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Artist Communities Alliance Welcomes Three Distinguished Board Members in 2024

[Providence, RI]—The Artist Communities Alliance (ACA) is delighted to announce the appointment of three esteemed cultural leaders to its board of directors: Roberto Bedoya, Cultural Affairs Manager, City of Oakland; Jeffreen M. Hayes, Ph.D., Executive Director, Threewalls; and Joel Garcia, Artist + Co-Founder and Director, Meztli Projects.

"We are thrilled to welcome these three esteemed leaders to ACA's board," said Lisa Funderburke, ACA President + CEO. "Board members hold a critical role in guiding the organization's strategic direction and affirming our commitment to artists and the people who power residencies. Their collective experiences as thought leaders will add invaluable contributions to ACA and strengthen our capacity to uplift the field."

Roberto Bedoya is the Cultural Affairs Manager for the City of Oakland. He recently shepherded the City of Oakland's new cultural development plan, *Belonging in Oakland*. Throughout his career, Bedoya has consistently supported artist-centered cultural practices throughout his career and advocated for expanded definitions of inclusion and belonging in the cultural sector.

An art historian and curator, Jeffreen M. Hayes, Ph.D., merges administrative, curatorial and academic practices into her cultural practice of supporting artists and community development. As an advocate for racial inclusion, equity and access, Jeffreen has developed a curatorial and leadership approach that invites community participation, particularly from those in historically excluded communities. As the Executive Director of Threewalls, Jeffreen provides strategic vision for the artistic direction and impact of the organization in Chicago. Under her leadership, Threewalls intentionally develops artistic platforms that encourage connections beyond traditional engagements with art. These engagements help manifest the organization's vision of art connecting segregated communities, people and experiences together. Jeffreen earned a Ph.D. in American Studies from the College of William and Mary, a MA in Art History from Howard University, and a BA from Florida International University in Humanities. Jeffreen's leadership practice is rooted in her matrilineal connections to her West Indian and Caribbean heritage and love of Black people.

Joel Garcia (Huichol) is an Indigenous artist, cultural organizer, co-founder, and Director of Meztli Projects, an Indigenous- based arts & culture collaborative centering Indigeneity into the creative practice of Los Angeles. In various roles, he has worked with Indigenous communities across borders in support of issues of land, access, and self- determination. His work explores healing and reconciliation, as well as memory and place. He's a current Stanton Fellow and former fellow of Monument Lab, and co-facilitator of the Intercultural Leadership Institute which proposes to hold space for cultural production outside of white supremacist frameworks.

"ACA is so fortunate to have a dynamic, committed, and passionate board," said Sanjit Sethi, ACA Board Chair, expressing his enthusiasm for the new appointments. "The addition of Roberto Bedoya, Joel Garcia, and Jeffreen Hayes — cultural leaders all — will make a significant contribution to this already remarkable community as ACA deepens its role in providing a platform for more equitable, engaged creative practices throughout the country."

[Full bios of each new board member is available on ACA's website.](#)

ABOUT ARTIST COMMUNITIES ALLIANCE: Artist Communities Alliance (ACA) is the international service organization for artist residency programs and artist-centered organizations. ACA's mission is to advocate for and support artist residency programs as a means of advancing the endeavors of all artists. Founded in 1991, ACA currently has more than 250 members in 50 U.S. states and 20 countries and works on behalf of 1,500 residency programs worldwide. Since 2004, ACA has provided more than \$4 million in direct grant funding to artists and artist residency centers.