



2023

National Heritage FELLOWSHIPS

NATIONAL
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2023

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*Virgen del Camino de
Suenos* woodcarving by
Luis Tapia

Photo courtesy of the artist

ON THE COVER

Kapa by Roen Hufford

Photo by Lynn Martin Graton

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Message from the Chair



Photo by David K. Riddick

I am delighted to extend congratulations on behalf of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to the recipients of the nation's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts—the 2023 NEA National Heritage Fellows. These distinguished individuals uphold the rich cultural legacy of their respective art forms and communities, and enrich our entire nation.

Since 1982, the NEA has recognized the vital and dynamic role of culture bearers in preserving and sharing their artistry, traditions, languages, and histories. The fellowship program is not only a celebration of our nation's diverse cultural tapestry, but a poignant reminder that amidst changing times and circumstances, these individuals ensure the passing of cultural traditions to succeeding generations.

The 2023 Heritage Fellows' creative contributions enable us to both celebrate and transcend our differences while fostering unity and allowing us to recognize our shared humanity. We see this through kapa maker Roen Hufford's revival of the art of *ka hana kapa*—crafting barkcloth with intricate designs inspired by Hawaiian heritage; musician R.L. Boyce's "North Mississippi Blues" performances that have earned him accolades for over half a century; Luis Tapia's *santero* sculptures that embody his community's values of faith and cultural pride while commenting on social justice issues; and Nick Spitzer's efforts as educator, folklorist, and media producer to bring local artists and culture bearers to the national stage.

At the Arts Endowment, we take immense pride in paying homage to these exceptional individuals who anchor our cultural heritage. Thank you for joining us in commemorating the accomplishments of the 2023 honorees as we come together in person for the first time since 2019. These individuals serve as steadfast connections to our history, reflecting traditions in

g doors to the future of these art forms.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Rosario Jackson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Maria" being the most prominent.

Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD
Chair
National Endowment for the Arts

Message from the Acting Director



Photo by Jay Bruce

When you close your eyes and think of the environment, what do you picture? Do you see a waterfall, a snowcapped mountain, a river bank? Do you see people, family? A busy street? Stewardship of the land and caretaking the environment for future generations require keeping all of this in mind—land, water, family, communities and their cultural assets, people, and places.

The 2023 National Heritage Fellows are keenly aware of their surrounding communities and express what they see in the world around them. Depicting scenes of social injustice using wood and paint, Luis Tapia's sculptures vibrantly tell thought-provoking stories. African American quilter Michael A. Cummings creates designs featuring historically significant people and events with cloth and thread.

Ed Eugene Carriere, Elizabeth James-Perry, and Roen Hufford carry forward traditional ancestral knowledge of sustaining lifeways and working with the environment. Through waterways traditions in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, Carriere weaves baskets for shrimping using ancient designs, and James-Perry hand-sculpts wampum beads from quahog shells into jewelry and regalia, leaving little waste. Hufford cultivates the land and the wauke plant to make bark cloth and clothing for community events.

In rural and urban spaces, R.L. Boyce and Joe DeLeon "Little Joe" Hernández reflect life and its environs in musical landscapes, entrancing their communities with inspired performances. Wu Man's mission in music is to bridge the past to the present and across continents with mesmerizing pipa playing, illustrating that we are all connected in time and space. All the while, this year's Bess Lomax Hawes National Heritage Fellow, Nick Spitzer, has presented our nation's cultural landscape to audiences all over the world, on radio waves, in classrooms, and on stage.

I am grateful to the 2023 National Heritage Fellows for being our cultural custodians of life's environs and for expanding our view of the people and places that make our nation vibrant.

Thank you and congratulations!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheryl T. Schiele". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cheryl" and last name "Schiele" being more prominent.

Cheryl T. Schiele

Acting Director, Folk & Traditional Arts
National Endowment for the Arts



Gathering in Fellowship

This year marks the return to in-person NEA National Heritage Fellowships events in Washington, DC after three years of virtual programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the in-person festivities paused, in-depth films took us on a cross-country tour to mountain ranges, forest glens, backyards, and homes of the 2020, 2021, and 2022 National Heritage Fellows. We are now excited for a landmark gathering and celebration on September 28 that will bring together the 2020-2023 honorees.

At a convening entitled **Gathering in Fellowship: The Legacy and Impact of NEA National Heritage Fellows**, these four classes of National Heritage Fellows will reflect on the impact of receiving a national honorific for their community-centered, cultural practices. These artists and advocates have an important vantage point in their communities. They see a wide array of needs and assets in areas such as the economy, infrastructure, environment, health and wellness, aging, injustice, safety, and social change. In the essay, *Legacy and Impact*, NEA Acting Director of Folk & Traditional Arts, Cheryl Schiele traces the awards' beginnings, highlights identifiable upshots, and contemplates the future. At the gathering, the fellows will have a chance to reflect and share, exploring topics such as: How can we serve our communities more equitably? What is the impact of these living

traditions and how can we elevate their importance in our changing society? How do we better acknowledge and support source communities?

Held at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, this one-day gathering will be an opportunity for fellows to connect and uplift one another, reflecting collectively on the legacy and impact of the National Heritage Fellowships. The day's events will feature sharing circles, facilitated small group discussions, and public sessions, including a film screening. In addition, after the in-person gathering, the NEA will bring in voices of previous Heritage Fellowship recipients in an online series of conversations. The reflections at the gathering, both in-person and through the subsequent online series, will inform a report to be published next year.

Finally, on Friday, September 29, 2023, the in-person National Heritage Fellowships Ceremony will recommence, hosted by the Library of Congress and the American Folklife Center. With the nation's capital as the backdrop, the NEA will induct the 2023 Heritage Fellows and celebrate all four classes together, in a magnificent demonstration of how diverse cultural influences and perspectives is itself a national treasure.

Alliance Collar by
Elizabeth James-Perry

Photo courtesy of the artist

The Roots and Impact of the NEA National Heritage Fellowships

By Cheryl Schiele, Acting Director, Folk & Traditional Arts

The National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellowships program is an essential primer on cultural heritage in the United States. In its maturity, the program's ideals stand confidently next to venerated fellowship programs that recognize excellence in arts and culture. As master artists, Heritage Fellowship recipients illuminate the fruits of human tenacity and serve as cultural custodians. Reflecting on the program's impact, I am drawn not just to its origin story but to how the Arts Endowment's development elevated folk and traditional arts in the U.S. arts ecology.

HISTORY

In the late summer of 1976, the folklorist, folk singer, and educator Bess Lomax Hawes was winding down her term as deputy director of the Smithsonian Institution's Bicentennial Festival of American Folklife on the National Mall and intended to return to a teaching post at California State University-Northridge. Instead, she switched gears after being invited to join the staff of the National Endowment for the Arts. Hawes's personal decision coincided with critical inflection points, both professionally and nationally.

A conversation about Japan's Living National Treasures program between Hawes and the Arts Endowment's second chairperson, Nancy Hanks, sparked the idea behind the National Heritage Fellowships. After World War II, Japan's years of reconstruction in its government and economy led to rapid industrialization, and Western popular culture gained greater influence on its society to a worrying degree. In 1950, the Japanese government enacted the Cultural Properties Protection Law to support and designate culturally significant and centuries-old artforms as Important Intangible Cultural Properties (IICP). The

tradition bearers of IICP, popularly known as Living National Treasures, received a yearly stipend to sustain cultural knowledge and skills through personal development, transmission, public performance, documentation, and archival efforts.

Adapting this idea to a U.S. model was not without debate, but it appealed to staff and panelists, who deliberated over the issue for five years. Questions arose early about the adverse effects of singling out an individual with a prominent honor and monetary award. At present, the Arts Endowment defines folk and traditional arts as artistic disciplines and traditions "learned as part of the cultural life of a community whose members share a common ethnic heritage, cultural mores, language, religion, occupation, or geographic region. These traditions are shaped by the aesthetics and values of a shared culture."

If these overarching principles were realized, then how would highlighting individual accomplishments support the elevation of shared culture? Hawes inscribed the oral history of the period: "Would not this public recognition have a dampening effect on the artists not selected and, thereby, on the art form itself? Would it not create jealousies



NEA National Heritage Fellow Ralph Stanley [center, with banjo] leads his band in a concert outside the Old Post Office Building in Washington, DC, in 1984.

NEA file photo

or stimulate unhealthy competition?... We considered the effect of such an award on an individual carver in a remote New Mexico Hispanic village, as well as on Serbian American urban steelworker/musicians in a neighborhood band.... I believe I am accurate in stating that in all these many discussions nobody ever exactly wanted to do it, but everybody thought it ought to be tried.”

In 1980, the debate was resolved when the National Heritage Fellowships were established under chairman Livingston Biddle, third chairman of the Arts Endowment. In 1982, 15 traditional artists were inducted as the first class of National Heritage Fellows, the highest honor awarded to folk and traditional artists by the U.S. government.

Ultimately, Hawes’s version of a U.S. “living national treasures” program differed from Japan’s focus on sustaining inherently Japanese cultural practices. At the time, the Arts Endowment supported transmission of cultural knowledge through direct apprenticeship grants before the program was moved to the state level. The National Heritage Fellowships program was designed as a celebration of traditional arts within

a culturally pluralistic society. Cultural equity, a trademark of the program from its inception, implicitly propelled inclusivity into the national arts ecology.

In the Heritage Fellowships’ fourth year, Hawes opened the program book with a director’s message that captured the burgeoning excitement of the program’s attributes. She noted that as a new endeavor, the Heritage Fellowships were “the most appreciated and applauded,” positing that “perhaps because they represent to Americans a vision of themselves and of their country, a vision somewhat idealized but profoundly longed for and so, in significant ways, profoundly true. It is a vision of a confident and open-hearted nation, where difference can be seen as exciting instead of fear-laden, where men and women of good will, across all manner of racial, linguistic and historical barriers, can find common ground in understanding solid craftsmanship, virtuoso technique and deeply felt expression.”

In this vision lies the complexities of a culturally pluralistic society perpetually under construction. It provides a space for common purposes, similarities, and

differences. Hawes’s vision can be seen today when the fellows meet one another in Washington, DC.

IMPACT

From the outset, the Arts Endowment created a way to honor and draw public attention to the excellence and representative diversity of folk and traditional artists. The ceremony and performances were originally held in conjunction with the Smithsonian’s Festival of American Folklife on the National Mall. Subsequently, the festivities moved to different Washington, DC, area venues and expanded to include a formal banquet, currently held in partnership with the Library of Congress and its American Folklife Center in the Great Hall of the Thomas Jefferson Building.

Since 1983, the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA), a nonprofit arts organization and producer of the peripatetic National Folk Festival, has deftly managed the events surrounding the ceremony, and the Arts Endowment has secured private funding to support formal activities, publications, and multimedia projects. Throughout the years, a combination of public and private events, formal and informal, has been integral to honoring and drawing public attention to the Heritage Fellows.

Typically, the fellows attend a White House or Capitol Hill awards ceremony, embassy receptions, and a formal banquet, and perform or demonstrate their traditions in a public concert. The concert has been held at Ford’s Theater, the George Washington University Lisner Auditorium, the Music Center at Strathmore, and Sidney Harman Hall, home to the Shakespeare Theatre Company. Both *American Routes*, with host Nick Spitzer (the concert’s master of ceremonies from 1997 to 2014 and 2023 Bess Lomax Hawes Award recipient), and WDUQ Radio have created radio broadcasts and specials for later broadcasts. Most recently, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Arts Endowment produced a one-hour film to celebrate the fellowships in an online



broadcast, forgoing in-person events. This marked the first time in the program’s history that honorees were unable to travel to Washington, DC.

Many staff and contractors at the Arts Endowment, the NCTA, and the American Folklife Center have facilitated an atmosphere of intimacy and grandeur for the honorees. In turn, Heritage Fellows have reciprocated with gifts of extraordinary cultural wisdom that connect everyone through their songs, crafts, and stories—especially at times of national crises.

