

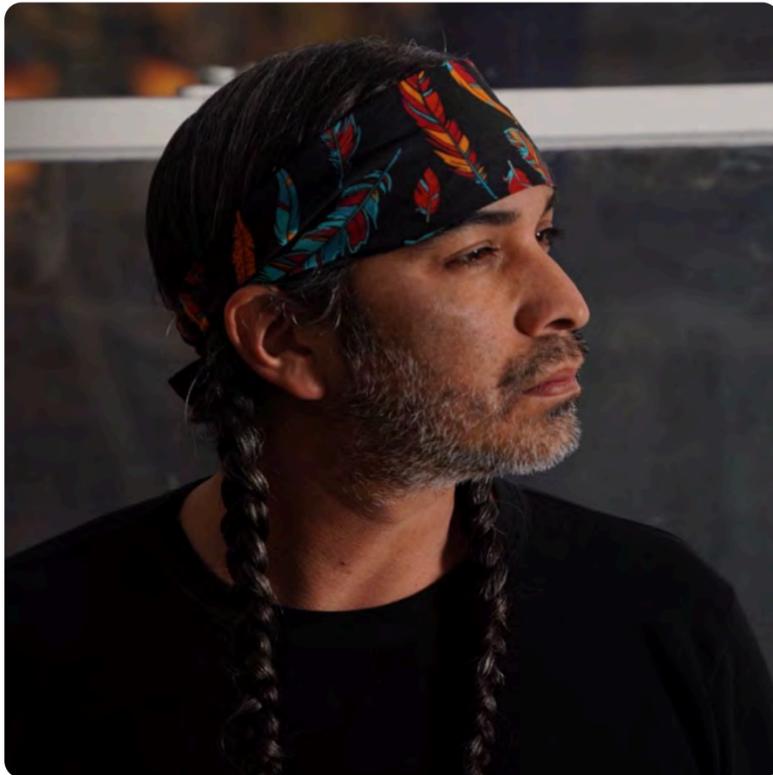
ARX SAC

2026 RESEARCHER + ARTIST LOOK BOOK

RESEARCHER

Monika Ray

Monika Ray has a PhD in Computer Science with a specialisation in Artificial Intelligence from Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri. Her undergraduate degree is in Biology/Neuroscience. She is a Research Scientist in the Department of Internal Medicine at UC Davis School of Medicine, where she focuses on research (opioids, chronic pain, etc.) pertaining to pattern recognition and feature selection using AI methods, teaching advanced statistical analysis and machine learning to graduate students at UC Davis and Yale University and leading efforts related to advanced computing infrastructure at the Center for Healthcare Research and Policy, UC Davis. She also works as a consultant for various government organisations. She is the analytical lead developer of several Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) inpatient quality measures, currently in use by healthcare facilities. She has extensive experience working with large data and developing/implementing new and off-the-shelf artificial intelligence/machine learning (AI/ML) models, with a particular interest in unsupervised pattern recognition/anomaly detection. She has experience working with traditional statistical models and concepts enabling effective collaboration with other scientists to guide analytical pipelines using a combination of AI and traditional statistical methods. She is responsible for the development and testing of advanced AI/ML models for creating improved models to predict outcomes in several research domains.

**ARTIST**

Dominick Porrás

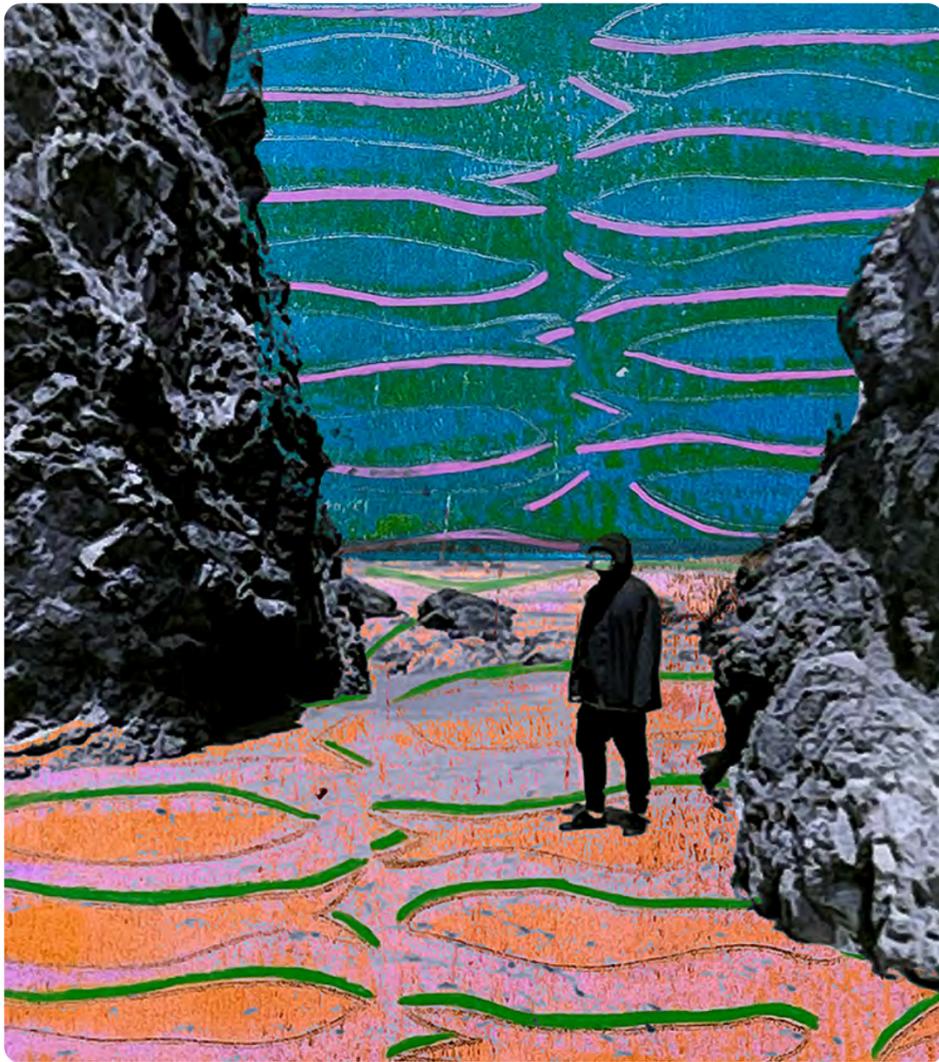
Dominick Porrás is an Indigenous multidisciplinary artist and academic instructor with Los Rios and CSUS, residing in Sacramento, California. His practice is grounded in lens-based media and archival investigation. Porrás' framework as an artist foregrounds community-based methodologies and intertribal collaboration. Through digital interventions, Porrás interrogates the visual politics of early colonial representation and reasserts Indigenous ecological and cultural knowledge systems.

