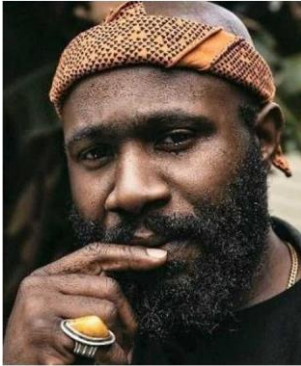


BEYOND INNOCENCE Symposium - Speaker Biographies



Karega Bailey (recording artist, educator, angel parent)

Karega Bailey is an angel parent, a social-emotional healing practitioner and an award-winning educator and recording artist. He is a nationally renowned Peace Advocate and the Founding Dean of Culture of Roses in Concrete Community School, a K-8 social justice performing arts school I in Oakland. He is the author of SOL Affirmations and co-founder and lead facilitator for BE-imaginative, a transformative safe space lead by a collective of artists and activists dedicated to disrupting gun violence and healing Black and Brown communities through innovative multi-dimensional storytelling. Evidence of his work, of which has received national acclaim, can be found in the Emmy award-winning film *Dear Beloved: Music & Storytelling with SOL Development & BE-IMAGINATIVE*. Karega Bailey is also the co-host of the AMBIE-nominated podcast SOL Affirmations with Karega and Felicia on the Black Love Podcast Network.



Aleksí Barriere (*Innocence* multilingual librettist and dramaturg)

Aleksí Barriere is a French-Finnish writer, director and translator. He is co-artistic director of the company La Chambre aux echos, working at the intersection of theatre and music.

La Chambre aux echos's productions, written and/or directed by Barriere, have featured 20th-century classics and forgotten gems, as well as multiple world premieres by living composers, including Kaija Saariaho's *La Passion de Simone* (chamber version), Juha T. Koskinen's *Ophelia/Tie/see*, and Diana Syrse's *Connected Identities*.

Barriere also works within other artistic constellations and has been a guest director at the Paris Conservatoire, London's Grimeborn Festival, Finland's Organ Night & Aria and Silence Festivals, Chicago's Trap Door Theatre, Hamburg's State Opera, the Finnish National Opera and Stockholm's Folkoperan, where he recently directed the world-premiere production of Djuro Zivkovic's *Bogoluchie*.

As an author too, Aleksí Barriere favors collaborative approaches. Working with composers as a librettist, with a taste for interdisciplinarity, interculturality and multilingualism within text, he is in that capacity a regular collaborator of Juha T. Koskinen, Diana Syrse, Outi Tarkiainen, and Kaija Saariaho, with whom he created the opera *Innocence* and the madrigal *Reconnaissance*.



W. Kamau Bell (TV host, author, community activist)

W. Kamau Bell is a stand-up comedian, director, producer and dad. For seven seasons he was the host and executive producer of the five-time Emmy Award-winning CNN docuseries *United Shades of America*. Kamau won a Peabody Award for his Showtime docuseries *We Need to Talk About Cosby*. He is also co-author of the *New York Times* best-selling book *Do The Work: An Antiracist Activity Book*. His first book was his memoir *The Awkward Thoughts of W Kamau Bell: Tales of a 6'4' African American, Heterosexual, Cisgender, Left-Leaning, Asthmatic, Black and Proud Blerd, Mama's Boy, Dad, and Stand-Up Comedian*. Recently Kamau directed and produced the Emmy Award-winning HBO documentary *1000% Me: Growing Up Mixed*. As a stand-up comic, Kamau has recorded two comedy specials. The second one, *Private School Negro*, is available on Netflix. Kamau is on the board of directors of DonorsChoose-a nonprofit that helps teachers raise money for class projects, and Live Free-a nonprofit dedicated to ending gun violence, mass incarceration and mass criminalization. Kamau also is the ACLU's Celebrity Ambassador for Racial Justice. He lives in Oakland.



Sheryl Davis (Executive Director, San Francisco Human Rights Commission)

Sheryl Evans Davis, EdD is a changemaker who leads relationship-driven, community-engaged initiatives. Davis is a passionate champion of equity, opportunity and access for all. For nearly three decades, she has made contributions as an educator and leader with expertise in community outreach and engagement, workforce development, youth development and violence prevention.

