



# Brother Thomas Fellowships

*A Special Arts Initiative  
of the Boston Foundation*

**“The reading  
of the written  
word is  
always an  
interpretation.”**

**—Ambreen Butt**



# Ambreen Butt

## Multimedia Artist

Ambreen Butt studied for four years to master the techniques of traditional Indian and Persian Miniature Painting in Pakistan in the early 1990s only to learn that “formally there is not much you can do to further advance this traditional stylistic genre except by deviating from it,” which is what she has been doing as an artist ever since. Born in Lahore, Pakistan, Ambreen is a multimedia visual and installation artist. Some of her recent work explores the meaning people assign to a text and the levels at which it can be read and understood. “The intent is to compel the viewer to look at text not as a form to be read, but to be viewed and interpreted,” she explains. “The reading of the written word is always an interpretation.” Ambreen received her BFA in Pakistan and her MFA at Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston and has exhibited extensively nationally and internationally. • [www.ambreenbutt.com](http://www.ambreenbutt.com)





# Lorraine Chapman

## Choreographer

Lorraine Chapman can't remember a time when she wasn't in love with dance or when it didn't come naturally to her. "My first Ballet teacher, after my first class, asked my mother where I had studied before," she remembers. "It was as if I already knew the vocabulary." Lorraine went on to train in Boston and Canada—and became a choreographer as well as a dancer. "I am inspired, with each new work, by the human condition," she says, "to express outwardly everything we experience inwardly." In 2002, she founded LCTC (Lorraine Chapman, The Company) a contemporary dance company in Boston. Its mission is to provide passionate, engaging and satisfying theatrical dance performance, to create appreciation for and contribute to the art form, and to develop a local, national and international audience. Since its founding LCTC has achieved a reputation for being creative, original and relevant—and for engaging dance creators in building innovative collaborations. • [www.lorrainechapman.org](http://www.lorrainechapman.org)

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**—Lorraine Chapman**



# Matti Kovler

## Composer

Matti Kovler believes that music should have a tangible impact on audience members, whatever their background may be. “What I value in any music,” he explains, “is its ability to touch people, both directly and deeply, as well as a certain magnetism that will call them to return to it again and again.” As a composer and creator of new music-theater works, Matti’s works draw on many contrasting musical and textual sources. Traditional chants—from Gregorian to Hassidic—are juxtaposed with modern music theater and jazz. Sometimes, these widely scattered sources reveal surprising parallels, such as the striking similarity between Hassidic and Native American chants. Matti wrote his first opera at the age of 17 and his works have since been performed worldwide. Recent projects included commissions from Carnegie Hall, Tanglewood Music Center and the Israel Philharmonic. Born in Moscow and educated in Israel and the U.S., Matti recently completed his doctoral studies at the New England Conservatory. • [www.mattikovler.com](http://www.mattikovler.com)

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**—Matti Kovler**

# From Our President and CEO

Arts and culture have been a major priority of the Boston Foundation for close to a century, with the understanding that they have a unique capacity to reflect the very soul of a community. Permeating all aspects of our lives, art and culture have the power to unite people in extraordinary ways.

The Foundation contributes to strengthening Boston-area arts organizations by increasing investment in the cultural sector through public advocacy, promoting arts education in the Boston Public Schools and leveraging culture as a catalyst for vibrant communities and neighborhoods.

We are particularly blessed in Greater Boston to have a wealth of exceedingly talented artists. Some of our artists have grown up in Boston's neighborhoods—their work uniquely shaped by our local culture. Others have come to our great city from far corners of the world and enriched our region with their tremendous talents influenced by their own cultural traditions.


Brother Thomas was an extremely gifted, world-renowned ceramic artist who had a profound dream. We are deeply honored that he chose the Boston Foundation to make it a reality. The sale of his work supports artists at a critical point in their career, as his friends had done for him throughout his lifetime. What a tremendous legacy.

This publication highlights the third class of artists to receive Brother Thomas Fellowships. Each of them is extraordinary. They, along with past and future fellows, will continue to make spectacular contributions to the vibrancy of Greater Boston.

While these unique fellowships are supported by funds bequeathed to us by Brother Thomas, future fellows will benefit tremendously from additional funding. I hope you will consider supporting this vital effort.

**Paul S. Grogan**





**“Sometimes  
the key to  
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in the past.”**

**—Ekua Holmes**

# Ekua Holmes

## Visual Artist

Ekua Holmes grew up in Roxbury and says she was nurtured not only by her mother and father and aunts and uncles, but by neighbors, teachers and friends—really the entire community. Her collages reflect and honor all of them.

“Sometimes the key to our future lies in the past,” she says.