Over the past two decades, Porrás has been a key cultural worker and co-founder of Sol Collective, a Sacramento non-profit that merges arts, activism, and community education. His photographic and media work has played a central role in defining the organization's visual language and public presence. Porrás earned his MFA in Studio Art from the Institute of American Indian Arts in 2023 and currently teaches courses in photography and New Media.

ARTIST

ARX
SAC

Dominick Porras



**RESEARCHER**

Geoanna Bautista

I am a physician-scientist and neonatologist at UC Davis working at the intersection of mechanobiology, storytelling, and care for critically ill newborns. My clinical work focuses on intestinal injury in extremely premature infants, including necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) and spontaneous intestinal perforation (SIP), as well as surgical diseases such as short gut syndrome, gastroschisis, intestinal atresias, and other complex congenital anomalies and syndromes. My research explores how physical forces such as pressure and stretch are translated into biological signals in the developing intestine through the mechanosensitive ion channel Piezo1, with the goal of transforming outcomes for vulnerable infants born premature or with congenital anomalies. I bring an integrative lens to understanding how cells sense their environment and how these invisible forces shape growth, adaptation, and resilience in the neonatal gut.

Beyond the bench, I help build structures that support both science and the people who do it: I co-founded the Physician-Scientist Group Initiative at UC Davis, co-lead the UC Fetal Consortium Gastroschisis Working Group, and co-founded the Baby Intestines Group (B.I.G.), all aimed at fostering collaboration across disciplines and institutions. As Associate Program Director for Scholarly Oversight for the Neonatology Fellowship, I work closely with trainees to develop their research identities, amplifying voices from diverse backgrounds and nurturing the next generation of physician-scientists. I bring scientific rigor, clinical relevance, passionate mentorship, and genuine enthusiasm for exploring how art can illuminate the invisible forces that shape life—through ARx, I hope to collaborate with artists to transform abstract mechanotransduction into tangible experiences that help families understand what is happening inside their infant's body and create new dialogues between researchers, clinicians, patients, and communities.

**ARTIST**

Jennifer Lugris

Jennifer Lugris is a Uruguayan Korean American artist whose work centers on inherited generational fortitude. She is the granddaughter of refugees from North Korea and Franco-Spain and the daughter of parents who fled military dictatorships in Uruguay and Argentina. After becoming a mother, she began uncovering the story of her North Korean grandmother—a woman she never met but whose resilience shapes her life and art. Drawing from her layered identities and the strength passed down through her family, Lugris creates paintings that transform generational memory into a visual language of courage, healing, and becoming. Lugris’s award-winning work has been exhibited widely, funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council, and acquired by institutions including the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Facebook, and the University of California Davis Health. She earned her MFA from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and lives in Sacramento, CA.

