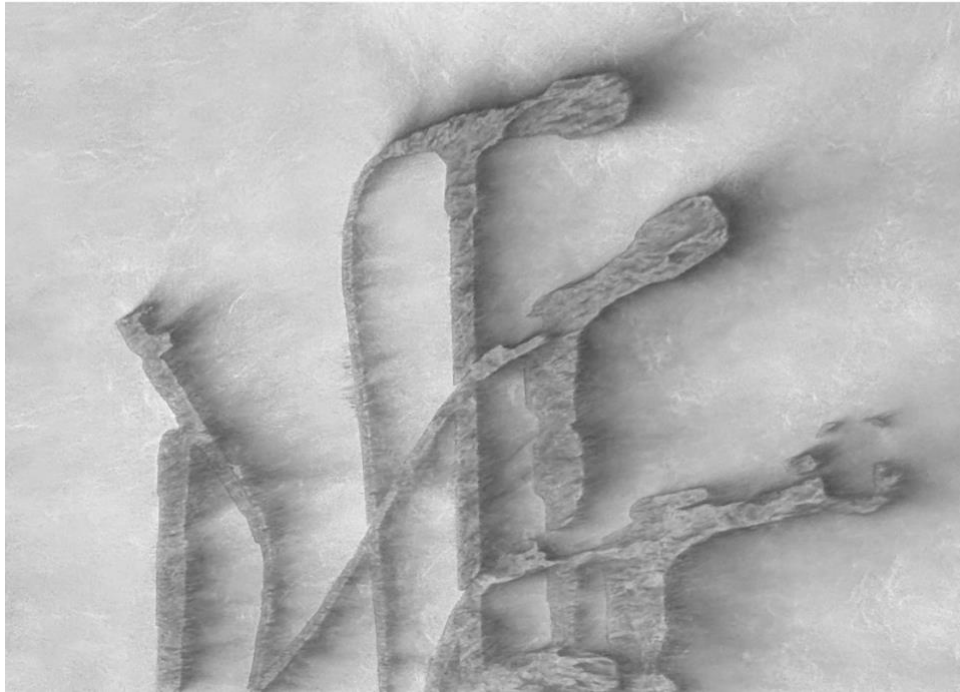




## TOWN MEETING 1978-2028: SYMPOSIUM ART LEAGUE HOUSTON



**Saturday June 7, 10am - 5:30pm**  
**Sunday June 8, 10am - 5:30pm**

**[FREE – Registration Required](#)**  
**[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)**

Join us for a two-day symposium grounded in the legacy of [Town Meeting 1](#), the pivotal 1978 convening of 4,000 queer Houstonians at the Astro Arena that shaped Houston's queer community for decades to come, as we collectively envision the 50th anniversary of Town Meeting 1 in 2028.

Organized by queer Houston artists Nick Vaughan & Jake Margolin, the symposium combines expert panels of community elders, scholars of queer visual culture, activists, and community stakeholders, with community building activities and experimental, artist-lead programming including commissioned manifestos, guided movement, vocal and visual arts focused workshops.

Habr  interpretaci n al espa ol disponible (Spanish language interpretation will be available)

## Presenter Bios and Sessions

(click on a presenter's name to read their bio)

### Keynote Address

[Annise Parker](#)

**Meeting in a Hotbed of Activity: plenary on the many contemporaneous queer movements and organizations in late-70s Houston**

[Larry Bagneris](#) | [Deborah Bell](#) | [Judge Phyllis Frye](#) | [Harrison Guy](#)

**Creating a Scene: plenary on queer historical visual culture**

[Dr Andy Campbell](#) | [Dr C. Ondine Chavoya](#) | [Dr Che Gossett](#)

**Diving into Houston's Queer Archives: panel discussion**

[Robert Conn](#) | [JD Doyle](#) | [Joyce Gabiola](#) | [Alexis Melvin](#) | [Loyd Powell](#) | [Judy Reeves](#) | [Brian Riedel](#)

**Queer Manifestos**

[Violette Bule](#) | [Koomah](#) | [Lovie Olivia](#) | [Sixto Wagan](#)

**Tracing Lineages: Intergenerational panel and open discussion hosted by:**

[Kevin Anderson](#)

