

ART CHATT : FRAMEWORK

MIXER

7:30 PM

KICKOFF

**MIXER AT THE READING ROOM
ENJOY 1 FREE DRINK / MOCKTAIL**

PROVIDENCE PREVIEW

8:15 PM

**A PREVIEW OF "BEYOND THE FRAME"
PRESENTED BY PROVIDENCE NEWSON
DANCE CO.**

PANEL DISCUSSION

8:30 PM

**A PANEL OF ARTISTS AND CURATORS
DISCUSS THE FRAMEWORKS THAT
SHAPE BLACK ARTS AND CULTURE**

AUDIENCE Q&A

9:30 PM

ART EXHIBIT

**A COLLECTION OF ARTWORK
DISPLAYED BY LOCAL
CHATTANOOGANS**

SOUL THERAPY

**LIVE JAZZ MUSIC TO SET THE
TONE OF THE EVENING**

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MEET THE ARTISTS



GIA SCOTT

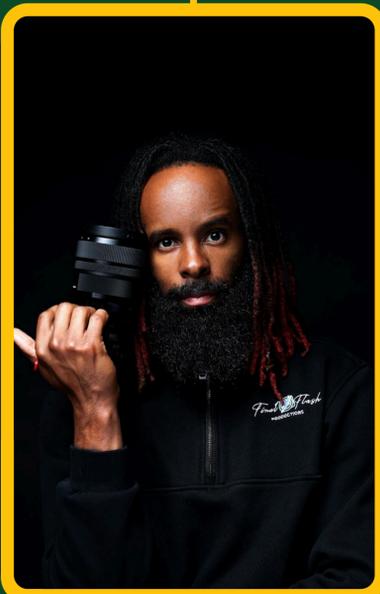
Deidra “Gia” Scott is a contemporary visual artist and creative entrepreneur from Memphis, Tennessee, and the visionary behind The Gia Effect – Artistry & Design. Known for her emotionally charged, story-driven paintings, her work explores identity, transformation, femininity, and the layered experiences of Black womanhood. Through bold composition, expressive movement, and rich symbolism, Gia creates pieces that feel both intimate and powerful, often reflecting personal chapters of growth, resilience, and self-definition.

MAURIEL RODRIGUEZ

Mauriel Rodriguez is a Visual Artist with a Bachelor's degree in Fine and Studio Art from Maryville College and a Masters in Art Education from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Working mainly in acrylics and mixed medium, her most current works examine self-portraiture, personal growth, motherhood and mental health.

Being drawn to the stage and performing from an early age, Mauriel has also been in several theatrical productions, Chorals and ensembles; the latest performances include “The Color Purple” and “Waitress” with the Chattanooga Theater Center. When she’s not on stage or creating art she enjoys reading science fiction and fantasy novels or building her personal styling business; “The Art Teacher’s Closet.”

Mauriel would like to thank her family and friends for their continued love and support.



CHRIS SHAW

Christopher Shaw is a visionary photographer, videographer, and creative entrepreneur with a passion for turning ideas into timeless visuals. With over 20 years of experience behind the lens, he has mastered the art of storytelling through light, composition, and emotion. As the founder of Final Flash Productions, Christopher approaches his work in a more spiritual way. “God creates in light and shadow. Just as a photograph. Once I connected the two, I began to use my camera as an instrument of my evolution.

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QIMMAH MUHAMMAD

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, and raised in Rancho Cucamonga, California, Qimmah Zayn is a queer Black artist currently based in Chattanooga, Tennessee. She began exploring her passion for the arts at an early age, using her work as a form of expressive therapy to connect with audiences while offering insight into her lived experiences and identity.

Qimmah earned a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art from Delaware State University, a historically Black university, and enjoys working across multidisciplinary mediums, with a focus on painting.

Her work has been exhibited at UUC's Art on the Walls Exhibit, where she was featured in the group exhibition *Mélange in Blue* and presented her solo show *ACTIVISION*. She has also vended and participated in events with Art House Chattanooga and Seductive Desire Ent. In addition, she has performed live paintings and vended for MFA Fest. Qimmah also served as a studio participant at the White Box Theatre during the production of *Gilgamesh* and held a gallery internship at the Arts Center/Gallery.

Across all her work, Qimmah continues to center identity, lived experience, and communal dialogue within her creative practice.

MIA GRIFFIN

I am Mia Griffin, a multi-disciplinary visual artist and creative professional. My graphic design work covers logos, branding, and illustration-based style, favoring handwritten fonts, and inspired by nature and handmade textures. I strive to impact people with my designs through warm and bright colors, and an optimistic feel. I have had packaging art featured in Winnie and Ethel's Downtown Diner of Las Vegas, created multiple logos for nonprofits and startups, and helped craft their brand identity and vision. I love to work on various Interior Design and Photo Op projects to learn how art can live in spaces and events, and engage with the community. I'm happy to help make someone's vision come to life, through simple, intelligent design.



ARIEL PATTERSON

Born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, I'm a self-taught artist whose creative journey began with drawing anime and cartoons. What started as sketching quickly evolved into a deeper passion for painting, allowing me to explore more. My work centers on body positivity and "existing loudly" — celebrating authenticity, confidence, and the beauty of taking up space unapologetically. I

create with the intention of empowering others and helping people feel comfortable and confident in their own skin. Beyond drawing and painting, I also enjoy dabbling in other crafts, constantly exploring new ways to express creativity.