When the September 11, 2001, World Trade Center and Pentagon terrorist attacks occurred, the Heritage Fellowship festivities were scheduled for the following week. Barry Bergey, who worked under Bess Hawes and later became a folk and traditional arts director (2001–14), recalled: “In my conversation with the artists in the days following the tragic events, I sensed their resolve to carry on.... On the night of the concert, after a moment of silence, taiko master Seiichi Tanaka performed a cleansing ceremony using flute and bell, and following a procession and ritual drumming, the National Heritage Fellows assembled on stage as the audience welcomed them with a thunderous ovation.”

In 2017, *bomba* and *plena* master Modesto Cepeda attended the festivities between two major hurricanes. He and his daughters arrived just in time to attend the orientation. They were unsure whether the rest of the family would make it after Hurricane Irma grazed Puerto Rico, causing flooding and a major power outage. Fortunately, his multigenerational family of more than twenty people arrived that evening, tired from the journey but ready. Once orientation introductions and formalities were out of the way, spontaneous plena music and dancing erupted from the Cepeda family. Buoyed by their unflagging spirits and excitement for the days ahead, the cordial orientation became a celebration with dancing and singing. When the family returned to San Juan at the end of the week, Hurricane Maria followed. In the aftermath of back-to-back hurricanes, Cepeda and his daughter Gladys formed their own relief effort for the Villa Palmeras community in San Juan, home to their bomba and plena school.

Viewed as a collection, each yearly class of Heritage Fellows has a magnifying effect on cultural identity and place. Human migration and immigration patterns across states emerge, revealing noteworthy familial and occupational folklife, as well as local and regional cultures that inform national and international histories. Viewed in relation to one another, as surveyed by Steve Siporin, author of *American Folk Masters: The National Heritage Fellows*, recipients may be categorized as inheritors, innovators, or conservers. Viewed as a whole, the

Heritage Fellows have a democratizing effect that raises their communities to national importance. Measuring impact may be harder to quantify but easier to illustrate when you assess the value of local culture, language, community, personal and professional feats of excellence, and legacy.

The initial concerns about how the fellowships would be accepted by the artists and their communities dissipated within the first decade. In a retrospective, Barry Bergey captured this in his introduction to the class of 1990 National Heritage Fellows. He highlighted Douglas Wallin, an Appalachian ballad singer from Marshall, North Carolina: “In the early years of the nomination process, someone had nominated the Sodom-Laurel areas of Madison County, North Carolina, an area rife at one time with unaccompanied ballad singers in the Anglo tradition. Ballad collector Cecil Sharp visited this region...and described it as ‘a community in which singing was as common and almost as universal a practice as speaking.’ Douglas Wallin, whose mother had been documented by Sharp, served as a representative of this tradition.”

The fellows often interpreted the fellowship as posthumous formal recognitions of their cultural forbearers. At the 2004 banquet, Gerald Bruce Miller, a Skokomish elder, stated, “I want to extend my gratitude on receiving this award to all of our ancestors who left us the gifts that we exhibit today; the gift of the song, the gift of the dance, the gift of the story, and the gift of creativity. As long as we keep these traditional arts alive, we speak for our people.” In 2005, Michael Doucet, a



Cajun fiddler and composer, reflected, “You know, it’s interesting—it’s a national award but it really comes down to your community and what you do for your community. I was very fortunate to be around when a lot of people born before 1900 were still alive—the ‘old-timers,’ as we call them now. I think that’s where most of my inspiration comes from. It’s really a process of a continuation—I wouldn’t be getting this award if it wasn’t for people who came before me.”

Recognition of this kind may also validate and bring about clarity of purpose, commitment, or recommitment to maintaining a practice in a dynamic world and in sometimes challenging circumstances. There are countless stories of how this has come to pass, including in the areas of professional and personal support, new traditions, language preservation, and legacy.

LEGACY

There are several honorees who have familial and generational connections to previous fellows. Mavis Staples was the first recipient to represent familial ties when she received

a 2006 Heritage Fellowship eight years after her father, Roebuck “Pops” Staples (1998). The conjunto musicians and brothers Santiago Jimenez Jr. (2000) and Leonardo “Flaco” Jimenez (2012) each received the Heritage Fellowship, as did the Ghanaian drummers and brothers Obo Addy (1996) and Yacub Addy (2010). As another example of generational connections, Bounxeung Synanonh, a Laotian *khaen* player and 2016 recipient, accompanied a 1991 recipient, Khamvong Insixiengmai, a Laotian Lum singer, at his Heritage Fellowships concert. The Yiddish musician Michael Alpert, a 2015 recipient, performed with Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman, a Yiddish singer, poet, and songwriter, at the 2005 concert for her fellowship. The Tlingit ceremonial regalia maker and 2016 recipient Clarissa Rizal apprenticed under Jennie Thlunaut, a 1986 recipient, when Thlunaut was in her 90s and Rizal in her 20s.

In an example of cultural heritage transmission conjoined, family members of two 1982 Heritage Fellows designed and fashioned new award medallions in 2016. A citizen of the Osage Nation, the late Georgeann Robinson received a Heritage Fellowship for her intricate ribbonwork stitched by needlepoint onto clothing worn by Osage people for important social gatherings. Drawing inspiration from one of Robinson’s designs, Jami Powell, Robinson’s great-granddaughter and a scholar and documenter of Robinson’s legacy, worked with her mother, Lisa Powell, Robinson’s granddaughter, on a lanyard for a medallion.

The late Philip Simmons, a master blacksmith, received a Heritage Fellowship for his ornamental ironwork. A notable feature of Charleston, South Carolina’s visual and cultural aesthetic, Simmons’s remarkable wrought-iron gates, fences, balconies, and freestanding sculptures grace many of the homes, gardens, and businesses in the city and its surrounding areas. Carlton Simmons, an apprentice to his uncle Philip at age 13, designed a heart motif medallion with the signature scrolling filigree found in Philip Simmons’s designs. The new medal linked the legacies of Georgeann Robinson and Philip



Gottesman is accompanied by father National Heritage Fellow (named in 2015) Michael Alpert along with Deborah Strauss, Peter Rushefsky and Theresa Tova.

Photo by Michael G. Stewart

Simmons to each other and those legacies to present-day recipients, combining past, present, and future.

Largely thanks to a network of statewide folklife programs that were launched in the lead-up to the creation of the National Heritage Fellowships, folklorists and public folklore specialists situated at state arts agencies, universities, humanities councils, and nonprofit organizations have conducted extensive fieldwork across the nation since the 1970s. Tasked with sustaining traditional arts through apprenticeship grants, exhibitions, publications, festivals, and collaborative partnerships, state folklife programs provide a robust influx of nominations derived from this fieldwork. Presently, a rough estimate puts the number of apprenticeships managed throughout any given year at 500. As such, nominations and recipients are likely to be from states and regions with a solid folklife program.

Overall, the goal of bringing greater visibility to cultural knowledge and practices by highlighting extraordinary individuals and groups has garnered a great deal of local interest, while mainstream media attention has ebbed and flowed. There is still more that could be done to gain high-profile visibility to maintain a connection to and draw on Heritage Fellows as ambassadors of the program. In the past few years, Fellows from previous years have been asked to participate in the ceremony and banquet as performers and/or guest speakers.

In 2019, the Arts Endowment examined folk and traditional arts grants and fellowships awarded from 2013 through 2015 in a report called *Living Traditions: A Portfolio Analysis of the National Endowment for the Arts' Folk and Traditional Arts Program*. The report included a policy action item about the program's impact: "Host a national gathering of National Heritage Fellows in 2022 to mark the 40th anniversary of the program, in advance of the Semiquincentennial (America 250). This gathering would celebrate the strength and diversity of the nation's many cultural communities, would generate symposia and other public events focused on cultural



created in 2016, its design a homage to fellows Philip Simmons and Georgeann Robinson.

Photo by Tom Pich

sustainability and social cohesion, and would gather information about how the Heritage Fellowships have positively affected individuals and their cultural traditions.”

As one takes in their breadth and diversity, the National Heritage Fellowships illuminate a national identity stitched together like a handmade quilt. I am reminded that quilting is sometimes a communal effort, as it is done by 2015 Heritage Fellows Mary Lee Bendolph, Loretta Pettway, and Lucy Mingo of Gee’s Bend, Alabama. Sitting and singing together, the quilters of Gee’s Bend strengthen a quilt by cutting away tattered edges and reinforcing weak spots. Every stitch supports the backing and batting to the top layer’s mosaic patchwork, providing texture and pattern, seen and unseen.

In his ceremony remarks, 2017 Heritage Fellow Phil Wiggins, a country blues harmonica player and longtime musical partner of the late John Cephas (1989 recipient), referred to this analogy when he spoke about the patchwork quilt his mother had given him to take to college. “I’m so happy to be a part of this celebration because it celebrates what that patch quilt symbolizes, it symbolizes the patch quilt of beautiful deep cultures from all over the world that came to make up this country, that we call home.”

—Excerpted from the essay “The National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellowships: A Reflection on the Roots and Impact of a National Cultural Heritage Honorific Program,” *Culture Work: Folklore for the Public Good*, Edited by Tim Frandy and B. Marcus Cederström, July 2022, University of Wisconsin Press.

Hill Country Blues Musician

Como, Mississippi

R.L. Boyce

Seeds of American blues music were cultivated in tight-knit African American communities located an hour south of Memphis in Tate and Panola Counties, Mississippi. From the Civil War until the 1970s African American traditional fife and drum bands flourished in the area. Led by a cane fife player accompanied by three marching drums and a unique dance, it was a popular form of entertainment from the region. Such bands performed at social gatherings like picnics, weddings, and funerals.

A life-long resident of Panola County's Como, Mississippi, R.L. Boyce was born into the fife and drum tradition. Boyce's uncle was the late Othar Turner of the Rising Stars Fife and Drum Band, a 1992 NEA National Heritage Fellow. Turner established an annual family picnic he called the GOAT Picnic. Many great local musicians like the Young Family, R.L. Burnside, Fred McDowell, and Jessie Mae Hemphill played these picnic and social gatherings.

As a young teen, while watching his uncle play fife with his band at a picnic, Boyce realized that he wanted to play music. He joined the Rising Stars Fife and Drum Band in 1970 as a drummer at age 15. Boyce remained a member of the Rising Stars for 30 years, until Turner's passing in 2003.

In the 1980s, Boyce moved to guitar after fellow Mississippi musician Luther Dickinson "dared him" to learn. His Hill Country boogie style is simple, repetitive trance music. Boyce's approach to playing and song structures are rooted in past traditions; however, his music is uniquely contemporary. "There are a lot of good blues players out there. But see, I play the old way and nobody today can play my style, just me."

Boyce has played North Mississippi blues for more than half a century. He has shared stages with blues greats John Lee Hooker (1983 NEA National Heritage

Fellow) and Howlin' Wolf. He was the drummer for and recorded with Jessie Mae Hemphill. Boyce's sophomore solo release, *Roll and Tumble*, was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2018. He is featured in the Daniel Cross documentary, *I Am The Blues* (2015) and appeared on BBC's *Later... with Jools Holland* in 2017. Boyce represented North Mississippi blues at the Blues Rules Crissier Festival in Lucerne, Switzerland, and Blues Alive Concert in Czech Republic in 2018. His self-produced live recording, *Boogie w/ RL Boyce Live* (WoodB Records), was nominated for Best Traditional Blues Album, Blues Music Awards, 2022. Boyce has also received several grants from the Mississippi Arts Commission (MAC) and is on their Mississippi Artist Roster.

Boyce hosts his own annual gathering, RL BOYCE Picnic: a three-day music event held over Labor Day weekend in Como, Mississippi, offering an array of activities, such as a music workshop, guided tour, and family picnic celebrating his music and traditions.

—By Amy Verdon,
Visual Artist, FANCY! Partners,
Media Arts, Brooklyn, NY

■
"When I come up in Mississippi, there wasn't much. See, if you saw any opportunity to survive, you grabbed it. Been playing Blues 50 years. Playing Blues is all I know."

