



## Meet Our Keynote Speakers

### Virtual Keynote Address: Removing the Background Noise: Authenticity, Accessibility, and Embodiment in Communicating Creative Arts Therapeutic Work



**Natasha Thomas, PhD, MT-BC** (They/She + any neo-pronouns offered with respect) is a Queer, Black, Disabled child of Caribbean immigrants from St. Vincent, an island that has historically been home to shipwreck and volcano, as well as the Kalinago people and descendants of the Trans Atlantic Slave trade, among others. Natasha holds a PhD in Expressive Therapies and teaches Music Therapy at IUPUI, on the land of the Miami people (Indianapolis, Indiana), where she lives with her spouse and three year old. Natasha is a member of the steering committee for the Black Music Therapy Network and co-host of their podcast Black Creative Healing. When not actively creating or playing with their child, you can find Natasha exploring ancestral concepts of creativity and healing (particularly within African spiritual cosmologies), cooking, gardening, or community building with kin or anyone else willing to join themme. She works with those who are ready to transform.

### In-Person Keynote Address: In Times of Protest: Critique, Criticism, & Radical Trajectories

**Marisol Norris, PhD, MT-BC** is the founder and CEO of the Black Music Therapy Network, Inc., and director of the Music Therapy and Counseling Master’s Program at Drexel University. A leading scholar-activist in music therapy whose work centers on musical placemaking within Black communities, Dr. Norris teaches internationally on the human need for wholeness and the liberatory function of artistic processes to deepen the capacity for relational experience. Her work has been featured in media outlets, including Rolling Stone and Vogue, and has contributed to the international discourse of applied music-based research through platforms such as The Sound Health Network. Her clinical and supervisory background spans medical and community health settings and includes acute psychiatric care, trauma and loss, addictions, familial ruptures and repair, and organizational systems. She co-labors with communities to facilitate justice-oriented arts and health initiatives, including the Philadelphia-based series Lyric & Flow: Songwriting through Trauma and esperanza spalding’s Grammy Award-winning project, Songwrights Apothecary Lab. Her deep commitment to healing justice and dismantling relational and structural violence through advocacy, education, and action has led to the development of community-based resources and the reimagining of music therapy education in the U.S. Dr. Norris’ scholarship focuses on aesthetics as an embodied meaning-making process within Black life, exploring the effects of societal trauma on the health of Black communities and the agented portrayals of Black service recipients’ health practices across chronic illness and mental health. Dr. Norris’ co-edited special multidisciplinary journal issue, “Black Aesthetics & the Arts Therapies,” demonstrates this work as a theory in the flesh and her deliberate care in bringing margins to the center.



## Sponsored by:



# Schedule of Events

All times CT (GMT-5:00)

## Part 1 – Virtual Conference: Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Virtual presentations will occur live on the Zoom platform with recordings available by April 8<sup>th</sup>. Recordings will be available for viewing until April 15<sup>th</sup>. Live captioning will be available for each presentation. Please email [Conference@ITACHicago.org](mailto:Conference@ITACHicago.org) for additional requests for accommodations or questions regarding accessibility.

### Conference Welcome & Virtual Keynote (1.5 CEUs) Removing the Background Noise: Authenticity, Accessibility, and Embodiment in Communicating Creative Arts Therapeutic Work 9:00am – 10:30am (90 minutes)

*Presented by* Natasha Thomas, PhD, MT-BC

*Objectives:*

- Reflect critically on how the work of creativity is translated and communicated in personal, community, and research contexts.
- Explore pathways and develop strategies to tap into cultural histories and wisdom-bearers (community elders, healers, and other trusted community members) with sensitivity and humility.

### Panel Presentations (1.5 CEUs) 11:00am – 12:30pm (90 minutes)

#### Evaluating a Research Mentorship Pilot Program in the Profession of Drama Therapy

*Presented by* Angelle Cook, RDT/BCT, PhD & Jason Frydman, PhD, RDT/BCT, NCSP

*Description:* This presentation will detail a NADTA Research Committee pilot program which matched emergent drama therapy researchers with established drama therapy researchers to encourage new scholarship and research in the field of drama therapy. We will discuss the research design and results of this pilot study, as well as take-aways for the next, expanded iteration.

