

# **UGA Arts Collaborative Annual Report FY2024**

## **I. OVERVIEW**

### **Mission**

The UGA Arts Collaborative is a catalyst for innovative, interdisciplinary creative projects, advanced research and critical discourse in the arts, and for creative applications of technologies, concepts, and practices found across disciplines. It is a collaborative network of faculty, students, and community members from all disciplines of the visual and performing arts in addition to other disciplines in the humanities and sciences. The Arts Collaborative enables all stages of creative activity, from concept and team formation through production, documentation, and dissemination of research.

### **Support**

The UGA Arts Collaborative is supported by Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, the Office of Research, the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts, and the Graduate School. Additional support for the Arts Collaborative has been provided by the National Science Foundation, Lamar Dodd School of Art, Dance, Theatre and Film Studies, English, Hugh Hodgson School of Music, Morehead Honors College, Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities, Georgia Museum of Art, and the generous volunteer and financial support of many others.

### **History**

The UGA Arts Collaborative began in 1999 as a series of conversations among faculty and students throughout the university and local community to address the need for a program that would support collaboration in the arts. Seed grant funding from the Office of the Provost enabled the launch of a summit in 2001 that brought together a group of national and international artists interested in issues of collaboration and new forms of art, often involving multiple disciplines. Known then as Ideas for Creative Exploration, the group developed original projects and events, hosted visiting artists and scholars, held workshops, published websites, and established a campus office.

### **Governance**

David Saltz is the Executive Director and Mark Callahan is the Artistic Director of the Arts Collaborative.

The Advisory Board consists of the Executive Director and thirteen members appointed by the Executive Director for a three-year renewable term. The Advisory Board includes at least one student representative.

The following Advisory Board members served in FY24:

Anna Abraham (Torrance Center)  
Madeline Blankenship (Athens community)  
Melisa "Misha" Cahnmann-Taylor (Education)  
Chris Cuomo (Women's Studies and Philosophy)  
Connie Frigo (James Madison University X-Labs)  
David T. Gay (Mathematics)  
Rebecca Gose (Dance)  
Moon Jung Jang (Art)  
Peter Van Zandt Lane (Music)  
T. Anthony Marotta (Theatre and Film Studies)  
Meredith Welch-Devine (Graduate School)

Andrew Zawacki (English)  
Nkululeko Zungu (Student Representative)

See **Appendix A** for the Arts Collaborative Bylaws.

### **Graduate Assistantships in Interdisciplinary Arts Research**

UGA offers Graduate School Assistantships to students entering programs in Art, Music, and Theatre and Film Studies following a highly qualified student's nomination by their home department. These competitive, merit-based awards support collaborative research between the arts and other disciplines. Recipients of these assistantships work in a cohort of graduate students with the Arts Collaborative.

Assistantship recipients receive two years of funding from the Graduate School, followed by a third year of funding from the appropriate home department in the form of a Departmental Assistantship.

The current graduate assistants are Nkululeko Zungu (Music), Azadeh Beidollahkhani (Theatre and Film Studies), Samuel Horgan (Art), Sierra Wojtczack (Music), and Cicely Osborne (Theatre and Film Studies).

Graduate assistants starting in August 2024 are Maddy Underwood (Art), Richard Arndorfer (Music), and Amir Akbarpour Shiraz (Theatre and Film Studies).

See **Appendix B** for a report of Graduate Assistant activities.

### **Partnerships**

The Willson Center for Humanities and Arts is a showcase for faculty innovation and achievement. It facilitates intellectual exchange with the University and the public by the encouragement of interdisciplinary activity, which extends to the sciences and other orders of knowledge. The mission of the Willson Center is to promote research and creativity in the humanities and arts. It supports faculty through research grants, lectures, symposia, publications, visiting scholars, visiting artists, collaborative instruction, public conferences, exhibitions, and performances. It is committed to academic excellence and public impact.