Davis led efforts to center community voice and prioritize equity in addressing the impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations, including coordinating the allocations process of \$120 million in grant monies to support the Black community in San Francisco. Starting in 2019, David worked to build out an equity framework with San Francisco community stakeholders and City departments, resulting in the launch of the Office of Racial Equity, an initiative housed within the SFHRC. Davis also oversees Black 2 San Francisco, the Dream Keeper Initiative, the Equity Studies Task Force, Everybody Reads and Opportunities For All, among other programs housed within the Human Rights Commission.



Dr. Rochelle A. Dicker (Advisor, UCSF's San Francisco Wraparound Project and Section Chief, Acute Care Surgery)

Dr. Rochelle Dicker is Professor in Residence of Surgery and Anesthesia at UCSF. She is the Division Chief for Acute Care Surgery and Co-Director of Surgical Critical Care.

In 2003 she founded the Wraparound Project at San Francisco General Hospital. Wraparound is one of the first hospital-based violence intervention programs based on integrating credible messengers and addressing the social determinants of health. Wraparound was one of seven start-up programs that formed the National Network of Hospital Based Violence Intervention Programs. Now called the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention, this organization is now home to over 60 full and start-up programs. Dr. Dicker is the Advisory Board Chair.

She is a member of the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma where she leads a group called "Improving the Social Determinants to Attenuate Violence." The group works to integrate social care and investment models and trauma-informed practices across the country in trauma centers. She is Vice Chair of the COT's Injury Prevention and Control Committee.



Gabriela Lena Frank (Composer and Founder, Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music)

Soon to finish her long tenure as Composer-in-Residence with the Philadelphia Orchestra with the premiere of *Picaflor* (Marin Alsop, conductor) in the spring of 2025, identity has always been at the center of composer/pianist Gabriela Lena Frank's music. Her exploration of her indigenous-Peruvian, Chinese and Lithuanian heritages has placed her on the *Washington Post's* list of the most significant women composers in history. More recently, her Spanish-language opera, *El ultimo sueño de Frida Diego*, commissioned and premiered to sold-out audiences by San Diego Opera and San Francisco Opera in the 2022-23 Season, was hailed as a major landmark of contemporary opera, "[revealing] a significant music-theatre talent. Frank, a Berkeley native, has mastered the intricacies of operatic construction on her first attempt, producing a confident, richly imagined score that is free of lapses and longueurs." (Alex Ross, *The New Yorker*)

In 2017, Gabriela founded the award-winning, Mellon Foundation-supported Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music (GLFCAM), a training institution held on her two rural properties in Boonville, CA for emerging composers from a broad array of demographics and aesthetics. Additionally, civic outreach is an essential part of Gabriela's work, and she has volunteered extensively in hospitals and prisons; her current focus is on developing the music offerings for the largely Latino student population of Boonville public schools.

In recent years, Gabriela has become a climate activist, becoming certified as a naturalist through the University of California, and she also reflects environmental ideals in her work, such as *Pachamama*

meets an ode premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra (Yannick Nezet-Segufn, conductor) at Carnegie Hall, and in GLFCAM programs, such as Composing Earth.

Gabriela's life as a cultural witness has been profiled in multiple PBS documentaries. She will be newly featured in the documentary *Beethoven's Nine*, released internationally by Riddle Films in May 2024 and directed by Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Larry Weinstein.



Gunna Goes Global (hip-hop artist)

Gunna Goes Global, formally known as E-Gunna, is a San Francisco hip-hop artist known throughout the United States for his music and role in the critically acclaimed film *The Last Black Man In San Francisco*. As a staple in the Bay Area, many believe he is on the brink of becoming a household name with his latest album titled *Therapy In The Ghetto*, released by 100 Million Records, which features fan favorites "Ain't Toxic," "Here," "Young World" and "I Know."



Chinaka Hodge (poet and educator)

Chinaka Hodge is a poet, educator, playwright and screenwriter. Originally from Oakland, California, she received her BA from NYU and studied Writing for Film and Television at USC's Graduate School of Cinematic Arts under the Annenberg fellowship. Chinaka was a 2012 Artist in Residence at The Headlands Center for the Arts in Marin, CA. In early 2013, Hodge was a Sundance Feature Film Lab Fellow for her script *700th & Int'l*. Since its early days, Chinaka has served in various capacities at Youth Speaks/The Living Word Project, the nation's leading literary arts nonprofit. During her tenure there, Hodge served as Program Director and Associate Artistic Director and worked directly with Youth Speaks' core population as a teaching artist and poet

mentor. Her poems, editorials, interviews and prose have been featured in *Newsweek*, *San Francisco Magazine*, *Believer Magazine*, PBS, NPR, CNN, CSpan, and in two seasons of HBO's *Def Poetry*.

