**Paula Larke**

Paula Larke is a dramatist, writer, musician, and, in her own words, a "story-teller/gatherer." She has worked as artist-in-residence at the Riverside Church, in New York. She is a veteran of the Broadway, Off-Broadway, and touring stages. Paula has performed nationally, primarily in the South and Northwest, presenting chants, songs, and spirituals from Tuskegee, Alabama; the Georgia Sea Islands; the Blue Ridge and Appalachian mountains; and the Piedmont Plateau region of North Carolina. She tells and gathers tales, as well, from many cultures.  She uses her stories and songs to illustrate Biblical and universally spiritual principles.  Her work covers much territory: addiction recovery, school bullying and violence, racism, heritage, and, always, grace in healing. She is a modern-day djali (village chronicler in West Africa), carrying the personal stories of ordinary people to the altar of life for benediction and forgiveness.

<http://www.paulalarke.com/>

**Robert Martin**

Robert (Bobby B) Martinlives in Rockcastle County, Kentucky and works as a theater/film artist, community arts producer, cultural organizer, trainer/facilitator and teaching artist through his company Clear Creek Creative. He is passionate about using all forms of story, theatre, and media to create spaces where audience and artists merge to transform the human condition. He creates and collaborates in performance and art that is rooted in the needs, memories, and possibilities of the community from which it is born. His work ranges from original community performance to digital storytelling to creating community-driven art events and festivals. He also actively uses his cultural organizing and story work to examine the intersections of urban and rural communities and to build dynamic partnerships in hopes of bringing folks closer.

Bob facilitates communication, strategic planning and creative professional development sessions with artists, arts professionals, teachers, community members and cultural organizers who work in community using critical engagement strategies, co-intentional methodology, creative visioning and curriculum building.

Examples of Bob’s Community Story Projects include: Directing and co-writing Cowan’s Roots and Branches/The Homecoming; Directing Higher Ground 3: Talking Dirt, Directorial support and coaching on Higher Ground 5: Find a Way; Directing and writing HomeSongs 1, 2, 3 in Owsley County; Directorial Support for Monkey Dumplins in Clay County; Directorial and writing support for Estill County River City Players; Leading a Creative Community Performance Track at the Brushy Fork Institute and Directing and performing in a series of plays about his home on Clear Creek currently touring the state. Bob also annually produces the Clear Creek Festival with his partner, Carrie Brunk.

Bob is the current Board Chair of Alternate ROOTS an artist-activist network throughout the South and a member of the Kentucky Arts Council’s Teaching Artist and Kentucky Peer Advisory Network.

[**www.clearcreekcreative.net**](http://www.clearcreekcreative.net)

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**Anne Shelby**

Anne (Gabbard) Shelby was born in Berea, Kentucky, and lives in rural Southeastern Kentucky, in a farmhouse that has been in her family for generations. She has published essays, newspaper columns, plays, songs, and children's books, among them an American Bookseller Pick of the Lists, an American Folklore Society Aesop Accolade winner, a School Library Journal Best Book, and a Junior Library Guild Selection. Her collection of poems, Appalachian Studies, was a Kentucky Literary Award and Appalachian Writers Association Book of the Year nominee. Many of her stories, poems, plays and other works are set in Appalachian Kentucky, where she lives. Some of the published credits of Anne Shelby include The Adventures of Molly Whuppie and Other Appalachian Folktales, and Homeplace.