The Arts Collaborative student organization is registered with the Student Affairs department of Engagement, Leadership, and Service. It is a network of graduate and undergraduate students interested in interdisciplinary arts collaboration. Members plan events and creative projects. The Artistic Director serves as an advisor to the student organization.

The Center for Integrative Conservation Research (CICR) mission is to advance new visions for conservation and environmental governance that are more just and more effective in creating the conditions in which all life can thrive, through innovations in graduate education, research and societal engagement that embrace multiple ways of knowing and relating to the world around us.

The UGA Office of Sustainability coordinates, communicates, and advances initiatives in teaching, research, service, student engagement, and campus operations. In alignment with UGA's Great Commitments to create healthier populations; stronger, more resilient communities; and a safer, more secure future for all; our sustainability initiatives provide meaningful experiential learning for students and valuable support for the communities we serve.

UGA is an institutional member of the Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru), an organization that advances the full range of arts-integrative research, curricula, programs, and creative practice to acknowledge, articulate, and expand the vital role of higher education in our global society. a2ru envisions a world in which universities – students, faculty, and leaders – acknowledge, deeply embed, and seamlessly integrate the arts in the pursuit of basic knowledge and in everyday practice.

## II. PROJECTS and EVENTS

### *Creativity and Collaboration*

Three semester-long cohorts participated in *Creativity and Collaboration* workshops with the support of an Innovations in Graduate Education award from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The grant provided \$499,835 of research funding to the University of Georgia and represents a partnership of campus programs including the UGA Arts Collaborative and the Center for Integrative Conservation Research.

The workshops were facilitated by Mark Callahan and Nate Nibbelink with additional support from the UGA GradFIRST program. Creativity and collaboration are fundamental to addressing today's socio-environmental challenges. The workshops included arts-based, STEM-friendly activities developed by UGA researchers from the arts, humanities, and sciences designed to help students to think creatively, to collaborate across disciplines, and to work with people with different perspectives, knowledge, and values.

The NSF award allowed the team to study the effectiveness of the workshops and to generate the knowledge required to move these approaches into the broader community. If successful, widespread adoption of these methods will contribute to equipping graduates across the country with communication and collaboration skills and ultimately increase creative and innovative solutions to complex global environmental challenges.

### Project Team

Nate Nibbelink (Forestry)  
Lizzie King (Ecology/Forestry)  
Mark Callahan (Art)  
Kathryn Roulston (Education)  
Brian Haas (Psychology)  
Meredith Welch-Devine (Graduate School/Anthropology)  
Michael Marshall (Art)  
Rebecca Gose (Dance)  
Chris Cuomo (Philosophy/Women's Studies)  
Jenna Jambeck (Engineering)  
Laurie Fowler (Ecology)

### *Organoids*

The "Organoids" team of artists and scientists received a 2023 Mini Grant to develop prototypes and arts-integrative methods to create organoids, three-dimensional cellular structures which are developed from pluripotent stem cells. In FY24 they expanded the project team with support from the Arts Collaborative and additional awards from the National Science Foundation and Franklin College of Arts and Sciences.

Project leaders Dr. Nadja Zeltner and Martijn van Wagtenonk were inspired by the complexity of organoid models that grow in three dimensions and invite novel methods of representation. Organoid structures are of interest in seeking solutions for problems including adrenal gland insufficiency, understanding human embryonic development, and how hormone regulation impacts diseases such as PTSD. Now the team includes faculty and students in art, dance, molecular medicine, engineering, animal science, and cellular biology.

Project leader Nadja Keltner received an NSF CAREER grant for multi-year support of engineering next-generation adrenal gland organoids with arts-integrated methods.

Graduate assistant Christina James received an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, a five-year award to help ensure the quality, vitality, and diversity of the scientific and engineering workforce of the United States.

The project was awarded one of five Franklin College Rapid Interdisciplinary Proposal grants, responding to the need for new paradigms that shape future research, life-long learning, public discourse, service, and dynamic entrepreneurship.