ARTIST

ARX
SAC

Jennifer Lugris



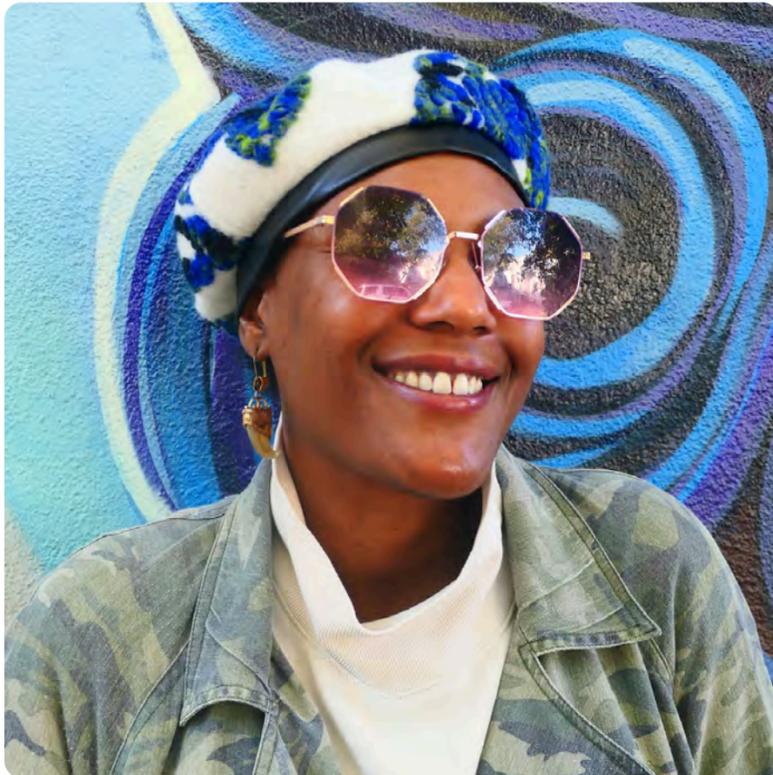
**RESEARCHER**

Leigh Ann Simmons

Dr. Leigh Ann Simmons is a national and international women's health scholar, trained therapist, and expert health coach who blends scientific expertise with hands-on coaching to drive meaningful health behavior and systems change. A tenured Professor of Nursing at the UC Davis Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing, her research focuses on advancing health equity and improving chronic disease risk among childbearing women and underserved communities. Dr. Simmons has published more than 100 peer-reviewed articles, abstracts, and book chapters and has secured over \$16 million in research funding from the National Institutes of Health, the Veterans Health Administration, and the California Department of Health and Human Services, among others.

Using community-engaged, in-person, and digital approaches, Dr. Simmons has designed and tested interventions that improve risk screening, health care access, mood, and personalized care. She has trained more than 300 health coaches for the Veterans Health Administration, provided executive coaching for health system leaders, and partnered with community organizations ranging from federally qualified health centers to child and family services to patient advocacy groups. These collaborations ensure that her work extends beyond academic journals into practical strategies that people can use to feel better and live healthier lives, while enabling care systems to expand reach and impact.

Dr. Simmons earned her PhD in Child and Family Development from the University of Georgia, a Master's degree in Couple and Family Therapy from MCP-Hahnemann University (now Drexel University), and a BA in Literature/Writing from the University of California, San Diego. She also holds a certificate in Integrative Health Coaching from the Duke Integrative Medicine Center.

**ARTIST**

Jessica Wimbley

Jessica Wimbley is an artist/curator based in Sacramento, California. Wimbley utilizes the literary term biomythography, defined by poet Audre Lorde as a combination of “biography, myth, and history”, as an interdisciplinary visual arts practice and framework for curatorial inquiry. Her art practice incorporates the building of visual archives via a variety of photographic/material cultures. With these images, she creates interruptions and juxtapositions within histories of identity, digital photography, video, performance, and collage. Her works are included in academic, museum, and public art collections, including the CA Public Digital Art Collection, Crocker Art Museum, and LACMA.

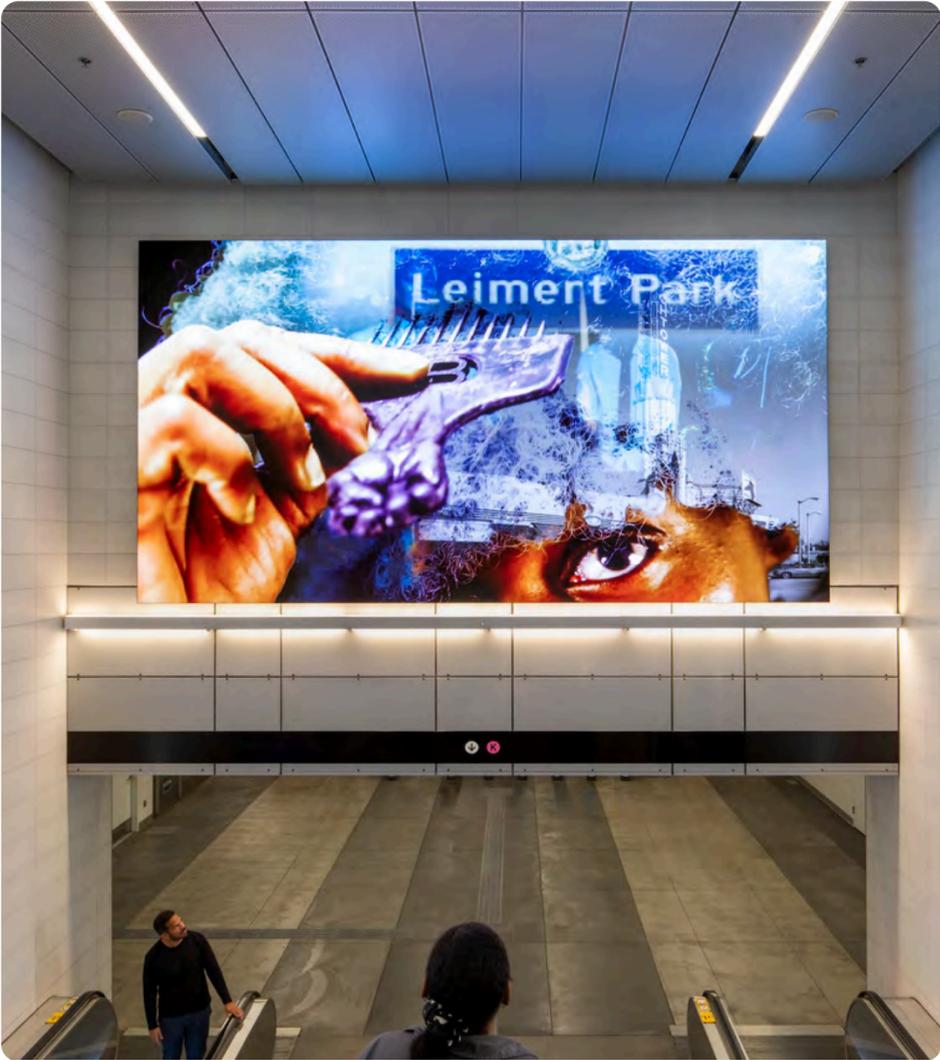
Her public art projects include "True Story of Edges: Leimert Park" (2025), a video collage featured in "Love, Leimert" at MetroLA Leimert Park Station K Line, and "Fieldworks: California State Railroad Museum" (2024), part of the Sacramento Public Library's Parks and Tranquility program. This project is supported in whole or in part by funding provided by the State of California, administered by the California State Library; Fieldworks: Califia, 2021, part of the CA Public Digital Art Collection, the “Social Justice Billboard Project” in collaboration with the Northeast Sculpture and Gallery Factory in Minneapolis, MN, and Masking Series, 2021 featuring video and still photography created in partnership with the State of California and The Center at Sierra Health Foundation, to speak directly to Californians impacted by COVID.

