepers of our environmental future. This unique intersection of eco-justice and cultural heritage makes the event an essential engine for collective healing, ensuring that the protection of the ocean is noticeably tied to the protection of the people who depend on it.

Building Our Own Tables™

HOSTED BY
YURA SAPI

PODCAST

In our fifth year of Building Our Own Tables, Yura Sapi hosted eleven guests and explored legacy, being rooted in community, hope, grief, beginnings and shifts, and a sense of purpose in that what they bring to the world is vital. In collaboration with **HowlRound Theatre Commons**, LiberArte's producing partner, a powerful season emerged.



The eleven organizational guests of the season were **Aganza Kisaka** of Yenze Theatre Conservatoire, **Sona Tatoyan** of Hakawati, **Elisa Bocanegra** of HERO Theatre, **Gabi Sanchez** and **Erlina Ortiz** of Power Street Theatre, **Chels Morgan** of Intimacy by Chels Morgan, **Ron Himes** of The Black Rep, **Theresa Chavez** of About...Productions, **R. Réal Vargas Alanis** of In The Margin, **Nadia Garzón** of Descolonizarte Teatro, and **Alexandra Meda** of Culture Change Lab.

With more than 20,000 views on social media, almost 1000 visits to **HowlRound Theatre Commons**' website for transcripts, and 4, 027 all-time downloads, we were able to reach theatre makers, theatre goers, and those interested in the arts. And we cannot wait for more seasons to come.





WIND is an intercultural multimedia project that celebrates creation, land connection, and storytelling.







WIND is led by **Maura García** (non-enrolled Cherokee/Mattamuskeet) with artists **Amado Espinoza** (Qhichwa) and **Yura Sapi** (Kichwa).

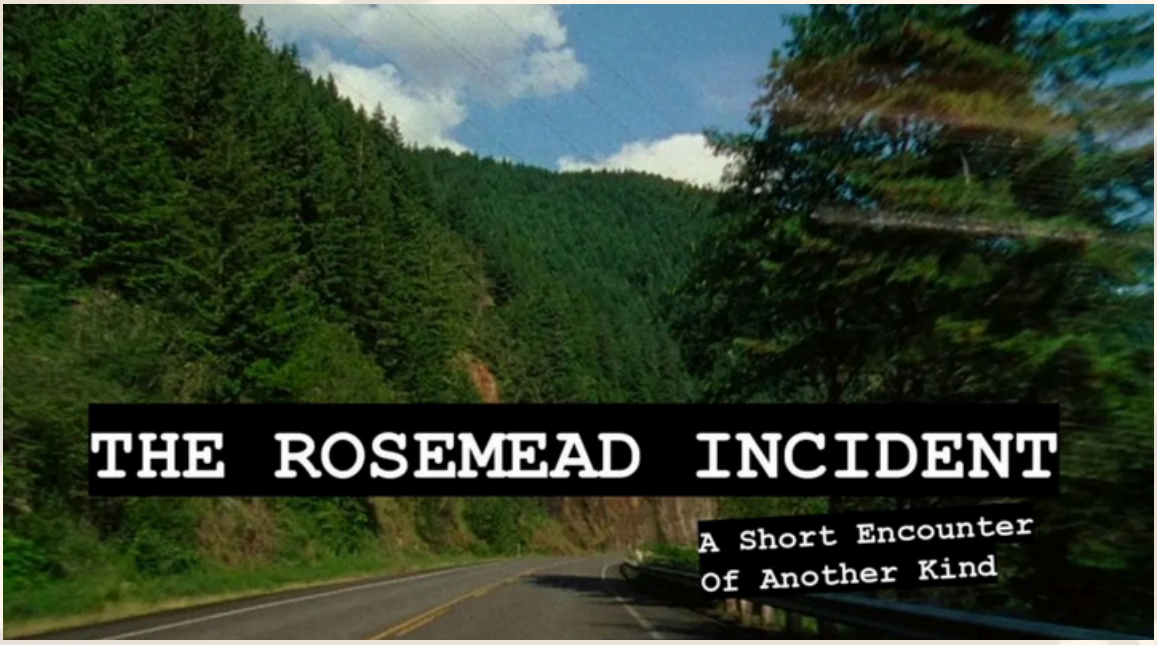
WIND
KANSAS CITY RESIDENCY

Premiered in February 2025 in Kansas City, Missouri, the work brought together Indigenous artists from North and South America to explore creation, land connection, and storytelling through the elemental force of wind. Across Indigenous cosmologies, wind is understood as breath, spirit, sound, and memory, an invisible yet essential force that moves freely across borders and generations, long before colonial boundaries attempted to divide land and people.