#### Project Team

Nadja Zeltner, Center for Molecular Medicine, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Cellular Biology faculty

Martijn van Wagtenonk, Art faculty

Lohitash Karumbaiah, Regenerative Bioscience Center and Animal Dairy Science faculty

Ramana Pidaparti, Engineering faculty

Breanna Urbanowicz, Complex Carbohydrate Research Center faculty

Maryn Whitmore-Mills

Alexander Bucksch, Plant Biology faculty

Eileen Wallace, Art faculty

Mable Fox, Engineering faculty

#### *Treehouse Zine*

*Treehouse Zine* is a collaborative community placemaking project supported in part by the Arts Collaborative. The project produced community events and publications.

#### Issue 3 Release Party

September 10, 2023

Buvez, 585 Barber St.

Art and clothes vendors, food and drink, DIY zine and craft station, clay activities, weaving, games, and live music, and performances by Neat Freak, Petunia Jane, Nick Christian, Little Mae Band.

#### Treehouse Squared Fall Fest

November 12, 2023

Treehouse Kid and Craft, 585 Barber St.

Candle making, zine making, and an ice cream special co-sponsored by Treehouse Kid and Craft.

#### Issue 4 Release Party

December 3, 2023

Lamar Dodd School of Art Atrium

Art market, zine-making station, memory box crafting, music by Viv Awesome, Subject to Change, and Insect Politics, a live-coded audiovisual performance, and interactive performance art.

#### Project Team

Eliana Gelman

Sophie James

Aryan Thakur

*Expression of the Superorganism*  
September 14 – October 1, 2023  
Lamar Dodd Galleries

*Expression of the Superorganism* was an exhibition of visual art created by Red Imported Fire Ants in collaboration with artist Jiayi Guo and biologist Haolin Zeng. In the seemingly boundless expression of the superorganism, art created by ants features a post-humanist element, where the aesthetic dimension of being for humans and ants is one of cooperation rather than conflict. The project received a 2023 Mini Grant and continued support from the Arts Collaborative and the National Science Foundation.

Project Team

Jiayi Guo, Art Education  
Horace Zeng, Entomology

*Arts Collaborative Conversation: Expression of the Superorganism*  
September 29, 2023

Join collaborators Jiayi Guo and Haolin Zeng for a gallery talk about their project, *Expression of the Superorganism*. The exhibition features images, objects, and video created by Red Imported Fire Ants in collaboration with the artists.

*Annie Sprinkle & Beth Stephens Residency*  
October 11 – 14, 2023

For the last decade, Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens have been creating performance under the rubric of “ecosexuality” in which they playfully provoke audiences to think differently about their relationship to the Earth: instead of imagining Earth as mother, how would we treat the Earth if we thought of it as a lover? How would our behavior change? How might we, then, co-create a more sustainable future? Sponsored by the UGA Arts Collaborative, Willson Center for Humanities & Arts, The Athenaeum, Department of Theatre and Film Studies, Institute of Women’s Studies, and Sustainable UGA.

A SprinkleStephens Salon: Reception, Games, and Book-signing/Decorating of “Assuming the Ecosexual Position: The Earth as Lover”

Introduction to Ecosex Art & Ideas: Artist Talk and Workshops

Screening + Q&A: *Water Makes Us Wet*

I Love You (Earth) Day! Sidewalk Ecosex Clinic

*Arts Collaborative Conversation: Sustaining Creative Teams*  
October 23, 2023

Join graduate assistants in interdisciplinary arts research for a conversation about how creative partners meet, work together, and keep going. All are welcome to share questions and knowledge about the challenges and benefits of collaboration.

*My Body as the Topic Coming Around Again*  
October 26, 2023  
Lamar Dodd School of Art Atrium

*My Body as the Topic Coming Around Again* is a three-volume dancework that unravels the tangled threads of white womanhood and American modern dance. Centered around Land, (In)Visibility, and Care, these dances traverse dualities of freedom/control; sincerity/satire; tenderness/violence; beauty/monstrosity.