Wimbley received her BFA in Painting from Rhode Island School of Design, M.F.A. in Visual Arts from the University of California, Davis, and her MA in Arts Management from Claremont Graduate University. Wimbley is currently Artist in Residence for the Twin Rivers School District in Sacramento, CA, and a consultant with the California State Railroad Museum. Wimbley served as the 2023-2024 Creative Corp Fellow for the City of Sacramento.

ARTIST

ARX
SAC

Jessica Wimbley



**RESEARCHER**

Jennifer Rosenthal

I am an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and a pediatric hospitalist at UC Davis School of Medicine. Caring for hospitalized children directly inspired my research, which focuses on designing and evaluating ways healthcare systems and clinical teams can improve care delivery to strengthen quality, safety, and equitable access for children and families. My work centers on advancing family-centered care—care that recognizes the family as the focus and unit of care—by changing provider behavior and communication. Family-centered care is associated with improvements in care quality, trust, goal achievement, satisfaction, reduced anxiety, and lower costs. Core attributes including collaboration, empowerment, respect, communication, individualized care, and support. Despite its benefits, persistent barriers to implementation include family and care team stress, competing clinical demands, power imbalances, and organizational limitations. My research develops and validates tools to measure family-centered care and designs interventions to improve it, often using digital approaches such as telehealth. For example, my neonatal intensive care unit clinical trials have shown that virtual engagement using telehealth improves families' access to participating in their infant's care; it also mitigates structural- and social-factor-based disparities—including neighborhood health conditions and race/ethnicity. These trials also improved family experience, reduced safety events, reduced unplanned emergency department revisits, and increased interpreter utilization. Because of this expertise, I also serve as the Faculty Director for Digital Health Equity at the UC Davis Center for Health and Technology, where I lead evaluations and improvement initiatives to advance digital health equity across UC Davis Health. In addition to my own research, I direct the ARC-MD physician-scientist training pathway for medical students, the most meaningful and impactful part of my work. Outside of medicine, I enjoy hiking in the mountains, practicing yoga, cooking, and spending time with my husband and two children.

**ARTIST**

Jodi Connelly

Jodi Connelly's work investigates the complexities of the human relationship to nature and the environment. Through site-specific environmental interventions, photographic documentation, installations and drawing, she explores issues of climate change and the impact the industrialization of the land has had on native ecosystems and the environment. She completed her MFA in Art Studio at the University of California, Davis in 2018, where she received the Keister and Allen Prize for her project *An Intervention in Space and Time*, an environmental artwork created at the UC Davis McLaughlin Reserve. She was an Ali Youssefi Artist in Residence at Verge Center for the Arts in 2019, where she explored the impact of mining on the Knoxville area of the Coast Range of California. In 2023, she was awarded the National Endowment for the Arts funded Seeding Creativity Grant to research the use of rammed earth in fire resilient landscaping. She has also been an artist in Residence at the Montello Foundation in Montello, NV, Residency 108 in Germantown, NY, Vermont Studio Center in Johnston, VT and Cill Rialaig in Ballinskelligs, Ireland, among others. Her work is included in the permanent collections of the Manetti Shrem Museum in Davis, CA, the Greenville Museum of Art and the Durham Art Guild in North Carolina. She is currently working on a public arts commission for the City of Sacramento and will be an artist in residence at Starworks in Star, NC in the summer of 2026.

ARTIST

Jodi Connelly



**RESEARCHER**

Drew Cingel

Drew Cingel (PhD, Northwestern University) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication at the University of California, Davis, and a member of the Human Development Graduate Group. He studies the interaction between human development and media effects. He is particularly interested in understanding how child and adolescent development influence media choice and the effects of exposure to media, especially in the areas of social media use and adolescent mental health, as well as young children's moral development. His work has been published in journals such as the *Journal of Communication*, *Communication Research*, *Human Communication Research*, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *New Media & Society*, and *Media Psychology*, among others. He currently serves as Co-Editor of *Media Psychology*.

**ARTIST**

Melissa Uroff

Melissa Uroff is a California based artist and photographer. Her work deeply comes from her experience of being a woman. She finds great joy working with color and light in both her installations and multimedia work. She has a long love affair with mixing mediums in both her 2-D and 3-D work.