**Digital Humanities, Curricula, and Research: workshop**

[Dr Rachel Afi Quinn](#) | [Dr Leandra Zarnow](#)

**Following our Bodies, Intersections for Listening: movement workshop**

[Jasmine Hearn](#)

**Listening to be Heard: Voicework for Protest: vocal workshop**

[Chris Giarmo](#)

**The Progressive Tea Party: meme workshop**

[Phillip Pyle II](#)

**Town Meeting 1: a performance lecture**

[Nick Vaughan & Jake Margolin](#)

**Creating a Platform: community listening session on Houston's queer agenda**

**Dreaming Toward 2028: "Open Space" meeting collectively imagining programming/collaborations to coincide with Town Meeting 1's 50th Anniversary in 2028.**

The symposium will be documented by queer Houston poets, and these poems along with other material generated during the symposium will be compiled into a chapbook/handbook to be distributed free of charge to all participants in Fall 2025.

**Poet Documentarians:**

[Francine J. Harris](#) | [Jadine Pluecker](#) | [Stalina Emmanuelle Villarreal](#)

## **Montrose Block Party!**

On Saturday evening Art League Houston is hosting a block party with vendors and food trucks following the symposium.

## **BIOS**

**Nick Vaughan** (he/him/his) & **Jake Margolin** (he/him/his) are co-founders of Rendezvous Center for Art and Houston-based interdisciplinary artists. Their life's work, an ongoing series of 50 interdisciplinary installations inspired by little-known LGBTQI2 histories from each state, involves extensive original archival research and deep collaborations with local LGBTQI2 communities. They have completed six installations in this 50 States Project (Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Wyoming, Arkansas, and Louisiana) and have had solo exhibitions at The Blaffer Art Museum, DiverseWorks, the Oklahoma State University Museum of Art, the Invisible Dog Art Center (NYC), Art League Houston, Aurora Picture Show, McClain Gallery (Houston), Devin Borden Gallery (Houston) and non-traditional community-facing venues including Pride Festivals in Tahlequah, Oklahoma and Houston, Houston Community College Campuses, Houston Public Library, University of Houston MD Anderson Library, and numerous queer bars.

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**Kevin D. Anderson** (he/him) is the Founder and CEO of The T.R.U.T.H. Project, Inc., a nonprofit focused on mental, emotional, and sexual health through art and advocacy within Queer Communities of Color. With over 17 years of public health experience in the nonprofit sector, Kevin brings a creative, art-centered lens to his work. In 2009, he launched theART&SOUL, one of the longest-running Queer-centered multidisciplinary open mic events in the country. In 2013, he founded The T.R.U.T.H. Project further to amplify the voices of community and Queer artists of color. As a filmmaker, Kevin has directed two short films, Black Boy Symphony and the award-winning And We Rest on Giants, a tribute to resilience and love for those living and thriving with HIV. His accolades include the Arts & Humanities Award from Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner's LGBTQ Advisory Board, the John Paul Barnich Award for community justice from the LGBT Political Caucus, and proudly served as the 2024 Pride Houston Male Identifying Grand Marshal for Pride Houston 365. Outside of work, Kevin enjoys traveling and visiting art exhibits with friends

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### **Larry Bagneris**

A native New Orleanian, Larry Bagneris began his civil rights activism as a student at St. Augustine High School. He graduated from Xavier University of Louisiana and moved to Houston, Texas, where he was a two-term president of the city's Gay Political

Caucus, chairperson of Gay Pride week, and, in 1979, founder of Houston's Gay Pride parade. Bagneris returned to New Orleans in the 1990s and became a lobbyist for the NO/AIDS Task Force. He served four mayoral administrations as executive director of New Orleans's Human Relations Commission. In 2018 he retired to write his memoir, *Call Me Larry: A Creole Man's Triumph over Racism and Homophobia*, published in 2025 by the Historic New Orleans Collection.

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**Deborah Moncrief Bell** says having been born in 1950 that she's mid-century modern. Deborah is a long-time feminist activist having served as President of Texas NOW, one of the organizers of Womynspace Collective, and a participant in The Women's Group that meets at the First UU Church. She has also been involved in the Pride movement, serving as co-chair of Houston Pride in 1987. She has been involved as a programmer and producer of the Queer Voices radio show/podcast on KPFT since 1982. She has worked as an editor and writer for several community publications. She was the National Organizer of the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation. In 1997 she was one of the Grand Marshals of Houston Pride. She is the mother of two and has one grandchild.

