



A message from FAP to the Harvard community

Black Lives Matter. Black Artists Matter. Black Stories Matter.

The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade—and countless other Black people throughout our nation's history—have shaken our country to the core, and have magnified injustice, unnecessary violence, and further exposes, yet again, unshakeable truths about how members of our society are continually discriminated against, targeted, and forced to experience constant microaggressions and stereotypes. In such times, it is imperative that individuals and organizations speak out against injustice and systematic racism. The First-Year Arts Program proudly stands with our Black community now and always.

Across America, and around the globe, we constantly engage with Black art. Black artists have advanced the cultural fabric of our nation, creating entire genres such as gospel, jazz, tap, hip-hop, rap, R&B, soul, funk, and blues. Black creators have contributed to every artistic medium, inspiring the work of others-- all while working hard to overcome systematic biases.

The arts exist in every culture, and those arts are used to share authentic and vulnerable stories, narratives, histories, and experiences of existing in that culture, or at their intersection with other cultures and identities. What more joyous way can there be to learn about the experiences of others than through a poem, a dance, a costume, a play, a film, a painting, or a song? Art shapes our minds and hearts and allows us to laugh and cry while challenging us to do better and be better.

The First-Year Arts Program is committed now and always to allowing room and making space for these stories to be told, and to fearlessly open dialogues that need to be had. Creativity, expression, and identity are essential for art to survive, and we celebrate the contributions of each and every student who participates in our program. For the foreseeable future, we will be sharing art of Black Harvard students, staff, and alumni on our social media pages in solidarity, recognition, and appreciation of our Black community members.

We are all responsible for taking a deeper look at the art we create and consume. We acknowledge, as a Harvard-affiliated pre-orientation program, our own privileges and the barriers to entry that have been in place in the past, and moving forward, we will constantly work to establish the most conscious, equitable, and accessible experience—for all to enjoy. We commit to reevaluating our mission and working to remove systematic barriers to ease the transition into the college experience. We commit to enhanced training on implicit bias for our staff. We need to amplify, elevate, and honor all of the voices in our community. Black stories will always matter. Black artists will always matter. Black lives will always matter.

In solidarity,

Dana Knox, Director

Ian Chan '22, Production Proctor

Ramona Park '22, Production Proctor

Paolo Pasco '22, Creative Writing Proctor

Dara Badon '22, Creative Writing Proctor

Katherine Deng '21, Dance Proctor

Udochi Emeghara '23, Dance Proctor

Joy Nesbitt '21, Drama Proctor

Connor Riordan '23, Drama Proctor

Sam Dvorak '23, Film Proctor

Sara Komatsu '23, Film Proctor

Emma Lanford '22, Music Proctor

Travis Harper '23, Music Proctor

Quinn Lewis '22, Studio Arts Proctor

Bridget Chamberlin '23, Studio Arts Proctor

Finn Bamber '22, Theater Design Proctor

Odessa Deng '22, Theater Design Proctor