

MEKAH STINGLEY

MULTIDISCIPLINARY FOLK ARTIST | CREATIVE DIRECTOR | COMMUNITY FACILITATOR

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Interdisciplinary artist, curator, writer, and community organizer with 13+ years of experience creating exhibitions, performances, publications, workshops, and community-centered programs. Skilled in translating complex social themes into accessible visual, written, and experiential work; building creative partnerships; facilitating groups; and managing projects from concept through public presentation.

CORE SKILLS

Creative Direction & Concept Development	Event Curation & Production	Mixed Media, Collage & Print
Grant Writing & Research	Group Facilitation & Community Care	Web, Graphic & Publication Design

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Founder & Creative Director | Sideshow Arts / Backbone Studios 2013–Present

Milwaukee, WI

- Develop multidisciplinary art, performance, publication, and community-program concepts using collage, printmaking, poetry, photography, installation, and digital media.
- Curate artists and collaborators, design audience experiences, create promotional materials, and manage projects from early concept through public presentation.
- Founded current initiatives including Backbone Studios, Invisible Labor Union, and 3rd Space Coalition.

Director | Booth Street Housing Co-op 2021–2022

Milwaukee, WI

- Managed routine building operations, resident transitions, contractor coordination, vacancy marketing, applications, rent collection, and utility payments.



- Applied cooperative values and clear communication to support shared responsibility and consistent house operations.

Manager, Grant Writer & Sous Chef | TrickleBee Café 2019–2020

Milwaukee, WI

- Prepared grant proposals and public-facing materials; coordinated front-of-house service, menu planning, food utilization, presentation, and community hospitality.

Independent Contractor, Commissioned Artist & Airbnb Manager | ONCATA 2019–Present

Virtual / Milwaukee, WI

- Create commissioned zines and visual work, support performer casting and preparation, host community art-share gatherings, and manage residential hospitality needs.

SELECTED CREATIVE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

Bitches, Bitches, Bitches — Group Exhibition, Braided Magazine / Bint Jamila Studios | Milwaukee, WI 2026

New York Fashion Week – LEECH Collection — Model, Elena Velez; featured in Vogue Runway archive | New York, NY 2025

Lighting the Wick — Participating Artist, Dear Vessel Art Auction & Fundraiser | Milwaukee, WI 2025

S.A.D.E. 4 PRESIDENT Campaign — Creatrix | Charlotte, NC 2024

Lovers Rock Supper Club — Chef & Hostess | Milwaukee, WI 2024

Soulfolks 2nd Annual Beat Invitational — Creative Directing Assistant | Nashville, TN 2023

Materia Magicka — Curator & Practitioner | Milwaukee, WI 2022

2220 Arts Residency — Performer | Los Angeles, CA 2022

MKE Zine Fest — Scholar & Featured Artist | Milwaukee, WI 2020

Spirit Weavers Gathering — Instructor | Virtual 2020

NO Studios Social Justice Summit — Closing Poet | Milwaukee, WI 2019

Gathering Resonance Collective — Facilitator | Milwaukee, WI 2017–2018

Lunation Moon Circles, Backbone Studios — Curator & Guide | Milwaukee, WI 2016–2017

Circle of Spirit, People's Books Co-op — Creatrix & Guide | Milwaukee, WI 2015–2016

PROJECTS & PUBLICATIONS



- Haiku a Day — Daily poetry and digital publication project (Jan. 2025–Jan. 2026)
- The Heart Knows — Mekah Musings (2023)
- Shoveling Out — Mekah Musings (2020)
- MXD \$GNL\$ — Podcast (2019)
- HER.IT.AGE — Four-volume self-published poetry collection (2019)
- Sun Route — Mekah Musings (2018)
- Nice Digs — Mekah Musings (2018)
- Objects of Desire — Draw-Write-Here (2017)

EDUCATION

Alverno College 2020–Present

Milwaukee, WI

University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee 2011–2014

Milwaukee, WI

CERTIFICATIONS

Birth Doula Training (2015) • Zumba Instructor Training (2017) • Universal Life Church Minister (2017) • Life Insurance & Annuities License, Florida (2018) • ServSafe Commercial Kitchen Manager (2019) • HypnoBirth Educator Training (2023)

MEKAH STINGLEY | PROFESSIONAL RESUME