R.L. Boyce

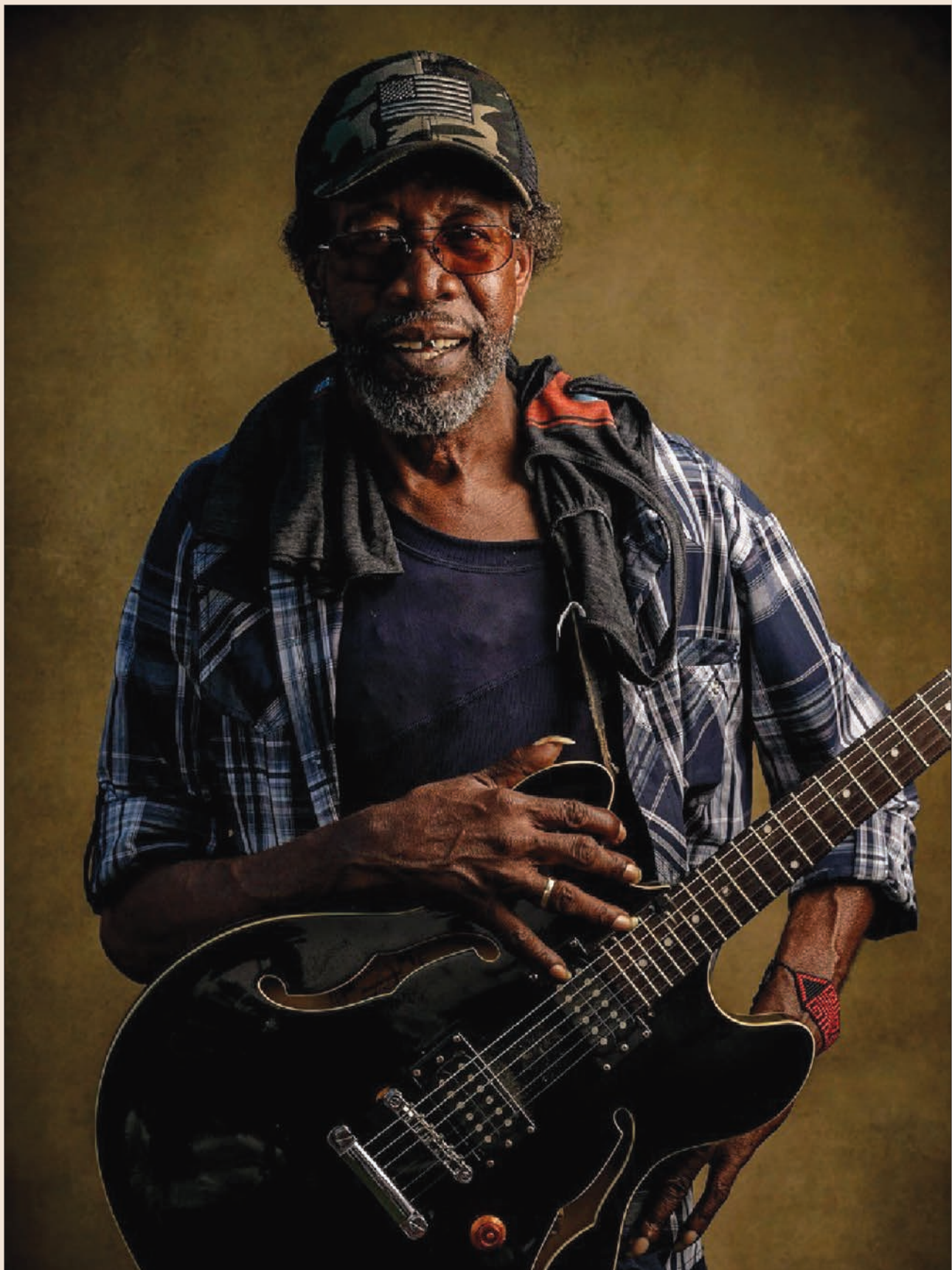


Photo by Rustin Gudim

Suquamish Basketmaker

Indianola, Washington

Ed Eugene Carriere (Suquamish)

Ed Eugene Carriere (Suquamish) learned the art of basketmaking from his great-grandmother, Julia Jacob of the Suquamish Tribe, who raised him from infancy. Jacob, born in 1874, was raised in a cedar plank longhouse called Old Man House, until she was a teenager, learning the early traditions of basketry; then her family was moved to their Indian allotment across the bay where Carriere currently lives. At age 14, he started to learn old-style split cedar limb and root Salish basketry and what became his lifetime specialty, clam baskets. Estimating from sales records, Carriere has likely made more than 600 clam baskets so far in his lifetime.

Carriere's goal always was to learn basketry styles from as many generations back as he could. Through his tribal elders and museum collections, he was able to learn from five generations back. He then visited the 700-year-old *Qwu?gwe*s archaeological waterlogged/wet site to help excavate preserved ancient clam baskets that are very similar to the ones he makes. Carriere literally was able to learn from his 30th and earlier generation grandparents, something he never dreamed could be possible.

Carriere helped to analyze a 2,000-year-old basketry collection from a Coast Salish wet site near Snoqualmie, east of Seattle, which provided inspiration for him to replicate baskets from his 100th grandparent's work. After making several beautiful replicas, he went to the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology to observe even earlier ancient Coast Salish wet site basketry, dating from 2,000, 3,000, and 4,500 years ago—fully 225+ generations back in Carriere's Salish Sea traditions. Carriere decided to make a “book” by putting all these slightly different ancient styles of weave into one pack basket. He calls it an Archaeology Basket since it has “layers” of weaves from the different time periods.

Ed Carriere and archaeologist Dale Croes co-produced the book *Re-Awakening Ancient Salish Sea Basketry, Fifty Years of Basketry Studies in Culture and Science* (2018) where they detailed each step in replicating ancient Salish basketry, and, through Croes' statistical tests, showed how the ancient basketry styles link to his great-grandmother's teachings; they call their approach “generationally linked archaeology.”

Carriere now presents his baskets for all future generations to learn from the deep-rooted cultural and arts heritage of the Salish Sea and peoples. In July 2022, Carriere was awarded the Community Spirit Award by the First Peoples Fund, honoring artists who embody their People's cultural assets in their creations and their way of life. In February 2023, Carriere and Croes were awarded the Society for American Archaeology Award for Excellence in Archaeological Analysis, demonstrating a synergy of culture and science produces more than either one does separately.

—By Dale R. Croes, PhD,
Wet Site Archaeologist,
Washington State University

■
“I would personally like to thank the Ancestors whose baskets were preserved in archaeological wet sites for thousands of years so I could weave in honor of them. I could feel their hands helping my hands as I attempted to replicate their beautiful baskets. I also want to acknowledge the endless kindness of my *Kia'h*, my great-grandmother Julia Jacobs, who patiently raised me from birth and eventually to let me try my hands at making cedar clam baskets.”

Ed Eugene Carriere



Photo by Stuart Isett

**African
American
Quilter**

New York, New York

Michael A. Cummings

African American quilting represents the skill, aesthetic beauty, and utilitarian need of the community from which it emerged. Such quilts have been the primary vehicle to preserve family and political histories for generations in America. A growing appreciation for the African American sense of design, coupled with a scarcity of work, has made contemporary African American quilts among the most sought-after of all collectibles. In the tradition of the African griot (storyteller), Michael Cummings' quilts tell the stories of African American life. As a result of his masterful creativity, he has become one of America's premier quiltmakers.

Cummings grew up in Los Angeles, California, and earned a BA in American art history at Empire College. He moved to New York in the early 1970s to take a position with the Department of Cultural Affairs for New York City. He spent his early artistic career as a part-time collage and paint artist with renowned artist Romare Bearden as his mentor. After a work project to create a cloth banner for an exhibition in 1973, Cummings discovered his love for working with fabric and taught himself to quilt with mentoring from Paul Smith (former director of American Crafts Museum). He also joined local and national quilting guilds. Working in the narrative quilt tradition, Cummings tells stories of the African American experience across historical, cultural, and philosophical realms. He views his quilts as giant art collages, likening the process of making quilts to painting on canvas.

In an art form dominated by female artists, Cummings is one of very few men nationally recognized for quiltmaking. Throughout his career as a quilt artist, Cummings has remained true to his roots, exploring various aspects of what it means to be a Black artist in this country. Using vibrant colors, reclaimed commercial and

African fabrics, applique and patchwork techniques, he often embellishes the surface with hand embroidery and found objects. The many subjects of his quilts include Josephine Baker, James Baldwin, Harriet Tubman, Langston Hughes, Barack Obama, jazz music, and historical events in African American history and the African Diaspora experience.

Through a career spanning more than 30 years, Cummings' work has been commissioned by the U.S. Department of State's Art in Embassies program, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, the White House, HBO, and Absolut Vodka. His quilts can be found in numerous museum collections, which include the Brooklyn Museum, the Museum of Arts and Design, California African American Museum, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, in both Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery and National Museum of African American History & Culture, International Quilt Museum, and the Obama Presidential Center and Museum. He has received numerous prestigious awards, including the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Biennial Award and the Excellence in Design award from New York City's Public Design Commission.

—By Carolyn L. Mazloomi, 2014 Bess Lomax Hawes National Heritage Fellow and founder of the Women of Color Quilters Network

■
“Look at all the famous male fashion designers who make clothes for women. And look at all the chefs who are men. As a male quilter, I am in a unique position. It forces people to reassess what they think men can and cannot do.”

Michael A. Cummings



Photo by Clarence Johns

Joe DeLeon “Little Joe” Hernández

Tejano Music Performer

Temple, Texas

Described as the “King of the Brown Sound,” Little Joe—Joe DeLeon Hernández—has helped pioneer *Tejano* music, a mix of traditional Norteño, country, blues and rock styles, and has become one of the most prominent figures in the tradition today. In his earlier years, Hernández found influences in the music of Beta Villa, the originator of *orquesta Tejano* that generally features trumpets and saxophones. As a recipient of the Texas NARAS Governor’s Award and Texas State Artist of the Year, he has entertained audiences around the world for more than 65 years with 70 albums and countless shows. Through his music, which features the struggle of the less fortunate, he supports the United Farm Workers, Farm Aid, and Diabetes Educational Campaign Project. His song “Las Nubes” was adopted by the United Farm Workers as their official marching song.

Hernández was born in a one room, dirt floor shack in Temple, Texas, in October 1940. While working as a young migrant cotton field worker, Hernández’s cousin, David Coronado, of the band David Coronado & the Latinaires, recruited Hernández on guitar. Hernández realized that the rhythm of picking a guitar reminded him of the rhythm of picking cotton. Soon after joining the band, his first recording came in 1958 on their instrumental single “Safari Part I & II.”

Jesse, Hernández’s brother, joined the band in 1959 as David Coronado was leaving. Hernández took over the band, renaming it Little Joe & the Latinaires. Jesse died tragically in an auto accident in 1964. Hernández made a vow to Jesse to carry their music forward, not realizing how far his music would take him. It has opened many doors for other artists and set many new musical trends.

After playing and spending much of his time in the San Francisco area in the 1970s, Hernández discovered “Latinismo”, a strong Latin musical world that was

not found in Texas at that time. It had a profound change on his music and cultural values, prompting him to change the name of the band from Latinaires to La Familia, emphasizing Hernández’s need for knowledge and reflection of his roots.

Nominated 11 times, Hernández has received five GRAMMY Awards: 1991 Best Mexican American album, *Diez y Seis de Septiembre*, 2005 Best Tejano album, *Chicanísimo*, 2007 Best Tejano album, *Before The Next Teardrop Falls*, 2010 Best Tejano album (and a Latin Grammy in 2011), *Recuerdos*.

Along with his contributions in music, Hernández’s most recent endeavor, his biographical book, *No Llore, Chingon! An American Story The Life of Little Joe* written by Emma Gonzalez, has won five major awards in the International Latino Book Awards, considered the largest Latino cultural awards in the United States.

Little Joe still continues through his work to bring people together for a more harmonious world.

—By Larry Romo

■
“Dreams can come true if you are willing to work as long and as hard as it takes, and most importantly, never give up.”

Joe DeLeon
“Little Joe” Hernández



Photo by Mark Del Castillo

Roen Hufford

Kapa Maker

Waimea, Hawai'i

Of Native Hawaiian descent, Roen Halley Kahalewai McDonald Hufford carries on the art of *ka hana kapa* (making barkcloth) and is a leading figure in the reclaiming of this nearly lost art. Barkcloth is made in many parts of the world, but in Hawai'i, has reached levels of remarkable refinement and was once as essential to life as food.