As a photographer, she works in alternative, historical and experimental processes including cyanotypes, gum printing, polaroid transfers, hand-coloring, screen printing and traditional darkroom techniques. She often features local leaders as the subject in her pieces.

Her 3-D work consists of neon lights, artist created sculpture(s), and found objects which are often built into installations. She finds neon intriguing to use as a medium to provide a place for female-centered representation. She is influenced by those who have come before her, as well as her own personal stories.

Melissa's 2-D work is a mix between her personal life and a strange dream, it is often difficult to find where reality begins and ends. This work is created through exploration of mixed medias and regularly combines collage of her personal photography as well as found images, which are then printed and combined with paint, ink, resin, among other mediums.

She uses her work to communicate and often create work to overcome personal hardships. Her childhood and heritage continually and subconsciously pop into the work with the use of specific flora and fauna, dance, birds, references to music, found and obtained objects, family and community connections. It becomes a mix between personal life and a strange dream. It becomes a mix between her personal life stories and it is often difficult to find where reality begins and ends.

ARTIST

ARX
SAC

Melissa Uroff



**RESEARCHER**

Angie Louie

Angelique Louie received the B.S. degree from the University of California, Davis, and the M.S. degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, both in electrical engineering. She received the Ph.D. degree in biological sciences from the University of California, Irvine. She held a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena. She is currently a Professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering, University of California, Davis. Her research focuses on the development of multimodal probes for molecular imaging. Recent work from her lab describes Magnetic Resonance Imaging contrast agents that are light-activated and next generation site-localizing anticoagulants to mitigate thrombotic risk. Dr. Louie is a member of Tau Beta Pi, and an elected Fellow of American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE), and elected fellow of the Biomedical Engineering Society (BMES). But as a small person she wanted to be an artist or a naturalist! When she is not pushing the boundaries of knowledge she likes to ride dressage, play with her dog, foster kittens, and spend time in nature. She is excited for this art-science collaboration and would love to work with a bronze sculptor.

**ARTIST****Muzi Li Rowe**

Muzi Li Rowe is an interdisciplinary artist working across photography, sculpture, installation, and drawing. Using electronic waste and obsolete technologies as both her primary medium and direct subject matter, she aims to create a dialogue between content, media, and form that interrogates our relationship with both technology and cultural heritage. Li Rowe holds an MFA from the University of California, Davis, and has presented solo exhibitions at artist-run venues such as Axis Gallery in Sacramento and nonprofit institutions including Arts Visalia Visual Art Center. Her work has been included in group and juried exhibitions across the United States, Australia, and China, and she has completed residencies at the Wassaic Project, the Ali Youssefi Project, and the Vermont Studio Center. Li Rowe is the recipient of the 2025 Creative Growth Fellowship from the City of Sacramento, the 2022 National Endowment for the Arts Seeding Creativity grant, and her practice has been profiled in the documentary series *Making Art in the Golden State*. In addition to her studio practice, she has taught photography at the University of California, Davis, California State University, Sacramento, and American River College, and currently works as a freelance photographer specializing in artwork and exhibition documentation.

ARTIST

ARX
SAC

Muzi Li Rowe



**RESEARCHER****Nicole Kravitz-Wirtz, PhD**

Nicole Kravitz-Wirtz, PhD, MPH is an Associate Professor with the Centers for Violence Prevention at UC Davis. Her research sits at the intersection of sociology and population health science. She utilizes mixed methodologies and participatory research principles to examine the drivers of health and behavior in larger social and institutional contexts in service of fostering equitable and community-centered strategies for improving the wellbeing and safety of people and communities impacted by structural injustice and community violence. Dr. Kravitz-Wirtz received a BA in Psychology from UC Berkeley, MPH with a concentration in Epidemiology from UCLA, and PhD in Sociology from the University of Washington. She is the District 7 Commissioner on the City of Sacramento Children's Fund Planning and Oversight Commission and a member of the First 5 Sacramento Commission, appointed by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors.

**ARTIST**

Ruby Chacón

Ruby Chacón, born in 1971, is a Sacramento-based artist and high school educator whose roots trace back to Salt Lake City, Utah. Her work is grounded in the resilience of her ancestors, whose stories of survival amid segregation, assimilation policies, and systemic discrimination inform the counter-narratives she paints into community public spaces. Her work centers the lives of historically disenfranchised Chicanx/Latinx populations.

Inspired by her grandfather Cosme Chacón's wisdom, Ruby's art honors familial ways of knowing and uplifts marginalized voices too often silenced. Her works are an act of healing, a visual celebration of courage, resistance, and a collective memory of the devastating outcomes of racial differentiation and discrimination across generations including segregation in public spaces and in schools, English only/Assimilation, housing and job discrimination, environmental injustice, and poor health care access. Her work speaks truth to power.

In 2002, she co-founded Mestizo Coffeehouse and Gallery, Utah's first Chicanx/Latinx arts and activist community space, followed by formation of the Mestizo Institute of Culture and Arts (MICA) in 2003. Through MICA and a University of Utah partnership of faculty professors, she pioneered youth-led mural projects and worked with youth to co-create murals (as the lead artist) all over Utah, Wyoming, Sacramento, Morocco, and Thailand.

Her works are intertwined with those who lived before—ancestors whose stories are ever present. They reveal a lineage of warrior spirits: resilient, radiant, and rooted. These spirits continue to exist, to bloom, and to flourish. Through Ruby Chacon's art, resistance becomes ritual.

