

Wake Bus Rapid Transit New Bern Avenue Artists

2021 | Raleigh Arts

*Department of Transportation- Transit, and
Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources*

Project Background

In November of 2016, Wake County voters approved a plan to expand and better connect the public transit network. The Wake Transit Plan identified transit improvements, including the implementation of four (4) Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors. As the designated project sponsor, the City of Raleigh is responsible for the implementation of the BRT corridors. The first corridor to be designed and built is the New Bern Avenue corridor, which will connect downtown Raleigh with WakeMed and New Hope Road.

Understanding the benefits of including local culture, history and art into community projects, the City of Raleigh identified opportunities for art integration within the Wake BRT corridor projects. This was done with the help of the Artist in Resident, Dare Coulter who developed the *Wake BRT Art Integration Report & Recommendations*. The report includes recommendations for the New Bern Avenue corridor, specifically for concrete integration, artistic railings and glass art at stations.

New Bern Avenue Artist Selection Process

In Fall 2021, three separate Calls for Artists were published for the purpose of hiring North Carolina artists to create artwork along the Wake BRT: New Bern Avenue corridor. Applications submittals were reviewed by diverse selection panels, consisting of representations from St. Augustine University, the Public Art and Design Board, New Bern Avenue Corridor Alliance, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, and local artists and community members.

After reviewing all application submittals, semifinalists were chosen and interviewed by the selection panels. Following discussion, the selection panels chose a total of 11 artists to create artwork for the New Bern Avenue corridor.

Johnny Lee Chapman, III was selected as the Concrete Integration Artist who will design and create wayfinding and concrete integrated artwork along the New Bern Avenue corridor. David Wilson was selected as the Railing Artist, responsible for railing artwork at Bus Rapid Transit stations. And a total of nine artists were selected to design artwork for glass windscreens at Bus Rapid Transit stations along the New Bern Avenue corridor: Leslie Bartlebaugh, Jane Cheek, Max Dowdle, Shawn Etheridge, Mayanthi Jayawardena, Georges Le Chevallier, Alberto Ortega, Kiara Sanders and Wendy Spitzer.

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Leslie Bartlebaugh



Leslie Bartlebaugh is a landscape architect and artist in Raleigh, NC. With a past studying plants and ecosystems, she worked to observe and understand the intricacies and connections within the natural world but realized the element of people and their relationships was missing. Embracing landscape architecture and art allowed her to feed her desire to make the world a better place and enhance connections between nature and people and between people and each other. She hopes her art can improve this world a little if it sparks joy in anyone else or inspires others to have empathy and compassion for the earth and for each other.

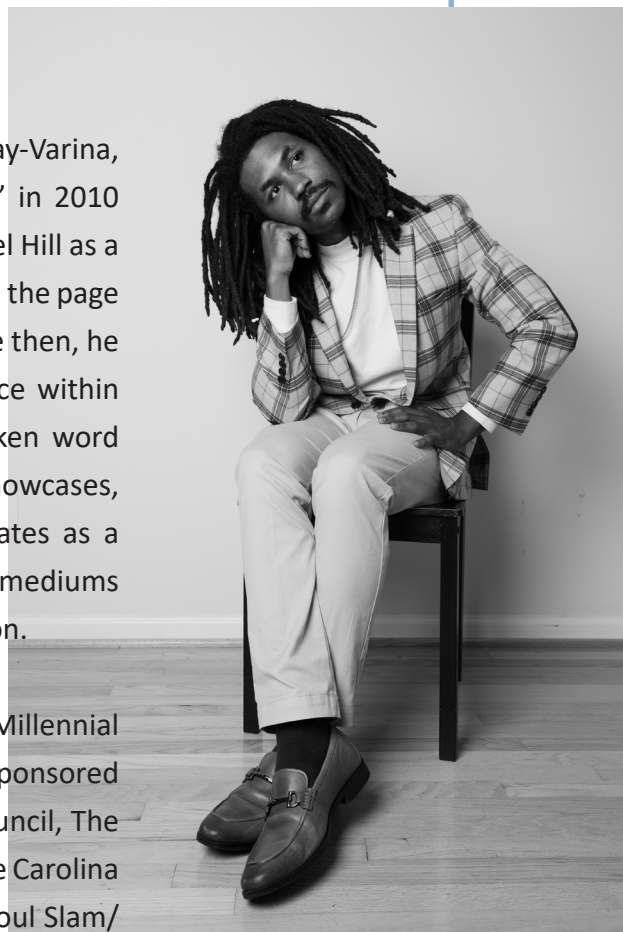
Bartlebaugh finds inspiration and influence from nature, people and their interactions, and from artists that capture such in bold, unexpected forms, techniques and media. Starting out using fineliners, she has since committed strongly to more traditional art techniques primarily including dip pens and linoleum and block printing techniques as the inky and slightly unpredictable output of these media feels relatable and human.