Her writing for TV credits include NBC's *Rise; Amazing Stories* for AppleTV+; *Snowpiercer* for TNT/HBO Max and Netflix's *The Midnight Club*. Her most recent credit is as the Head Writer of Disney's *Ironheart*.



Tinisch Hollins (Executive Director, Californians for Safety and Justice)

A crime survivor and a native of San Francisco, Tinisch is the Executive Director of Californians for Safety and Justice-the Alliance for Safety and Justice's flagship state-based program in California.

Tinisch previously served for two years as CSJ's Associate Director as well as the California State Director of Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice. Her leadership helped to pass historic first-in-the-nation legislation that extended employment leave for all survivors of violence, as well as legislation permitting crime victims to terminate their leases if they no longer feel safe in their homes following a crime. Tinisch also played a pivotal leadership role in the defeat of Proposition 20, a regressive ballot measure on the 2020 California ballot that sought to repeal numerous successful criminal justice reforms.

She has been deeply engaged in the Bay Area social justice movement as the community organizer, policy advocate and systems navigator for nearly two decades. Tinisch has worked passionately to bring the voices of survivors to the center of community engagement and public policy and has advocated tirelessly for those voices to guide decisions, priorities and resources. Prior to joining CSJ in 2019, Tinisch served in various leadership capacities in local government, including the San Francisco Human Services Agency and in the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice.



Vilma Jaa (*Innocence* cast member)

Vilma Jaa is a singer, composer, fiddler and researcher who works in the fields of folk music, pop music and opera. Jaa's folk singing role in Kaija Saariaho's *Innocence* received international acclaim after its premiere in July 2022.

Besides her work in *Innocence*, Vilma Jaa has gained recognition for her career as an ethno pop artist. In her editorialized feminist music, Jaa approaches current topics through history revealing how miserably little the world has changed especially with issues regarding women's rights. After five single! releases Jaa released her award-winning debut album, *Kosto (Revenge)* in October 2023. *Kosto* has won the Ethno of the Year award at the "Finnish Grammys" Emma Gala and the Folk Music Album of the Year award at the Elakoon FOLK! Gala.

Vilma Jaa has performed at some of the most prestigious festivals in Finland including Flow Festival and Kaustinen Folk Music in 2022 and Provinssi and Kuhmo Chamber Music in 2023. In 2023 she recorded a live studio concert "Keikalla Vilma Jaa" with the Finnish broadcasting company Vie which has been widely televised and streamed. Later this summer she is scheduled to perform at Ruisrock and Helsinki Festival.



Mina Kim (Host, KQED Forum)

Mina Kim hosts KQED's live, daily talk show *Forum* at 10 a.m.; chronicling Californian's experiences and hosting conversations that inform, challenge and unify listeners in an increasingly divided world. Before joining the Forum team, Mina was KQED's evening newscaster, health reporter for The California Report and general assignment reporter for KQED News. Her award-winning work has included natural disasters in Napa and gun violence in Oakland. Mina grew up in St. John's, Newfoundland.



Ryan Marchand (Director of Diversity, Equity and Community, San Francisco Opera)

Ryan Marchand (He/Him, They/Them) is a transdisciplinary practitioner, whose work emerges at the intersection of arts practice and praxis, arts education, social justice, cultural intelligence and community engagement.

Marchand has 15 years of experience in an array of organizational settings that include Fortune 500 companies, tech startups and giants, emergent arts nonprofits and long-established ones. He consults with organizations on diversity, equity and inclusion practices and policies, creative collaboration, inclusive marketing and engagement strategies, cultural/educational programming, cultivating cultures of feedback and change management.

Marchand's work is human-centered and designed to foster the creative potential of all, informed by his training in multiple performance modalities.



Pastor Mike McBride (Executive Director, Live Free USA)

Rev. Michael McBride is the Executive Director for [Live Free USA](#), a national organizing and social change network committed to ending the criminalization of people of color, reducing gun violence and transforming the policing and the criminal justice system. He is one of the national leaders in the movement to implement community violence intervention and public health gun violence prevention programs, recently featured as one of [CNN's Champions of Change](#).