Ruby Chacón's prolific public art and community engagement have earned her numerous awards and recognitions, which she shares with her family and community. Today, Chacón continues her collective work with Las Poderosas Colectiva (sacpoderosas.org), a Chicana/Latina women-led organization using art to foster social change, belonging, and intergenerational healing.

ARTIST



Ruby Chacón



**RESEARCHER**

Dave Hogsett

I am an industrial biologist by trade, meaning I work with microorganisms to produce "stuff" of interest. Most of my career has been working at small biotech start-ups, although I currently work for a very large, international company. I've worked with several microbes that people might recognize by name, like E. coli and Baker's Yeast, as well as some very unusual organisms, including ones discovered in samples of thermal springs, like one would see at Yellowstone.

Working as part of multi-disciplinary teams, we develop the microbes to be better at making "stuff", which encompasses working across scientific fields like molecular biology, microbiology, fermentation and engineering. I love working across the scientific disciplines and love working on complex biological topics which are difficult to understand.

Many of my projects have been intended to create more sustainable products and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Sustainability is important to me, whether we are talking about the environment or communities. When not busy at work, I enjoy time with my family and outdoor activities. I also enjoy puzzles, learning and exploring creative pursuits.

As my research focuses almost exclusively on very complex, interesting little creatures that are too small for me to really appreciate with my inborn human senses, I am really interested to see where this ARx program will lead and how we'll get there.

**ARTIST**

Sunroop Kaur

Sunroop Kaur (b. 1997, Calgary, AB) holds a BFA in Visual Arts from Emily Carr University of Art + Design (2019). Kaur is an interdisciplinary artist currently working in the Bay Area. Her practice employs Eastern + Western iconography to decontextualize cultural materials, and create spaces that reclaim/subvert South Asian narratives. Kaur is creating relics for the future, the work is heavily anchored by her interest in the materiality of time. Using cultural hybridity as a lens, Kaur is able to translate the struggles of a lived experience while allowing for the synthesis of critical spaces and generative dialogue within the Punjabi Sikh Diaspora. The use of mediums such as textile/embroidery allows her work to serve as a distillation of familial and community history— through which she counteracts the legacies of colonial violence and theft. She hopes her work is a restorative force that can facilitate reconciliation and healing for her community.

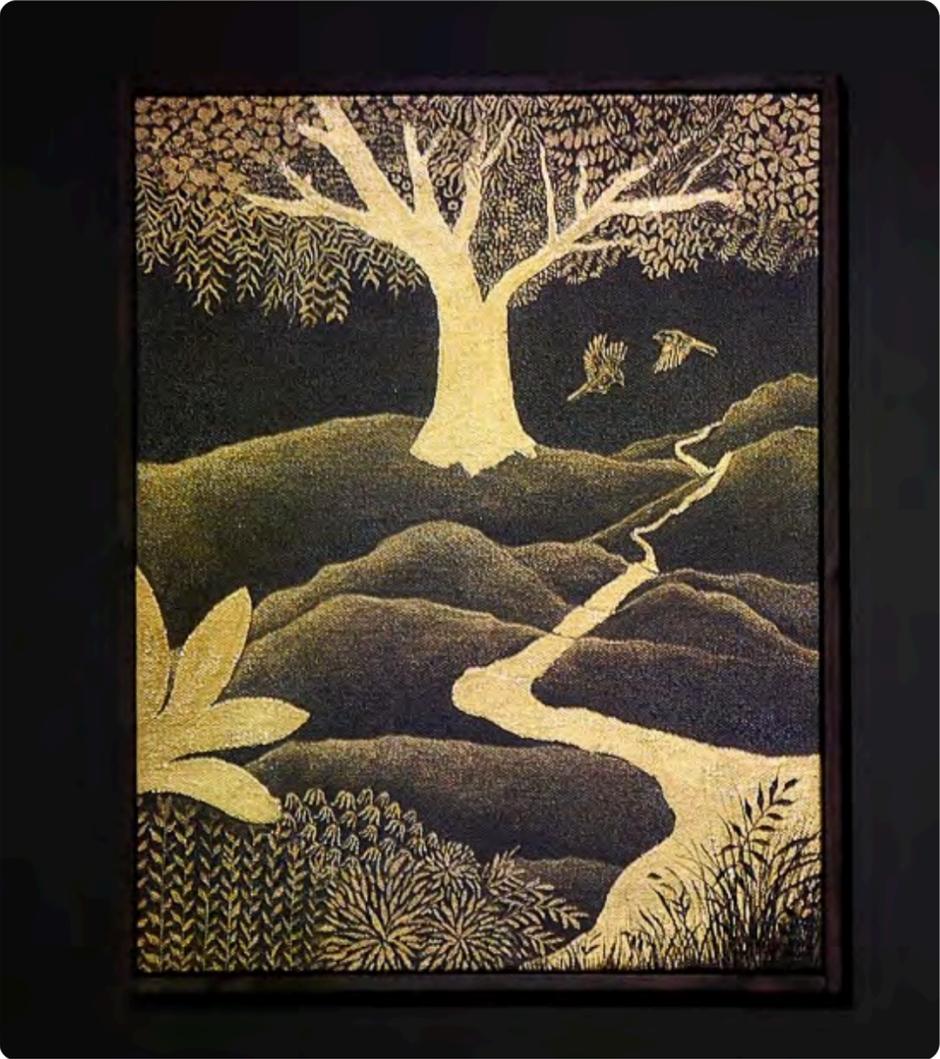
Kaur recently exhibited her debut solo exhibition “ਕੋਇਲ Dream • Keeper” at Prism Art space (2025) and is currently preparing for an upcoming two person show at ARTogether (2026).