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**Violette Bule** studied at the Escuela Activa de Fotografía in Mexico City and earned her MFA in Studio Art from the University of Houston. Her work has recently been featured in several group and solo exhibitions, including the biennial *La Poli/Gráfica de Puerto Rico y el Caribe: Bajo Presión / Under Pressure* in San Juan (2024); *Day Jobs* at both the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University and the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas (2023–24); and *Echo Chamber* at the Transart Foundation for Art and Anthropology in Houston, among others. She was awarded the 2023 Horton/Artadia Award in Houston, TX. In 2024, Bule was an artist-in-residence at the University of Texas at Austin and previously held a residency in the Department of Romance Studies at Cornell University in 2022. Her book *De la Lleca al Cohue: Photography in Venezuelan Penitentiaries* was recently published by Roga Ediciones and was selected as the Book of the Month by the Henri Cartier-Bresson Foundation in July 2024. She was also part of Round 57: Southern Survey Biennial II at Project Row Houses in Houston.

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**Dr Andy Campbell** is a historian of art and design whose work broadly privileges archives as wellsprings of engaged communal histories and artistic energies. In his first academic book, *Bound Together: Leather, Sex, Archives, and Contemporary Art*, he stressed the fragility and profundity of such community archives; and in edited volumes like *Queer Communion: Ron Athey* (compiled with Amelia Jones), he positioned participants, witnesses, and co-conspirators as expert voices in reviewing Athey's singular practice. He is the curator of the forthcoming retrospective *Susan Silton: Diving into the Wreck* (originated with Blaffer Art Museum and opening there in Winter/Spring 2027), and he is currently working on a text / lecture series considering the pressures of poverty on artistic practice. This is lifework; for his work-life he is Associate Professor and Chair of Critical Studies at USC's Roski School of Art and Design.

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**Dr C. Ondine Chavoya** is an art historian, educator, writer, and curator. He was co-curator of Axis Mundo: Queer Networks in Chicano L.A., a groundbreaking exhibition and archival research project that was part of the 2017 exhibition series Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA, and the earlier exhibition Asco: Elite of the Obscure, A Retrospective, 1972-1987 that opened at LACMA in 2011. Chavoya is also co-curator of Teddy Sandoval and the Butch Gardens School of Art a traveling exhibition that will open at The Contemporary Austin in fall 2025. A specialist in contemporary art and Latinx art, Chavoya is co-editor of Chicano and Chicana Art: A Critical Anthology (2019), which was named one of “The Best Art Books of the Decade” by ARTnews. He is the recipient of a 2021 Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant and was a 2023-2024 MoMA Scholar in Residence.

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**Robert Conn** has been actively involved in the Houston Gay community since the mid-1980s. He began his journey as a member of Gay Fathers of Houston, where he initially represented the club at various events. His participation led him to join the planning meetings for the Houston Pride Parade, and within two years, he became part of the first fundraising committee for the event. In 1990, Robert played a crucial role in organizing an international coalition of gay and lesbian parents and their children in Houston.

- Throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, Robert was a dedicated member of the Houston Area Bears, serving as a Triad (leader) of the organization for five years. During this time, he also represented the club at Houston Council of Club meetings and later served as the HCC Secretary for seven years.
- In 2006, Robert earned the title of Daddy of Montrose, using this platform to raise essential funds for the community.
- In 2011, Robert joined the National Leather Association Houston, where he remains an active member. In 2017, he won the title Mr. Prime Choice, which provided him the opportunity to compete in International Mister Leather in Chicago. Although he did not win the title, his participation revitalized his commitment to the local community.
- Robert has also served as an advisory member of Gulf Coast Archives and Museum for several years. In 2023, President of the Board and Curator Judy Reeves approached him about rebranding the organization and assuming a leadership role. Robert now serves as one of the Directors for the newly rebranded “Heart of Leather Foundation.” He envisions this foundation as a valuable resource for the greater Houston and Gulf Coast Community, aiming to preserve the history while providing current and future generations with insights into the vibrant community that preceded them.
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## **JD Doyle Archives**

The mission of the JD Doyle Archives is to gather, digitize, and share LGBT music and Houston/Texas LGBT History. This is done on three large websites. The work began in 2000, with the radio show Queer Music Heritage, which ran until 2015. Its site archives all the shows, along with playlists, artist images and much more.

