

BOSTON CENTER FOR THE ARTS

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BOSTON CENTER FOR THE ARTS APPOINTS SHEY RIVERA RÍOS AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Boston, MA – Wednesday March 18, 2026 – The Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) announced today the appointment of *Shey Rivera Ríos* as its new Artistic Director, marking a new chapter for one of Boston’s most vital cultural institutions. Rivera Ríos will lead the artistic vision and programmatic direction of the organization, advancing BCA’s mission to support artists and strengthen Boston’s creative ecosystem.

Rivera Ríos joins BCA with more than a decade of leadership experience at the intersection of arts administration, cultural strategy, and community-rooted artistic practice. Born and raised in Puerto Rico and rooted in New England for more than fifteen years, Rivera Ríos has built a reputation as a collaborative cultural leader who strengthens creative ecosystems by connecting artists, institutions, and communities.

Prior to joining BCA, Rivera Ríos held a leadership role at AS220, the Providence-based artist-run arts organization known for its interdisciplinary programming and long-standing commitment to artists and creative communities. Their work spans cultural districts, festivals, site-responsive projects, and cross-sector collaborations with municipalities, foundations, universities, grassroots organizations, and independent artists. Rivera Ríos brings significant leadership experience cultivating institutional partnerships, engaging funders, and advancing artist-centered programming that positions the arts as a vital force in civic life.

Rivera Ríos is also an interdisciplinary artist whose work explores ritual, social practice, and cultural memory. Their artistic practice has been exhibited and performed throughout New England, including at the BCA Mills Gallery. This dual perspective—as both artist and cultural strategist—shapes Rivera Ríos’s approach to institutional leadership and creative collaboration.



Rivera Ríos was selected following a national search conducted in partnership with executive search firm **DRG Talent**. The process engaged BCA staff, artists, campus partners, board members, civic stakeholders, and the Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture, reflecting a strong alignment around Rivera Ríos’s artistic vision, collaborative leadership style, and commitment to community-centered cultural practice.

“She is an extraordinary artistic leader whose work reflects a deep commitment to artists and creative communities. Their appointment marks an exciting moment for Boston Center for the Arts as we build greater alignment across artistic leadership, programming, and the campus experience. This work strengthens BCA as a vital platform for artists and a cultural convener within Boston’s creative landscape.”

– **KRISTI KEEFE**, CEO, Boston Center for the Arts

“I feel deeply honored to serve as the first Artistic Director of BCA and help lead this exciting new chapter. As a cultural anchor, BCA has made the commitment to lead with artist-centered vision. Now more than ever, we must strengthen artists and arts communities, so we can build visionary futures together.”

– **SHEY RIVERA RÍOS**, Artistic Director, Boston Center for the Arts

“With BCA’s dedication as an arts-driven organization, She brings the creativity, energy, and experience that our entire ecosystem will benefit from. Together we look forward to Shey’s contribution to elevating the Boston artistic community.”

– **JENNIFER PINCK**, Board Chair, Boston Center for the Arts

“I’m incredibly excited to welcome Shey Rivera Ríos as the new Artistic Director of Boston Center for the Arts. She is an artist and leader who understands the power of culture to convene people, to think critically about the world around us, and to collectively build new futures—

“I admire how they approach their work with thoughtfulness and care for artists and the wider community. We are looking forward to working closely with Shey, as we continue to grow BCA as a campus for artistic experimentation, connection, and civic life in Boston.”

– **JOSEPH HENRY**, Chief of the Mayor’s Office of Arts & Culture for the City of Boston

As Artistic Director, Rivera Ríos will guide the artistic direction of BCA programming and partnerships while strengthening the organization’s role as a civic and cultural anchor in Boston. The position includes curatorial leadership, artist support initiatives, cross-sector partnerships, and the cultivation of a vibrant artistic community across BCA’s historic South End campus.

Rivera Ríos will work closely with BCA leadership, artists, and partners to deepen the organization’s impact locally while expanding connections across regional, national, and international networks.

Rivera Ríos will begin their tenure as Artistic Director on March 23.

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