

**The U.S.-Japan Creative Artist Fellowship Program**, an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Japan-United States Friendship Commission, provides support for three- to five-month residencies in Japan for five U.S. individual creative artists or teams in any arts discipline. For the 2019-2020 fellowships, each collaboration of U.S. and Japanese artistic teams will produce a project that will be showcased in Tokyo in summer 2020.

## ARTISTIC TEAM

**Gene Coleman**, Composer, Musician, Director – Philadelphia, PA, United States

**Adam Vidiksis**, Composer, Conductor, Percussionist, Improviser, Technologist – Philadelphia, PA, United States

**Akikazu Nakamura**, Composer, Musician – Tokyo, Japan

**Sansuzu Tsurzawa**, Shamisen Performer – Saitama, Japan

### *Artists Bios:*

Gene Coleman is a composer, musician, and director. A 2014 Guggenheim Fellow and the winner of the 2013 Berlin Prize for Music, he has created more than 70 works for various instrumentation and media. Innovative use of sound, image, space, and time allows Coleman to create work that expands our understanding of the world. Since 2001 his work has focused on the global transformation of culture and music's relationship with science, architecture, video, and dance. He studied painting, music, and new media at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Adam Vidiksis is a composer, conductor, percussionist, and technologist based in Philadelphia, where he is an assistant professor of music technology and composition at Temple University's Boyer College of Music and Dance. Vidiksis holds degrees from New York University and a PhD in music composition from Temple University. His music often explores sound, science, and the intersection of humankind with the machines we build. Vidiksis's research in music technology focuses on techniques for realtime audio processing, designing gestural controllers for live digital performance, and machine improvisation.

Akikazu Nakamura studied under Katsuya Yokoyama and several masters of the Komuso *shakuhachi* tradition. A graduate of the NHK School of Traditional Music, Nakamura went on to study composition and jazz theory at Berklee College of Music. He was awarded a master's degree in composition and third-stream music at the New England Conservatory. While still grounding his roots in the classical tradition handed down by Komuso monks, Nakamura has delved into different musical genres, including rock, jazz, and contemporary music.

Sansuzu Tsuruzaza is a performer of Gidayu-style *shamisen*. Born in Saitama, Japan, she completed a master's degree in musicology at Tokyo University of the Arts and now teaches at Tokyo Collage of

Music. In 2018 she was designated as an Important Intangible Cultural Property for her artistry by the government of Japan. She has performed with various contemporary music projects in Tokyo and other places, including New York, Boston, and Toronto through the support of the Japan Foundation in 2019.

*Project Description:*

This collaborative project aims to combine Japanese martial arts with music, video, motion sensor technologies, and other digital media. Martial arts was one of the earliest cultural elements that migrated from Japan to the United States and came to influence American culture post-WWII. A key element of that influence was the value of using martial arts to build character and to understand the responsibilities we have towards other people in society: to create a just and peaceful world. Digital technologies will be used to translate martial arts movements into sounds, which will then form a landscape over which musicians will play.

**ARTISTIC TEAM**

**Cameron McKinney**, Choreographer, Dancer, Educator – New York City, NY, United States

**Toru Shimazaki**, Choreographer – Kobe, Japan

*Artists Bios:*

Cameron McKinney is a New York City-based choreographer, dancer, educator, and author. He founded Kizuna Dance in 2014 with the mission of creating works that celebrate the Japanese language and culture. He recently received a three-month individual fellowship from the Asian Cultural Council to travel to Japan and continue his studies on the intersections of street dance and *butoh*. He has presented choreographic work nationally and internationally, as well as leading workshops, masterclasses, and residencies. He is currently on faculty at Gibney Dance Center.

Toru Shimazaki first began choreographing while he was the director of the ballet department of the Sitter School of Dance in Canada, 1989-91. He has since choreographed in Europe, America, and in his native Japan for many renowned dance companies, including Japan's National New Tokyo Theatre, Grand Theatre de Geneve, the Royal Ballet of Flanders, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Introdanse, Singapore Dance Theater, and Colorado Ballet. He is presently the directing professor of the dance program in the Music Department of Kobe Jogakuin College, Japan.

*Project Description:*

McKinney and Shimazaki will collaborate to produce a 30-minute contemporary dance work for a five-person ensemble. The work will be rooted in an embodiment of the personal histories of dancers both in the United States and Japan, and is meant to resonate on a deeper level with the dancers of both casts. McKinney will travel to Kobe to work with Shimazaki's dance company, Dance Barbizon, then return to New York to work with his dancers. The work will then be performed in Tokyo in summer 2020. By specifically focusing on the connection between United States-based artists and Japanese artists, the work will portray the bond of friendship that has developed between the two nations over the last several decades by accenting the similarities between the two seemingly disparate cultures.