*Objectives:*

- Understand the design of a research mentorship program in drama therapy.
- Learn about the strengths and weaknesses of the program.
- Gain ideas of how to address research gaps in their field through mentorship.

## How Do We Engage Our Clients in Developing Our Practice? Findings From a Qualitative Meta-Analysis of Client Experiences of Drama Therapy

*Presented by* Tobias Constien, BA Drama therapy, H. Dip. Psychology, Akhila Khanna, MA, LCAT, & Amélie Wiberg, BA Drama therapy

*Description:* This presentation presents the findings of a meta-analysis of qualitative studies reporting on client experiences of drama therapy. By synthesizing reports from various studies, this analysis allows a comprehensive representation of clients' experiences that may contribute to the further development of our field.

*Objectives:*

- Understand common positive and negative client experiences of drama therapy.
- Learn to appreciate the importance of including clients in research and practice evaluation.
- Become familiar with the content and importance of qualitative research.

### Lunch Break

12:45pm – 1:45pm

### Neurodivergent Attendees Affinity Group (No CEUs)

12:45pm – 1:45pm

*Facilitated by* TBA

ITA welcomes neurodivergent individuals to gather as an affinity group to explore, discuss, and support each other through challenges that this community faces within the Creative Arts Therapy community and beyond. This group is a closed group for those that identify as neurodivergent, neuro-queer, non-neurotypical, including those who are self-diagnosed, self-realized, or undiagnosed, and those questioning their neuro-identity to provide a private space for transparent and open discussion. **This virtual affinity group is open to ALL neurodivergent conference registrants, even if you did not register for the virtual conference.**

### Discussion & Panel Presentations (1.5 CEU each)

2:00pm– 3:30pm (90 minutes)

#### ***Discussion:* Building a Hospital-Based Creative Arts Therapy Program from Scratch**

*Presented by* Kate Beever, MA, MT-BC

*Description:* This session will share tools for setting up successful, sustainable creative arts therapy programs in inpatient hospitals. We'll outline the use of pilot studies, share ideas for best contacts and funding sources in healthcare systems, as well as tips for avoiding burnout while being professionally persistent in advocacy.

*Objectives:*

- Learn how to find the contact information for, and reach out to, the decision-makers in a large hospital system. Practice verbally engaging diverse stakeholders through education and advocacy.
- Draft the pieces of a sample pilot study, in order to share qualitative and quantitative results of the addition of services rather than the 'free demo' version of new programming attempts. Understand how the IRB process works.
- Build skills in avoiding burnout, considerations for how to access additional cultural competency and education for working with new populations, and best practices for co-treating with integrative medicine teams.

## **Panel: Implementing a Creative Arts Therapy Program in a Large, Diverse School District**

***Presented by*** Amanda Check, MS, Art Therapy Fellow, Sarah Clewett, MA, MT-BC, Megan Curran, MAATC, ATR-P, McKenna Fuder, MAAT, ATR-P, Shelby Graves, LPC, ATR-P, Lizzy Kunde, MT-BC, Matthew Kwon, MT-BC, Cara Paden, MM, MT-BC, Alexis Pelt, MT-BC, Jazmin Royg, MA, R-DMT, Joey Sedlacek, MT-BC, and Nolan Sheets, Art Therapy Intern

*Description:* Bringing creative arts therapy to Chicago Public School students in diverse learning classrooms brings both opportunities and challenges. This panel presentation will focus on formulating and communicating goals and benefits of creative arts therapy, developing effective interventions, and building relationships with teachers and paraprofessionals.

### *Objectives:*

- Learn strategies to formulate and communicate creative arts therapy goals.
- Learn solutions and challenges to creating interventions that effectively address diverse learning needs.
- Understand the importance of building relationships with teachers and paraprofessionals.

## Part 2 – In Person Conference

YWCA Evanston/North Shore  
1215 Church Street, Evanston, IL 60201

No sessions will be virtual or recorded. Free parking is available in the YWCA's lot. You can also access the venue via Metra, CTA, and PACE bus routes.