Pastor McBride is a Square One Fellow at Columbia University Justice Policy Lab. He is the co-founder of [Black Church PAC](#) and the [Black Brown Peace Consortium](#). Pastor McBride serves as the Lead Pastor of [The Way Church](#) in Berkeley. He has been a frequent contributor to the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, MSNBC, CNN, the Huffington Post and many other media outlets.



Mike Mclively (Policy Director, GIFFORDS Center for Violence Intervention)

Mike Mclively is a senior staff attorney at GIFFORDS Law Center and the policy director of the organization's Center for Violence Intervention, which offers policy expertise, advocacy, organizing and technical assistance to support and promote evidence-based violence intervention strategies in America's most impacted communities.

The author of many major reports on the topic of community violence, including *America at a Crossroads: Reimagining Federal Funding to End Community Violence*, Mike has spoken in many public forums-and to many national, state and local leaders across the country-about the need to address the day-to-day shootings that fuel America's gun violence epidemic and the promising community-based solutions that have gone unrecognized and underfunded for too long.

An expert on gun policy, Mike has discussed and debated issues related to gun violence on national television, including CNN's *The Lead with Jake Tapper*, and has appeared on a variety of radio programs on NPR and other networks. Mike has also been quoted extensively in articles covering gun violence in publications such as the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, CNN, VICE News and *Mother Jones*.



David Muhammad (Executive Director, National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform)

David Muhammad is a leader in the fields of criminal justice, violence prevention and youth development.

National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) works to reduce incarceration and violence, improve the outcomes of system-involved youth and adults and increase the capacity and expertise of the organizations that serve these individuals.

Through NICJR, David provides leadership and technical assistance to the Gun Violence Reduction Strategies in the cities across the country, including Oakland, CA; Indianapolis, IN; and Baltimore, MD. David helped lead a partnership of organizations and technical assistance providers that achieved a 50% reduction in shootings and homicides in Oakland. David was the main author of NICJR's report on Oakland's Successful Gun Violence Reduction Strategy.

David has worked to implement positive youth development into youth justice systems around the country and was the primary author of NICJR's seminal report, *A Positive Youth Justice System*. For three years, David was extensively involved in developing a detailed reform plan for the Los Angeles County Probation Department, the largest probation department in the country. He also served as the technical assistance provider for the Sierra Health Foundation's Positive Youth Justice Initiative, providing training and consulting to several California probation departments.



Sofie Oksanen (*Innocence* original Finnish librettist)

One of the most awarded literary authors in Scandinavia and translated into 46 languages and sold in more than 2 million copies, Finnish-Estonian novelist, librettist and playwright Sofie Oksanen (b. 1977) is an icon of her field. Called a "literary phenomenon" by *The Times*, Oksanen has since her international breakthrough novel, *Purge*, proved time and again that she is a mistress of human drama, incorporating historical and contemporary issues that move the reader. Her most recent work is *Same River Twice-Putin's War on Women*, a literary essay on colonialism and oppression, women and war.



Elena Park (Founder, Lumahai Productions)

Filmmaker, curator and producer Elena Park has moved freely through the worlds of arts, culture and media throughout her colorful career. Recently, she conceived and directed *Visual Cavafy* (Onassis Foundation) featuring the talents of Taylor Mac, Julianne Moore, Daniel Bernard Roumain, Caroline Shaw and Carl Hancock Rux, among others, screened in New York City, Athens and Alexandria. She is creating films for Mabou Mines and an installation for Luminarium, connected to developing AI and other tools for those with expressive disabilities.

San Francisco Opera credits include BEYOND *INNOCENCE* symposium (co-curator); *INSTIGATORS* (curator) and the award-winning *In Song* (director-executive producer). Filmed on location in places such as Buenos Aires, Auckland and Piet Retief, the eight-episode *In Song* series traces the roots of singers including Jamie Barton, Daniela Mack and Pretty Yende, who perform music from American roots to tango to Zulu.

Through NationalSawdust+, she explores timely issues and surprising artmaking with creators including Jad Abumrad, Laurie Anderson, Ava DuVernay, Tiokasin Ghosthorse and esperanza spalding. *Other credits*: Metropolitan Opera radio broadcasts (Executive Producer) and *Live in HD* shows (Supervising Producer); *Mozart in the Jungle* (Creative Consultant) and *Bel Canto* (Music Producer); Kennedy Center (Artistic Advisor); and Cambodian Living Arts and Meyer Sound (Strategic Advisor).