<https://www.facebook.com/AnneShelbyWriterPage/>

<http://www.amazon.com/Anne-Shelby/e/B001H9R6T6>

<http://www.jacketflap.com/anne-shelby/10112>

**Kevin Iega Jeff**

Kevin Iega Jeff began studying dance formally at age thirteen.  He trained at the Bernice Johnson Cultural Arts Center, New York City’s High School for the Performing Arts, Darvash Ballet School, and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center before matriculating into The Juilliard School.  As a dancer he has been praised for his technical brilliance and rigor, his dramatic power, and the singular ability to perform and bridge different dance forms in a seamless manner, whether it be ballet, modern, contemporary, or African American dance.  
At the age of twenty one, Iega founded his first company, JUBILATION! Dance Company in New York City.  JUBILATION! was created out of a need to provide a forum for African-American artists to be nurtured holistically through the arts.  For ten years the company toured nationally and internationally, helping to bring the stories, histories, and art of the African American people as well as his unique approach to contemporary dance to a global audience.While continuing to perform as a dancer, it was at JUBILATION! that Iega began his life long pursuit of both choreographing new work and directing a company that would train a new generation of dancers and choreographers.  In 1994, he left New York to take up an appointment as Artistic Director of the Joseph Holmes Chicago Dance Theater.  In 1995, he co-founded Deeply Rooted Productions in Chicago where he continues to serve today as Artistic Director.  As a choreographer, Iega has created more than fifty works, ranging from solos to large-scale company dances, where he pushes contemporary dance to take cognizance of different voices and aesthetics. He primarily creates for Deeply Rooted, but also continuously receives commissions by other companies to create new works for them, such as the Alvin Ailey Dance Ensemble, River North Dance Company, Dallas Black Dance Theater, the Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theater, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble, and the Wylliams/Henry Danse Theatre.In 2005, Iega was named as one of the Juilliard School’s 100 Outstanding Alumni in celebration of the school’s centenary anniversary.  Among his other awards are those from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Council for Culture and Arts, and the BTAA Best Choreography award for *Church of Nations*. He received a Merit Award from the International Association of Blacks in Dance, and joined their Board in January 2006.  Most recently, Iega was awarded the 2009 Chicago Dance Makers Forum Grant to support the creation of *I Am Deeply Rooted*, which premiered in the Spring of 2010.Iega has served as artist-in-residence at Howard University, the University of Las Vegas, Goucher College, SUNY Purchase and at Purdue University’s Black Cultural Center. His work has been featured in several films, including Spike Lee’s *She’s Gotta Have It,* and in the Broadway shows *Comin’ Uptown* and *The Wiz*.  Iega’s *Walls*premiered at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, GA.  In 2003, Iega and Deeply Rooted Dance Theater Associate Artistic Director Gary Abbott co-choreographed *Jagged Ledges*, featuring Tony Award-winning spoken word artist Staceyann Chin. In 2006, he and Abbott were commissioned to choreograph *Three Brazilian Dances* for the Chicago Sinfonietta, which premiered at Chicago’s Symphony Hall. As Iega reflects on fifteen years at Deeply Rooted, he states: “I want my work to grow truer, more focused, and relevant over time.  My art is born out of human examination, and my desire to communicate authentically informs what I create. For me dance is a perfect catalyst. It reveals the inner voice, reflecting who we are and who we strive to become.”

<https://deeplyrootedproductions.org/about/artistic-directors/>

**Peter Kallok**

Peter Kallok, assistant professor of theatre design at Hampshire College, received his B.A. from U.C.L.A. and his M.F.A. from the University of Washington. He served as the technical director of the Summer Repertory Theater, Santa Rosa, CA for three years before joining StageWest in Springfield, MA, where he was technical director, scenic designer and artistic associate. With more than fifty designs to his credit Peter's work includes scenery for *Equus, Riches, Closer, Venus*, and *BFE* as well as lights for *The Ride Across Lake Constance, Riches, Unplugging* and *Bind Their Wounds* at Hampshire College. Other professional and summer stock design credits include the Miniature Theatre of Chester, Summer Theatre Mount Holyoke, Worcester Foothills Theater, New London Barn Playhouse and Summer Theater at Meredith Village. Peter has served as designer and fabrication consultant respectively for WALA Heimettel, International, and AGH Design. He designed and fabricated scenic elements for *Popa Depot* for HERE'S American Living Room Series. Peter is actively involved in Hampshire's DART (Design Art and Technology) Program. He is focused on design driven performance. Peter has worked with students developing and presenting performance pieces reflecting on trauma, a photograph, control, and a piece of thread. Peter's current project is based on memories of working in a DDT plant and Rachel Carson. In addition to scenography Peter teaches courses in light art and in exploring performance spaces.

<https://www.hampshire.edu/faculty/peter-kallok>

www.peterkallok.com

**Richard Owen Geer**

People Magazine says "Director Richard Geer heals troubled communities with the magic of theatre--and the gift of new hope." Dr. Richard Geer created Community Performance-- Theater of, by and for the community- to empower individuals and bring neighborhoods together. Geer has founded over a score of Community Performance groups, including Georgia's Official Folk Life play, "Swamp Gravy", part of the Cultural Olympiad in Atlanta, Georgia, and also featured at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC.  In partnership with the International Storytelling Center, Geer and CPI are pioneering ways to bring this transformational work to organizations and communities nationwide.  American Theatre Magazine calls Geer's work a "gem of cultural democracy."  It has been showcased across America, as well as in England, Scotland, Brazil and Chile. Geer holds a PhD. in Performance Studies from Northwestern University.

<http://www.communityperformanceinternational.org/about-us/our-team?view=employee&id=1>