### Day 1 – Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

#### Conference Welcome (1 CEU)

9:00am – 10:00am

*Facilitators:* ITA Conference Committee

*Location:* Community Room (Room 206)

*Description:* Begin the conference with an interactive welcome to the event. Breakfast will be served.

*Objectives:*

- Define the creative arts therapies.
- Increase awareness of approaches, interests, and expertise of conference attendees.
- Gain an understanding of liberatory and anti-oppressive frameworks.

#### Keynote Address (1.5 CEUs)

#### In Times of Protest: Critique, Criticism, & Radical Trajectories

10:30am – 12:00pm

*Presented by* Marisol Norris, PhD, MT-BC

*Location:* Community Room (Room 206)

*Objectives:*

- Examine the significance of disciplinary critique and professional activism in fostering radical trajectories.
- Discuss the dynamics of socio-political movements and their broader implications for creative arts therapies.
- Explore strategies that prioritize community whole-being and collective placemaking across social and cultural contexts.

#### Lunch Break

12:00am – 1:30pm

*Location:* Community Room (Room 206)

*Lunch will be provided.*

## LGBTQIA+ Attendees Affinity Group (No CEUs)

12:15pm – 1:15pm

*Facilitator:* TBA

*Location:* TBA

*Description:* ITA welcomes LGBTQIA+ identified individuals to gather in this affinity group to explore, discuss, and support each other through the challenges within and outside of the Creative Arts Therapy communities. This affinity group is closed for those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, or agender to cultivate a private space for transparent and open discussion. **Lunch will be provided.**

## Discussions & Performance (0-1.5 CEUs)

1:30pm – 3:00pm (90 minutes)

***Performance:* Exploring the "Plot Twists and Key Changes" in the Lives of People with Disabilities (no CEUs)**

*Presented by* James Williams

*Location:* Community Room (Room 206)

*Description:* Many people with disabilities receive creative arts therapies. They also struggle to understand the “plot twists and key changes” from both society and their disabilities. Watch a performance from a drama therapy beneficiary that demonstrates how “plot twists and key changes” impact people with disabilities throughout their lives.

*Objectives:*

- Analyze how "plot twists and key changes" within our society impact people with disabilities throughout their lives, both positively and negatively.
- Describe how "plot twists and key changes" from within the symptoms of various disabilities impact people living with those disabilities, both positively and negatively.
- Summarize how creative arts therapists can benefit from understanding how the impacts of "plot twists and key changes" throughout the lives of people with disabilities, and how this information can improve their ability to administer creative arts therapies, especially with recipients with disabilities.

***Discussion:* Navigating Over a Decade of Growth and Change in a Forensic Creative Community (1.5 CEUs)**

*Presented by* Alison Guzardo, MM, MT-BC & Jaimie Peterson, ATR, LPC

*Location:* Room 302

*Description:* This presentation will feature a creative community of musicians and artists in an inpatient forensic facility. We will discuss trends, changes, and the evolution of the artist collective over the years and the impact the artist collective has on community music and art therapy programs.

*Objectives:*

- Identify two ways to adapt therapeutic programming to meet the needs of the community.
- Identify two ways to engage in collaborative work with other professionals, residents, and community members.
- Identify two ways to apply community music therapy approaches in an inpatient setting.

## ***Discussion: Role Theory and the Schizophrenia Spectrum (1.5 CEUs)***

***Presented by Alessia Hughes, LCAT, RDT***

***Location: Room 304***

***Description:*** This session will introduce participants to a drama therapy process that uses a flexible version of the role sort assessment tool. Additionally, the session will facilitate discussion regarding flexibility in creative arts therapy assessment and exploring how we can better understand clients' inner reality in contrast to the repetitive, reductive narrative of the chronically mentally ill patient.

***Objectives:***

- Understand the basic tenets of drama therapy's Role Theory.
- Promote flexibility within creative arts therapy assessment tools.
- Identify personal biases when working with patients living with chronic and persistent mental illness.