With no loom-woven fabric, barkcloth once swaddled newborns, served as clothing, was made into blankets, adorned sacred images, and was used to prepare burials. So important was *wauke* (*Broussonetia papyrifera*), the plant that provides the strong bast fiber, it was carried to the Hawaiian Islands on canoes by the first Polynesian settlers. Kapawas made throughout the year and it is said you could hear the beating of kapa before you saw a village. With the introduction of cotton in the 19th century, kapa fell out of fashion, and the skills nearly vanished.

Hufford was born on the island of Moloka'i and grew up on the windward side of O'ahu. From an early age, she was immersed in Hawaiian values—respect for the land and the importance of *kokua* (helping) family and community. After graduating from the University of Hawai'i Mānoa, Hufford spent many years as a florist. In 1990, she and her husband Ken moved from Kaua'i to Hawai'i Island to grow organic vegetables on her mother's farm in Waimea.

The 1960s to 1980s was a time of intense interest in recapturing traditional Hawaiian music, dance, crafts, and values. Hufford and her mother Marie Leilehua McDonald (a 1990 NEA National Heritage Fellow) became important participants in the movement. Hufford helped her mother research and document traditional lei and publish Marie's two seminal books on leimaking. From there, they focused on retrieving the skills of *ka hana kapa*. They planted patches of *wauke* and dye plants, studied

museum collections, and collaborated with woodworkers to make the needed tools. With her mother's passing in 2019, Hufford inherited the legacy.

Making kapa is a labor intensive process. After peeling and cleaning the bast from 7- to 10-foot stems, the fiber is soaked in sea water, beaten with wooden mallets into thin sheets, and then felted into larger pieces. In Hawai'i, delicate watermarks are imprinted by patterned beaters and the dried kapa is decorated with natural colors derived from flowers, fruits, bark, and soil. Dyes are applied with handmade stamps, brushes, bits of wood, and even leaf stems.

Over the last 30 years, interest has grown in *ka hana kapa* and Hufford is a leader in the effort, widely appreciated for her artistry, skill and generosity. She hosts a weekly *kapa hui* (kapagroup) at her farm where students of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels come to learn and share with each other. She is one of the few kapamakers in Hawai'i with enough *wauke* to share, and provides *wauke* "starts" for others. For Hufford, farming and making kapa are inseparable. "If you are going to beat kapa," she says, "you have to know how to cultivate the plant.... Were it not for the resources the land gives us, we couldn't do this."

Hufford's work is collected and exhibited widely in Hawai'i and internationally. Like her ancestors, she finds inspiration for her designs in the richness of her environment. With her students, Hufford demonstrates locally and beyond. She collaborates with other Polynesian barkcloth makers, helping to bring renewed recognition and relevance to the tradition of *ka hana kapa* across the Pacific.

—By Lynn Martin Graton, folklorist, arts consultant and fiber artist, Waimea, HI

■
"Growing *wauke* and beating kapa from it connects me [and other *kapa* makers] to generations past who did this out of necessity and to other Pacific people who continue to fashion this beaten cloth. Every beat honors my mother, my *kumu* [teacher] who taught and encouraged me to do this knowing that it was in my nature to share it with others."

Roen Hufford



Photo by Lynn Martin Gratton

Wampum & Fiber Artist

Dartmouth, Massachusetts

Elizabeth James-Perry (Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head, Aquinnah)

Elizabeth James-Perry's artwork is intimately tied to her Aquinnah Wampanoag tribal homeland on Martha's Vineyard/Noepe. Highly regarded for her woven wampum, twined basketry, quillwork and sashes, she is considered one of the most accomplished Native artists working in New England today.

She combines careful preparation of natural materials, exquisite skill of execution, and beauty of form with historical research and family knowledge to create a body of work that is revitalizing Eastern Woodlands/Algonquian traditional arts. Examples of this work include hand-sculpted wampum beads shaped from locally harvested quahog shells, soft fiber basketry, and ancient forms of woven wampum belts, gauntlet cuffs, and round leadership medallions. In contrast to more commercially inspired, mass-produced thin wampum jewelry, James-Perry uses hand tools to make pendants—a grinding stone and deer antler to billet out three dimensional designs. She then carefully hand spins and plies plant fibers into consistent widths for stringing and weaving. Following years of careful work and gardening, she was able to successfully revive non-toxic natural dye techniques using local native plants to create a traditional palette that give her pieces a distinctive look.

James-Perry credits her mother, Scrimshaw artist Patricia James-Perry, with grounding her in the understanding of what it is to be an artist and educator. She credits her cousin Dr. Helen Attaquin (1923-1993), an educator, skilled weaver, and quillworker, as her first teacher in natural fiber processing, finger weaving, and twined weaving patterns. Another strong influence was her cousin Nanepashemut Tony Pollard (1954-1995), an Eastern Woodlands performer and artist. Their knowledge and artistic discipline were crucial to the development of a Native presence at Northeastern

museums, including Plimoth-Patuxet Museum.

Teaching and sharing her mentors' educational values is ever-present in James-Perry's life. She taught tribal children beginning in the 1990's in the Dartmouth Children's Museum, and for the Aquinnah Afterschool Program, demonstrated willow branch fish trap weaving at the Aquinnah Cultural Center Museum and at the Working Waterfront Festival, was an advisor for New England Foundation for the Arts' Native American Arts Program, and was later funded to mentor a Mashpee tribal member in dye work and textiles. She taught traditional arts at the Shinnecock Nation Cultural Center & Museum on Long Island, presented a twined basketry class at the Colins Center for the Arts to the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance and Natural Dye-work for Evergreen Colleges' Longhouse Program. She has been funded as mentor artist for Mass Cultural Council's Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program and Connecticut Historical Society's Southern New England Apprenticeship Program.

Awards include ribbons in Textile & Jewelry at the Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair and Market and an Artist Fellowship in the Traditional Arts from Mass Cultural Council. Her work has appeared in *Native New England Now* at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum (2013), *Ripples: Through a Wampanoag Lens*, New Bedford Whaling Museum (2020), and *Raven Reshapes Boston: A Native Corn Garden* at the MFA, Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (2021). Lowell National Historical Park commissioned a white wampum choker on dyed milkweed for their permanent exhibit, *One City, Many Cultures* scheduled to open in Fall of 2023.

—By Maggie Holtzberg, Folk Arts & Heritage Program, Mass Cultural Council

■
“Teaching traditional arts is really important because cultural arts contain so much sophisticated traditional ecological knowledge that has gone into making those arts what they are, and that’s knowledge accrued over countless thousands of years.”

Elizabeth James-Perry



Photo courtesy of the artist

**Sculptor,
Hispano
Woodcarving
Tradition**

Santa Fe, New Mexico

Luis Tapia

For five decades, Luis Tapia has helped to revitalize and transform the art of the *santero* (saint-maker), a centuries-old Hispanic tradition practiced in New Mexico and southern Colorado. Rooted in European devotional sculpture, and metamorphosed in New Spain, the art of the *santero* thrives today due to artists such as Tapia who passionately embrace the tradition and increase its vitality within the Hispano community and beyond.

Tapia has shaped today's *santero* art, powerfully demonstrating that tradition is inherently malleable and dynamic. His modern-day sculptures renewed the art form by reintroducing color and crafting social critiques. By reimagining the lives of the saints—situating them as if living among us and offering their assistance with pervasive social justice issues such as homelessness, political corruption, immigration, and class inequities—Tapia's visionary work at once embodies the Hispano community's values of faith and cultural pride, and highlights the complexities of modern society.

Born in 1950 in the village of Agua Fría, New Mexico, Tapia grew up surrounded by traditional Hispano arts in his family home and neighborhood church, such as carved wood furniture, weavings, and sculpted saints. It wasn't until he was 21 that his interest in the *santero* tradition emerged, dovetailing with his political awakening during the Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Creating *santos* (saints) became Tapia's way of connecting with his culture.

Self-taught, Tapia studied historic *bultos* (three-dimensional saints) in museum collections, examining them closely to understand the lessons they taught. In the 1970s, he participated in Santa Fe's annual Spanish Market to connect with fellow *santeros* on similar learning paths. Based on his research and childhood memories of old polychromed

santos, Tapia understood that time had faded the sculptures' rich colors. He recognized that the market-driven preference for unpainted *santos* grew from the influence of tastemakers. In what was then regarded as a radical departure, Tapia began making brightly painted *bultos* of "unconventional" subjects (such as Noah's Ark). In doing so, he contested narrow ideas about the history of Hispano devotional art and forged a new path for himself as a contemporary artist.

Seeing tradition as something to inspire and uplift, rather than to limit and control, Tapia simultaneously embraces tradition and pushes its limits. He has restored historic New Mexico furniture, created *reredos* (altarpieces) for local churches, explored local festivities or motifs such as Doña Sebastiana's *carreta de muerte* (death cart), and reimagined *ofrendas* (altars) as lowrider dashboards. His deeply humanistic works—which impart social commentary; elicit empathy for the human condition; and offer humor, satire, and pathos—have opened possibilities for younger generations of artists. Tapia's influence has been recognized through countless exhibitions and various awards, including a New Mexico Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 1996.

—By Laura Addison, Curator of
North American and European Collections,
Museum of International Folk Art

■
"I believe in the tradition. I *am* the tradition. But tradition is not copying. What I do to continue my heritage is to renew it, like a growing plant."

Luis Tapia



Photo by Tom Pich

Wu Man

Pipa Player

Carlsbad, California

Wu Man belongs to a rare group of musicians whose vivid brilliance, commanding personality, and range of expression has redefined their instrument, in her case, the *pipa*, a centuries-old, pear-shaped, four-stringed Chinese lute. Wu Man stands alongside past Heritage Fellows like Bill Monroe (1982, bluegrass mandolin) and Zakir Hussain (1999, North Indian tabla) as virtuosic, improvisational, pioneering luminaries who transformed their respective traditions. The immensity of their transformational contributions to our musical heritage are clearly apparent.

Wu Man was the first recipient of a master's degree in pipa performance from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China. Prior to this, pipa instruction was transmitted orally from teacher to student, in the style and locality of the master, not taught in an institutional conservatory setting. Studying in a conservatory under pipa masters Lin Shicheng, Kuang Yuzhong, Chen Zemin, and Liu Dehai, Wu Man is the first of the new era of pipa players. Wu Man immigrated to the United States to expand the reach of the pipa and explore new horizons for her instrument.

Americans who know what a pipa is will have heard of the instrument largely thanks to Wu Man. In her hands, the pipa becomes a perfectly vivid instrument with unlimited potential, not confined by the long and ancient history of its place in traditional Chinese music, but a proud member of that magnificent legacy. Wu Man is recognized as transforming the pipa into a gateway to Chinese culture. She has added the musical colors and textures of the pipa to concert music of all kinds. Composers now incorporate the pipa into their compositions, musicians regularly perform with pipa players, and audiences in the U.S. and across the globe are now familiar with the sound of the pipa.

From her solo concertizing, to

performing with groups such as the Kronos Quartet, and the Silk Road Ensemble, to her work bringing traditional Chinese village musicians to the U.S. for educational symposiums and performances (as well as bringing traditional Western musicians to China), Wu Man does much more than just play her instrument splendidly. She is a gifted educator and takes every opportunity to foreground her instrument and its history, frequently giving master classes and demonstrations at all levels throughout the U.S. and the world. She continues to travel back to China to share her discoveries and traditional cultural links, such as the Li Family Daoist Shawm Band, Zhang Family Shadow Puppet Band, Sanubar Tursun, Abdulla Majnun, and others. Additionally, the sound of her pipa has been shared on over 40 recordings, including Grammy winning and nominated albums, amplifying her work to expand the pipa's reach beyond the traditional.