“I honor the memory of those who nurtured me by bringing them to life with torn and cut shapes of color and texture, found objects and fading ephemera.” Ekua studied at the

Maryland Institute College of Art/Mount Royal School of

Interdisciplinary Arts and earned a BFA from Massachusetts

College of Art and Design, where she currently serves as the

Director of *sparc!* the ArtMobile, in the Center for Art and

Community Partnerships. She also curates and leads art,

cultural and historical tours through Discover Roxbury.

Ekua has had a number of solo exhibits and participated

in group exhibits throughout Massachusetts and parts

of New England. • [www.ekuaholmes.com](http://www.ekuaholmes.com)





## Megumi Naitoh Ceramic Artist

Megumi Naitoh is a student of the ancient past and a highly contemporary artist with her feet planted firmly on a path to the future. For more than a decade, she has been fascinated by Roman mosaics and their narrative depictions of daily life and has translated that into ambitious ceramic and digital works. “I am intrigued by how Roman mosaics consisted of small pixel-like squares that were structured in a non-grid, free form manner,” she says. “I responded by creating portraits with visible pixels.” As part of her art, Megumi was an active participant in Second Life, a 3D virtual online community. “I explore the relationship between technology and our lives,” she explains. “Anonymous blogs, forums and social sites are a new way of social interaction.” Megumi was born in Japan and educated in the U.S. She is an Associate Professor of Art at Emmanuel College and teaches ceramics as well as 3D foundation. • [www.meguminaitoh.com](http://www.meguminaitoh.com)



**“I explore the relationship between technology and our lives.”**

**—Megumi Naitoh**



## Sean Fielder Choreographer

Sean Fielder discovered his love of dancing at the age of three. At seven, he began tap dancing at the Roxbury Center for the Performing Arts and has been practicing his art ever since. At 18, he participated in a program in New York City called Funk University. During that same period, Sean was featured in Missy Elliot's video "The Rain" and was selected for the national touring company of Savion Glover's Tony-award-winning show, "Bring in Da Noise Bring in Da Funk." He started the tour as an understudy and quickly worked his way into the lead role. Returning to Boston, Sean founded Boston Tap Company in 2007, which has performed all over the east coast. "My work is an extension of my life and my motto: The only way to be different is to be yourself," he says. As a result, through his dancing, he is creating a body of work that is one of a kind. • [www.thebostontapcompany.com](http://www.thebostontapcompany.com)

**"The only way to be different  
is to be yourself."**

**—Sean Fielder**

**The Brother Thomas Fund** was established at the Boston Foundation in 2007 to honor the legacy of Brother Thomas, a Benedictine monk and world-renowned ceramic artist, who wanted the sale of his work to support other artists, as his friends had helped him. Brother Thomas Fellowships are awarded to a diverse group of Greater Boston artists working at a high level of excellence in many disciplines—with the goal of enhancing their ability to thrive and create new work.

All fellows receive no-strings-attached awards of \$15,000 and are selected biennially through a rigorous multidisciplinary process of nominations and review by a panel of Boston area leaders and cultural practitioners. As more artists join the ranks of Brother Thomas Fellows, our community will benefit immeasurably from their collective talent and creativity.

## Join Us in Supporting the **Brother Thomas Fellowships**

Toward the end of his life, Brother Thomas came together with his dear friends, Sue and Bernie Pucker, owners of the Pucker Gallery on Newbury Street, to create a legacy that would benefit other artists through the sale of his work. Today, the proceeds of the sale of the remarkable works held by the Pucker Gallery—a series of breathtaking vessels with luminous and delicate glazes—go to support the Brother Thomas Fellowships.

We invite you to join us in fulfilling Brother Thomas' vision. If you are a donor interested in contributing to the Brother Thomas Fund—or a collector who would like to learn more about Brother Thomas' works of art as a way of supporting the fund—please contact the Boston Foundation at 617-338-1700.

# About the **Boston Foundation**

As Greater Boston's community foundation since 1915, the Boston Foundation devotes its resources to building and sustaining a vital, prosperous city and region, where justice and opportunity are extended to everyone. It fulfills this mission in three principle ways:

- Helping donors achieve high-impact philanthropy
- Providing major funding for nonprofit organizations
- Serving as a civic leader and convener

All of the work of the Foundation is guided by two main strategic goals that reflect our deep commitment to strengthening our communities:

**Greater Boston residents are successful and thriving.**  
**Greater Boston communities are vibrant, safe and affordable.**

Through these goals, we seek to have a profound impact on five important areas of community life: education, health, jobs, neighborhoods and arts and culture.

For more information about the Boston Foundation or the Brother Thomas Fellowships, call 617-338-1700 or visit [www.tbf.org](http://www.tbf.org).



With special thanks to Artists for Humanity.