Johnny Lee Chapman, III

Johnny Lee Chapman, III is an interdisciplinary artist from Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina. Chapman started writing as a “Tumblr poet” in 2010 during his first year at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a student in the Dental Hygiene program. In 2014, he leaped from the page to the stage, beginning his career as a spoken word artist. Since then, he has performed regionally and nationally and is an active voice within his Triangle community. His professional range includes spoken word performances, screenwriting and acting, facilitation of poetry showcases, craft workshops, and artist mentorship. Chapman also operates as a visual artist under the name The Golden Moment utilizing the mediums of film and photography to convey emotion without explanation.

Chapman is a member of the North Carolina Arts Council Millennial Traditional Artist register. He’s been involved with projects sponsored by the North Carolina Museum of Art, the Fayetteville Arts Council, The Black on Black Project, Cameron Art Museum in Wilmington, the Carolina Performing Arts at Chapel Hill, Durham Art Guild, Jambalaya Soul Slam/ Bull City Slam Team, Visual Art Exchange (V AE), Downtown Raleigh Alliance, and Raleigh Arts. He’s a second-year fellow at The Watering Hole, a regional writing workshop designed for writers of color and a Bull City Slam Team representative, a competitive poetry team. His media work was included in exhibitions at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the North Carolina Museum of History.

Chapman embraces the title of the storyteller: the one in charge of relaying history by inspiring the audience’s imagination. His art can be best summed up as an in-depth case study on the human condition in the new millennium, a genre-bender unafraid to infringe on the hidden to provide a novel perspective for all who grant him a moment. Offstage, he can be found traveling with his camera and passport, providing care to the community as a Registered Dental Hygienist (“brush all the teeth you wish to keep”), or playing a game of soccer on the pitch. A personal motto he wishes to leave with any is “Never let your ink run dry.”





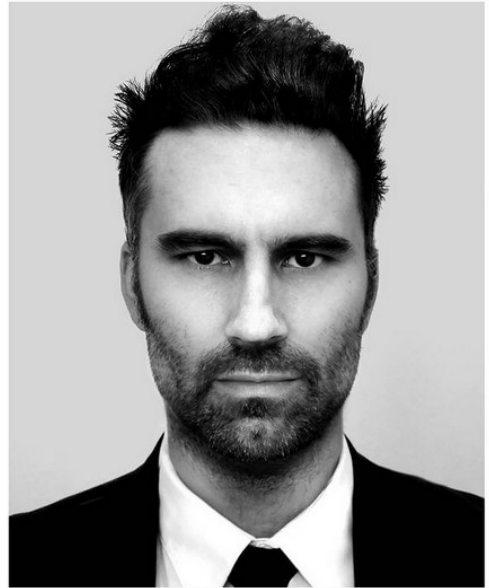
Jane Cheek

I am an installation and collage artist based in Raleigh NC. I work in both mixed media and digital formats and have created a number of public artworks during the past few years. In June of 2021, I collaborated with Downtown Raleigh Alliance's David Moore to create a pop-up installation for the pride celebration that took place at Union Station Plaza. In July of 2021, I was commissioned by Artsposure in conjunction with Trophy Brewing Company to add kinetic elements to a metal tree sculpture by artist Jennifer Van Orton. In August of 2021, I was commissioned by Pullen Arts Center to create an art ribbon and interactive installation for their grand opening ceremony and community celebration.