Ewan Barker Plummer (Chair, San Francisco Youth Commission)

Ewan Barker Plummer serves as the Chair of the San Francisco Youth Commission, which advises the Mayor and Board of Supervisors on all issues impacting young San Franciscans.

Ewan was born and raised in San Francisco. He began his political advocacy in middle school, where he organized his school's first Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) and led a walkout following the 2018 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida. In high school, Ewan continued his work on gun violence prevention, LGBTQ rights and other issues impacting young people. He has been especially focused on increasing youth engagement in local policy-making. He worked for a local nonprofit on the Shine On SF Partnership and co-founded Youth for San Francisco, a youth-led organization focusing on educating, engaging and involving young people in conversations about the future of their city.

In September 2021, Ewan was appointed to the San Francisco Youth Commission by Mayor London Breed, where he has advocated for protecting and affirming queer youth, increasing housing affordability, gun violence prevention policies and engaging youth in local government. In 2023 he was named unanimously elected Chair of the Commission.



Tyese Wortham (Director of Community Engagement, Community Arts Stabilization Trust)

Tyese Wortham brings extensive nonprofit administration experience to her role, spanning education, family literacy, youth development and the arts. Prior to CAST, Tyese honed her social justice lens as a grantmaker in Cultural Equity Grants at the San Francisco Arts Commission and as a presenter and producer of culture-specific artist populations with the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival. A 2014 Emerging Arts Professionals MADE award recipient, Tyese has been recognized for her expertise as a panelist, consultant, facilitator and advisor for various Bay Area arts organizations, including Silicon Valley Creates (formerly Arts Council Silicon Valley) and the Isadora Duncan Dance Awards and was an Association for the Performing Arts Professionals Fellow 2018-2020. At CAST, Tyese was instrumental in designing and implementing Keeping Space-Oakland, an artist-driven peer knowledge exchange forum for artists and arts groups representing Oakland's diverse arts ecosystem. Tyese facilitates CAST's Cultural Space Ambassador network, which is included in the planning and execution of Dreaming Spaces.



Ash Walker

Grammy-nominated conductor Ash Walker, who leads members of the Pacific Edge Voices, began his musical career with the Philadelphia Boys Choir and Chorale, where he traveled throughout the U.S., as well as Switzerland, Australia, South Africa, Israel, and many other countries. While completing a B.A. in music at Millersville University in Pennsylvania, Ash co-founded and directed the Men's Choir and served as Drum Major of the Marauder Marching Band and President of the American Choral Directors Association, Lancaster. After graduating, Ash served as Director of Curriculum for the Music Preparatory Program at El Redentor United Methodist Church in Lancaster, while also serving as Director of Choirs for the Pennsylvania Academy of Music.

In 2009 Ash founded the 'Music for Everyone,' Lancaster Community Chorus, serving as Artistic Director of this non-auditioned community choir, whose mission was cultivating the power of community and music in Lancaster City, PA. During this time, Ash also served as Director of Music at Linden Hall School for Girls in Lititz, PA, and performed regularly with the Mendelssohn Club Choir of Philadelphia as a core singer and soloist. More recently, Ash completed his Masters degree in Choral Conducting at California State University East Bay, where he won the Trustees Scholarship, sang with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in *Boris Godunov*, and on two occasions presented research at National American Choral Directors Association Conferences with his mentor and CSU professor Dr. Buddy James. He also founded the People's Choir of Fremont and served as Director of Choirs at Mt. Eden High School.

Ash now lives in Oakland, California and serves as Chorus Director of the Oakland Symphony and Cantor and Associate Director of Choirs at the Cathedral of Saint Mary, Archdiocese of San Francisco. He previously served as Artistic Director of Pacific Edge Voices.

Pacific Edge Voices

For more than 40 years, Pacific Edge Voices has been known and loved for our extensive diverse repertoire of high quality choral a cappella music, as well as collaborations with high-profile and popular artists such as Dave Brubeck, Meredith Monk, Sufjan Stevens, and Bobby McFerrin.

Founded in 1980 as Pacific Mozart Ensemble, today's PEV is a Grammy-nominated vocal ensemble that celebrates our shared love of singing in community and creating an experience of connection with every audience. This love of musical connection drives our commitment to excellence in live and recorded performances. PEV attracts highly skilled non-professional singers with diverse artistic backgrounds and experience. The chorus has toured in the U.S. and internationally, performing in New York's Carnegie Hall, Germany, France, Cuba, and England.