

# OUR 2022-2023 CULLEN FELLOWS

## BUILDING THE BENCH OF WNY'S PERFORMING ARTS SECTOR LEADERS

### WHAT IS THE CULLEN FELLOWS PROGRAM?

The Cullen Fellows program reflects the foundation's belief that development of talent is essential to strengthening individual professionals, organizations, and elevating WNY's performing arts sector as a whole.

The year-long, self-designed program provides substantive new learning opportunities for promising performing arts leaders to move from "success to significance" by providing them with the financial resources to enhance their skills through intentionally selected activities and a customized professional advancement plan.

[READ MORE](#)

CULLEN FOUNDATION IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE MICHAEL MURPHY, PRESIDENT OF SHEA'S PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, SERVE AS THE CULLEN FELLOWS' COHORT FACILITATOR



SHEA'S PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

#### MICHAEL MURPHY

HOW DOES THE FELLOWSHIP HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO STRENGTHEN THE WNY PERFORMING ARTS SECTOR?

"Cullen Foundation's Fellows program provides the cohort members valuable opportunities for learning on a local and national level. Grant funding is used by the Fellows to develop a strategy for professional development through classes in areas of arts management that, without the Fellowship, their organizations are unlikely able to provide. They may also use funds to travel to other cities to meet one-on-one with artistic and managing leaders of other organizations who provide specific insights into their own journeys, experiences, and best practices, thereby encouraging the Fellows to build their own personal and organizational paths.

The monthly group meetings of the cohort allow for sharing and comparing knowledge and experiences. In addition, it's wonderful to see the Fellows develop strong relationships with each other, providing strong support and networking advantages that continue to grow and extend beyond the cohort, further strengthening the performing arts in Buffalo."

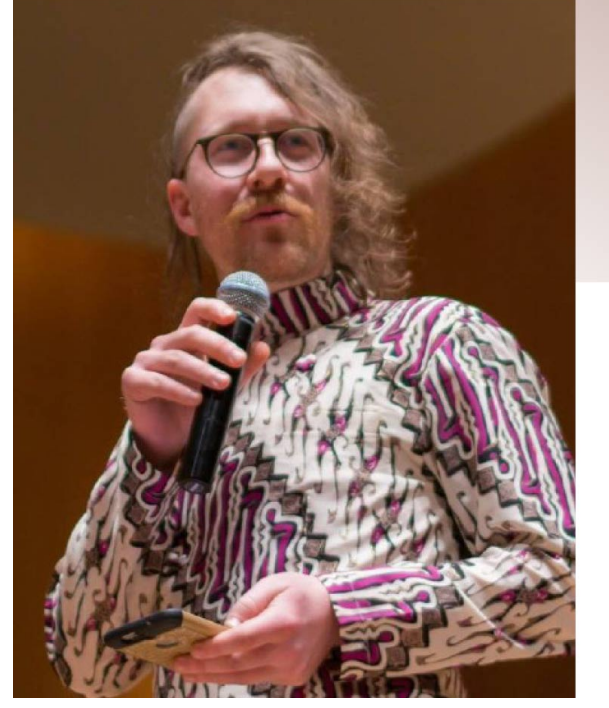
NUSANTARA ARTS, INC

#### MATT DUNNING

FAVORITE ARTISTIC FORM:  
Gamelan Musician & Educator

YOU SPENT SIGNIFICANT TIME IN INDONESIA, LEARNING YOUR MUSICAL ART FORM. WHAT WOULD THE JAVANESE TELL WNY RESIDENTS ABOUT WHAT GAMELAN CAN BRING TO OUR LOCAL CULTURE?

"The Javanese people would tell WNY residents that Gamelan is a synthesis of community, art, history, and culture into something incredible; An artform of beauty and depth. Enduring because of its ability to evolve and remain relevant, and impactful through its inclusive community building; Gamelan music can tap into WNY's rich cultural history and tight knit communities, empowering residents to access musical abilities and performances of beauty they might not have realized were possible."



SHAKESPEARE IN DELAWARE PARK INC.

#### SEAN CRAWFORD

FAVORITE ARTISTIC FORM:  
Clarinetist

YOU HAVE WORN MANY HATS PROFESSIONALLY IN LOCAL ARTS ORGANIZATIONS. HOW WILL THIS FELLOWSHIP HELP YOU FILL GAPS IN YOUR ARTS MANAGEMENT CAREER?

"It's helped me hone in on group and team management skills, while giving me the opportunity to explore deeper conversations in arts management and the philanthropic sector at large."