Rather than following a single linear narrative, WIND weaves movement, sound, spoken word, visual elements, and ritual gestures into a shared dreaming practice. The artists approach creation through relationship with one another, with the land, and with the histories that shape place, inviting audiences to sense wind not only as an external force, but as breath within their own bodies.

Kansas City became an active collaborator in the work, with attention to the prairie beneath the pavement and the visible and erased histories carried by the land, linking personal experience to collective memory.

The Rosemead Incident



This year, we launched fiscal sponsorship for aligned projects.

Through this work, LiberArte supported several powerhouse producers and creators of original work who apply for grants and receive donations to move their work forward. One example is filmmaker and producer, **Zoe Tamara**.

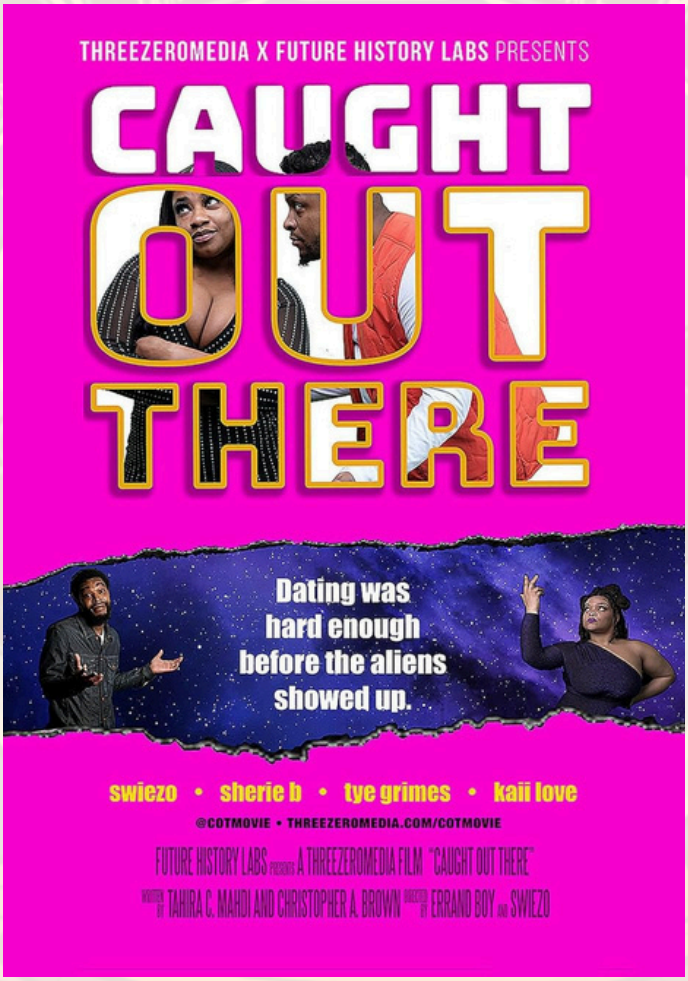
This year, Zoe produced The Rosemead Incident, a short sci-fi narrative film that tells the story of Kevin Chen, an immigrant who believes he is a bona fide alien.

When he convinces a documentary crew to film his reunion with his long-lost extraterrestrial family, a decades-old conspiracy theory is put to the test as he attempts to prove once and for all that he really is an alien on Earth. The film explores themes of immigration, family, and the stories we tell ourselves to cope with isolation.

Helmed by Mexican-American director **Cesar Cervantes**, the film went into production at a time when ICE raids began to plague Los Angeles, making it a timely reflection on the immigrant experience and what it means to belong.

For Zoe and her team, LiberArte provided fiscal sponsorship, which allowed them to receive donations to fund the film. Zoe was paired with a paid intern through our partnership with the Reel Works MediaMKRS program. We are proud to serve as a hub for connection where artists, interns, and partners all benefit.

Caught Out There



Another film LiberArte supported this year is Caught Out There, a witty comedy written by Dr. Tahira Mahdi about Heartly and Malik, star-crossed singles who join a Zodiac-based matchmaking service. Things get complicated when they discover extraterrestrials in the dating pool.