As an immigrant, she has woven this traditional Chinese instrument into the musical fabric of our country, and is truly a cultural ambassador for both traditional Chinese culture in the U.S., as well as Western culture in China. She has received a Bunting Fellowship from Harvard University in 1998, a 2008 United States Artist Fellowship, 2013 Musical America's Instrumentalist of the Year, and an Honorary Doctorate of Music from the New England Conservatory of Music in 2021. In 2023, she was named an Asia Arts Game Changer by the Asia Society. Wu Man's contributions to American musical culture, and specifically to traditional Chinese instrumental music, are still being written, and they will continue to be felt for generations to come.

—By David Harrington, founder and artistic director, Kronos Quartet

■
“Since I started learning the pipa at the age of 9, music has always been the most important part of my life. Through the pipa, I share different cultural traditions with audiences and showcase this ancient Chinese instrument on the global stage. I hope to uphold the roots and soul of Chinese music and let the next generation understand how diverse our traditional art is on this planet.”

Wu Man



Photo by Call the Shots Photography

Nick Spitzer

**Folklife
Presenter,
Educator,
and Radio
Producer**

New Orleans, Louisiana

Nick Spitzer is an anthropologist, folklorist, media producer, and professor at Tulane University in New Orleans whose focus is American vernacular culture. His whole life has been spent documenting, broadcasting, and writing about the local, the non-official, the folkloric—the vernacular—all pointing to the vitality and innovation of American culture that is so often neglected by critics, scholars, and government.

While studying anthropology and folklore in college and graduate school, he hosted his own radio programs in Philadelphia and Austin with music and talk not heard anywhere else, in part because he drew upon the local cultures near wherever he was located. After fieldwork and landmark sound recordings in rural Afro-Creole Louisiana communities, he launched the Louisiana Folklife Program with then-Louisiana Arts Council Director Al Head (2012 National Heritage Fellow), and collaborated in the creation of the Baton Rouge Blues Festival, the Folklife Pavilion at the Louisiana World Exposition, and a long-running exhibit called *The Creole State* in the Louisiana State Capitol building. His work with rural and New Orleans Creole culture led to significant writings on cultural creolization, the process by which new or foreign cultures interpenetrate traditional cultures and create new elements or meanings to older forms.

Later, at the Smithsonian, Spitzer curated programs for the Festival of American Folklife and made documentaries for *Radio Smithsonian*. As a commentator and producer, he went on to work with ABC News' *Nightline*, NPR's *All Things Considered*, and *Sunday Morning* for CBS News. He was also artistic director for seven seasons of Folk Masters at Carnegie Hall and Wolf Trap, and the American Roots Independence Day concerts on the National Mall throughout the 1990s—all heard nationally on public radio.

In 1998, he began to broadcast his still-airing two-hour program *American Routes*, and has produced more than 650 programs to date. He drew on local artists from New Orleans and French Louisiana and brought traditional jazz, Cajun and Creole music, along with blues, gospel, country, Tejano, Latin and Caribbean music, roots rock, and soul to the nation each week. Cultural critic Nat Hentoff (2004 NEA Jazz Master) declared, "In the history of American radio, no series has ever come close to Nick Spitzer's *American Routes* in exploring the many streams of this nation's music." Over the years, Spitzer has carried these streams as cultural diplomacy to audiences in Russia and China. His publications include *The Mississippi Delta Ethnographic Overview*, *Louisiana Folklife: A Guide to the State*, *Public Folklore* (with Robert Baron), and *Blues for New Orleans: Mardi Gras and America's Creole Soul*. His film *Zydeco: Creole Music and Culture in French Louisiana* was seen on PBS and globally in French-speaking countries. He has produced and annotated numerous CD recordings and developed special projects such as the 13-part *American Routes* radio series about hurricane Katrina, "After the Storm."

His honors include a Guggenheim, an ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award, Louisiana Humanist of the Year, and Lifetime awards from the University of Louisiana, the Louisiana Folklore Society, and the American Folklore Society. Spitzer has conducted over 1,200 interviews with musicians and artists. His life's work of discovering, introducing, and sustaining vernacular artists is in the highest tradition and the full spirit of the NEA's Bess Lomax Hawes National Heritage Fellowship.

—By John Szwed, folklorist and music historian

■
"I didn't do the work to get an award. I do it because I enjoy and value the people I meet and collaborate with—their knowledge and expressions of traditional and vernacular arts. I want Americans to put the nation back together around creativity, inclusiveness, and our diversities."

Nick Spitzer



Photo by Francis Pavy



The Bess Lomax Hawes National Heritage Fellowship honors “keepers of tradition” who through their efforts as organizers, educators, producers, cultural advocates, or caretakers of skills and repertoires have had a major beneficial effect on the traditional arts of the United States. A member of the Lomax family of pioneering American folklorists, Bess Lomax Hawes (1921–2009) committed her life to the documentation and presentation of American folk artists. She served as an educator both inside the classroom and beyond, and nurtured the field of public folklore through her service at the National Endowment for the Arts. During her tenure as director of the NEA Folk Arts Program (1977–1993) an infrastructure of state folklorists was put in place, statewide folk arts apprenticeship programs were initiated, and the National Heritage Fellowships were created. In 1993 she received the National Medal of Arts for her many contributions in assisting folk artists nationwide and in bringing folk artistry to the attention of the public.



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*Founded in 1933, the National Council for the
Traditional Arts (NCTA) is the nation's oldest folk
arts organization. The NCTA presents the nation's
finest traditional artists to the public in festivals,
national and international tours, concerts, radio
and television programs, films, recordings and
other programs. For over 30 years, the NCTA has
worked with the National Endowment for the Arts
on a consulting basis to manage and coordinate
the National Heritage Fellowships activities
honoring the Fellowship recipients.*

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***Gathering in Fellowship:
The Legacy and Impact of NEA
National Heritage Fellows***

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Kapa by Roen Hufford

Photo by Lynn Martin Gratton

National Heritage Fellows

1982–2022



1982

Dewey Balfa *
Cajun Fiddler
Basile, LA

Joe Heaney *
Irish Singer
Brooklyn, NY

Tommy Jarrell *
Appalachian Fiddler
Mt. Airy, NC

Bessie Jones *
Georgia Sea Island Singer
Brunswick, GA

George Lopez *
Santos Woodcarver
Cordova, NM

Brownie McGhee *
Blues Guitarist/Singer
Oakland, CA

Hugh McGraw *
Shape Note Singer
Bremen, GA

Lydia Mendoza *
Mexican American Singer
San Antonio, TX

Bill Monroe *
Bluegrass Musician
Nashville, TN

Elijah Pierce *
Carver/Painter
Columbus, OH

Adam Popovich *
Tamburitza Musician
Dolton, IL

Georgeann Robinson *
Osage Ribbonworker
Bartelsville, OK

Duff Severe *
Saddle Maker
Pendleton, OR

Philip Simmons *
Ornamental Ironwork
Charleston, SC

Sanders "Sonny" Terry *
Blues Harmonica/Singer
Holliswood, NY

* Deceased

Photo by Cheryl Schiele

1983

Sister Mildred Barker *
Shaker Singer
Poland Spring, ME

Rafael Cepeda *
Bomba Musician/Dancer
Santurce, PR

Ray Hicks *
Appalachian Storyteller
Banner Elk, NC

Stanley Hicks *
Appalachian Musician/
Storyteller/Instrument
Maker
Vilas, NC

John Lee Hooker *
Blues Guitarist/Singer
San Francisco, CA

Mike Manteo *
Sicilian Marionettist
Staten Island, NY

Narciso Martinez *
Texas-Mexican
Accordionist/Composer
San Benito, TX

Lanier Meaders *
Potter
Cleveland, GA

Almeda Riddle *
Ballad Singer
Greers Ferry, AR

Joe Shannon *
Irish Piper
Chicago, IL

Simon St. Pierre *
French American Fiddler
Smyrna Mills, ME

Alex Stewart *
Cooper/Woodworker
Sneedville, TN

Ada Thomas *
Chitimacha Basketmaker
Charenton, LA

Lucinda Toomer *
African American Quilter
Columbus, GA

Lem Ward *
Decoy Carver/Painter
Crisfield, MD

Dewey Williams *
Shape Note Singer
Ozark, AL

1984

Clifton Chenier *
Creole Accordionist
Lafayette, LA

Bertha Cook *
Knotted Bedspread Maker
Boone, NC

Joseph Cormier *
Cape Breton Violinist
Waltham, Ma

Elizabeth Cotten *
African American Singer/
Songster
Syracuse, NY

Burlon Craig *
Potter
Vale, NC

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Hammered Dulcimer
Player/Builder
Scottsbluff, Ne

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Storyteller
Johns Island, SC

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Basketmaker
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Lebanese American Lace
Maker
Bettendorf, IA

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Bronx, NY

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African American Tap
Dancer
New York, NY

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Bluegrass Banjo Player/
Appalachian Singer
Coeburn, VA

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Santa Clara Pueblo Potter
Espanola, Nm