Kaur completed the Château d'Orquevaux Artists & Writers Residency in France (2024) and was commissioned by Sikh Heritage Manitoba to have her work installed at the Manitoba Legislative Parliament Building (2024). She has completed separate projects with Sephora and the Sacramento Kings (2024).

ARTIST

ARX
SAC

Sunroop Kaur



**RESEARCHER**

Gabriel Simmons

Gabriel Simmons is an AI researcher, educator, and consultant who teaches machine learning at UC Davis. His research explores how we validate AI simulations — specifically, how we know when a language model is genuinely simulating a system versus creating an illusion of simulation. This work sits at the intersection of AI, causality, and the philosophy of science. He's interested in questions of representation, resemblance, fidelity, subjectivity, and what it means for an AI system to model the world.

**ARTIST**

Taner İlhan Paşamehmetoğlu

Taner Paşamehmetoğlu is a multidisciplinary visual artist whose work integrates storytelling, themes of sustainability, and reflections on his own cultural hybridity. While he primarily works with vibrant colors in oil and acrylic paint, his process often incorporates upcycled mixed media and experimentation with natural elements, blurring the boundary between artist and environment.

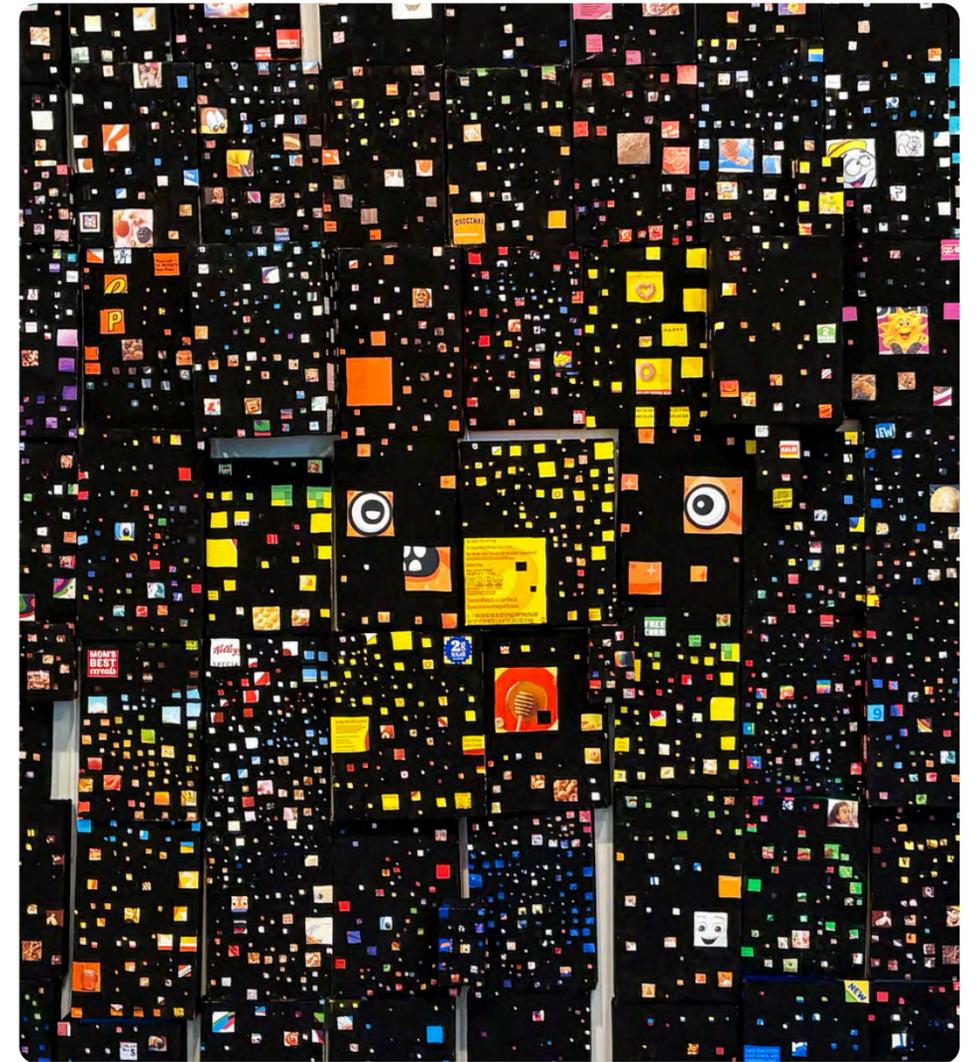
In 2024, Paşamehmetoğlu completed an artist residency with the City of Sacramento's Office of Climate Action and Sustainability, culminating in a collaborative community mural that is now part of the City's Art in Public Places Collection and on display at the Joe Mims, Jr. Hagginwood Community Center. His work has been exhibited throughout California, and his painting *The American Dream* was recently included in curriculum at UC Berkeley.

Paşamehmetoğlu currently works out of his home studio in Sacramento and is a member artist at Axis Gallery and Atrium 916.

