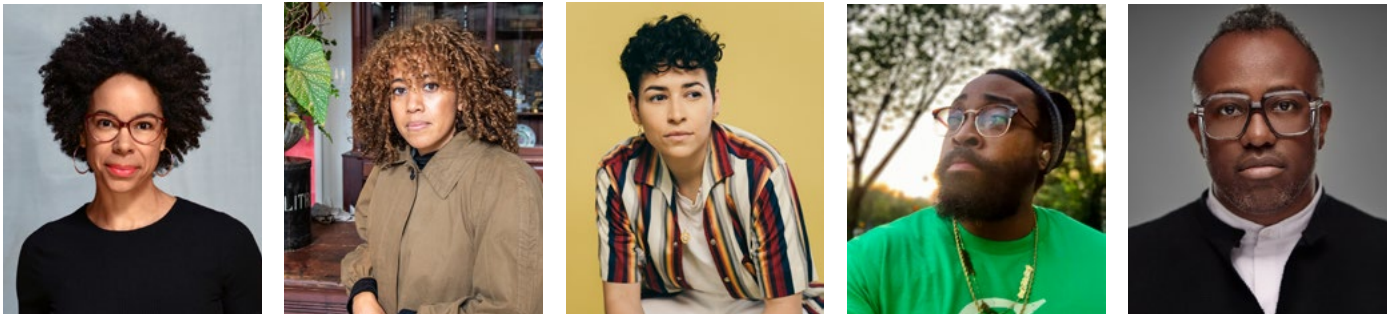


# Headlands Center for the Arts Announces Inaugural Cohort of Threshold Fellows

Group of experts and artists commence multimedia exploration of climate futurism



From left: Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, Erica Deeman, Denice Frohman, Olalekan Jeyifous, Sheldon Scott

**(San Francisco, CA — February 23, 2022)** — Headlands Center for the Arts is proud to announce the 2022 Threshold Fellowship, which will bring together a group of experts and artists from across sectors to investigate climate solutions at the intersection of science, policy, culture, and justice. In collaboration with lead fellow **Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson**—a marine biologist, policy expert, and writer—the fellows will harness the power of the creative process to produce knowledge that confronts the climate crisis. Johnson will work in partnership with poet, performer, and educator **Denice Frohman**; visual artist **Erica Deeman**; visual artist and trained architect **Olalekan Jeyifous**; and artist, performer, and storyteller **Sheldon Scott**.

“I am thrilled to be engaged in cross-disciplinary conversations about climate solutions with these incredible artists, and to support the creation of a body of work around the theme of climate futurism,” says Dr. Johnson. “Headlands supporting this collaboration is legitimately a dream come true. It’s a gift to partner with an organization that knows we can’t get to where we need to go on climate without seeing things in new ways, without a cultural transformation.”

The Threshold Fellowship builds upon the early success of Headlands’ Thematic Residency program and highlights the power and efficacy of artists’ methods and processes to imagine a more equitable future. Each fellow will receive a \$10,000 annual stipend and access to onsite facilities, Headlands retreats, and funds for project development, fabrication, and travel. The program is generously supported by the Gardner Planetary Health Award and the Gruber Family Foundation.

“Reflection, dialogue, and exchange are core to Headlands’ mission, and we are honored to support Ayana, Denice, Erica, Olalekan, and Sheldon as they embark on a multidisciplinary project that bridges fields,” says Mari Robles, Executive Director of Headlands Center for the Arts.



The participants, who have begun conversing about climate topics and sharing resources, will work together virtually for one year with the option to collaborate for a second year. By coming together at key moments, such as a week onsite at Headlands in April of 2022 and a public presentation in 2023, they will deepen their engagement with the Headlands community over the course of the fellowship period.

The announcement of the inaugural Threshold Fellowship comes at an important moment in the evolution of Headlands—its 40th anniversary year. Throughout 2022, the organization will host a range of events and programs that celebrate its rich history and offer a preview of what's to come, including the work of the Threshold Fellows.

### **About the Fellows**

#### **Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, Lead Fellow (she/her)**

Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson is a marine biologist, policy expert, writer, and Brooklyn native. Currently, she is working on a book offering a vision of what our world could look like if we race together toward climate solutions at the intersection of science, policy, culture, and justice. Painting a picture of a thriving world—a replenished, transformed, loving world—the book aims to show us that it is worth the effort, and the overhaul, to get there together. It will form the cornerstone of a multimedia project with the inaugural Threshold Fellowship cohort.

Dr. Johnson is co-founder of Urban Ocean Lab, a think tank for coastal cities, and co-creator of the Spotify climate podcast “How to Save a Planet.” She co-edited the bestselling climate anthology *All We Can Save* and co-founded The All We Can Save Project. Recently, she co-authored the “Blue New Deal,” a roadmap for including the ocean in climate policy. Previously, she was executive director of the Waitt Institute and developed policy at the EPA and NOAA. Dr. Johnson earned a BA from Harvard University in environmental science and public policy, and a PhD from Scripps Institution of Oceanography in marine biology. She is on the Time 100 Next 2021 list and *Outside* magazine called her “the climate leader we need.”