## **Workshops (2 CEUs)** **3:30pm – 5:30pm (120 minutes)**

### **Wellness Through Movement**

***Presented by Aisha Robinson, LCPC, BC-DMT***

***Location: Room 302***

***Description:*** This training is grounded in Audre Lorde's assertion of self-care as a necessary means of "self-preservation." Participants will be guided through reflections on holistic self-care practices and leave with tools that they can integrate for more balanced and effective living, as well as practices to integrate into their work.

***Objectives:***

- Learn and practice at least three body-based strategies for self-care and stress management.
- Define at least one way stress can impact the body.
- Identify four dimensions of wellness.

### **Twisting the Kaleidoscope: Inspiring Social Imagination Through Multimodal Autoethnographic Performance Narratives**

***Presented by: Phil Weglarz, PhD, MFT, REAT***

***Location: Room 304***

***Description:*** Explore the practice of multimodal autoethnographic performance narratives, developed by Expressive Arts Therapy faculty at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) MA in Counseling Psychology program. This practice highlights individual and collective resilience, creativity, and resourcefulness, leading to the social imagination needed for community wellness and collective liberation.

***Objectives:***

- Identify and describe multimodal autoethnographic narrative performance.
- Define and discuss the concept of kaleidoscopic social imagination.
- Practice aesthetic responding to a sample narrative and begin to create their own autoethnographic narrative.



## Day 2 – Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### Lectures (1 CEU)

9:00am – 10:00am (60 minutes)

#### Un-weathering Community Health: Voice as Expression

*Presented by* Joselyn Carvalho, M.A., LMHC: spec/ Expressive Arts Therapy

*Location:* Room 302

*Description:* As the use of storytelling can inspire/change communities, voice in expressive therapies has become a tool for expression. Verbally and non-verbally, voice has expanded resources within community development and healthcare. Within research, the term ‘weathering’ and learning how to ‘un-weather’ are expanding meaning, creating deeper conversations in community health.

*Objectives:*

- Understand the terms ‘weathering’ and how to ‘un-weather’ ourselves while working in community health.
- Integrate expressive therapies more within community development.
- Feel empowered by the modality of ‘Voice’ and how to navigate storytelling.

#### The Experience of Self-Selected Isochronic Music Playlists and Mood State in Adolescence: An Experiential Phenomenological Inquiry

*Presented by* Lizzy Kunde, MT-BC

*Location:* Room 304

*Description:* This presentation will delve into the findings from a phenomenological inquiry exploring the use of individualized isochronic playlists by adolescents in school and at home to support emotional regulation and well-being. This will be followed by a demonstration of the process for creating one of these playlists.

*Objectives:*

- Be introduced to the process of creating isochronic playlists for clinical use.
- Be presented with findings from the current research to better understand the use of isochronic playlists by adolescent study participants.

### Lectures (1 CEU)

10:30am – 11:30am (60 minutes)

#### Anti-Oppressive Supervision in the Creative Arts

*Presented by* TBA

*Location:* Room 302

*Description:* TBA

*Objectives:*

- TBA



## **A Model for Community Art Therapy**

*Presented by Emily Nolan, LPC, ATR-BC & Amanda Wright, LPC-IT, ATR-P*

*Location: Room 304*

*Description:* This presentation illuminates a model of community art therapy drawn from grounded research. One presenter shares her research from interviewing 26 art therapists representing 32 countries, and one presenter shares her work from many community contexts. The model endeavors to guide art therapists in the work of creative collective healing.

*Objectives:*

- Identify a definition of community art therapy grounded by the work of practitioners all over the world.
- Identify at least 5 practice aims that art therapists can use to anchor their work in communities.
- Understand the application of art therapy in social healing.

## **Lunch Break**

**11:30am – 1:00pm**

*Location: Community Room (Room 206)*

*Lunch will be provided.*

## **Attendees of Color Affinity Group (No CEUs)**

**11:45am – 12:45pm**

*Facilitator: TBA*

*Location: TBD*

ITA welcomes Black, Brown, and Indigenous attendees and attendees of color to gather as an affinity group to explore, discuss, and support each other through challenges that this community faces within the Creative Arts Therapy community and beyond. This group is a closed group for individuals of color to provide a private space for transparent and open discussion. Lunch will be provided.