- In recent years, additional sites have been launched. The website Houston LGBT History houses Houston and also statewide history, including the broad areas of Publications, Politics, Pride and many other cultural areas. And the Texas Obituary Project is a searchable database of those we have lost, over 8200, with an emphasis on those lost to AIDS.
- Both are ever expanding, with a common goal of making our history accessible. The History site is also host to The Banner Project, a pop-up museum of our Houston LGBT History. My first book is "1981 My Gay American Road Trip: A Slice of Our Pre-AIDS Culture."
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**Judge Phyllis Frye** is the first openly transgender judge to be appointed in the United States, the first attorney to obtain corrected birth certificates for transgender people who had not undergone confirmation surgery, a survivor of conversion therapy, and author of a law review article that helped thousands of employers adopt supportive policies for their workers.

- Among her many accomplishments, Frye founded the first national organization devoted to shaping transgender law - the International conference on Transgender Law and Employment Policy, which has since created a body of works in nine different areas of law that includes the International Bill of Gender Rights - trained a cadre of future trans activists, and built the first national movement for transgender legal and political rights.
- Frye also lobbied the organizers of the first three national marches for lesbian and gay rights to include transgender issues in the marches' names and lists of demands and was the first transgender person to speak at a national march for lesbian and gay rights. She played a pioneering role in putting the T in (at the time) LGBT, especially by breaking down barriers in the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association and its influential Lavender Law conference.
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**Joyce Gabiola**, Archivist at the University of Houston Libraries, curates the Contemporary Literature Research Collection and the LGBTQ History Research Collection. In addition to being a Council Member of the Society of American Archivists (2022-2025), Joyce serves on the Board of Directors for JD Doyle Archives and the Advisory Board for the Texas Archive of the

Moving Image's grant project to digitize and catalog film/video from their KPRC-TV Collection, which documents Houston's LGBTQ+ community from 1960-2010. Recently, Joyce was selected to be a Memory Workers Fellow as part of the Autistic Voices Oral History Project (tAVOHP).

- Joyce is the principal author of "'It's a Trap': Complicating Representation in Community-Based Archives" (The American Archivist, July 2022) and also authored "(En)countering the Archival Sidekick" in Q&A: Voices from Queer Asian North America (July 2021). They are currently co-editing a book about the politics and relationships of language and archival description. And many moons ago, they wrote for our beloved OutSmart Magazine. Joyce earned a MS in Library and Information Science with a concentration in Archives Management from Simmons University.
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**Chris Giarmo** is a New Orleans-based, multidisciplinary artist, the “mustachio'd standout” of David Byrne's American Utopia, the creator of queer electro-pop music project Boys Don't Fight, and anti-consumerist drag queen YouTube beauty guru, Kimberly Clark. He's also a voice teacher who's own voice methodology Singing With the Space, is an imagination and listening-based technique that develops an expansive awareness of one's own voice, the space it fills, and its physical connection to others. He's been an adjunct professor at NYU's Experimental Theater Wing, where he initially encountered the work of Roy Hart, which became a foundation for his own teachings [chrisgiarmo.com](http://chrisgiarmo.com)

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**Dr Che Gossett** is associate director of the Center for Research in Feminist, Queer and Trans Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. Prior to returning to Penn — where they received an MA in History — they were the Racial Justice Postdoctoral Fellow at Columbia Law School from 2021-23, and an Animal Law and Policy fellow at Harvard Law School from 2022-2024. Gossett has published work in anthologies such as Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility (MIT Press, 2018), and is co-editor, with Yale University African American Studies professor Tavia Nyong'o, of a forthcoming Social Text journal special issue on Sylvia Wynter, culture, and technics. They are the recipient of a 2024 Creative Capital Andy Warhol Writers Grant.

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**Harrison Guy** (He/Him) is an Activist, Choreographer, Cultural Architect, and Community Builder. Harrison Guy is a visionary choreographer and cultural leader whose work centers Black identity, arts, and LGBTQ+ advocacy. As the founder of Urban Souls Dance Company, he has created a vital platform for Black dancers to explore history, identity, and activism through movement. His choreography—often informed by his experiences as a Black gay man—uses dance as a medium for healing, empowerment, and social commentary.