In May of 2021, I installed a large scale kinetic rainbow sculpture titled, "We Wondered If We Could Reach Its End," at Artmosphere Community Arts Center in Clayton, NC. As a part of that three month long exhibit, I organized a collaborative fundraiser with area photographer, Sarah Ford. In conjunction with that installation, I also worked with Artmosphere owner, Mandy McNulty, to curate a second collaborative exhibition with myself, and Raleigh artists, Kelly Sheppard Murray, Susie Silver, and Tonya Solley Thornton.

Throughout my art career, teaching and volunteering has been a constant part of my work. I enjoy engaging with the community as an artist and educator. I most recently taught several weeks of summer camp art Artspace where I have a public studio. Through Artspace I engage with visitors to the studio on a regular basis. Prior to moving to Artspace in May of 2021, I was a teaching artist in residence at Total Life Centers during which I designed collaborative projects with the participants and organized the installation and exhibition of participant work. I have also taught art for various local companies, volunteered for Artsposure, and taught art for a charter school in Durham from 2005-2011 where I worked with my students to create two collaborative murals. I graduated from NC State in 2005 with a BA in Art Studies and a minor in Business Management and received my teaching certificate through ECU's lateral entry program in 2007.

Max Dowdle



Max Dowdle, a North Carolina native, grew up in a family of artists and craftspeople, visiting the sets of various films that his father worked on as lead sculptor. Max is indebted to his father's influence as an artist, particularly his work ethic and aesthetic focusing on figures and realism, as well as his maternal grandmother, an early abstract expressionist painter who worked tirelessly to make it as a self-made, woman artist in 1960's southern America.

In his teens Max became certain that he would follow the path of fine art, and he has spent every moment of time and energy over the past two decades honing his skills to make that a reality. Max completed his undergraduate work at the College of Charleston, graduating with a double major in fine art and art history, before moving on to studying the old master oil painting traditions at Charles Cecil Studios, a world-renowned classical atelier located in Florence, Italy.

Upon completing his studies and finishing a stint of teaching at the atelier, Max returned to the United States and began exhibiting with galleries, and taking commission work. In 2015 his career took a grander, more dramatic turn with the embracing of public art as a means of expression. Max now divides most of his artistic time between large-scale public, corporate, and private work in North Carolina. Recent projects of note include murals for downtown Chapel Hill and Oxford, a series of eight monumental paintings for the Local Government Federal Credit Union headquarters lobby in Raleigh, as well as two large-scale paintings for the George Washington University Lobby at the Watergate Hotel in Washington, DC.

Shawn Etheridge

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A native of Elizabeth City, North Carolina, Shawn has been creating art since childhood. He began his love of the arts singing, writing poetry, and trying to “out-draw” his nephew when they were children. Starting out using markers and colored pencil, he was introduced to painting with acrylics by his 8th grade art teacher. It was also around this time that he was exposed to graffiti writing by a childhood friend, which had a profound impact on his style by fostering a love of color and the preference of markers over brushes. Attending North Carolina Central University from 1987 to graduation in 1993, he majored in Public Administration while continuing to nurture his craft as a part time art student. Although this was not a major course of study, he found a “second home” in the Fine Arts Department.



His artwork has been displayed in numerous establishments spanning the east coast with his base being in the Raleigh-Durham Area, including the Hayti Heritage Center and Durham Arts Council in Durham, NC, the Garner Performing Arts Center, Garner, NC, The Mint Museum in Charlotte, NC, and the William R. Harvey Art Museum in Talladega, AL. He has works in the permanent collections of Benedict College in Columbia, SC, Saint Augustine’s University and Shaw University in Raleigh, NC. Prominent owners of his work include notable public figures Erykah Badu and Dr. Cornel West.