Dave Tarras *
Klezmer Clarinetist
Brooklyn, NY

Paul Tiulana *
Eskimo Mask Maker/
Dancer/Singer
Anchorage, Ak

Cleofas Vigil *
Hispanic Storyteller/Singer
San Cristobal, NM

**Emily Kau'i
Zuttermeister ***
Hula Master (Kumu Hula)
Kaneohe, Hi

1985

Eppie Archuleta *
Hispanic Weaver
San Luis Valley, CO

Periklis Halkias *
Greek Clarinetist
Astoria Queens, NY

Jimmy Jausoro *
Basque Accordionist
Boise, ID

Mealii Kalama *
Hawaiian Quilter
Honolulu, HI

Lily May Ledford *
Appalachian Musician/
Singer
Lexington, KY

Leif Melgaard *
Norwegian Woodcarver
Minneapolis, MN

Bua Xou Mua *
Hmong Musician
Portland, OR

Julio Negrón-Rivera *
Puerto Rican Instrument
Maker
Morovis, PR

**Alice New Holy
Blue Legs ***
Lakota Sioux Quill Artist
Rapid City, SD

Glenn Ohrlin *
Cowboy Singer/Storyteller/
Illustrator
Mountain Veiw, AR

Henry Townsend *
Blues Musicain/Songwriter
St. Louis, MO

**Horace "Spoons"
Williams ***
Percussionist/ Poet
Philadelphia, PA

1986

**Alphonse "Bois Sec"
Ardoin ***
Creole Accordionist
Eunice, LA

Earnest Bennett *
Anglo-American Whittler
Indianapolis, IN

Helen Cordero *
Pueblo Potter
Cochiti, NM

Sonia Domsch *
Czech American Bobbin
Lace Maker
Atwood, KS

Canray Fontenot *
Creole Fiddler
Welsh, La

John Jackson *
Black Songster/Guitarist
Fairfax Station, VA

Peou Khatna *
Cambodian Court Dancer/
Choreographer
Silver Spring, MD

Valerio Longoria *
Mexican American
Accordionist
San Antonio, TX

Doc Tate Nevaquaya *
Comanche Indian Flutist
Apache, OK

Luis Ortega *
Hispanic American
Rawhide Worker
Paradise, CA

Ola Belle Reed *
Appalachian Banjo Picker/
Singer
Rising Sun, MD

Jennie Thlunaut *
Tlingit Chilkat Blanket
Weaver
Haines, AK

Nimrod Workman *
Appalachian Ballad Singer
Macot, 8 Chattaroy, TN/WV



1987

Juan Alindato *
Carnival Maskmaker
Ponce, PR

Louis Bashell *
Slovenian Accordionist
Greenfield, WI

Genoveva Castellanoz
Mexican American Corona
Maker
Nyssa, OR

**Thomas Edison
“Brownie” Ford ***
Anglo-Comanche Cowboy
Singer/Storyteller
Herbert, LA

Kansuma Fujima *
Japanese American Dancer
Los Angeles, CA

Claude Joseph Johnson *
African American Religious
Singer/Orator
Atlanta, GA

Raymond Kane *
Hawaiian Slack Key
Guitarist/Singer
Wai‘ane, HI

Wade Mainer *
Appalachian Banjo Picker/
Singer
Flint, MI

Sylvester McIntosh *
Crucian Singer/Bandleader
St. Croix, VI

**Allison “Tootie”
Montana ***
Mardi Gras Chief/Costume
Maker
New Orleans, LA

Alex Moore, Sr. *
African American Blues
Pianist
Dallas, TX

**Emilio & Senaida
Romero ***
Hispanic American Tin
and Embroidery Workers
Santa Fe, NM

Newton Washburn *
Split Ash Basketmaker
Bethlehem, NH

1988

Pedro Ayala *
Mexican American
Accordionist
Donna, TX

Kepka Belton *
Czech American Egg
Painter
Ellsworth, KS

Amber Densmore *
New England Quilter/
Needleworker
Chelsea, VT

Michael Flatley
Irish American Stepdancer
Palos Park, IL

Sister Rosalia Haberl *
German American Bobbin
Lace Maker
Hankinson, ND

John Dee Holeman *
African American
Musician/Dancer/Singer
Durham, NC

**Albert “Sunnyland Slim”
Laundrew ***
Blues Pianist/Singer
Chicago, IL

Yang Fang Nhu *
Hmong Weaver/
Embroiderer
Detroit, MI

Kenny Sidle *
Anglo-American Fiddler
Newark, OH

Willi Mae Ford Smith *
African American Gospel
Singer
St. Louis, MO

Clyde “Kindy” Sproat *
Hawaiian Cowboy Singer/
Ukulele Player
Kapaaee, HI

Arthel “Doc” Watson *
Appalachian Guitarist/
Singer
Deep Gap, NC

1989

John Cephas *
Piedmont Blues
Guitarist/Singer
Woodford, VA

Fairfield Four
African American a Capelle
Gospel Singers
Nashville, TN

José Gutiérrez
Mexican Jarocho Musician/
Singer
Norwalk, CA

**Richard Avedis
Hagopian**
Armenian Oud Player
Visalia, CA

Christy Hengel *
German American
Concertina Maker
New Ulm, MN

**Vanessa Paukeigope
Jennings**
Kiowa Regalia Maker
Fort Cobb, OK

Ilias Kementzides *
Pontic Greek Lyra Player
and Builder
South Norwalk, CT

Ethel Kvalheim *
Norwegian Rosemaler
Stoughton, WI

Mabel E. Murphy *
Anglo-American Quilter
Fulton, MO

LaVaughn E. Robinson *
African American Tap
Dancer
Philadelphia, PA

Earl Scruggs *
Bluegrass Banjo Player
Nashville, TN

Harry V. Shourds *
Wildfowl Decoy Carver
Seaville, NJ

**Chesley Goseyun
Wilson ***
Apache Fiddle Maker
Tucson, AZ

1990

Howard Armstrong *
African American String
Band Musician
Boston, MA

Em Bun *
Cambodian Silk Weaver
Harrisburg, PA

Natividad Cano *
Mexican American
Mariachi Musician
Fillmore, CA

**Giuseppe * and Raffaella
DeFranco**
Southern Italian Musicians
and Dancers
Belleville, NJ

Maude Kegg *
Ojibwe Storyteller/
Craftsperson/Tradition
Bearer
Onamia, MN

Kevin Locke *
Lakota Flute Player/Singer/
Dancer/Storyteller
Wakpala, SD

Marie McDonald *
Hawaiian Lei Maker
Kamuela, HI

Wallace “Wally” McRae
Cowboy Poet
Forsyth, MT

Art Moilanen *
Finnish Accordionist
Mass City, MI

Emilio Rosado *
Woodcarver
Utado, PR

Robert Spicer *
Flatfoot and Buckdancer
Dancer
Dickson, TN

Douglas Wallin *
Appalachian Ballad Singer
Marshall, NC

* Deceased



1987 Fellow Juan Alindato

Photo by Tom Pich

1991

Etta Baker *
African American Guitarist
Morgantown, NC

George Blake
Native American
Craftsman (Hupa-Yurok)
Hoopa Valley, CA

Jack Coen *
Irish American Flautist
Bronx, NY

Rose Frank *
Nez Perce Cornhusk
Weaver
Lapwai, ID

Eduardo “Lalo” Guerrero *
Mexican American Singer/
Guitarist/Composer
Cathedral City, CA

Khamvong Insixiangmai
Southeast Asian Lao Singer
Fresno, CA

Don King *
Western Saddlemaker
Sheridan, WY

Riley “B.B.” King *
African American Blues
Musician/Singer/
Bandleader
Itta Bena, MS

Esther Littlefield *
Alaskan Regalia Maker
(Tlingit)
Sitka, AK

**Seisho “Harry”
Nakasone ***
Okinawan American
Musician
Honolulu, HI

Irvan Perez *
Isleno Singer (Canary
Islands)
Poydras, LA

Morgan Sexton *
Appalachian Banjo Player/
Singer
Linefork, KY

Nikitas Tsimouris *
Greek American Bagpipe
Player
Tarpon Springs, FL

Gussie Wells *
African American Quilter
Oakland, CA

Arbie Williams *
African American Quilter
Oakland, CA

Melvin Wine *
Appalachian Fiddler
Copen, WV

1992

Francisco Aguabella *
Afro-Cuban Drummer
Los Angeles, CA

Jerry Brown *
Potter (southern stoneware
tradition)
Hamilton, AL

Walker Calhoun *
Cherokee Musician/Dancer/
Teacher
Cherokee, NC

Clyde Davenport *
Appalachian Fiddler
Jamestown, TN

Belle Deacon *
Athabaskan Basketmaker
Greyling, AK

Nora Ezell *
African American Quilter
Five Points, TN

Gerald Hawpetoss *
Menominee/Potowatomie
Regalia Maker
Neopit, WI

Fatima Kuinova *
Bukharan Jewish Singer
Rego Park, NY

John Yoshio Naka *
Bonsai Sculptor
Whittier, CA

Marc Savoy
Cajun Accordion Player/
Builder
Eunice, LA

Ng Sheung-Chi *
Chinese Toissan Muk'yu
Folk Singer
New York, NY

Othar Turner *
African American Fife
Player
Senatobia, MS

Tanjore Viswanathan *
South Indian Flute Maker
Middletown, CT

1993

Santiago Almeida *
Texas-Mexican Conjunto
Musician
Sunnyside, WA

Kenny Baker *
Bluegrass Fiddler
Cottontown, TN

Inez Catalon *
French Creole Singer
Kaplan, LA

**Elena * & Nicholas
Charles ***
Yupik Woodcaver/
Maskmaker/Skin Sewer
Bethel, AK

Charles Hankins *
Boatbuilder
Lavallette, NJ

**Nalani Kanaka'ole
& Pualani
Kanaka'ole Kanahele**
Hula Masters
Hilo, HI

Everett Kapayou *
Native American Singer
(Meskwaki)
Tama, IA

**McIntosh County
Shouters**
African American
Spiritual/Shout Ensemble
St. Simons Island, GA

Elmer Miller *
Bit and Spur Maker/
Silversmith
Nampa, ID

Jack Owens *
Blues Singer/Guitarist
Bentonla, MS

**Mone & Vanxay
Saenphimmachak**
Lao Weaver/Needleworker
and Loom Maker
St. Louis, MO

Liang-Xing Tang
Chinese American Pipa
(Lute) Player
Bayside, NY

1994

Liz Carroll
Irish American Fiddler
Mundelein, IL

**Clarence Fountain *
& The Blind Boys of
Alabama**
African American
Gospel Singers
Atlanta, GA

Mary Mitchell Gabriel *
Native American
(Passamaquoddy)
Basketmaker
Princeton, ME

Johnny Gimble *
Western Swing Fiddler
Dripping Springs, TX

Frances Varos Graves *
Hispanic American
“Colcha” Embroidery
Rancho De Taos, NM

Violet Hilbert *
Native American (Skagit)
Storyteller/Conservator
Ca Conner, WA

**Sosie Shizuye
Matsumoto ***
Japanese Tea Ceremony
Master
Los Angeles, CA

D.I. Menard *
Cajun Musician/Songwriter
Erath, LA

Simon Shaheen
Arab American Oud Player
Brooklyn, NY

Lily Vorperian
Armenian (Marash-Style)
Embroidery
Glendale, CA

Elder Roma Wilson *
African American
Harmonica Player
Oxford, MS



1994 Fellows The Blind Boys
of Alabama

Photo by Tom Pich

1995

Bao Mo-Li
Chinese American
Jing-Erhu Player
Flushing, NY

Mary Holiday Black *
Navajo Basketmaker
Mexican Hat, UT

Lyman Enloe *
Old-Time Fiddler
Lee's Summit, MO

Donny Golden
Irish American Step
Dancer
Brooklyn, NY

Wayne Henderson
Appalachian Luthier,
Musician
Mouth of Wilson, VA

Bea Ellis Hensley *
Appalachian Blacksmith
Spruce Pine, NC

Nathan Jackson
Tlingit Alaskan Woodcaver/
Metalsmith/Dancer
Ketchikan, AK

Danongan Kalanduyan *
Filipino American
Kulintang Musician
South San Francisco, CA

Robert Jr. Lockwood *
African American Delta
Blues Singer/Guitarist
Cleveland, OH

Israel “Cachao” López *
Afro-Cuban Bassist,
Composer, and
Bandleader
Miami, FL

Nellie Star Boy Menard *
Lakota Sioux Quiltmaker
Rosebud, SD

Buck Ramsey *
Anglo-American Cowboy
Poet, Singer
Amarillo, TX

1996

Obo Addy *
African (Ghanaian) Master
Drummer/Leader
Portland, OR

**Betty Pisis
Christenson ***
Ukrainian American
Pysanky
Suring, WI

Paul Dahlin
Swedish American Fiddler
Minneapolis, MN

Juan Gutiérrez
Puerto Rican Drummer/
Leader (Bomba and
Plena)
New York, NY

Solomon * & Richard *
Ho’opi
Hawaiian Falsetto Singers/
Musicians
Makawao, HI

Will Keys *
Anglo-American Banjo
Player
Gray, TN

Joaquin Lujan *
Chamorro Blacksmith
GMF, GU

Eva McAdams *
Shoshone Crafts/Beadwork
Fort Washakie, WY

**John Mealing * &
Cornelius Wright, Jr. ***
African American Work
Songs
Birmingham, AL

Vernon Owens
Anglo-American Potter
Seagrove, NC

Dolly Spencer *
Inupiat Dollmaker
Homer, AK

1997

Edward Babb *
“Shout” Band Gospel
Trombonist & Band
Leader
Jamaica, NY

Charles Brown *
West Coast Blues
Pianist & Composer
Berkeley, CA

Gladys Leblanc Clark *
Acadian (Cajun) Spinner
& Weaver
Duson, LA

Georgia Harris *
Catawba Potter
Atlanta, GA

Wen-Yi Hua *
Chinese Kunqu Opera
Singer
Arcadia, CA

Ali Akbar Khan *
North Indian Sarod Player
& Raga Composer
San Anselmo, CA

Ramón José López
Santero & Metalsmith
Santa Fe, NM

Jim* & Jesse *
McReynolds
Bluegrass Musician
Gallatin, TN

Phong Nguyen
Vietnamese Musician/
Scholar
Kent, OH

Hystercine Rankin *
African American Quilter
Lorman, MS

Francis Whitaker *
Blacksmith/Ornamental
Iron Work
Carbondale, CO

1998

Apsara Ensemble
Cambodian Musicians &
Dancers
Fort Washington, MD

Eddie Blazonczyk *
Polish Polka Musician/
Bandleader
Bridgeview, IL

Bruce Caesar
Sac Fox-Pawnee German
Silversmith
Anadarko, OK

Dale Calhoun *
Boatbuilder (Reelfoot Lake
Stumpjumper)
Tiptonville, TN

Antonio De La Rosa *
Tejano Conjunto
Accordionist
Riviera, TX

Epstein Brothers *
Klezmer Musicians
Sarasota, FL

Sophia George
Yakima Colville Beadwork
and Regalia
Gresham, OR

Nadjeschda Overgaard *
Danish Hardanger
Embroidery
Kimballton, IA

Harilaos Papapostolou *
Byzantine Chant, Greek
Orthodox
Potomac, MD

Roebuck “Pops” Staples *
Gospel/Blues Musician
Dalton, IL

**Claude “The Fiddler”
Williams ***
Jazz Swing Fiddler
Kansas City, MO

* Deceased

1999

Frisner Augustin *
Haitian Drummer
New York, NY

Lila Greengrass Blackdeer *
Hocak Black Ash
Basketmaker,
Needleworker
Black River Falls, WI