## **Workshops (2 CEUs)**

**1:00pm – 3:00pm (120 minutes)**

### **prACTice... pause... hit play**

*Presented by Jessica Young, MA, BC-DMT, LCPC, GL-CMA & Kris Larsen, MA, BC-DMT, LCPC, GL-CMA*

*Location: Room 302*

*Description:* Participants will collaboratively apply creative processes that can aid in cultivating the therapeutic relationship as well as support self and community care, using techniques grounded in creativity theory, movement studies, and neuroscience. Observing and deconstructing a movement performance will serve as a foundation for identifying these techniques and processes.

*Objectives:*

- Recognize when internal and external shifts occur in their everyday experiences.
- Identify interventions which foster healthy collaboration between self, other, and the environment.
- Engage in and apply creative processes to enhance personal adaptability.
- Deconstruct creative performance in order to identify clinical and creative interventions.

## **Critical Pleasure Inquiry Explored Through Embodied Art Therapy**

*Presented by Zachary Van Den Berg, MA, LPC, ATR-BC & Mia de Bethune, ATR-BC, LCAT, ISP/SEP*

*Location: Room 304*

*Description:* Discover “Critical Pleasure Inquiry” (CPI) in this workshop, blending embodied art therapy, intersectional queer praxis, and a Lordian erotic ethos. CPI informs critical-consciousness raising, transformative meaning-making, and resilience, enriching creative arts therapies with the depth of erotic intelligence for profound personal and collective healing justice.

*Objectives:*

- Identify three components of the Critical Pleasure Inquiry framework.
- Gain familiarity with one’s own body satisfaction and erotic intelligence.
- Learn two arts-based practices for engaging a CP Inquiry, explore these practices experientially, and engage in integrative reflection.

## **Workshops (2 CEUs)** **3:30pm – 5:30pm (120 minutes)**

### **Laugh Review: Stand-Up For Mental Health**

*Presented by Mary Clohan, LCAT*

*Location: Room 302*

*Description:* A combination presentation/experiential workshop of a therapeutic protocol called Laugh Review, which combines life review therapy with stand-up comedy.

*Objectives:*

- Introduce participants to presenters’ Master’s thesis research conducted using the Laugh Review protocol with older adults.
- Conduct an experiential exercise to help participants create original stand-up comedy material based on the Laugh Review protocol.

### **How We Flourish: A Word of Encouragement for Creative Arts Therapists**

*Presented by Aeva Munro, MA/R-DMT, PhD*

*Location: Room 304*

*Description:* This workshop explores how the creative arts are integral to mental health and not just enhancements. We will participate in an experiential that offers methods for knowing, in mind and body, how our work as creative arts therapists helps move clients toward lives that flourish.

*Objectives:*

- Understand human flourishing as a norm for human health and well-being in contrast to the traditional medical healthcare model.
- Locate the creative arts therapies as integral to the norm of human flourishing.
- Experience ways to know how creative arts therapists can know somatically that creative arts therapy moves clients toward flourishing.