JOSH ETCHISON

A videographer and photographer based in Chattanooga, known for blending cinematic storytelling with fashion, music, and cultural expression. With experience shooting nationwide, he creates intentional, elevated visuals that capture authenticity and identity. Passionate about uplifting Black artistry, Joshua is committed to expanding creative opportunities and placing Black art at the forefront of Chattanooga's cultural landscape.



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LYA KIMBROUGH

Lya Kimbrough is a Chattanooga native, devoted mother, and lifelong learner with a passion for entrepreneurship and community impact. She serves as Senior Director at the Urban League of Greater Chattanooga's Center for Economic and Business Success, where she oversees programs that support small business growth and sustainability. With an MBA in Finance, Lya brings expertise in business strategy and financial planning and is deeply committed to connecting entrepreneurs with the tools, resources, and relationships they need to thrive and drive lasting impact in the local business community.



LASHA MITCHELL

LaSha Rockymore Mitchell is a visionary community creative strategist, nonprofit founder, and cultural entrepreneur whose work bridges art, purpose, and impact. As the Founder and Executive Director of the Music, Fashion & Arts Foundation – a 501(c)(3) dedicated to empowering artists and communities through creativity, education, and professional development – LaSha has helped over 250 creatives across the Southern region amplify their voices and launch sustainable careers in the arts. Including being the founder of Chattanooga Week and 423 Day here in Chattanooga, TN.

Also co-owner of The SmArt Oasis, a cultural hub where art, business, and wellness intersect, LaSha fosters environments where collaboration, artistic expression, and community connection thrive. Her work rejects the traditional boundaries between art and advocacy, believing deeply that creativity can be a powerful tool for healing, leadership, and opportunity.

LaSha's journey toward purpose was shaped by personal loss and resilience. After the passing of her brother in 2018 – a pivotal moment that stoked her commitment to service – she transformed her grief into a mission of uplifting others through intentional community engagement and creative empowerment.

Her initiatives include statewide creative convenings, educational workshops, outreach events, and collaborative showcases that inspire emerging artists and nurture lasting impact. Whether cultivating creative space or championing underserved voices, LaSha's legacy is rooted not in ambition alone, but in service, authenticity, and the belief that every creative life holds the power to change communities for the better.



JAMES MCKISSIC

James McKissic is the President of ArtsBuild, where he works to strengthen communities through the arts. With nearly 30 years of experience in nonprofit leadership and public service,

James is passionate about using the arts, humanities, and philanthropy to create lasting, inclusive impact. He holds degrees from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and NYU's Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service and is a proud graduate of Leadership Tennessee. He has also studied textile arts and weaving at the John C. Campbell Folk School, Foxfire, and with the Chattahoochee Weavers' Guild.

James currently serves on the boards of the Chattanooga Chamber, The River City Company, Hamilton County Schools Foundation, Tennesseans for the Arts, Tennessee Craft: Southeast, and Humanities Tennessee. He is a founding member of The Sankofa Fund for Civic Engagement and created the African American Historic Cemetery Fund to preserve local Black cemeteries. In his free time, he enjoys travel, weaving, reading, collecting art, gardening, and volunteering as a Little Free Library Steward.



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KRENESHIA WHITESIDE-MCGEE

Kreneshia (Kren The Curator) is an advocate for the arts devoted to fostering culture in the community and presenting creatives in captivating original ways. She's a Tennessee native, but travels near and abroad to work with various artists such as legends like the late renowned poet Nikki Giovanni, retired Ralph Lauren Creative Director, Audrey Schilt, and Forbes recognized artist, Genesis the Greykid. Kreneshia has been credited for her multi-genre projects by Essence Magazine and the Tennessee Association of Museums amongst others. Her portfolio includes creative direction, interior design, and curation in the settings of galleries, homes, restaurants, and more. Kreneshia is also the founder of Culture & Co. Museum which is devoted to curated collaboration and vitalizing the creative economy.

"I'm conscious that my work is bigger than me- it's about the art and the message of the artist. That's what creates culture."



BRIANNA JONES

Exposure to the arts in early adolescence allowed Brianna to develop an immense appreciation for the ways in which arts and culture can unite us all in our shared humanity. This is what motivates her work to administrator opportunities in the arts to her local community.

WOODSON CARPENTER

Woodson Carpenter is a proud Black son of Appalachia—of its mountains, hollers, valleys, and rivers. A son of poets, singers, players, and thinkers. A son of rebellion and rebuilding, enslaved people and enslavers. His hope, in remaining always rooted in his home, heritage, and history, is to become an ever more beautiful embodiment of a dream deferred.

As a multi-hyphenate creative, Woodson's work is, at its core, a pursuit of beauty—often the sort that emerges from simple and mundane elements of life. Through music, poetry, and photography, he reflects the intersecting identities he and his village embody.

A trained social scientist with a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Pittsburgh, his professional and academic work has largely explored how policy, community, creativity, economics, and justice can meaningfully intersect. On any given day, you can probably find reading, writing, and staring out the window at one of Chattanooga's local coffee shops or wandering around local green spaces.

