

locustprojects

3852 North Miami Avenue, Miami, FL 33127
305.576.8570 | info@locustprojects.org | www.locustprojects.org

****MEDIA ALERT****

Locust Projects Announces New Board Vice-Chair and Directors

[Miami: July, 2021] Locust Projects, an arts incubator producing and presenting experimental exhibitions, programs and projects, is pleased to announce the appointment of a new Vice Chair and new Board of Director Members elected during fiscal year 2020-2021.

Chaired by Miami philanthropist and art collector Debra Scholl since 2009, the organization's Board of Directors have helped establish Locust Projects as a nationally recognized leading alternative art space celebrating twenty-three years of supporting artists with vital opportunities and resources.

"With a fiduciary commitment to the growth and vitality of Locust Projects, these newly appointed members come with exciting experience and intellectual capital," said Lorie Mertes, executive director. "They have expressed a passionate interest in supporting Locust Projects' mission to provide artists with opportunities to create ambitious new work, inspire the next generation, and support local artists with resources to push their practice. We look forward to expanding our impact under their leadership as members of the Board of Directors."

Munisha Underhill appointed as Vice Chair of Locust Projects Board



Munisha Underhill is an art historian, collector, philanthropist, and an accomplished fundraiser with more than twenty years of experience in advancing intuitions, business development, strategic planning, and fundraising for non-profit arts organizations including the *Adrienne Arsht Center* and the *Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA)*. Formerly based in London, she served as Researcher at *Christie's* and as Archivist at the *Henry Moore Foundation*. She is currently a consultant and has advised for *PAMM*, *NSU Art Museum*, *Ordovas Gallery*, *Conde Nast* and *Tra Publishing*.

She joined the board of *Locust Projects* in 2014, and has served as the Chair of the Development Committee, a member of the Events Committee, the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee. She is also spearheading the launch of Locust Projects' new annual fund, *The Incubator*, to continue growing vital support in the three core areas of Locust Projects mission and vision – Exhibitions, Artist Resources and the Next Generation.

In addition to her dedication to Locust Projects, Underhill supports many art, animal rescue, environmental and horse causes in her community. Close to her heart is *Give Back for Special Equestrians*, where she serves on the board to help provide equine therapy for special needs riders.

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Sunita Bhagwan



Sunita was born in Toronto, Canada and grew up in suburban Michigan. She graduated from Michigan State University and owned and operated a successful clothing boutique until 2009 when she moved to Miami, Florida.

Sunita is currently the Membership Director for Faena Hotel's private art and culture-based membership club, Faena Rose, where she has successfully closed close to \$700K in memberships since the start of 2021. Prior to joining Faena Rose she was one of the top producers in procuring gifts for Mount Sinai Medical Center, securing over half a million dollars in less than six months.

As a Miami Beach resident, Sunita is very involved with the community and has volunteered with several organizations including Make-A-Wish, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Friends of North Beach Elementary School.

In her spare time she enjoys reading, exercising, makeup artistry, and spending time with her husband and two children.

Jillian Choi



Jillian Choi is an art & design consultant, specializing in cultural programming, brand strategy, strategic partnerships and creative production under her company, Choi & Friends. She is also a freelance writer. She most recently served as Director of Global Exhibitions at Design Miami/. Formerly based in New York, she served as Fair Director at Collective Design, a 20th century and contemporary international design fair, where she oversaw five editions of the fair. She has also worked at Cristina Grajales Gallery, as well as FITZ & CO, managing media relations and events for their various arts clients including museums, galleries, art fairs and private collections. She is the co-founder of MAKER Magazine (no longer in production), a contemporary arts content

platform and served as Editor at Large for its annual publication. While living in Hong Kong, she focused on bridging the gap between art and design, East and West, connecting the dots in between—still a primary focus in her practice. Image by Giovanni Mocchetti / BFA.com

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Nick D'Annunzio



Nick D'Annunzio brings more than a decade of strategic marketing, event coordination, product development, and public relations expertise to his position of co-principal at TARA, Ink., a public relations, special events and creative marketing firm headquartered in Miami, with events and campaigns realized nationwide. Founded in 2001, TARA, Ink. has serviced top-tier national clients, including Cadillac, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Gucci, Tom Ford, Rolex, Bobbi Brown, La Mer, Sony Ericsson, The History Channel, SBE Hotel Collection, Faena Miami Beach, Soho Beach House, and Hard Rock Hotels, among many others, and continues to serve clients of the most discriminating caliber with Nick at the helm.

André Williams



André Williams is a real estate attorney practicing law in South Florida since 1993. His full service real estate law firm represents real estate developers, investors, lenders, brokers and individuals in real transactions including multifamily and bulk sales of condominiums. He is also President and CEO of Pendragon Title and Escrow Inc., and serves as President of the Miami Gardens Chamber of Commerce, Co-Chair of the Diversity and Equity Inclusion Council of the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce, and member of the BNI Pioneers. Previously Williams served as Councilman in the City of Miami Gardens, FL.

[See the full list of Locust Projects Board of Directors here.](#)

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ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami's longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida's arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.

Locust Projects 2020-2021 exhibitions and programming are made possible with support from: The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, The Children's Trust; Berkowitz Contemporary Foundation; The National Endowment for the Arts Art Works Grant; Hillsdale Fund; the Albert and Jane Nahmad Family Foundation; VIA Art Fund | Wagner Incubator Grant; Funding Arts Network; The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation at The Miami Foundation; Susan and Richard Arregui; Kirk Foundation; Miami Salon Group; Scott Hodes; Jones Day; Community Recovery Fund at The Miami Foundation and the Wege Foundation; and the donors to the Still Making Art Happen Campaign and Locust Projects Exhibitionist members.

ART HAPPENS HERE.