- A champion for community and cultural preservation, Harrison launched Houston's first African American Dance Festival and serves as Director of Arts and Culture for the 5th Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation. His leadership helped establish the 5th Ward Cultural Arts District and initiatives that keep arts at the heart of community development.
- He also founded Black Arts Movement Houston (BAM), aiming to unite and uplift Black creatives and develop a state-of-the-art Black cultural center. A national arts advocate, Harrison's work has been presented at Carnegie Hall and in partnership with institutions like Rice and Vanderbilt.
- Harrison has been honored as Houston's first Black Pride Grand Marshal and served as Chair of the city's LGBTQ Advisory Board. Through his artistry and activism, he continues to shape inclusive cultural narratives and elevate Black LGBTQ+ voices.
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**Francine J. Harris** is the author of three collections, including *Here is the Sweet Hand*, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award. Originally from Detroit, she has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the MacDowell Colony, and the Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library. She is Professor of English at the University of Houston and serves as Consulting Faculty Editor at Gulf Coast.

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**Jasmine Hearn**, born and raised on occupied Akokisa lands (Houston, TX), is an interdisciplinary artist, teacher, doula, performer, and organizer. Jasmine, recently named one of Dance Magazine's 25 to Watch, is a recipient of a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grants to Artists award (2023), Cynthia Hazen Polsky and Leon Polsky Rome Prize in Design with collaborator Athena Kokoronis of Domestic Performance Agency (2023), a Creative Capital Award (2022), a Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship (2019), NY Dance and Performance "Bessie" Awards for Outstanding Performer (2021, 2017). Jasmine has collaborated with Dream the Combine, Bill T. Jones, Saul Williams, Solange Knowles, Alisha B. Wormsley, Vanessa German, Okwui Okpokwasili, Marjani Forté-Saunders, Tsedaye Makonnen, Holly Bass, Bebe Miller, and with dance companies, Sandra Organ Dance Company, Urban Bush Women, David Dorfman Dance, Staycee Pearl dance project, and Dance Alloy Theater.

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**Ana Gail Jumalon** is a senior undergrad majoring in Sociology at the University of Houston. She has previously been involved in organizations such as Deeds Not Words, Texas Rising and Environment Texas. Her interests focus on giving back to the local Houston community within a lens of combining art and local politics.

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**Koomah** is an intersex and genderfluid multidisciplinary artist, community organizer, and educator. Involved with nonprofit and arts organizations, Koomah is co-founder of The Houston Intersex Society, advisor to the Transgender Foundation of America, and member of the DiverseWorks artist board. Koomah's art and social practice has received accolades including the BIPOC Arts Network and Fund's individual artist award and recognition at the White House Pride Celebration in 2022. Koomah's artwork is held in private collections in the US and abroad. Outside of the arts, Koomah serves as a legislative policy advisor and strategist for intersex, rare disease, and other community issues

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**Alexis Melvin** is a gender-fluid transgender woman. Beginning in the mid-1960s, she worked as a grassroots community organizer to challenge discriminatory policies and work to elect pro-equality policy makers. An independent consultant, transgender activist, photographer, charity fundraiser, and lecturer located in Houston Texas, she is president of the Transgender Foundation of America, Co-founder of 22 Sides podcast, former Board Member and Vice President of Houston MediaSource, the Managing Principal and Senior Consultant for MCONSERV consulting, the Managing Associate of InVoter.us, and a regular on the Transadvocate Podcast. Alexis formerly served as Chair of the Houston Transgender Unity Committee (HTUC), is a past member of the Board of Trustees of the Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus, a founding member of International Foundation for Gender Education, and an initial member of TransGender San Francisco. As a successful independent consultant, she provides consulting services to multinational corporations, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and public charities in the areas of information technology, strategy, crises management, organizational structure, event management, diversity, and general business management.

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**Lovie Olivia** creates works that are informed by race, gender, and sexuality and the historical and cultural nuances surrounding these intersections. She employs painting, printmaking, sculpture, and installation to arrive at her body musings.