MediaMKRS Apprentice Brianna Nicole assisted Dr. Tahira Mahdi in post production promoting it on social media.

This was a collaboration that blossomed from the Intercultural Leadership Fellowship (ILI), where Yura Sapi and Dr. Tahira Mahdi met.

LIBER ARTE

CREATIVE DISRUPTORS LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

Strategic Planning for Visionary Leaders



TAUGHT BY

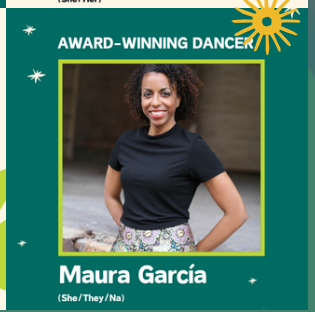
YURA SAPI, MFA &
CHRISTIAMILDA CORREA, CFRE











2025 BIPOC COHORT

VISIONARIES

The Strategic Planning for Visionary Leaders accelerator addresses the specific needs of the Global Majority, a term utilized by partners Creative Disruptors Learning Collaborative and LiberArte to center the experiences of those historically marginalized by Western institutional structures.

The program's curriculum moves beyond the transactional nature of traditional business school methodologies. Instead, the accelerator provided systems that guided fourteen leaders from abstract visioning to concrete implementation, ensuring that their organizational structures were a reflection of their internal values.

Our 2025 participants, Alana Gamage, Ami King, Being, Fallon Ayaan, Jeremy Tadrous, Kimberly Rodgers, Maura García, Nika Moeini, Rachel Fernandez, Shanté Skyers, Shelley Jackson, Terrelle Lue, Ysanet Batista, and Zhayra Palma shifted from survival to visionary execution. LiberArte used sliding scales and free scholarships to ensure these impactful projects, which are all worthy of support, remain accessible.

Each of these leaders brought a unique project or organization to the accelerator, and their progress during these eight weeks was characterized by a deepening of their decolonial practices and a strengthening of their organizational sustainability.

On-Demand Online Courses



How to set intentions before sleep to receive dream guidance, techniques to transform a problem into a solution. Guided breath work and grounding practices for clarity, visualization methods to send intentions to higher power during dreamtime.

How to set yearly intentions across different areas of life breaking down big goals into actionable monthly steps, Tools, coaching, and meditative practices to sustain your journey.





How to write compelling applications that stand out to grant readers, build realistic budgets and work plans funders can trust, overcome barriers like self-doubt and confusing eligibility, and use modern tools, including AI, to support your process.

Understand the impact of Pluto in Aquarius. Guided meditation to connect with purpose, practices to manifest change, insights on how to align with collective transformation, and a gratitude ritual honoring the Four Directions.





How to overcome systemic and internal barriers, and approach funding from a place of clarity and confidence. Explore multiple funding pathways so you can build a sustainable and values-aligned financial strategy for your work.



Protectores de la Tierra Develops a Viche For-Profit Arm

Since beginning as a small community garden in 2021 and formally establishing our farm in 2022, Protectores de la Tierra has grown into a living ecosystem that centers Afro-Colombian and Indigenous wisdom, regenerative agriculture, and youth education.

In 2025, over 4,000 pounds of food were grown, harvested, and shared with the community. We invested in a 300-liter artisanal copper distiller, custom-made to honor traditional methods, constructed a two-story production facility in Río Mortero, and designed a production flow where sugarcane is washed, pressed into guarapo, fermented, distilled, and prepared for bottling. Protectores de la Tierra is committed to developing a hybrid organizational model, combining a nonprofit arm with a for-profit social enterprise rooted in ancestral Viche production, an Afro-Colombian ancestral sugarcane-based spirit, produced for generations along the Pacific coast. Increasingly recognized and protected under Colombian law, Viche represents agricultural skill, cultural identity, racial justice, and economic opportunity for Black and Indigenous communities.

Protectores de la Tierra launched a new youth education initiative in partnership with Profe Yenny Valencia Reyes, a respected local educator and elder in Nuquí. Through her leadership of Cumbancheritos, a traditional music school, and Los Delfines, a youth soccer program, we introduced youth participants to ancestral farming practices, allowing young people to travel by river, enter the forest, and learn directly from the land.

