

First Person Arts

FACT SHEET

Our Mission

First Person Arts' mission is to transform the drama of real-life into memoir and documentary art to foster an appreciation for our unique and shared experiences.

Our Vision

Our vision is to be a platform for artists and everyday people to share the compelling personal stories they must tell now.

Our Core Belief

Everyone has a story to tell and sharing our stories connects us with each other and the world. Embedded in this core belief is our organizational commitment to diversity and equality as vital to our practice.

WHAT WE DO

First Person Arts cultivates true, personal stories through our principal programs.

STORYSLAMS

Once-a-month, themed slams where anyone can sign up to tell their story for a chance to win a \$100 prize!

FIRST PERSON ARTS FESTIVAL

Our one-of-a-kind festival, dedicated to presenting art based on real-life stories by well-known and emerging artists across disciplines.

APPLIED STORYTELLING

Our Applied Storytelling programming places first person storytelling at the forefront of personal growth & healing, and uses it as a vehicle to build stronger communities around the issues facing us all.



FACTS AT A GLANCE

- Founded by Vicki Solot in **2001 in Philadelphia, PA**
- The First Person Arts Festival, first held in 2001, is **the only festival of its kind in the world**, dedicated to presenting real-life personal stories
- We are celebrating **20 years of the festival** in 2021

We launched a **twice-monthly storytelling podcast, #US-Unique & Shared Experiences**, on October 12, 2020



We've produced **118 episodes of Commonsense**, a podcast series with WHYY



Our digital programs have been viewed **20,212 times** between May-September 2020



We've received **over 500,000 views** on our YouTube Channel, which archives live and digital stories

👁️ **500,000**

CONTACT US



Tanesha Ford

Director of Marketing & Communications

tford@firstpersonarts.org



Brandon Szeker

Press and PR Consultant

brandon.szeker@gmail.com



Our Website:

firstpersonarts.org

We share and archive stories through:

- First Person Arts **YouTube Channel**
- **#US Podcast**-Unique & Shared Experiences



Notable Festival Performers

Our performers have included Grammy, Tony, and Pulitzer Prize winners, nationally, internationally, and unknown artists—all using the power of their personal experiences to transform the spaces around them. (see the full list here)

Ali Siddiq
Angela Davis
Berneice Johnson Reagon
(Founder, Sweet Honey in the Rock)
Bilal
Black Thought (The Roots)
Chef Marcus Samuelsson
Dael Orlandersmith
Eric Asimov (NY Times Wine Critic)
Fatin Danzler (Kindred The Family Soul)
Felonious Munk

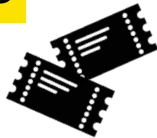
Hari Kondabolu
Ira Glass (in partnership with the
Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts)
Janeane Garofalo
Jennifer Teege
Keith David
Margaret Cho
(in partnership with Live Nation)
Maria Bamford
(in partnership with Live Nation)
Martha Graham Cracker

Nadya Tolokonnikova (Pussy Riot)
Ntozake Shange (in partnership with the
African American Museum in Philadelphia)
Otis Gray
Peedie Crack
Poet Laureate Sonia Sanchez
Poet Laureate Yolanda Wisher
Poet Laureate Rita Dove
Toni Morrison



KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

First Person Arts has held nearly **300** live StorySlams since our founding!



Since **COVID-19**, we've...

- 🔄 **Pivoted to all-digital programming** to bring you new stories from the comfort of your own home, including Virtual StorySlams
- 🎬 **Produced 6 episodes of “COVID Stories”**, curated story submissions from everyday people throughout the United States
- 🎙️ **Launched our new podcast, #US—Unique & Shared Experiences!**
- 🌐 **Expanded to new audiences** locally and nationally
- 👥 **Compensated 100+ artists** who have contributed stories and expertise to our projects, supporting gig workers during COVID-19

APPLIED STORYTELLING

Sexual Harassment Symposium In partnership with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, First Person Arts held this incredible event featuring four workshops and guest speaker Tarana Burke (leader of the #MeToo movement!).

BEyond Expectations Celebrities and everyday males of color perform stories, shatter misconceptions, and celebrate resiliency in this collaborative series with the City of Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services' Engaging Males of Color initiative.

NMAJH Freedom Seders First Person Arts has worked with the National Museum of American Jewish History from 2014–2020 creating artistic content for their annual Freedom Seder. These Passover dinners explore freedom in the context of the Civil Rights Movement and in America today.

OUR PARTNERS

Success is never an individual accomplishment. Our amazing partners contribute to our outstanding programming and allow us to reach wider audiences throughout the region and the country. (see the full list here)

Our Partners include:

Philadelphia Museum of Art

City of Philadelphia DBHIDS Engaging Males of Color

Dow

Penn Nursing

African American Museum in Philadelphia

PA Human Relations Commission

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Sok Be
- Jason Breinin
- Peter Bloomfield
- Jamie Brunson
- Arianna J. Freeman
- Traci Green
- Leah Howse
- Michael Kutner
- Rosalyn McPherson
- Nicole M. Perkins, JD
- Steve Red
- Jean Burke-Spraker
- Leo Otting
- Dan Kaufmann

First Person Arts

Updated November 2020