Shirley Caesar
Gospel Singer
Durham, NC

Alfredo Campos
Horeshair Hitcher
Federal Way, WA

Mary Louise Defender Wilson
Dakota Hidatsa
Traditionalist
and Storyteller
Shields, ND

Jimmy “Slyde” Godbolt *
African American Tap
Dancer
Hanson, MA

Ulysses “Uly” Goode *
Western Mono
Basketmaker
North Fork, CA

Bob Holt *
Ozark Fiddler
Ava, MO

Zakir Hussain
North Indian Master Tabla
Drummer
San Anselmo, CA

Elliott “Ellie” Manette *
Trinidadian Steel Pan
Builder, Tuner, Performer
Osage, WV

Mick Moloney *
Irish Musician
New York, NY

Eudokia Sorochaniuk *
Ukranian Weaver, Textile
Artists, Embroidery
Pennsuaken, NJ

Ralph Stanley *
Master Boatbuilder,
(Friendship Sloop)
Southwest Harbor, ME

2000

Bounxou Chanthraphone
Lao Weaver, Embroiderer
Brookland Park, MN

Dixie Hummingbirds *
African American Gospel
Quartet
Philadelphia, PA

Felipe García Villamil
Afro-Cuban Drummer/
Santero
Los Angeles, CA

José González *
Puerto Rican Hammock
Weaver
San Sebastián, PR

Nettie Jackson *
Klickitat Basketmaker
White Swan, WA

Santiago Jiménez, Jr
Tex-Mex Accordionist/
Singer
San Antonio, TX

Genoa Keawe *
Hawaiian Tto Singer/
Ukulele Player
Honolulu, HI

Frankie Manning *
Lindy Hop Dancer
Choreographer/Innovator
Corona, NY

Joe Willie “Pinetop” Perkins *
Blues Piano Player
La Porte, IN

Konstantinos Pilarinos *
Orthodox Byzantine Icon
Woodcarver
Astoria, NY

Chris Strachwitz *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Record Producer/Label
Founder
El Cerrito, CA

B. Dorothy Thompson *
Appalachian Weaver
Davis, WV

Don Walser *
Cowboy & Western Singer/
Guitarist/Composer
Austin, TX

2001

Celestino Avilés *
Santero
Orocovis, PR

Mozell Benson *
African American Quilter
Opelika, AL

Wilson “Boozoo” Chavis *
Zydeco Accordionist
Lake Charles, LA

Hazel Dickens *
Appalachian Singer
Washington, DC

Evalena Henry
Apache Basketweaver
Peridot, AZ

Peter Kyvelos *
Oud Builder
Bedford, MA

João “João Grande” Olivera Dos Santos
Capoeira Angola Master
New York, NY

Eddie Pennington
Thumbpicking Style
Guitarist
Princeton, KY

Qi Shu Fang
Peking Opera Performer
Woodhaven, NY

Seiichi Tanaka
Taiko Drummer Dojo
Founder
San Francisco, CA

Dorothy Trumpold *
Rug Weaver
High Amana, IA

Fred Tsoodle *
Kiowa Sacred Song Leader
Mountain View, OK

Joseph Wilson *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Folklorist/Advocate/
Presenter
Fries, VA

2002

Ralph Blizard *
Old-Time Fiddler
Blountville, TN

Loren Bommelyn
Tolowa Singer, Tradition
Bearer, Basketmaker
Crescent City, CA

Kevin Burke
Irish Fiddler
Portland, OR

Francis * & Rose Cree *
Ojibwa Basketmakers/
Storytellers
Dunseith, ND

**Luderin Darbone */
Edwin Duhon ***
Cajun Fiddler and
Accordionist
Sulphur/Westlake, LA

Nadim Dlaikan
Lebanese Nye (Reed Flute)
Player
Southgate, MI

David “Honeyboy” Edwards *
Delta Blues Guitarist/
Singer
Chicago, IL

Flory Jagoda *
Sephardic Musician/
Composer
Alexandria, VA

Losang Samten
Tibetan Sand Mandala
Painter
Philadelphia, PA

Bob McQuillen *
Contra Dance Musician
Composer
Peterborough, NH

Clara Neptune Keezer *
Passamaquoddy
Basketmaker
Perry, ME

Jean Ritchie *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Appalachian Singer/
Songwriter Dulcimer
Player
Port Washington, NY

Domingo “Mingo” Saldívar
Conjunto Accordionist
San Antonio, TX

1999 Fellow Mick Moloney

Photo by Tom Pich



2003

BASQUE “BERTSOLARI” POETS

Jesus Arriada
San Francisco, CA

Johnny Curutchet
South San Francisco, CA

Martin Goicoechea
Rock Springs, WY

Jesus Goni
Reno, NV

Rosa Elene Egipciano *
Puerto Rican Bobbin Lace
“Mundillo”
New York, NY

**Agnes Oshanee
Kenmille ***
Salish Beadwork and
Tanning
Ronan, MT

Norman Kennedy
Weaver/Ballad Singer
Marshfield, VT

**Roberto * & Lorenzo
Martinez**
Hispanic Guitarist &
Violinist
Albuquerque, NM

Norma Miller *
African American Jazz
Dancer, Choreographer
Cape Coral, FL

Carmencristina Moreno
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Mexican American Singer,
Composer, Teacher
Fresno, CA

Ron Poast
Hardanger Fiddle Luthier
and Player
Black Earth, WI

**Felipe I. & Joseph K.
Ruak**
Carolinian Stick Dance
Leaders
Saipan, MP

Manoochehr Sadeghi
Persian Santour Player
Sherman Oaks, CA

Nicholas Toth
Diving Helmet Builder
Tarpon Springs, FL

2004

Anjani Ambegaokar *
Kathak Dancer
Diamond Bar, CA

**Charles “Chuck” T.
Campbell**
Gospel Steel Guitarist
Rochester, NY

Joe Derrane *
Irish American Button
Accordianist
Randolph, MA

Jerry Douglas
Dobro Player
Nashville, TN

Gerald Subiyay Miller *
Skokomish Tradition
Bearer
Shelton, WA

Milan Opacich *
Tamburitza Instrument
Maker
Schererville, IN

**Eliseo & Paula
Rodriguez ***
Straw Applique Artists
Santa Fe, NM

Koko Taylor *
Blues Musician
Country Club Hills, IL

**Yiqin Wang &
Zhengli Xu**
Chinese Rod Puppeteers
Tigard, OR

Chum Ngek
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Cambodian Musician and
Teacher
Gaithersburg, MD

2005

**Herminia Albarrán
Romero**
Paper-Cutting Artist
San Francisco, CA

Eldrid Skjold Arntzen
Norwegian American
Rosemaler
Watertown, CT

Earl Barthé *
Decorative Building
Craftsman
New Orleans, LA

Chuck Brown *
African American
Musical Innovator
Brandywine, MD

Janette Carter *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Appalachian Musician,
Advocate
Hiltons, VA

Michael Doucet
Cajun Fiddler, Composer,
and Band Leader
Lafayette, LA

Jerry Grcevich
Tamburitza Musician,
Prim Player
North Huntingdon, PA

Grace Henderson Nez *
Navajo Weaver
Ganado, AZ

Wanda Jackson
Early Country, Rockabilly,
and Gospel Singer
Oklahoma City, OK

**Beyle Schaechter-
Gottesman ***
Yiddish Singer, Poet,
Songwriter
Bronx, NY

Albertina Walker *
Gospel Singer
Chicago, IL

James Ka’upena Wong *
Hawaiian Chanter
Waianae, HI

2006

Charles M. Carrillo
Santero (Carver and
Painter of Sacred
Figures)
Santa Fe, NM

Delores E. Churchill
Haida (Native Alaskan)
Weaver
Ketchikan, AK

Henry Gray *
Blues Piano Player, Singer
Baton Rouge, LA

Doyle Lawson
Gospel and Bluegrass
Singer, Arranger, and
Bandleader
Bristol, TN

Esther Martinez *
Native American Linguist
and Storyteller
San Juan Pueblo, NM

Diomedes Matos
Cuatro (10-String Puerto
Rican Guitar) Maker
Deltona, FL

George Na’ope *
Kumu Hula (Hula Master)
Hilo, HI

Wilho Saari *
Finnish Kantele
(Lap-Harp) Player
Naselle, WA

Mavis Staples
Gospel, Rhythm and Blues
Singer
Chicago, IL

Nancy Sweezy *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Advocate, Scholar,
Presenter, and
Preservationist
Lexington, MA

Treme Brass Band
New Orleans Brass Band
New Orleans, LA



2006 Fellow Mavis Staples
Photo by Tom Pich

* Deceased

2007

Nicholas Benson
Stone Letter Carver and
Calligrapher
Newport, RI

Sidiki Conde
Guinean Dancer and
Musician
New York, NY

Violet De Cristoforo *
Haiku Poet And Historian
Salinas, CA

Roland Freeman *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Photo Documentarian,
Author, and Exhibit
Curator
Washington, DC

Pat Courtney Gold *
Wasco Sally Bag Weaver
Scappoose, OR

Eddie Kamae *
Hawaiian Musician,
Composer, Filmmaker
Honolulu, HI

Agustin Lira
Chicano Singer, Musician,
Composer
Fresno, CA

Julia Parker
Kashia Pomo Basketmaker
Midpines, CA

Mary Jane Queen *
Appalachian Musician
Cullowhee, NC

Joe Thompson *
African American String
Band Musician
Mebane, NC

Irvin L. Trujillo
Rio Grande Weaver
Chimayo, NM

Elaine Hoffman Watts *
Klezmer Musician
Havertown, PA

2008

Horace P. Axtell *
Nez Perce Elder, Spiritual
Leader, and Drum Maker
Lewiston, ID

Dale Harwood
Saddlemaker
Shelley, ID

Bettye Kimbrell *
Quilter
Mt. Olive, AL

Jeronimo E. Lozano *
Retablo Maker
Salt Lake City, UT

Walter Murray Chiesa *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Traditional Crafts
Advocate
Bayamón, PR

**Oneida Hymn Singers
Of Wisconsin**
Hymn Singing
Oneida, WI

Sue Yeon Park
Korean Dancer and
Musician
New York, NY

Moges Seyoum
Ethiopian Church Musician
Alexandria, VA

Jelon Vieira
Capoeira Master
New York, NY

Michael G. White
Jazz Clarinetist, Band
Leader, Scholar
New Orleans, LA

Mac Wiseman *
Bluegrass and Country
Singer and Musician
Nashville, TN

2009

**The Birmingham
Sunlights**
A Cappella Gospel Group
Birmingham, AL

Edwin Colón Zayas
Cuatro Player
Orocovis, PR

Chitresh Das *
Kathak Dancer and
Choreographer
San Francisco, CA

Leroy Graber *
German Russian Willow
Basketmaker
Freeman, SD

“Queen” Ida Guillory
Zydeco Musician
Daly City, CA

Dudley Laufman
Dance Caller and Musician
Cantebury, NH

Amma D. McKen
Yoruba Orisha Singer
Brooklyn, NY

Joel Nelson
Cowboy Poet
Alpine, TX

Teri Rofkar *
Tlingit Weaver and
Basketmaker
Sitka, AK

Mike Seeger *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Musician, Cultural Scholar,
and Advocate
Lexington, VA

**Sophiline Cheam
Shapiro**
Cambodian Classical
Dancer and Choreographer
Long Beach, CA

2010

Yacub Addy *
Ghanaian Drum Master
Latham, NY

**Jim “Texas Shorty”
Chancellor**
Fiddler
Rockwall, TX

Gladys Kukana Grace *
Lauhala (Palm Leaf)
Weaver
Honolulu, HI

Mary Jackson
Sweetgrass Basketweaver
Johns Island, SC

Del McCoury
Bluegrass Guitarist and
Singer
Hendersonville, TN

Judith McCulloh *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Folklorist and Editor
Urbana, IL