## ARTISTIC TEAM

**Sue Mark and Bruce Douglas (marksearch)**, Interdisciplinary Artists – Oakland, CA, United States  
**Natsuka Endo and Hiro Abe**, Multimedia Artists – Tokyo, Japan

### *Artists Bios:*

For more than 20 years, the Oakland-based creative team marksearch (Sue Mark and Bruce Douglas) has been designing interactive opportunities for communities to publicly share personal histories for empowerment. From neighbor-led walking discussions to sidewalk performances, commemorative plaques recognizing generations' old collective knowledge, and collaborative murals, their global projects preserve neighborhood narratives.

Based in Tokyo, Natsuka Endo and Hiroyuki Abe work together as an artist duo, as well as making artworks individually. Their works are based on artistic research about local history or people who lived there, making installations with drawings and videos to visualize their memories and personal experiences.

### *Project Description:*

These two wife-husband artistic teams will complete a project of poetic exploration to recognize and honor survivors of the 2011 Fukushima disaster. Working out of a nomadic writing room—a *ryokan* that combines modern and traditional building techniques—the team will collect haikus from strangers to form a communal poetic message of hope. The writing room will include visual and audio installations of these haikus, with a goal of amplifying the unheard voices of the Fukushima youth.

## ARTISTIC TEAM

**Jesse Schlesinger**, Visual Artist – San Francisco, CA, United States  
**Masayo Funakoshi**, Chef – Kyoto, Japan

### *Artists Bios:*

Jesse Schlesinger is a multidisciplinary visual artist working in sculpture, site-specific installation, drawing, and photography. His work is fundamentally concerned with place: how the natural environment, architectural context and engagement, and historical precedent contribute to experience and understanding. His upbringing as a second-generation carpenter (with a focus on traditional craftsmanship) and involvement with a small farm have jointly influenced the philosophy of his work. He has exhibited in galleries and museums in the U.S. and Japan.

While studying sculpture at Pratt Institute, Masayo Funakoshi was instead inspired by cooking and transferred to a culinary school in New York City. Funakoshi continued to learn cooking at one of New York City's most esteemed kitchens, Blue Hill, and traveled to Europe and regions of Asia to further explore food culture. Her travels have taken her across the Pacific Ocean as chef for an Australian cruise ship, as well as chef for a long-established hotel in Bali. In May 2018, Masayo opened her own studio, tea salon, and private restaurant, Farmoon, in Kyoto.

*Project Description:*

Schlesinger and Funakoshi will create an installation and performance-based work engaging food, architecture, agriculture, and craft through a temporary, experimental, and functional restaurant. The project will explore sustainability through the lens of food and agriculture, presented within an architectural installation. The importance of craft in Japanese culture and its influence on the West will form the basis for the project, actively engaging these histories from a contemporary perspective, with the intention of proposing a model for sustainability.

**ARTISTIC TEAM**

**Benjamin Volta**, Visual Artist – Elkins Park, PA, United States

**Cho Kuwakado**, Visual Artist, Educator – Saiki City, Oita Pref., Japan

**Yasuyuki Sakura**, Artist, Muralist – Saiki City, Oita Pref., Japan

*Artists Bios:*

Ben Volta creates intricate public murals and sculptures, working within the fields of education, restorative justice, and urban planning. His practice stands on the belief that art can be a catalyst for change. As a young artist, Volta was a member fo the groundbreaking art collective Tim Rollins and K.O.S. and was awarded a Pew Fellowship in 2015. For almost two decades, Volta has been developing a collaborative process with Philadelphia public schools to create participatory art rooted in an exploratory and educational process.

Cho Kuwakado is a director of Lumbini Kindergarten ECEC in Saiki City, Oita Prefecture. Educated in U.S. and U.K. colleges and graduate schools, he is an arts educator who, together with his art team led by artist Yasuyuki Sakura, makes public arts with young students in Japan and abroad.

*Project Description:*

Through engagement with youth in the U.S. and Japan, Volta, Kuwakado, and Sakura aim to create a collaborative public artwork. The project draws inspiration from the works of great innovators and educators, such as Benjamin Franklin and Fukuzawa Yukichi. Research will center on the accomplishments of distinguished Japanese and American individuals in sport, science, and education. These accomplishments will be introduced to youth in the United States and Japan during workshops, which will inspire them to create individual artwork that will come to make up the collaborative piece. The project as a whole will express how art, innovation, and sport have the power to change the world and our future.