While having worked in various mediums such as pencil, colored pencil, charcoal, oil pastel, clay (hand building and throwing), wood sculpture, plaster sculpture/casting and mixed media, Shawn’s current mediums of choice are oil pastel and opaque paint markers. What Shawn considers his first real collection, named “the Rebirth of Stick”, was a reinvention of the stick figure using fluid forms and broken lines. Aside from personal work and various commissions, his latest endeavor and labor of love has been crafting a series centered around celebrating and shining light on the country’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Mayanthi Jayawardena



Mayanthi, the founder of Serendib Creative LLC, is a proud Sri Lankan-American artist of all trades. She channels her passion through murals, painting, digital illustration, and children's book illustrations. Mayanthi's award winning art is internationally recognized and has been featured from North Carolina to Australia. Her art is an expressive blend of her Sri Lankan culture and her life experiences.

Prior to becoming a full-time artist, Mayanthi worked in the field of sexual violence prevention & advocacy for over 9 years, during which she began using art as a form of healing. Through these experiences, she decided to take the leap to invest in herself and her art full time and has been forever grateful for the opportunities and support that she has received. Mayanthi is constantly inspired by fellow artists and cannot wait to continue to cultivate a community of support for those like her. You can find Mayanthi's murals throughout the Triangle area, with more to come!

Georges Le Chevallier

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The youngest son of a French father and Puerto Rican mother, Georges Patrick Le Chevallier Marrero was born in Paris, France, on February 8, 1966. Shortly after, his family moved to San Juan, Puerto Rico, where he grew up speaking Spanish. His ties with Europe were maintained by spending summers with his father's family in France. At the age of thirteen, Le Chevallier's family moved to Los Angeles, California, where he added a third language and culture to his repertoire and discovered his fascination towards art.

In 1987, Le Chevallier traveled to Spain, where he studied painting at the prestigious "Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando" in Madrid. Alumni include Francisco Goya, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, Oscar de la Renta, and Fernando Botero. In 1990, he received his BFA degree in Drawing and Painting from California State University in Long Beach. In 1995, he graduated from Hunter College of the City University of New York where he earned his Master of Fine Arts degree in Painting.



Since then, Georges Le Chevallier's paintings have been exhibited extensively nationally and internationally in distinguished galleries and museums such as: The Painted Bride Art Center in Philadelphia, North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh, Central EU Gallery in Budapest, and El Centro Cultural de Lavapiés in Madrid. Le Chevallier has also created site specific public art installations in the USA, Mexico, Hungary, Tanzania, France, Guatemala, and Chile. Le Chevallier has been awarded travel art residencies to the Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts and Sciences, Chemin D' Art in Saint-Flour (France), The Bagamoyo African Modern Art Project in Tanzania, the Hungarian Multicultural Center in Balatonfüred and the Chilean National Arts Endowment's III Sculpture Symposium in Putaendo. Le Chevallier was also awarded a Travelocity Travel for Good Grant, a Millersville University Cultural Events Grant and a Professional Development Grant for Artists from the United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County, and North Carolina Arts Council.

Apart from receiving many illustrious honors and recognitions during his search for artistic excellence, Le Chevallier has over 20 years of bi-lingual teaching experience. He has taught at The Living Arts College in Raleigh, UNC Pembroke, Vance Granville Community College, The Federal Prison in Butner, The Art Institute of Raleigh/Durham, Lehman College in New York City and currently he teaches at Nash Community College. Because of his multi-ethnic background and countless travel experiences he is fluent in the French, Spanish, Italian, and English languages.



Alberto Ortega

Alberto Ortega (Sevilla, 1976) earned his MFA in Sevilla, Spain, and since 2008 works in Raleigh, North Carolina. He exhibits in Spain and the U.S. and has received grants and awards in both countries.

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Kiara Sanders

I am a visual artist and my primary medium is acrylic and oil paint. I have also done murals in both traditional (painting) and digital (illustration applied to vinyl) mediums on varying surfaces including wood, primed brick, and glass. The dominant subject of my artwork is human beings in portrait style.