ARTIST

ARX
SAC

Taner Ilhan Pasamehmetoglu



**RESEARCHER****Elizabeth Lopez**

Liz is a wildlife biologist with 15 years of experience in marine, aquatic, and terrestrial systems. Liz works for a consulting firm in Sacramento. Outside of work, she co-facilitates research projects with a small group of biologists who call themselves The Foothills Research Group, fostering her love of all things herpetology. Her passion for ecology and the outdoors is coupled with a passion for building community and promoting diversity in the biological field and in the outdoor industry as the Regional Program Coordinator for Latino Outdoors, Sacramento chapter. When she is not working her consulting job or volunteering with Latino Outdoors, she can be found gardening, teaching venomous snake relocation courses through Save the Snakes, dancing cumbia, and walking along the American River.

**ARTIST**

Yared Portillo

Yared Portillo is a community-based artist, educator, and organizer from Santa María, California. Her musical practice stems from her upbringing as a queer Chicana from a mixed-status family in a farmworking community. She approaches music not as a performance but as a tool for community building. She is a jaranera, leonera, guitarist, poet, and teaching artist dedicated to creating participatory music spaces through organizing and education.

Her work centers the fandango, a participator gatherings where son jarocho music is played—a popular folk music from Veracruz, México, rooted in Indigenous and Afro-diasporic histories of resistance to Spanish colonial rule. More than a performance, the fandango is about convivencia—being in community through music and creating alongside others, musicians and non-musicians, human and more-than-human. Yared’s practice is shaped by her years as an immigrant rights organizer in South Philadelphia and driven by the fandango’s commitment to convivencia in the face of social, economic, and political systems that regularly threaten the livelihoods of racialized communities living in diaspora.

Yared has helped found and develop intergenerational son jarocho collectives that offer bilingual, culturally sustaining music education through the context of the fandango, including Son Revoltura in Philadelphia and Cascabel de Dos Ríos in Sacramento. As a teaching artist, she understands these processes of learning music as deeply intertwined with identity, language, history, justice, and relationships with the land and one another.

She is also a Ph.D. candidate in Learning Sciences and Human Development at UC Berkeley’s School of Education. Her artistic work has been supported by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Leeway Foundation, and the Sacramento Office of Arts and Culture, and her academic research has been supported by the National Academy of Education, Spencer Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Mellon Foundation.

ARTIST

Yared Portillo

ARX
SAC



*Scan to listen to
Yared's music from
Del Rio Trail Project*

**ARx COMMITTEE****Uri Griner | Committee & MOSAC lead**

Uri Griner is a STEAM and experiential learning leader with more than 25 years of cross-sector experience spanning engineering, education, and museum leadership. He currently serves as Director of Experiences at the SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity (MOSAC), where he oversees education, exhibits, maker and public programs, as well as the planetarium. In this role, he guides a team of 35 and advances hands-on, inquiry-driven learning for youth and families. Uri has led the creation of signature programs and spaces and has strengthened school and industry partnerships, helping position MOSAC as a dynamic regional hub that inspires people of all ages to explore the wonders, possibilities, and responsibilities of science.

Before joining MOSAC, Uri held roles in exhibit development, educational programming, and project leadership at both MOSAC and the World of Wonders Science Museum. His earlier career in R&D engineering included work in radar, medical devices, and fiber optics, where he contributed innovative solutions and holds a patent in tunable laser technology. Uri also has experience in early childhood education, bringing a play-based, creativity-centered approach to his work.

With a foundation in electrical engineering, a teaching credential, and extensive experience bridging technical rigor with creative learning, Uri is committed to building inclusive, transformative environments where learners of all ages can explore, design, and innovate.

**ARx COMMITTEE****J. Ross Parrelli**

J Ross Parrelli is an award-winning recording artist, creative economist, frequency architect, and recent TEDx speaker dedicated to creating access, resources, and opportunities for youth and communities through cultural arts, entrepreneurship, and education. As the founder of Beats Lyrics Leaders and the non-profit Kidzapalooza.org, as well as the leader of the Creative Economy Entrepreneurship Initiative, she builds pathways from education to the workforce by integrating music, entrepreneurship, and leadership development into classrooms and communities globally. A California Advocate for Right to Start and Arts Now, she advances policies and programs that center on entrepreneurship and arts education as drivers of equitable economic growth. She also serves on the Arts Council Placer County Board, where she helps champion arts access and cultural vitality at the regional level. In her role on the Economic Development Commission, she continues to champion initiatives that connect education, the arts, and economic growth in underserved communities, while her work with Universal Records and global touring experience enables her to bridge music, advocacy, and equity to inspire the next generation of creative and professional leaders.

**ARx COMMITTEE****Kristin Belden**

Kristin Belden is a strategist, storyteller, and producer whose work weaves together creativity, business strategy and the human side of innovation and evolution. She has spent much of her career in creative and cultural spaces, including early work in art galleries in San Francisco and Spain, and later supporting artists, journalists, and cultural institutions through leadership, production, and program design.

Kristin has helped launch production studios, creative initiatives, and mission-driven organizations, and recently served as a panelist for the California Arts Council's Creative Youth Development grant program. She is the host and producer of Kind of a Big Deal, a storytelling series spotlighting women building lives of meaning, creativity, and legacy.

Through Belden Strategies, Kristin partners with women leaders, founders, and executives to align who they are becoming with what they are building. She is based in Sacramento and works with organizations and leaders across the country.

ARX SAC

[VISITAGGIESQUARE.COM/ARX](https://visitaggiesquare.com/arx)