Reconnecting to nature and to other ways of living – slower, in nature, in ancestral ways – helps to recalibrate you, heal, and find harmony, which is one of LiberArte's core messages. Through Protectores de la Tierra, More than thirty regular community members participated throughout the year, including elders, adults, and youth who returned repeatedly to the land to volunteer and collaborate. Nearly 500 people have directly benefited from this work, strengthening local food access while restoring relationships to land-based ancestral practices.



And Becomes Its Own Nonprofit



In 2026, Protectores de la Tierra becomes an incorporated nonprofit in Colombia, marking the end of its incubation period within LiberArte. At LiberArte, we look forward to the next iteration of collaboration with this project as it soars further into the world and enters its next phase with clarity and momentum.

Priorities in 2026 include beginning trial batches of Viche production, moving toward INVIMA health certification, and expanding sugarcane cultivation by an additional twelve hectares, collaborating with neighboring farmers.

Protectores de la Tierra plans on strengthening rice production toward a goal of one ton annually using ancestral irrigation systems. With Profe Yenny Valencia Reyes, Protectores will expand youth education programs and track learning outcomes. We will also welcome supporters, collaborators, and volunteers through new on-site accommodations for visits and agro-cultural exchange.

As year five on the land approaches, Protectores de la Tierra stands as a growing model of community-led food sovereignty, cultural preservation, and regenerative futures. None of this would be possible without the collective care, belief, and support of those who believe in the farm's mission.

SPONSORED FESTIVALS

LiberArte sponsored Festival del Tamborito in Nuquí, Colombia; Festival del Cangrejo Meón in Jurubira, Colombia; Hudson Latinx Festival in the Hudson Valley, NY; and El Festival de las Artes Cultura Conera in Peru, all vibrant celebrations of culture and joy.









FELLOWSHIPS AND PRESS

LiberArte is celebrating a year of unprecedented growth in the intersections of racial equity, climate justice, and ancestral healing.

Throughout the year, Yura Sapi has been recognized with prestigious fellowships and has spearheaded initiatives that have redefined "creative activism" on a global scale.

This year, Yura particiapted in four fellowships:

- Echoing Green Fellowship
- Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP)'s Emerging Leaders Institute
- Intercultural Leadership Institute (ILI)
- Georgetown University's Global Lab Fellows in Performance and Politics

Yura's visionary work was further featured in podcasts:

- pcdn's **The Social Change Career Podcast**
- APAP's **ARTS.WORK.LIFE**
- Soul Fire Farm's podcast **Sovereign: Reclaiming Black Land**