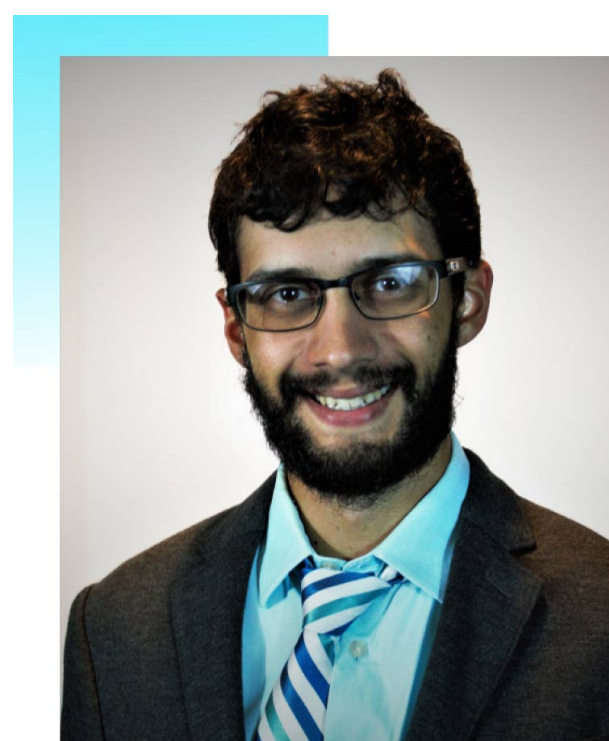
ARTPARK & COMPANY

#### MICHAEL RICCIO

FAVORITE ARTISTIC FORM:  
Musical Theatre

YOU JOINED ARTPARK RIGHT BEFORE COVID. HOW DO YOU SEE THE FELLOWSHIP AND THE LEARNINGS OF THE PAST TWO YEARS ADVANCE YOUR ARTS MANAGEMENT CAREER FURTHER?

"COVID, to me, was like someone hit the reset button on much of the artistic sector, as nearly every organization, artist, and arts worker was frozen, with almost no warning, and we were all forced to find new ways of continuing our work, if that was even possible. Even as we near this idea of normal, we know it is going to take years for a full recovery, but within that I want to be focused on building back different. I hope, through this fellowship, to focus on learning about and creating systems that are more equitable, particularly in fundraising, so that we can better support our artists and our organizations throughout these situations, and so that our sector is stronger in the long run because of it."



BUFFALO STRING WORKS

#### JOSHUA CARTER

FAVORITE ARTISTIC FORM:  
A Cappella

YOU JOINED BUFFALO STRING WORKS AS AN AMERICORPS MEMBER. HOW DID THAT EXPERIENCE INSPIRE YOUR INTEREST IN WORKING IN THE NONPROFIT ARTS SECTOR?

"When I joined Buffalo String Works as an AmeriCorps VISTA, I had no experience in nonprofit work. However, as someone who has been involved in the performing arts from a young age, I found fulfillment in working in the arts and in youth education. After a year of AmeriCorps, I stayed on doing communications, something I'm also very passionate about."



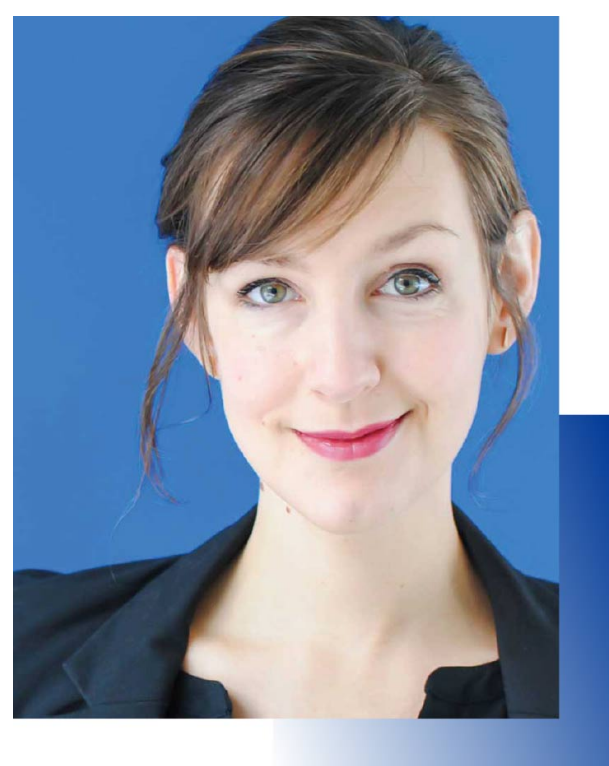
SECOND GENERATION THEATRE COMPANY

#### KELLY COPPS

FAVORITE ARTISTIC FORM:  
Actor/Choreographer

AS A COFOUNDER/LEADER OF ONE OF BUFFALO'S NEWEST THEATRE COMPANIES, HOW WILL THIS FELLOWSHIP HELP ADVANCE SECOND GENERATION THEATRE TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

"The Cullen Fellowship program is allowing Second Generation Theatre to really expand our knowledge of best practices as put forth by theatre practitioners all over the country. Making these regional connections really allows the entire Buffalo arts sector to rise!"



IRISH CLASSICAL THEATRE

#### MARY LOLIGER

FAVORITE ARTISTIC FORM:  
Dance/Dancer

YOU ARE NEW TO THE ARTS PROFESSIONALLY, BUT NOT PERSONALLY. HOW DO YOU INTEGRATE THE TWO TO BRING NEW EXCITEMENT TO IRISH CLASSICAL THEATRE AUDIENCE MEMBERS?

"It certainly helps that I've always been a huge theater nerd so in many ways, I'm a superfan of everything we do! I get behind-the-scenes looks and input on what we bring to audiences in Western New York, which is really, really cool and something I never thought could be part of my professional future when I was growing up in WNY. As a millennial who has also never worked with ICTC and wasn't as familiar with their history when I started my job last year, I can bring a fresh perspective and offer insights about what other young professionals or millennials are looking for in a theatre-going experience and what might bring new audiences to us."



UJIMA COMPANY

#### BRIAN BROWN

FAVORITE ARTISTIC FORM:  
Singer/Actor

MANY WESTERN NEW YORKERS MIGHT KNOW YOU FOR YOUR ACTING. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE THEM TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR NEW ROLE AND HOW THIS FELLOWSHIP IS PART OF THAT TRANSITION?

"This new role, (Associate Managing Director), gives me the opportunity to show my abilities off of the stage. Although new to this position, the Cullen Fellowship will ease the transition and strengthen my leadership skill in the arts."