Olivia has exhibited at numerous venues such as Corridor Gallery (Brooklyn, NY), 1969 Gallery (Manhattan, NY), Jam Gallery (Brooklyn, NY), Woman Made Gallery (Chicago, IL), Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN), Art Pace, (San Antonio, TX), The Station Museum (Houston, TX), Project Row Houses (Houston, TX), Blaffer Museum (Houston, TX), Houston Museum of African American Culture (HMAAC), and the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH). She is a recipient of three Individual Artist Awards, which are funded by the City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance, including a current commission with the City of Houston and Bush Intercontinental Airport. Olivia's work hangs in numerous private and public collections including Project Row Houses, ACRE Residency Chicago, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture at the Smithsonian Institute

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**Annise Parker** served 3 terms as a Houston City Council member, City Controller, and Mayor, winning 9 citywide elections. She was the first openly LGBTQ mayor of a major American city. In 2010 Time magazine named her one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

- Her first LGBTQ+ organizing event was Texas Gay Conference in 1975, she attended Town Meeting I, and was a founder of Rice University's Gay and Lesbian Support Group in 1979. She lead in dozens of LGBTQ organizations, including President of Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, Co-Chair of Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, Co-Chair of Lesbian and Gay Democrats of Texas and Treasurer of Names Project Houston. She was community liaison to the Houston Police department, and created and taught an LGBTQ+ human relations module to cadets for 5 years. She co-owned Inklings, a lesbian/feminist bookstore.
- Mayor Parker is the immediate past President/CEO of LGBTQ+ Victory Fund.
- She and her wife Kathy Hubbard are advocates for adoption, with three daughters, a son and now 5 grandchildren.
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**JD Pluecker** is a writer whose practice extends into installation, performance, bookmaking, language justice, and translation. She has translated many books from the Spanish and published three books of poetry: *The Every Wild*, *Grin Go Home / Las provincias internas*, and *Ford Over*. From 2010-2020, she worked as part of the transdisciplinary collaborative Antena Aire.

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**Loyd Powell** is a Director of Heart of Leather Foundation whose fifty-one years in the workforce has been about helping businesses and individuals pinpoint their current vision so they can move on to the next one. This has ranged from subsurface drilling equipment to the food service and promotional products industries. In his personal life, Loyd has been involved with several organizations in Houston's LGBTQ+ community and served as Co-Chair of fundraising for the Pride Committee, Chair of Houston Council of Clubs and president of National Leather Association. The care and nurturing of Heart of Leather Foundation is a labor of love for the community and vows to ensure that history is not only kept, but shared with all who want to learn.

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**Phillip Pyle II** is a visual artist, graphic designer, and photographer whose work engages with issues of race and popular culture through the visual lens of graphic design. Informed by symbols drawn from commercial advertising, sports culture, the hip-hop industry, and archival images, Pyle questions inherited perceptions and traditional values through color and form. Often reflecting an irreverent sense of humor, Pyle's work invites viewers to imagine and work towards a more just and peaceful future.

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**Dr Rachel Afi Quinn** is an associate professor in Comparative Cultural Studies and Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies at the University of Houston. She earned her Ph.D. in American Culture from the University of Michigan. Her first book, *Being La Dominicana: Race and Gender in the Visual Culture of Santo Domingo* (University of Illinois Press, 2021) and is now available in Spanish. Quinn is passionate about making queer community, writing about black visual culture, and teaching (and doing) transnational feminism. She is currently at work on a black feminist biography of 20th century Harlem-born mixed race child prodigy Philippa Schuyler. Her writing has been published in *Latin American & Latinx Visual Culture*, *Small Axe*, *The Black Scholar*, *Sinister Wisdom*, and *Burlington Contemporary*.

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**Judy Reeves (nee Voulgaris)** is the curator of the Heart of Leather Foundation; the evolution of the Gulf Coast Archive and Museum of GLBT History (GCAM) which Reeves was a founding member of in 1999. Reeves served as GCAM's Curator for Life, ensuring that there was always a representation of G-L-B-and T in every single exhibit she mounted.

