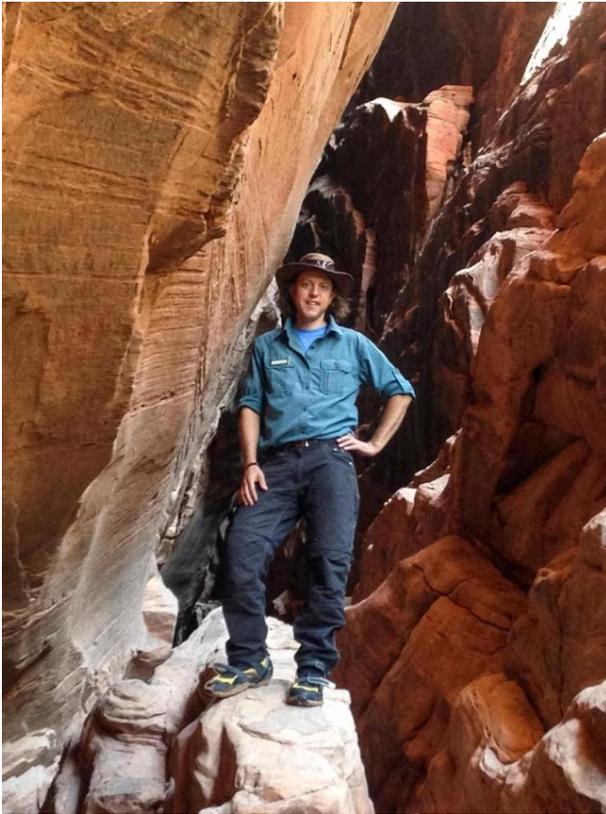


Meet 2018 Artists-in-Residence



Benjamin Rusnak, Photographer

Benjamin Rusnak is a South Florida editorial and commercial photographer, who finds solace and strength in the canyons and deserts of the American West. In 2015 he was an artist-in-residence at Zion National Park.

For 14 years he documented poverty in the Caribbean and Latin America for Food For The Poor, Inc., an international relief and development agency. Prior to that, he was a newspaper photojournalist for nearly 10 years.

His award-winning work has been recognized and exhibited internationally. He won the prestigious Gordon Parks Award in 2008 and he received InterAction's Effective Assistance Humanitarian Photography Award in 2010, among many other honors. His work is represented by ZUMA PRESS. Rusnak grew up in suburban Washington, D.C., where he developed an interest in topics beyond American borders and a passion for the plight of those less fortunate. He graduated from George Mason University in 1992, with a degree in communication. He lives in Boca Raton, Fla., with his wife and fellow newspaper refugee, Susan Bryant.



Zolt Levay is Principal Science Visuals Developer in the Office of Public Outreach at the Space Telescope Science Institute. He became interested in astronomy and photography at an early age and pursued astronomy studies at Indiana University, Bloomington and Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. He joined STScI in 1983 where he produces images and other visuals from data provided by the Hubble Space Telescope to publicize science results from Hubble and other observatories. Zolt is also an accomplished photographer. He is currently concentrating on an ongoing project to seek out dark, clear skies to explore and photograph the relationships between landscapes, the night sky, and the cosmos.

Zolt Levay, Photographer - 2018 Night Sky Artist-in-Residence

Photo Credit: Pat Izzo, NASA/GSFC



Kurt Wheeler is a jazz saxophonist, multi-instrumentalist, educator and composer in the Kansas City area. Shortly after moving to the KC metro, he established himself as a prominent musical figure and has played at countless renowned Kansas City venues including the Green Lady Lounge, Blue Room at the American Jazz Museum, Folly Theater, Union Station and Mutual Musicians Foundation. Kurt has also become a prominent educator, teaching private lessons to aspiring young musicians and giving clinics, sectionals and masterclasses across the metro area. He is also an adjunct professor of Jazz at The University of Missouri-Kansas City where he teaches jazz improvisation and jazz combos.

Kurt was born and raised in Warminster, PA. He began playing the saxophone in 4th grade and studied with several local masters. After high school, Kurt moved to Fairfax, VA to pursue a dual major in Music Education and Jazz studies at George Mason University. There, he studied with Rick Parrell, Tyler Kuebler, Jim Carroll, Jenny Lapple and Alan Baylock, among others. He also performed alongside jazz legends including Wycliffe Gordon, Wynton Marsalis and Eric Alexander. Kurt played at local and national festivals including Essentially Ellington, International Saxophone Symposium, Virginia Music Educators Association, National Jazz Workshop and Jazz Education Network, where he premiered two compositions for saxophone quartet. In 2011 Kurt traveled to the People's Republic of China with the GMU Jazz Ensemble. Under the direction of Prof. Jim Carroll, he participated in a weekly radio concert at the Shanghai Concert Hall with a band comprised of Chinese and American students to an estimated audience of 3-5 million radio listeners. After moving to Kansas City, Kurt also earned his master's degree in Jazz from UMKC.

Moving forward, Kurt is expanding his influence in the Kansas City area and elsewhere and reaching more students through educational outreach. In 2018, Kurt will be exploring new musical inspirations as an Artist-in-Residence at Capitol Reef National Park, where he hopes to connect his passion for music with his love of the outdoors.



Seattle-based **Suze Woolf's** work is usually about human relationships to nature, and she does much of it in the field. She studied ceramics and printmaking at the University of Washington. An early adopter of personal computers, her career has included graphic design for printed materials and computer interfaces. Now primarily a watercolorist, she explores a range of media from paper-casting and artist books to pyrography, sometimes combining all of them.

She has won a variety of regional and national awards, such as Artist Trust's GAP grant; artist residencies for Zion, Glacier and the North Cascades National Parks, the Grand Canyon Trust; and art colonies such as the Banff Centre, Vermont Studio Center, Willowtail Springs and the Jentel Foundation.