#### **Erica Deeman, Fellow (she/they)**

Erica Deeman is a visual artist considering the liminal and transitory spaces in which Black identities are formed. Deeman’s work is interdisciplinary in nature, and she creates in both physical and virtual spaces. Deeman’s maternal family moved to the United Kingdom as part of the Windrush generation, leaving their farmland in Lesterfields, Jamaica, and eventually settling in Nottingham. She draws upon this journey, her own migration to the US, collective migratory patterns, and memory to create installations and artworks that speak to the condition of becoming and the intimate, spiritual, and ancestral history belonging to her family.

Deeman received a BA (Hons), Public Relations, degree in 2000 from Leeds Beckett University, Leeds, UK, and a BFA, Photography degree in 2014 from Academy of Art, San Francisco. She has exhibited widely, including solo exhibitions with Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco; Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Archive, Berkeley; Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego; and Laurence Miller Gallery, New York. She received the 2021 Cadogan Contemporary Art Award, and was a 2019 Artist in Residence at Headlands Center for the Arts in Sausalito, CA.

#### **Denice Frohman, Fellow (she/her)**

Denice Frohman is a poet, performer, and educator whose work explores language, lineage, queerness, and the colonial relationship between the U.S and Puerto Rico. As an artist shaped by the Nuyorican Poetry Movement, she utilizes oral traditions of storytelling to build intimate connections with audiences. For Frohman, poetry is an embodied act, and she sees her work as a tool for social change, cultural preservation, and as a means to subvert traditional notions of power and knowledge. Furthermore, she hopes to inspire young people, particularly young queer people of color, to know that their stories are worth telling.

Frohman’s work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The BreakBeat Poets: LatiNext*, *Nepantla: An Anthology for*



Queer Poets of Color, and ESPNW. A former Women of the World Poetry Slam Champion, she has been featured on national and international stages from The Apollo to The White House, and at over 400 colleges and universities. She is a CantoMundo Fellow, and has received residencies and awards from the National Association of Latino Arts & Cultures, Leeway Foundation, Blue Mountain Center, and Millay Colony.

**Olalekan Jeyifous, Fellow (he/him)**

Olalekan Jeyifous examines contemporary socio-political, cultural, and environmental realities through the tradition of architectural utopianism, from a sci-fi inspired and Afro-surrealist perspective. His practice is rooted in borrowed and invented utopian or dystopian narratives anchored by direct relevance to contemporary social issues. To articulate these narratives, Jeyifous regularly combines digital illustration and 3D computer models with photographs, hand-drawings, and collage, to produce detailed illustrations, photo-montages, 360° VR experiences, adaptable and mobile architectural sculptures, and large-scale public installations that examine architecture and its relationship to place and community through an eco-political lens.

Jeyifous received a BArch from Cornell University and has exhibited at venues such as the Studio Museum in Harlem, MoMA, the Vitra Design Museum, and the Guggenheim in Bilbao, Spain. He has been a Wilder Green Fellow at the MacDowell Colony and has completed artist residencies with the Drawing Center's Open Sessions program and the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center, and is the recipient of a 2021 Fellowship by the United States Artists. He has spent over a decade creating large-scale installations for a variety of public spaces and was recently co-commissioned to create a monument dedicated to Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm as part of the City of New York's "She Built NYC" initiative.

**Sheldon Scott, Fellow (he/him)**

Born and raised in Pawley's Island in the Gullah/Geechee Lowcountry of South Carolina, Sheldon Scott now lives and works in Washington, DC. His practice is primarily based in performance, and includes sculpture, installation, photography, drawing, and film. In his work, Scott plays in the intersection of race, sexuality, and economic forces, while impugning mythologies of Black Male supernaturalism.

Scott has exhibited widely, including at Delaware State University, Art Miami, Untitled Art Fair, Katzen Art Museum, David C. Driskell Center, and the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery. His work has been acquired by esteemed collections including the National Museum of African-American History and Culture and The Ogden Museum of Southern Art. He has been recognized by Americans for the Arts' Best Public Art Program and was a finalist for the National Portrait Gallery's 2019 Outwin-Boochever Portrait Competition. Scott has been a featured presenter at TEDx Mid-Atlantic, ArtTable, CreativeTime Festival, Washington Ideas Festival, and the Smithsonian Long Conversation. He currently serves on the boards of Teaching for Change, Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, Transformer, and Woolly Mammoth Theatre, and currently serves at the Global Head of Purpose at Eaton Workshop.

**About Headlands Center for the Arts**

Founded in 1982, Headlands Center for the Arts operates a multidisciplinary, international arts center best known for its dynamic public programs and highly lauded artist residency. Located in the coastal wilderness of the Marin Headlands, within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Headlands' historic campus is dedicated to process-driven exploration and risk-taking contemporary art in all disciplines. Its year-round programs provide visual artists, performers, musicians, and writers with opportunities for research, professional development, and peer-to-peer exchange at critical times in their careers. More at [headlands.org](http://headlands.org).

Support Headlands Center for the Arts and the Threshold Fellowship at [Headlands.org/give](http://Headlands.org/give).