The project utilizes “dance wrecking,” a practice of choreographic feedback created by American choreographer Susan Rethorst. Embedded in the invitation to wreck these dances is a call to work collaboratively to disrupt patterns and legacies of colonization and white supremacy in dance.

By Rebecca Pappas; performed by Ellen Smith Ahern, Theo Armstrong, Alexis Robbins, and Taylor Zappone; wrecked by Antonio Darden.

Sponsored by the Georgia Review with additional support from the UGA Arts Collaborative, Department of Dance, and Lamar Dodd School of Art.

*Arts Collaborative Conversation: Arts Funding Trends*  
November 6, 2023

Graduate assistants in interdisciplinary arts research present a report about trends in arts funding and share examples of recent grants awarded by Creative Capital, MAP Fund, South Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. This event was part of the UGA Spotlight on the Arts festival.

*Arts Collaborative Conversation: Cydney K. Seigerman*  
February 9, 2024

Join Cydney K. Seigerman for a conversation about their field research in Brazil that incorporates community-based theatre techniques to better understand local water struggles. Seigerman is a doctoral student in Anthropology and Integrative Conservation exploring how socionatural processes shape and are shaped by the lived experience of water insecurity.

*Composition x Conservation: New Music Inspired by Current Conservation Research*  
February 17, 2024  
Special Collections Building

The 2024 Integrative Conservation Conference (ICC) concluded with a performance of new music created in collaboration with UGA student composers and ICON PhD students.

“Innaipu”

Composed by Nkululeko Zungu, Hugh Hodgson School of Music  
In collaboration with Janaki Mohanachandran, Department of Anthropology  
Performed by William Freeman Leverett (tablas and voice)

“Eventos Brasileiros: I. Na Foresta Branca”

Composed by William May, Hugh Hodgson School of Music  
In collaboration with Cydney Seigerman, Department of Anthropology  
Performed by William May (horn)

“Sunrises, Sunsets”

Composed by Gianna DiMuzio

In collaboration with Hannah Morris, Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources

Pre-recorded audio

“I-HI-YA”

Composed by Sydney Passmore

In collaboration with Alyssa Quan, Odum School of Ecology

Performed by: Bella Cabrel-Watson (flute), Allyson Kate McKoon (clarinet), Jhonnisvan Campos (violin), Daniel Boscan (viola), Charlton Hills (cello)

“Wild Potatoes”

Composed by William Emde

In collaboration with Justice Britton, Department of Anthropology

Performed by Dalton Hooper, Trey Heaton, Josh Hadaway, Zachary Nelson (trombones) William Emde, Jonas Vetrescas (bass trombones)

*Arts Collaborative Conversation: (art)WORK*

April 5, 2024

Join graduate assistants in interdisciplinary arts research for a conversation about art and labor. Pay and professional standards vary widely in creative spaces. Emerging artists often face challenges in obtaining fair compensation and equitable treatment in entry level positions. All are welcome to share their experiences and strategize together about the challenges of working in the arts.

*Rescue: Waste and Redemption*

April 6 to June 15, 2024

Lyndon House Arts Center

*Rescue: Waste and Redemption* is a group exhibition and publication featuring artists who transform industrial byproducts into artworks or craft objects, thus creating artworks that save materials from the landfill or rescue raw materials from the fate of becoming environmental pollutants. Curated by Lizzie Zucker Saltz, the project engaged community partners including Athens-Clarke County (ACC) Leisure Services, ACC Solid Waste, ACC Recycling, Dye Sheet Metal, UGA Office of Sustainability, and the UGA Arts Collaborative.

Artists: Paul Blake, Lisa Freeman, Heather Bird Harris, Susan Lenz, Adah Bennion, Casey McGuire, Larry Millard, Zachary Naylor, Johanna Norry, Emily Peters, Pilar, Paula Reynaldi, Nell Ruby, Lisa Schnelinger, Lenore Solmo, Kelly Thompson, Gregor Turk, Jon Vogt, Michael Webster, Matthew White, Kelsey Wishik and Joni Younkins.