**Kamala Lakshmi
Narayanan**
Bharatanatyam Indian
Dancer
Mastic, NY

Mike Rafferty *
Irish Flute Player
Hasbrouck Heights, NJ

Ezequiel Torres
Afro-Cuban Drummer and
Drum Builder
Miami, FL

2011

Laverne Brackens
Quilter
Fairfield, TX

Bo Dollis *
Mardi Gras Indian Chief
New Orleans, LA

Jim Griffith *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Folklorist
Tucson, AZ

Roy and Pj Hirabayashi
Taiko Drum Leaders
San Jose, CA

Ledward Kaapana
Slack Key Guitarist
Kaneohe, HI

Frank Newsome
Old Regular Baptist Singer
Haysi, VA

Carlinhos Pandeiro De Ouro
Frame Drum Player and
Percussionist
Los Angeles, CA

Warner Williams *
Piedmont Blues Songster
Gaithersburg, MD

Yuri Yunakov
Bulgarian Saxophonist
Bloomfield, NJ

2012

Mike Auldridge *
Dobro Player
Silver Spring, MD

Paul & Darlene Bergren
Dog Sled and Snowshoe
Designers and Builders
Minot, ND

Harold A. Burnham
Master Shipwright
Essex, MA

Albert B. Head
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Traditional Arts Advocate
Montgomery, AL

Leonardo “Flaco” Jimenez
Tejano Accordion Player
San Antonio, TX

Lynne Yoshiko Nakasone *
Okinawan Dancer
Honolulu, HI

Molly Jeannette Neptune Parker *
Passamaquoddy Basket
Maker
Princeton, ME

The Paschall Brothers
Tidewater Gospel Quartet
Chesapeake, VA

Andy Statman
Klezmer Clarinetist,
Mandolinist, and
Composer
Brooklyn, NY

2013

Sheila Kay Adams
Ballad Singer, Musician,
& Storyteller
Marshall, NC

Ralph Burns
Storyteller, Pyramid Lake
Paiute Tribe
Nixon, NV

Verónica Castillo
Ceramicist & Clay Sculptor
San Antonio, TX

Séamus Connolly
Irish Fiddler
North Yarmouth, ME

Nicolae Feraru
Cimbalom Player
Chicago, IL

Carol Fran *
Swamp Blues Singer &
Pianist
Lafayette, LA

Pauline Hillaire *
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Tradition Bearer, Lummi
Tribe
Bellingham, WA

David Ivey
Sacred Harp Hymn Singer
Huntsville, AL

Ramón “Chunky” Sánchez *
Chicano Musician &
Culture Bearer
San Diego, CA

2014

Henry Arquette *
Mohawk Basketmaker
Hogansburg, NY

Manuel “Cowboy” Donley *
Tejano Musician and Singer
Austin, TX

Kevin Doyle
Irish Step Dancer
Barrington, RI

THE HOLMES BROTHERS
Sherman Holmes
Wendell Holmes *
Popsy Dixon *
Blues, Gospel, and Rhythm
and Blues Band
Rosedale, MD
Saluda, VA

Yvonne Walker Keshick
Odawa Quillworker
Petoskey, MI

Carolyn Mazloomi
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Quilting Community
Advocate
West Chester, OH

Vera Nakonechny
Ukrainian Embroiderer,
Weaver and Beadworker
Philadelphia, PA

Singing and Praying Bands of MD and DE
African American Religious
Singers
Maryland and Delaware

Rufus White
Omaha Traditional Singer
and Drum Group Leader
Walthill, NE



2011 Fellow Ledward Kaapana
Photo by Michael G. Stewart

* Deceased

2015

Rahim AlHaj
Oud Player & Composer
Albuquerque, NM

Michael Alpert
Yiddish Musician and
Tradition Bearer
New York, NY

**Mary Lee Bendolph,
Lucy Mingo, and
Loretta Pettway**
Quilters of Gee's Bend
Boykin, AL

Dolly Jacobs
Circus Aerialist
Sarasota, FL

Yary Livan
Cambodian Ceramicist
Lowell, MA

Daniel Sheehy
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Ethnomusicologist/
Folklorist
Falls Church, VA

Drink Small
Blues Artist
Columbia, SC

**Gertrude Yukie
Tsutsumi**
Japanese Classical Dancer
Honolulu, HI

Sidonka Wadina
Slovak Straw Artist/Egg
Decorator
Lyons, WI

2016

Bryan Akipa
Dakota Flute Maker and
Player
Sisseton, SD

**Joseph Pierre “Big Chief
Monk” Boudreaux**
Mardi Gras Indian
Craftsman and Musician
New Orleans, LA

Billy McComiskey
Irish Button Accordionist
Baltimore, MD

Artemio Posadas
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Master Huastecan Son
Musician and Advocate
San Jose, CA

Clarissa Rizal *
Tlingit Ceremonial
Regalia Maker
Juneau, AK

Theresa Secord
Penobscot Nation Ash/
Sweetgrass Basketmaker
Waterville, ME

Bounxeung Synanonh
Laotian Khaen (free-reed
mouth organ) Player
Fresno, CA

Michael Vlahovich
Master Shipwright
Tacoma, WA/St. Michaels, MD

Leona Waddell
White Oak Basketmaker
Cecilia, KY

2017

Norik Astvatsaturov
Armenian Repoussé Metal
Artist
Wahpeton, ND

Anna Brown Ehlers
Chilkat Weaver
Juneau, AK

Modesto Cepeda
Bomba and Plena Musician
San Juan, PR

Ella Jenkins
Children's Folk Singer
and Musician
Chicago, IL

Dwight Lamb
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Danish Button
Accordionist and
Missouri-Style Fiddler
Onawa, IA

Thomas Maupin
Old-time Buckdancer
Murfreesboro, TN

Cyril Pahinui *
Hawaiian Slack-key
Guitarist,
Waipahu, HI

Phil Wiggins
Acoustic Blues Harmonica
Player
Takoma Park, MD

Eva Ybarra
Conjunto Accordionist and
Band Leader
San Antonio, TX

2018

Feryal Abbasi-Ghnaim
Palestinian Embroiderer
Milwaukie, OR

Eddie Bond
Appalachian Old-Time
Fiddler
Fries, VA

Kelly Church
Anishnabe (Gun Lake
Band) Black Ash
Basketmaker
Allegan, MI

Marion Coleman *
African American Quilter
Castro Valley, CA

Manuel Cuevas
Rodeo Tailor
Nashville, TN

Ofelia Esparza
Chicana Altarista (Day of
the Dead Altar Maker)
Los Angeles, CA

Barbara Lynn
R&B Musician
Beaumont, TX

Ethel Raim
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Traditional Music and
Dance Advocate
New York, NY

Don & Cindy Roy
Franco-American
Musicians
Gorham, ME



Anishnabe Treaty Hat by 2018
Fellow Kelly Church
Photo by Richard Church

2019

Dan Ansotegui
Basque Musician and
Tradition Bearer
Boise, ID

Grant Bulltail *
Crow Storyteller
Crow Agency, MT

Bob Fulcher
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Folklorist and State Park
Manager
Clinton, TN

Linda Goss
African American
Storyteller
Baltimore, MD

James F. Jackson
Leatherworker
Sheridan, WY

Balla Kouyaté
Balafon Player and Djeli
Medford, MA

Josephine Lobato
Spanish Colcha
Embroiderer
Westminster, CO

Rich Smoker
Decoy Carver
Marion Station, MD

LAS TESOROS DE SAN ANTONIO
Beatriz (La Paloma del
Norte) Llamas * and
Blanquita (Blanca Rosa)
Rodríguez
Tejano Singers
San Antonio, TX

2020

William Bell
Soul Singer and Songwriter
Atlanta, GA

Onnik Dinkjian
Armenian Folk and
Liturgical Singer
Fort Lee, NJ

Zakarya * and
Naomi Diouf
West African Diasporic
Dancers
Oakland/Castro Valley, CA

Karen Ann Hoffman
(Oneida Nation of
Wisconsin)
Haudenosaunee Raised
Beadworker
Stevens Point, WI

Los Matachines de
la Santa Cruz de la
Ladrillera
Traditional Religious
Dancers
Laredo, TX

Hugo N. Morales
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Radio Producer and
Network Builder
Fresno, CA

John Morris
Old-Time Fiddler and
Banjo Player
Ivydale, WV

Suni Paz
Nueva Canción Singer and
Songwriter
Henderson, NV

Wayne Valliere (Lac du
Flambeau Ojibwe)
Birchbark Canoe Builder
Waaswaaganing (Lac du
Flambeau, WI)

2021

Cedric Burnside
Hill Country Blues
Musician
Ashland, MS

Tom Davenport
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Filmmaker,
Documentarian, and
Media Curator
Delaplane, VA

Tagumpay Mendoza
De Leon
Rondalla Musician
Burbank, CA

Anita Fields
(Osage/Muscogee)
Osage Ribbon Worker
Tulsa, OK

Los Lobos
Mexican American Band
Los Angeles, CA

Joanie Madden
Irish Flute Player
Yonkers, NY

Reginald “Reggio the
Hoofer” McLaughlin
Tap Dancer
Chicago, IL

Nellie Vera
Mundillo Master Weaver
Moca, Puerto Rico

Winnboro Easter Rock
Ensemble
Easter Rock Spiritual
Ensemble
Winnboro, LA

2022

Michael Cleveland
Bluegrass Fiddler
Charlestown, IN

Eva Enciñias
Flamenco Artist
Albuquerque, NM

Excelsior Band
Brass Band Musicians
Mobile, AL

Stanley Jacobs
Quelbe Flute Player and
Bandleader
St. Croix, VI

The Legendary
Ingramettes
Gospel Artists
Richmond, Virginia

TahNibaa Naataanii
(Navajo/Diné)
Bess Lomax Hawes Award
Navajo/Diné Textile Artist
and Weaver
Shiprock, NM

Francis P. Sinenci
Master Hawaiian Hale
Builder
Hāna, HI

Tsering Wangmo Satho
Tibetan Opera Singer
& Dancer
Richmond, CA

C. Brian Williams
Step Artist and Producer
Washington, DC

Shaka Zulu
New Orleans Black Masking
Craftsman, Stilt Dancer,
and Musician
New Orleans, LA



Mundillo lace by 2021 Fellow Nellie Vera

Photo courtesy of Hypothetical Films

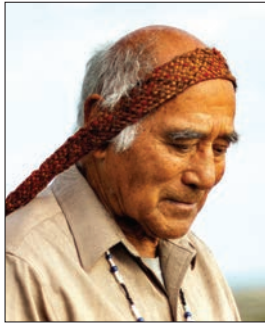
* Deceased



2023 NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWS



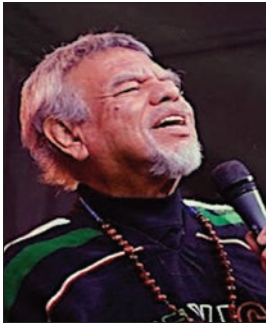
R.L. Boyce
Hill Country Blues Musician
Photo by John Branch



Ed Eugene Carriere
(Suquamish)
Suquamish Basketmaker
Photo by Stuart Isett



Michael A. Cummings
African American Quilter
Photo courtesy of the artist



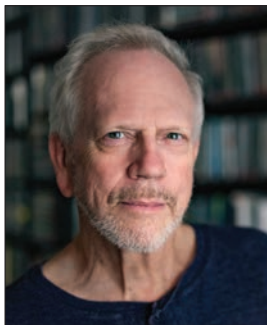
Joe DeLeon "Little Joe" Hernández
Tejano Music Performer
Photo by Catalina Cruz



Roen Hufford
Kapa Maker
Photo by Lynn Martin Gratton



Elizabeth James-Perry
(Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head, Aquinnah)
Wampum & Fiber Artist
Photo courtesy of the artist



Nick Spitzer
Folklife Presenter, Educator, and
Radio Producer
Photo courtesy of Tulane University



Luis Tapia
Sculptor, Hispano Woodcarving
Tradition
Photo by Tom Pich



Wu Man
Pipa Player
Photo by Call the Shots Photography