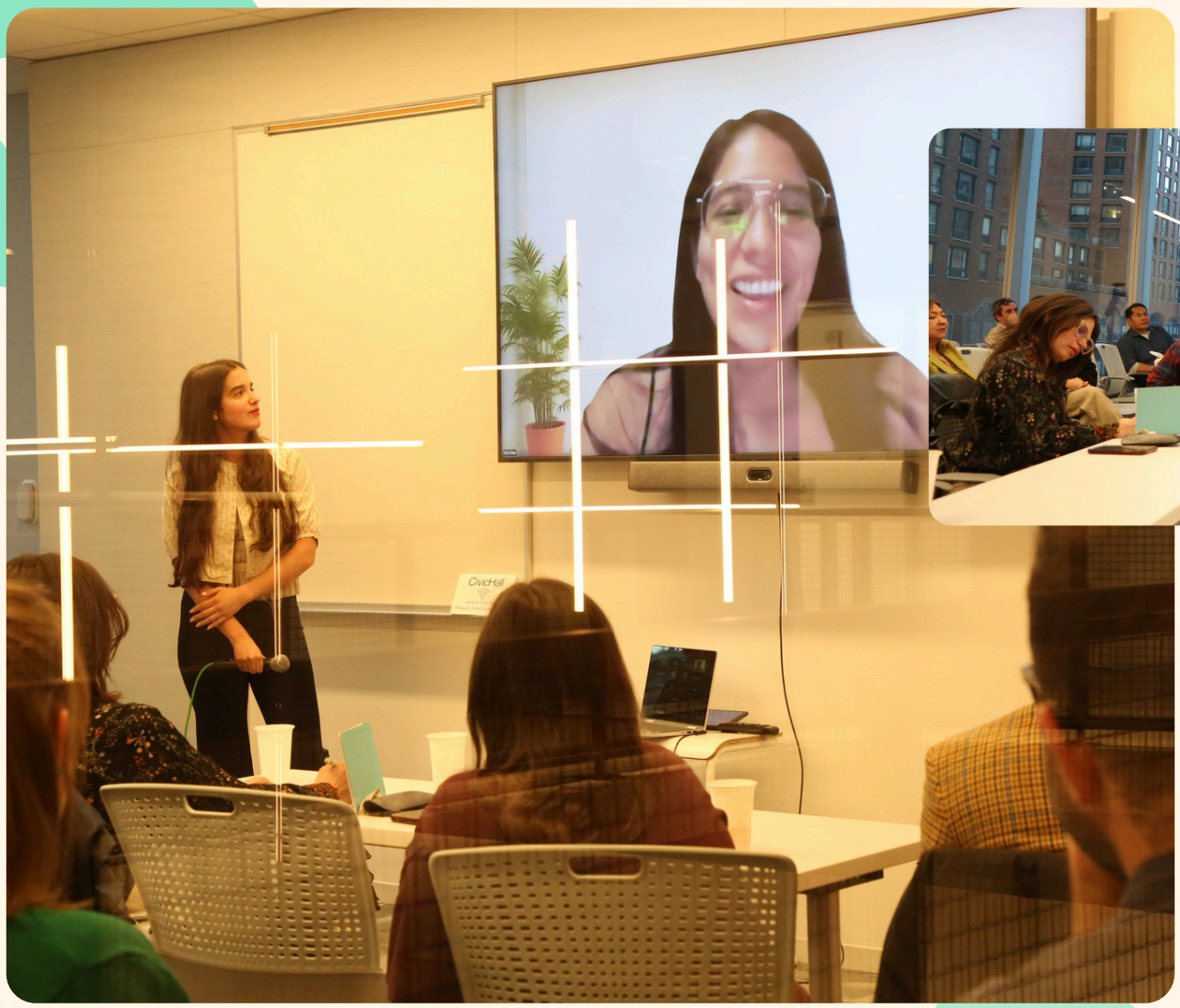






Bootcamp

QARTE Consultoría: Artistic Business Development in Latin America



QARTe, founded by Karla Prieto, is the first online bootcamp for artistic business development in Peru and Latin America. It brought together top NY-based experts to train artists in marketing, storytelling, pitching, and more. Yura Sapi taught a workshop on pitching and storytelling.

Alexandra Abadie, Augusto Ramos, Cecili Wisky, Leslie Carrasco, Rodrigo Poccidanio, Rocio Mancilla, and **Silvana Ventura** participated in the bootcamp, with **Rocio Mancilla** of Contoda Cultura winning $300 for best pitch, sponsored by LiberArte. This funding went to El Festival de las Artes Cultura Conera in Peru.


NORTH
ECOYSTEM
ACTION
W
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W
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MISSION
VISION
SOUTH
WHAT'S NEXT IN 2026?

AMADO ESPINOZA:

LIBERARTE'S 2026 ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE



LiberArte welcomes its new Artist-in-Residence, **Amado Espinoza**, who will be visiting New York City in August 2026 to perform, teach, and participate in cultural exchange with our community network.

Amado Espinoza is a Bolivian multi-instrumentalist, composer, educator, and native instrument builder. He was the recipient of the Folk Alliance International 2022 Spirit of Folk award, a 2019 Lighton Foundation International Artist Grant, and the 2017 Charlotte St. Foundation Performing Arts Fellowship. Amado has opened TEDxKC, and played at Carnegie Hall with Ensemble Iberica. He has taught a masterclass at Berklee College of Music.

Amado and Yura met in a Kansas City arts residency for WIND, and they will continue to create new music together, sponsored by a New Music USA grant.



Quiana Lewis, Vendor and Live Painter, Photo by LUMO Studio

2026:

LIBERARTE'S ANNUAL PROGRAMS

We look forward to **season six of Building Our Own Tables** releasing in Fall 2026, **2nd cohort of Strategic Planning for Visionary Leaders** with **Creative Disruptors Learning Collaborative**, new workshops and courses live and recorded for on-demand veiewing, and the 3rd **annual Afro-Diasporic Ocean Festival** held in August 2026.

We are launching a micro-**grants interest form** and a **event sponsorships interest form** to provide artists worldwide with opportunities to develop and showcase their work.

Thank You!

WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS WITHOUT YOU!

www.liberarteinc.org