I aim to capture the likeness of a subject and their cultural or social attributes, and to overall portray the unique features of an individual. I consider my style academic realism, except my goal is less to be fully representative and more to interpret the “energy” of the subject which is often attached to a narrative.

My source of inspiration for narratives is derived from my personal interest in human behavior and is often in correspondence to my neighborhood, my environment, and communities that I want to learn about. By and large, I often paint people that I know personally or someone who I have heard of from a person that I know. Minor influences include current events, mythology, and archetypes. I love, am inspired by, and try to understand other human beings. There is also a desire in my paintings to expand upon reality instead of being limited by it.

Wendy Spitzer

I am an interdisciplinary artist with a diverse output that spans music composition and performance, visual and community artmaking, writing, research, and modes of participatory inquiry. Recent projects have included public art audio installations on grief and mental health, solo and group visual art shows, images created and installed in bus shelters, a time capsule project, original scores composed and performed live to silent films, and theatre and film scoring.



Under the moniker Felix Obelix, I have released two albums of original compositions: *The Tick of the Clock, the Beat in the Chest* on the Pox World Empire label (2010) and *The Ringtone Album* on the Potluck Foundation label (2013). I have received support from Downtown Durham, Inc.; the Durham Arts Council; the Orange County Arts Commission; Chapel Hill Community Arts & Culture; Raleigh Arts; and the Strowd Roses Foundation, among others. I have a BMus in Performance from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (USA) and a MMus in Creative Practice from Goldsmiths College, University of London (UK), which culminated in a final thesis entitled, *Trust Them With Your Weird and Strange Notes: An Arts-Based Research Perspective on Vulnerability and the Social Dynamic in Creative Collaboration*. After time spent in Prague and London, I have been living and making art for the last five years in Pittsboro, North Carolina.

As an inquiry-based interdisciplinary artist, I ask questions and use responses to create projects that span multiple media. Curiosity drives my initial process: once the questions have been asked, I find patterns in the answers, and juxtapose and aggregate elements to find the connections among them. Thematically, I am often interested in the relationship of time to memory and the co-mingling of past and present in our personal and cultural histories. Collaboration is also a hallmark of my practice, and co-creation may occur with acquaintances, friends, community members, or other artists. The multiplicity of perspectives helps me explore a topic from multiple angles, some I may be blind to, and it lends a collective depth to the final piece beyond what I am capable of as an individual artist. In all of my work, I seek to find relationships - between disparate pieces of information, between past and present, and between myself and others.

David Wilson

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North Carolina based public artist, David Wilson, was born and raised in Clarksburg, WV, and obtained his BFA from Hampton University. While at Hampton, he received tutelage in the creation of public art under muralist, John Biggers and Africobra artist, James Philips. A primary driver in his public works is creation for interpretation by all with an overall goal to foster introspection, communication, and provide a platform for education.

Wilson employs his background in design, sculpture, and public art, to create site-specific work that explores the social, historical, and functional context of the site, as well as the architectural and urban phenomenology of the space.



Through collaboration, he embraces his role as a creative facilitator that helps shape an understanding on how art connects with community as an urban space and how its territory, trajectories, and interpretations combine to separate it from surrounding non-urban environments. He is comfortable with a wide variety of materials and methods and has successfully completed projects incorporating landscaping, lighting, sculpture, glass, stone, text, and interactivity. Additionally, he has worked closely with architects, urban planners, and design and construction professionals, and community members on a number of successful multi-disciplinary projects.

Wilson has served as Lead Artist for multiple public projects in Durham, Charlotte, Raleigh, and Gastonia. He's created highly polished stainless steel sculptures and monumental murals. He also merges his art+design skills with technology to create mobile applications for museums, galleries and cultural centers that allow the public to become more immersed in their experience and interaction with art.

Wilson's fine artwork paintings and mixed media collage has been featured in ESSENCE and UPSCALE magazines and notable collectors of his work include Princeton University, Oprah Winfrey, Actor/Musician COMMON, Henry Louis Gates, Dr Cornel West, and actors, Phylicia Rashad and Ruby Dee.