



Cultural Strategy to Shift *Worldview*

2021 End of Year Report



THE CENTER FOR
CULTURAL
POWER

Culture

is a

Powerful

Lever



Culture is a powerful lever to transform political and economic systems, and artists are uniquely situated to transform our culture. In 2021 we invested in supporting and deploying Artist Disruptors to accelerate a shift in worldviews from domination and division toward justice and collaboration. At the same time, we built the capacity of artists to use their creativity to respond to the greatest challenges of our time including: the climate, pandemic, and economic crisis, as well as the urgent need for gender and racial justice. In an increasingly polarized nation, people are **hungry for systemic solutions.**

In 2021, we positioned artists to **meet the moment, and we built the power of artists to impact change** across regions, sectors and movements. The Center for Cultural Power (Cultural Power) doubled down on our hypothesis that **artists are at the center of culture change**, as we confronted race-based violence and unjust state legislation over trans, abortion, voting rights, and pandemic response.

In January 2021, as white supremacists stormed the capitol, artists responded resoundingly with work showing **we are greater than fear.** We trained artists in the Midwest, Bay Area, and the Southern border in storytelling and career building. We brought artists into the center of the battle for climate justice, training more than 50 artists and partnering with BIPOC TikTok creatives, reaching tens of millions. We collaborated with Black, Indigenous and Queer filmmakers to elevate Black voices in the climate movement. In December, our president, Favianna Rodriguez, activated artists in Glasgow at the UN COP26 climate conference.

We are building an ecosystem where artists thrive and the field learns, inspiring new ideas and making the future we want feel tangible and inevitable. In 2020, we launched The Center for Cultural Power in a very uncertain world — and found we were built for it. As we enter the volatile unfolding of 2022, we are being called to hone our strategies and boldly meet the moment.

Opening art by Favianna Rodriguez.





DELIVERED MORE THAN

**\$315,000 to
200+ artists**

to create new work and reach their audiences with messages of care, interdependence, equity, self-determination and collaboration.



\$1,000+ artists

in trainings and partnerships with a focus on Latinx and Black artists and artists living in Oakland, the Midwest and the Border Region.



Creative Briefs

that make big issues accessible to artists to mobilize and build partnerships across regions and issues.



REACHED MORE THAN

24 Million

diverse audiences– 3 million+ audiences engaged across our combined social media platforms (@CultureStrike and Sons and Brothers); 21 million + potential audiences reached by 100+ influencers who shared our content.



PROVIDED

Opportunities

Provided emerging transgender, nonbinary, migrant, and disabled screenwriters an opportunity to breakthrough into Hollywood through our **Disruptors Fellowship** designed to upend Hollywood's status quo. Many are now receiving recognition in the industry.



RAISED MORE THAN

\$10 Million

for the Constellations Culture Change Fund & Initiative, a three year \$23 million field wide initiative to build the ecosystem of BIPOC culture makers and grassroots organizations at the intersection of social justice and culture.



CONDUCTED RANDOMIZED
OPINION POLLS ON

3,600

Black, Latinx and young people across California and found our content significantly increased support for tenant protection.



ELEVATED THE ROLE OF

Cultural Strategy

through President Faviana Rodriguez's thought leadership including: Forbes, Nonprofit Quarterly, Philanthropy News Digest, Philanthropy Women, Bloomberg, Grist, Atmos, and in reports (Deloitte Monitor Institute). She joined show host W. Kamau Bell for the premiere of United Shades of American on CNN.



OUR STRATEGIES



Artist Leadership



**Intersectional
Storytelling**



Field Building

Our approach is to invest directly in Artist Disruptors, develop values aligned core narratives for BIPOC artists and social movements to create from, and build a cultural strategy ecosystem. Power building underpins our approach to collaborating with artists and partners.

Across all three of our strategy areas (**Artist Leadership, Intersectional Storytelling and Field Building**) our goal is to **create inspiring stories to impact audiences**, ultimately shifting world views from domination and division toward justice, care, and collaboration.



2021 HIGHLIGHTS



THE DISRUPTORS FELLOWSHIP is designed to disrupt Hollywood and provide breakthrough opportunities to **10 screenwriters of color who identify as trans and/or non-binary, disabled, undocumented and/or formerly undocumented immigrants**. Ninety-one percent of television show creators are white and 78 percent are men. The Disruptors provides fellows with skills, community, and growth. Our Fellows are **breaking into the industry**.

- ▶ Fellows from this and last year’s cohort have been selected for the Sundance Institute’s inaugural Trans Possibilities Intensive, a Sundance Institute Uprise Grant Fund, for acting roles in film, one is a writer on the HBO comedy series “Gordita Chronicles”.
- ▶ Three fellows are now represented by two of Hollywood’s leading talent agencies.



OAKLAND FUTURES, an initiative to energize Oakland BIPOC artists and cultural workers to uplift, share, and connect stories about Oakland’s complex history, current moment, and future promise.

- ▶ On June 17th, we organized a Town Hall to advocate for city support of the arts as part of a Defund/Reinvest campaign. Oakland City Council was planning to allocate funds to Oakland Police, **but the activation changed the outcome**.
- ▶ Alongside local movement groups, we secured the reallocation of \$18 million for critical community needs like Arts & Culture, violence prevention programs, and mental health services. Four films created by the Oakland Futures cohort were selected for the 18th Oakland International Film Festival.

RECLAIMING THE BORDER NARRATIVE

As part of a Ford Foundation initiative, the Reclaiming the Border Narrative project seeks to enable immigrant rights advocates, artists, writers and organizations to organize and preserve stories reflecting the dignity and truth of impacted communities. Reclaiming the Border Narrative is a three-year effort initiated by the Ford Foundation in partnership with the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures, Borealis Philanthropy, and The Center for Cultural Power. It is part of a long-term effort to expand perceptions about the border region and migration from one of chaos and danger to one in which all communities, people, and cultures are respected and live with one another.