*Arts Collaborative Conversation: Summit Reports*

April 19, 2024

Learn more about the a2ru Emerging Creatives Student Summit and South Arts/Creative Placemaking Communities South and Appalachian Creative Placemaking Summit from UGA students who attended them. Sophie James, Emily Dustman, Jana Ghezawi, and Saurabh Anand will share their experiences in an informal conversation open to all.

## *Classics Undone*

A collaborative film project in progress, *Classics Undone* was co-written as an exploration of classic theatre plays existing in the modern filmed world. The project team is composed of a large ensemble of UGA students, faculty, alumni, and community partners. In addition, the film has received support from UGA Arts Collaborative, the Atlanta Mayor's Office, SAG-AFTRA, MAC Cosmetics, and Moonshine Post.

## **Mini Grants**

The Arts Collaborative student organization facilitates a mini grant program to emphasize project development through mentorship, flexible funding, and creative feedback. Collaborative teams must include participants from multiple disciplines and include at least one student, faculty, or staff member from UGA.

### *The Tiger as "Protector" to the Tiger as "Destructor"*

*The Tiger as "Protector" to the Tiger as "Destructor"* advances the role of Gond paintings in fostering dialogue around environmental injustice within biodiversity conservation programs. The project will explore the intricate relationship between the Gond Adivasis people of India and nature, with a specific focus on tigers and conservation actions imposed upon them. The project will serve as a powerful means to initiate meaningful discussions about environmental justice and the impact of top-down conservation efforts on indigenous communities.

#### Project Team

Amit Kaushik, Anthropology  
Nancee Uniyal, Geography  
Bhajju Shyam, artist

### *Rare Truth*

*Rare Truth* is an entrepreneurial project to repurpose global sterling silver scraps for 3D-printed jewelry. Project participants will develop digital model designs and research about marketing, manufacturing, and collaborations with local artists with an emphasis on ethical and environmental sustainability.

#### Project Team

Rae Bumgardner, Art  
Erin Faircloth, Art  
Molly Maxwell, designer  
Tijái Whatley, consultant

## **Conferences**

*2023 a2ru National Conference: "What's Next?: Imagining New Educational Futures for Ourselves, Our Communities and Our Planet"*  
October 19-21, 2023

The Arts Collaborative supported UGA faculty and student virtual participation in the a2ru national conference.

The a2ru national conference is an opportunity for practitioners and researchers from across the higher education spectrum to share innovations and perspectives in the arts. a2ru advances the



full range of arts and design integrative research, curricula, programs, and creative practice to acknowledge, articulate, and expand the vital role of higher education in our global society. a2ru's work, in partnership with an international network of leading higher education institutions, envisions a world in which universities—students, faculty, and leaders—explore, embed, and integrate the arts in everyday practice and research.

*2024 Emerging Creatives Student Summit*

March 14-17, 2024

Rochester Institute of Technology

Four graduate students from UGA participated in the 2024 Emerging Creatives Student Summit, hosted by the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and a2ru. Saurabh Anand (English), Emily Dustman (College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences), Jana Ghezawi (Art), and Christina James (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology) joined students from across the a2ru network to explore the theme of "Play" in the RIT Student Hall for Exploration and Development (SHED), a new facility that provides flexible spaces for technology, art, and design under one roof. Participants worked in interdisciplinary teams to create arts-integrative projects with training from a2ru staff on best practices for collaboration.

Christina James reflected that "the Summit's emphasis on interactive modes of learning, such as physical models, games, and experiential activities, has inspired me to explore novel avenues for incorporating play-based methodologies into upper-level biology courses."

Emily Dustman contributed an essay about her summit experience to *E-Squared*, an art+science publication and website. Her analysis on the collaborative process suggests that "together, cooperation and collaboration translate to much more meaningful work and build a strong foundation for successful teamwork and problem-solving in all aspects of life."

*South and Appalachian Creative Placemaking Summit*

March 5-8, 2024

Atlanta, GA

The Arts Collaborative supported Sophie James' participation in the South and Appalachian Creative Placemaking Summit.