- Reeves has been deeply involved in Houston's LGBT community for more than fifty years. She was instrumental in starting the AIDS buddy program at Metropolitan Community Church of the Resurrection, co-founded the Houston Chapter of the NAMES Project, joined the Krew of Olympus – Texas, served on the board of the GLBT Political Caucus, formed and worked with ACT UP Houston, served on the board of ICOH and on the board of Colt 54's, and was a longtime host of KPFT's After Hours.
- Since 1990 Reeves has been a member of Theatre Suburbia, NW Houston's longest running all volunteer community theater, and in 2008 published the autobiographical "The Pieces Form a Heart . . . But She Didn't Have a Clue" under the pseudonym Judy Troop
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**Brian Riedel**, a native of North Carolina, has called Houston home since 1997. In his role as Associate Director for the Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality at Rice University, he connects community conversations and academic resources through teaching, research, and public events. He is currently working on a book manuscript, 'Sex, Race, and the City: New Histories of Houston,' a history of the city that centers its sexual and racial past. Outside these pursuits, he enjoys spending time with his husband and their two dogs. You can learn more about him at <https://profiles.rice.edu/faculty/brian-riedel>

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**Andres Rios** is a senior history major at the University of Houston and recipient of the Del Barto Scholarship recognizing the highest ranking history majors. Currently, they are involved in H.O.P.E. (Houston Organization for Political Education) and was previously involved in Deeds

not Words at UH. His areas of interest include local Houston history, Latin American history, and global socio political movements.

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**Jhon Stronks** is a queer identifying gender non conforming dancer/ singer. As a choreographer Stronks has been accused of presenting audiences with seemingly unruly work that reveals itself according to its own logic. Stronks, choreographic expressions combine the fundamental elements of composition, with a confluence of movement styles and techniques drawn from a personal movement foundation in Modern, Post-Modern, Jazz, Ballet and Africanist dance training. John's choreographic awards and achievements include 2018 Rec Room Arts HTX Residency, Houston Press's 2014 Houston MasterMind, Houston Press Best of 2013 in the Contemporary/Modern Dance Categories, two 2008 Buff Orpington Awards for Houston Contemporary Dance Achievement, Best Choreographic Work Under 15 Minutes and Best Choreographic Work 15 to 40 Minutes. Most recently jhon was the Spring 2019 Visiting Dance Artist in Residence for the BFA Conservatory Dance program at The Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University.

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**Stalina Emmanuelle Villarreal** (she/they) is a poet, an essayist, an artist, an improviser, a translator, and an assistant professor of English. Their bilingualism stems from her 1.5-generation experience being both Mexican and Xicanx. Her debut collection of poetry called *Watcha* is out now from Deep Vellum Publishing. Their poetry can be found in the *Rio Grande Review*, *Texas Review*, *The Acentos Review*, *Defunkt Magazine*, and elsewhere. She has published translations of poetry. They are the recipient of the Inprint Donald Barthelme Prize in Poetry and the BIPOC Arts Network and Fund 2025 Artist Award.

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**Sixto Wagan** (he/him) is a Houston-based cultural leader whose creative and professional practice is deeply rooted in queer collective action, performance, and community care. For nearly three decades, he has championed equity and storytelling through roles as an artist, curator, educator, and nonprofit director. He currently serves as Executive Director of the BIPOC Arts Network and Fund (BANF), a community-led initiative that has invested over \$10 million into Greater Houston's BIPOC arts ecosystem to support self-determination and resilience. Sixto previously founded the Center for Art and Social Engagement (CASE) and led DiverseWorks for over 11 years, advancing artist-driven projects that interrogate social, political, and cultural narratives. Nationally recognized for his advocacy, participatory methodologies, and collaborations across sectors, he also serves on the boards of the MAP Fund and Grantmakers in the Arts.

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**Dr Leandra Zarnow** is an Associate Professor of US and Women's History at the University of Houston. Along with colleague Professor Nancy Beck Young, Zarnow leads "Sharing Stories

from 1977,” a digital humanities public history project to commemorate the 1977 National Women’s Conference. Zarnow earned a B.A. in American Studies and Government from Smith College and M.A. and Ph.D. in US History with a Doctoral Emphasis in Feminist Studies at University of California, Santa Barbara. Before coming to University of Houston, Zarnow taught at Stanford University as an American Council of Learned Societies New Faculty Fellow in the History Department. She has also held research affiliations with the University of Toronto’s Centre for the Study of the United States at the Munk School of Global Affairs and the Tamiment Library at New York University.

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