- ▶ Cultural Power provided intensive trainings for two cohorts of more than 50 artists, **journalists, migrant justice, and arts/culture organizations** across the Mexican American border.
- ▶ Cohorts focused on relationship building, goals alignment, and ethical storytelling.
- ▶ Our master artists provided one-on-one coaching to support their capacity for cultural strategy in the border region.



INTERSECTIONAL STORYTELLING

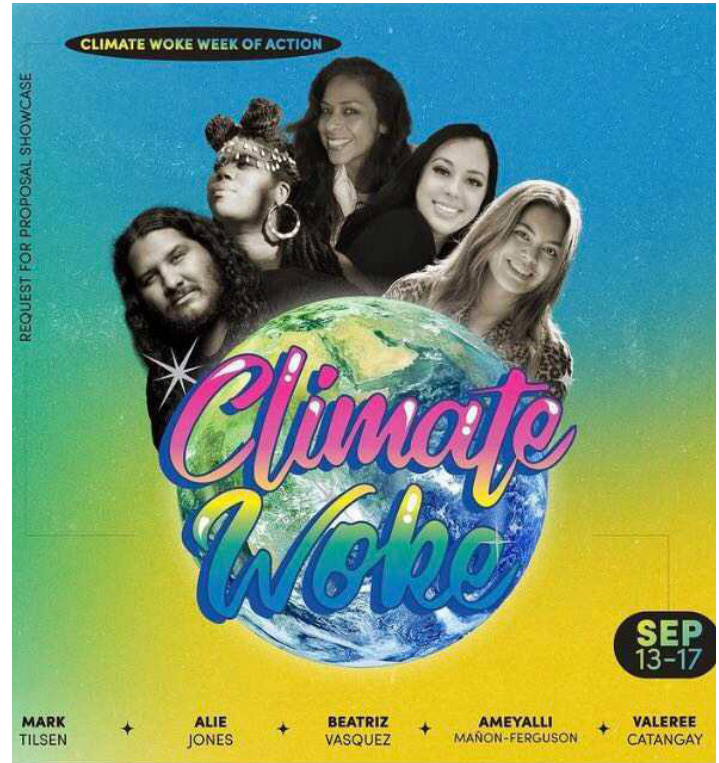
Intersectional Storytelling activates artists and movement groups to create inspiring stories on issues of migration, climate, and gender justice that uplift directly impacted communities.

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Our partnership with **CALIFORNIA LATINAS FOR REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE (CLRJ)** aimed to build a narrative among Gen Z/Millennial audiences through videos that highlight the links between reproductive justice, economic justice and health equity. The campaign targeted the effort to pass rent control and just cause in Bell Gardens, Los Angeles. Our videos co-created with artists, increased intent to take action on increasing support for Tenant Protections, raising awareness on the effects of Covid-19 on Housing, and raising awareness on the connection between Housing and Women’s Rights. We conducted randomized control trials with our videos with 3,600 statewide audiences (specifically, Black, Latinx and young audiences). Overall, the ads increased intent to take action on support for Tenant Protections.

Our **climate justice work** brought artists and culture bearers from impacted communities to the center of the battle for climate justice locally and internationally. Cultural Power continues to be part of uplifting shared narratives—both about the root causes of the climate crisis, as well as a shared vision for a fossil-free future.

- President Favianna Rodriguez participated in sessions on arts activation and cultural strategy at the **UN Climate Change Conference (COP26)** in Glasgow, Scotland
- Virtual **Climate Woke Summit**. Joined by BLD PWR and Poder NC:
 - 90+ participants, strategized and connected with fellow creatives and cultural organizers through panels, performances, conversations, and networking
 - 25 micro-grants given to artists from North Carolina and the Appalachian region whose work addresses the climate crisis.



- ▶ Sponsored and helped organize the **2021 Hollywood Climate Summit** with Young Entertainment Activists (YEA) on September 24 with Favianna as a keynote speaker to a social media reach of 18 million and with positive reactions in post-event surveys.
- ▶ Our September Climate Week of Action, featured short videos of Climigration, Land Back (Indigenous sovereignty), and Black Liberation (one shared by actor and activist Mark Ruffalo).
- ▶ Produced five **ClimateWoke videos**, and two of those videos “Reclaiming the Earth” and “Climmigration” were screened at the Summit and at UN COP26 in Glasgow.



2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Cultural Power moved ideas and mobilized audiences through the thought leadership of its team and by reflecting cultural strategy back to the field on its high visibility digital channels.

- ▶ Awarded \$50,000 to 25 Artists identifying as Black and Indigenous in our inaugural Artist Disruptor Awards. Artists were nominated by the Constellations Design Team.
- ▶ We created a **\$23 million investment over three years** for the Constellations Initiative and Fund. We have raised \$10.5 million toward this goal for a transformative investment that will collectively anchor a new field of cultural strategy that centers BIPOC cultural creators and artists rooted in social justice movements.
- ▶ President Favianna Rodriguez appeared in a range of media including: Forbes, Nonprofit Quarterly, Philanthropy News Digest, Philanthropy Women, Bloomberg, Grist, Atmos, and in reports (Deloitte Monitor Institute). She joined show host W. Kamau Bell for the premiere of United Shades of American on CNN, and appeared regularly on national panels on topics ranging from climate change, representation in Hollywood, gender justice and racial reckoning in arts and culture institutions.

www.culturalpower.org

Instagram & Twitter:
[@culturestrike](https://www.instagram.com/culturestrike)