Co-produced by Creative Placemaking Communities and South Arts, the South and Appalachian Creative Placemaking Summit is the preeminent gathering of creative placemaking professionals in the southern region. With over 40 sessions, experiences, tours and performances throughout the three-day Summit, attendees came away with innovative and effective approaches to placemaking, with an emphasis on arts and culture ecosystems. Both urban and rural projects throughout the Southeast were represented through peer-to-peer panel discussions, tours performances, special activations, and workshops. Attendees of the 2024 Summit included visual and performing artists, planners, urban designers, architects, arts administrators and community and economic development professionals.

## **Appendix A:**

### **BYLAWS**

#### *Executive Director*

The Executive Director is responsible for the budget and overall direction of the Arts Collaborative.

The Executive Director serves as a member and chairperson of the Advisory Board.

The Executive Director is appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Executive Director reports to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

#### *Artistic Director*

The Artistic Director is responsible for the daily operation of the Arts Collaborative.

The Artistic Director is appointed by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Artistic Director reports to the Executive Director and Advisory Board.

#### *Advisory Board*

The Advisory Board consists of the Executive Director and thirteen members appointed by the Executive Director for a three-year renewable term. The committee should represent a diversity of perspectives and academic disciplines inside and beyond the arts, and might include faculty of any rank, staff, students, and community members. The Advisory Board shall include at least one student representative.

The Advisory Board gives counsel to the Artistic Director on the Arts Collaborative's goals, policies, and procedures.

The Advisory Board shall convene at least once each academic year.

Any member of the Advisory Board may convene a meeting of the board at any time with at least one week of prior notice.

A simple majority of the Advisory Board constitutes a quorum.

#### *Ad Hoc Committees*

The Advisory Board chairperson shall create ad hoc committees to address specific issues and initiatives as necessary. Members of these committees are appointed by the chairperson for a term of up to three years, eligible for renewal. The chair of each committee will provide a report to the Advisory Board at least once a year.

#### *Graduate Assistants*

Arts Collaborative graduate assistants receive peer mentorship and practical experience in arts research design, project leadership, and community engagement. Assistantship duties include the student's own collaborative work across disciplines and facilitating collaborative projects and proposals with faculty, students, and community members.

Graduate assistants are supervised by the Artistic Director.

Semester evaluation reports are provided to the graduate assistant's home department.

An annual report is provided to the Graduate School.

### *Willson Center for Humanities and Arts*

The Willson Center is an administrative partner of the Arts Collaborative and a liaison to the Office of Research and UGA Arts Council.

The Arts Collaborative and Willson Center share resources to promote activities, communicate accomplishments, and develop research opportunities.

An annual report is provided to the Willson Center.

### *Research Affiliates*

The designation "research affiliate" describes individuals or teams who receive funding and/or mentorship support for creative projects from the Arts Collaborative.

### *Student Organization*

The UGA Arts Collaborative student organization is registered with the Student Affairs department of Engagement, Leadership, and Service. It is a network of graduate and undergraduate students interested in interdisciplinary arts collaboration. Members plan events and creative projects.

The Artistic Director serves as an advisor to the student organization.

### *Amendment Procedures*

The Bylaws may be amended by a vote of nine members of the Advisory Board.

Amendments to the Bylaws must be submitted to Board members at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote is taken. The ballot may be taken by mail if all members are not present at the designated meeting.

## **APPENDIX B:**

### **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS RESEARCH**

#### **Background**

UGA offers Graduate School Assistantships to students entering programs in Art, Music, and Theatre and Film Studies following a highly qualified student's nomination by their home department. These competitive, merit-based awards support collaborative research between the arts and other disciplines.

Graduate Assistants receive peer mentorship and practical experience in arts research design, project leadership, and community engagement while supervised by the Artistic Director of the Arts Collaborative. Assistantship duties include the student's own collaborative work across disciplines and facilitating collaborative projects and proposals with faculty, students, and community members.