REGISTRATION			
	Date	Cost	
Presenter Registration	January 10 – January 16	<u>No CEUs</u> Free (day of presentation only) \$100 (virtual + 1 day in person) \$120 (both days of in person) \$160 (virtual + 2 days in person)	<u>With CEUs</u> \$25 (day of presentation only) \$140 (virtual + 1 day in person) \$160 (both days of in person) \$200 (virtual + 2 days in person)
Early Bird Registration	January 17 – February 26	25% off standard registration fees with code: 2024CANARYCAT	
Student Registration (no CEUs)	January 17 – April 13	50% off standard registration fees with code: 2024EDUCAT	
Standard Registration	February 27 – April 11	<u>No CEUs</u> \$60 (1 day, virtual) \$120 (1 day, in person) \$180 (virtual + 1 day in person) \$200 (both days of in person) \$240 (virtual + 2 days in person)	<u>With CEUs</u> \$80 (1 day, virtual) \$160 (1 day, in person) \$220 (virtual + 1 day in person) \$240 (both days of in person) \$280 (virtual + 2 days in person)
Same-Day Registration	April 12-13	<u>No CEUs</u> \$85 (1 day, virtual) \$145 (1 day, in person) \$205 (virtual + 1 day in person) \$225 (both days of in person) \$285 (virtual + 2 days in person)	<u>With CEUs</u> \$105 (1 day, virtual) \$185 (1 day, in person) \$240 (virtual + 1 day in person) \$265 (both days of in person) \$325 (virtual + 2 days in person)
*Financial Assistance & Mutual Aid		75% off standard registration fees with code: 2024AID	
Registration Cancellation	Within 3 days of purchase before April 3	100% refund minus the transaction fees	
	Within 3 days of purchase between April 4 – April 10	50% refund minus the transaction fees for in person tickets only (no refunds on virtual conference tickets after April 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	
	After April 11	No refunds	

Registration can be cancelled within 3 days of purchase if requested before April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Recorded conference content will be available until April 15<sup>th</sup>; therefore, no refunds on virtual tickets will be provided after April 3<sup>rd</sup>. In-person conference registration can be cancelled for a 50% refund minus the transaction fees if requested between April 4<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup>. To request a refund, please forward your registration confirmation via email to [conference@itachicago.org](mailto:conference@itachicago.org).

Early bird registration includes entry into a raffle for a free creative arts gift basket, a value of \$50.

\*Financial Assistance & Mutual Aid: ITA recognizes the importance of including all members of our community in this conference and the benefit of people attending with different economic backgrounds. Therefore, if you are not in a financial position to pay the full registration fees, use the discount code **2024AID** upon registering to receive a reduced rate.

Attendees interested in volunteering for the conference should contact [Conference@ITACHicago.org](mailto:Conference@ITACHicago.org) for additional information.

## Continuing Education Units

Presenters and attendees can receive up to **19 continuing education units (CEUs)** by attending or viewing any or all of the conference presentations. The CEUs are sponsored by the Institute for Therapy through the Arts, a continuing education provider for LCPCs, LPCs, LCSWs, and LSWs in the State of Illinois (IL Lic. #197.000261) approved by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Board Certified Music Therapists may claim credits as Other Continuing Education. Please refer to the CBMT Recertification Manual for required documentation.

In order to receive certification of participation with accurate CE hours, please be sure to include your license number when completing the evaluation for each attended or viewed session. Continuing education credits can only be provided for participants who have attended the duration of the entire session and have completed the course evaluation for that session. For virtual sessions, participants must also receive a passing score of 70% on each session's quiz.

Recorded CEU content will be available for viewing until April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Certification of CEU credits will be provided by May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. If you require a CEU certificate prior to May 3<sup>rd</sup>, please notify the Conference Chair as soon as possible (Akash Bhatia: [abhatia@itachicago.org](mailto:abhatia@itachicago.org)).

### Masking policy

Facemasks are optional at our in-person conference. However, we strongly encourage masking for immunocompromised and unvaccinated attendees. Additionally, if you are experiencing symptoms of any viral illness, including but not limited to COVID, please follow medical recommendations and mask accordingly. Masks will be provided at the venue. If you are ill and cannot attend the conference, please contact the Conference Committee at [Conference@ITACHicago.org](mailto:Conference@ITACHicago.org).

### Childcare policy

ITA will not provide childcare at the in-person conference. Children 17 years and under are encouraged to stay home. If attendees cannot find childcare, then children under 18 are allowed in the conference space as long as they are supervised by their parent or guardian. All attendees 18 and over must register for the conference.

### Community guidelines & engagement preferences

Be sure to review our [community guidelines](#) prior to attending. We will utilize an engagement preference system using symbols on name badges:

- Green / ●: I would like to socialize – please approach me.
- Yellow / ▲: I would like to socialize, but I would like you to wait for me to initiate.
- Orange / ■: Only socialize with me if we have arranged to do so prior to the conference.
- Red / X: Please do not approach me. I do not wish to socialize with anyone.