#### **Selection**

To be considered for a Graduate School Assistantship, applicants must provide a one-page statement to their home department's Graduate Coordinator. The statement should describe the applicant's current research interests and any previous training and experience in interdisciplinary or collaborative programs and environments. Nominees will be reviewed by an interdisciplinary selection committee.

Graduate Coordinators in Art, Music, and Theatre and Film Studies submit up to five nominees each for the assistantships. A five-member selection committee reviews the nominations and ranks them within each department. Nominees are considered based on their potential to conduct research in accordance with the Arts Collaborative mission to generate innovative, truly interdisciplinary creative projects and critical discourse in the arts.

The FY24 selection committee included the following members:

John Bray (Theatre and Film Studies)  
Adrian Childs (Music)  
David Saltz (Executive Director, Arts Collaborative)  
Isabelle Wallace (Art)  
Meredith Welch-Devine (Graduate School)

#### **Graduate Assistants**

The current graduate assistants are Nkululeko Zungu (Music), Azadeh Beidollahkhani (Theatre and Film Studies), Samuel Horgan (Art), Sierra Wojtczack (Music), and Cicely Osborne (Theatre and Film Studies).

Graduate assistants starting in August 2024 are Maddy Underwood (Art), Richard Arndorfer (Music), and Amir Akbarpour Shiraz (Theatre and Film Studies).

#### **Research**

Graduate assistants play an integral role in providing administrative support to the Arts Collaborative, facilitating interdisciplinary events that make research in the arts available to the UGA and Athens communities, participating in faculty-led projects, and creating self-initiated projects.

*Graduate research assistants worked collectively on the following:*

- Administration of the Arts Collaborative student organization committed to providing an open, interdisciplinary platform for engagement with topics in arts.

- Administration of the Mini Grants program, including development of criteria, call for proposals, information sessions, formation of selection committee, and administration of awards.
- Project mentorship for Mini Grant recipients including team meetings, timeline and budget development, documentation, and creative feedback.
- Arts research development including reviews of local, national, and international funding sources for research in the arts.
- Planning, facilitation, publicity, and logistical support for public events.
- Content development for newsletter and social media.
- Orientation for new graduate assistants.
- Leadership of graduate assistant team meetings.

*Graduate research assistants worked individually and collaboratively on the following:*

- Samuel Horgan served as a liaison for the *Organoids* project team.
- Sierra Wojtczack served as liaison for the *The Tiger as Protector to the Tiger as Destructor* project team.
- Cicely Osborne served as a liaison for the *Rare Truth* project team.
- Nkululeko Zungu served as liaison for the *Expression of the Superorganism* project team.
- Samuel Horgan served as a liaison with members of the Southeastern Water Research and Education Network (SE-WREN), an interdisciplinary team supported by the NSF with members from UGA, the University of Memphis, Oak Ridge Associated Universities, Southern University of New Orleans, and Vanderbilt University.
- Sierra Wojtczack produced the *Composition x Conservation* project and performance featured in the UGA Integrative Conservation Conference.
- Azadeh Beidollahkhani and Cicely Osborne assisted with the Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stevens UGA artist residency events.
- Sierra Wojtczack and Nkululeko Zungu collaborated with the Ravish Momin UGA residency.
- Nkululeko Zungu collaborated with an environmental scientist in the *Composition x Conservation* project.
- Samuel Horgan coordinated an interdisciplinary student seminar in conjunction with the *Spotlight x Spotlight Ecologies* event.
- Nkululeko Zungu moderated a public conversation with Cassie Chantel and Julien Berger for *The Mask You Wear* event at Athens Cine.
- Azadeh Beidollahkhani assisted with virtual reality equipment management.

- Nkululeko Zungu created a performance in collaboration with Pamoja Dance Troupe for the UGA Concert Celebrating Contemporary Black Music in honor of Torrance Annual Lecturer Portia Maulsby.
- Cicely Osborne collaborated with Nkululeko Zungu on a video installation with the doctoral recital performance “That Part.”
- Azadeh Beidollahkhani contributed sound design to the UGA Theatre production of *Mother Courage*.
- Samuel Horgan facilitated the Arts Collaborative Conversation “(art)WORK.”
- Nkululeko Zungu collaborated with Lemuel “Life” LaRoche for a performance at the Morton Theatre as part of the Chamber Music Athens festival.
- Azadeh Beidollahkhani contributed video art and editing to the UGA Theatre production *Silent Sky*.
- Nkululeko Zungu performed in collaboration with the *Athens in Harmony: Live Benefit for Athens Anti-Discrimination Movement*.
- Sierra Wojtczack served on the UGA Campus Sustainability Grant selection committee.
- Nkululeko Zungu served on the Student Composers Association board.
- Samuel Horgan served on the Lamar Dodd Visiting Artist Scholars committee as a graduate representative.

### **Accomplishments**

- Sierra Wojtczack’s received support from the New Music Opportunity Travel Fund to attend the Society of Composers Inc. Region II Conference at Ohio University, where their composition “Alien Monologues II” was performed.
- Nkululeko Zungu received a commission for South African violinist, Bonolo Kgaile.
- Sierra Wojtczack was selected for participation in the 2024 Valencia International Performance.
- Samuel Horgan created a performance piece in conjunction with the exhibition *Insect Politics* in the Lamar Dodd Galleries.
- Azadeh Beidollahkhani was nominated for Best Design and Technologies for the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival Region IV.
- Sierra Wojtczack was selected as the 2023–24 Large Ensemble Composer-in-Residence at UGA.
- Nkululeko Zungu performed as a member of the African American Choral Ensemble.
- Cicely Osborne was nominated for a Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival award for the graphic animation she created for UGA Theatre production of *Silent Sky*.
- Sierra Wojtczack’s chamber work “Wind Up, Simmer Down” was selected for a reading session with the American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME).

- Nkululeko Zungu premiered a new work for percussion at the Danz Center for New Music and Freeside Atlanta, performed by Bryan Wysocki.
- Sierra Wojtczak was commissioned to compose “3 Approaches” for cellist Otavio Kavakama, who premiered the work on his doctoral recital at Bowling Green State University.

## Reflections

I have never considered arts leadership from a research perspective before this, but I find myself now thinking more critically and consciously about my practices. For example, I found the public conversations about arts funding trends and collaborative teams to be useful sounding boards for issues across all types of arts disciplines. Although there is no “one size fits all” solution for collaborative issues, it is beneficial to learn different project management strategies. [Sierra Wojtczak]

As a project liaison and mini grant coordinator I have helped create avenues for people to be matched with contacts and resources to support research and build community. This action has been extremely valuable and rewarding for me in sustaining momentum in my studies, as well as building a sense of academic citizenship both as a MFA and in a larger sense, as a UGA graduate student. [Samuel Horgan]

“I am able to glimpse smaller creative projects from other departments, more clearly get a sense of trends on campus and gain an awareness of higher academia in the arts. All of these aspects lead to greater growth, particularly the latter, which helps shape possibilities when contemplating future endeavors.” [Cicely Osborne]

I have learned many lessons in the numerous conversation series, through my involvement with different projects, and by meeting such a diverse group of individuals involved in the Arts Collaborative from around the world. I know that my practice has benefited greatly from interactions with these individuals alone and being in the Arts Collaborative at large has been the icing on the cake. [Nkululeko Zungu]

The *Composition x Conservation* concert was extremely well received, especially by the non-musicians/conference attendees in the audience. It was my first time witnessing how scientific research gets musically interpreted. In the future, I am interested in organizing similar collaborations between the performing arts and other disciplines. Seeing how receptive people can be to collaborate across disciplines was very encouraging. [Sierra Wojtczak]

I am enthusiastic to enact programs for greater critical engagement and partnership with the humanities as well as the sciences. In terms of creative production, interdisciplinary alliances are the structure through which art can most effectively meet contemporary conditions, not just as theory but as practice. [Samuel Horgan]