Below are bios for candidates who expressed interest as of 10:00am on October 29, 2019.

**John Cremona**  
Musician, 300 Summer Street (Current board member)

John Cremona is a singer songwriter who is also ever so slowly returning to the visual arts. He has lived in Fort Point for 25 years and says, “I'm honored to serve on the FPAC board to help address the concerns and needs of the artists in our community.

**Bonnie Donahue**  
Photographer, Video Artist, The Artists Building at 300 Summer Street (New board member)

Bonnie Donohue is a photographer, video artist, and writer who has worked in places of conflict, such as South Africa before the end of apartheid, Northern Ireland before the peace accords, and Vieques, Puerto Rico during and after the US military presence on the island. Her work examines displacement and loss as military structures transform human settlements into uninhabitable spaces; it conjures forgotten figures from military and civilian archives. Recent work includes large-scale panoramic photographs of over 100 military bunkers that are features in the western end of Vieques and a public art installation at the site of one of the bunkers. Her photographic exhibition in collaboration with cultural anthropologist Katherine McCaffrey, *Killing Mapepe: Sex and Death in Cold War Vieques* has traveled to several museums and cultural centers in Puerto Rico and the U.S. She is co-authoring a book with Katherine McCaffrey about the militarization of Puerto Rico in the 20th century, and writing a play on the murder of Mapepe Francis in Cold War Vieques in 1953.

**John Dykes**  
Illustrator, 249 A Street (New board member)

For over 30 years John S. Dykes has been creating illustrations for a wide and diverse range of clients, earning recognition from The Society of Illustrators, Communication Arts, American Illustration, 3x3 Illustration Annual, Print Magazine, How Magazine, Step By Step Graphics, and The Society of Illustrators of Los Angeles (gold and silver medals), as well as the Luerzer's Archive 200 Best Illustrators Worldwide. In addition to assignment work, John creates regular sketchbook drawings, large acrylic works, and small watercolors.

John has taught illustration at Rhode Island School of Design and has given numerous presentations at schools and institutions. His work is part of the permanent collection of The New Britain Museum of American Art, as well as in many private collections.

**Mercedes Farrando**  
Architect, Fort Point Resident (New board member)
Mercedes Farrando is a published architect and award-winning designer who has been a resident of Fort Point since 2008. She relocated to the United States in 2001 from her native city, Buenos Aires, Argentina where she earned her MA in Architecture, Design, and Urban Planning at de Universidad de Buenos Aires in 1992.

Mercedes currently serves as the President of Beacon Concepts at Beacon Communities LLC, headquartered in Boston, MA. Beacon is a privately-owned real estate firm that develops, acquires, invests in, and manages a wide range of multifamily housing with a special focus on affordable housing. Since joining Beacon in 2007, she has collaborated on the design of well over 10,000 apartment homes including Old Colony in South Boston, one of the oldest federal public housing developments in the country. Old Colony was transformed into a new sustainable development creating an entirely new community within the South Boston neighborhood. The Homes at Old Colony was awarded the John M Clancy Award for Socially Responsible Housing by the BSA in 2014. Mercedes is also a current board member of Preservation Massachusetts, a statewide non-profit historic preservation organization dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s historic and cultural heritage.

**Meredith Gisness**  
Painter, 35 Channel Center Street & Midway Studios (Current board member)

Meredith Gisness is an emerging mixed media artist and photographer and a new member of the Fort Point community. She is excited to bring her passion for the arts to her new neighborhood and strongly believes that community involvement and commitment to the arts strengthens our well-being and brings people together to engage on multiple levels. Meredith brings to the board years of community service and experience. Prior to moving back to Boston, she was Chair of her local Cultural Council. She has served on the Executive Committee board for the Museum of Fine Arts Senior Associates as well as guiding tours of the museum’s permanent collection. Meredith also serves an Art Ambassador for The Greenway Conservancy. There she is able to do what she loves: talking to the public about public art and her community.

**Eric Levin**  
Photographer, Midway Studios (Current board member)

Artist and entrepreneur, Eric Levin grew his photography business from modest beginnings, gaining recognition peddling his artistic works off the street. Fast forward about a decade, Eric’s talents earned him features in national publications, celebrity photo sessions, a host of global clientele and even an Emmy Award in 2013 for his work in front of the camera. Now operating with studios in NYC and Boston, Eric’s “Elevin Studios” is a hive of photo and filmmaking activity and an incubator for young talent. Eric hopes to inspire could-be artists, lecturing on “Entrepreneurship in the Arts,” most recently for SONY and the World Photography Organization in Sao Paulo and London. Eric studied at Clark University and L’Université de Paris-Sorbonne and enjoys travel, adventure, and astrophysics.

**Jen Mecca**  
Fiber Artist, Midway Studios (Current Board Member)
Jennifer’s textile art has been recognized by the Mass Cultural Council, and has been shown nationally, and at local venues including the Fuller Craft Museum and the Providence Art Club. Since moving to the neighborhood in 2003, Jennifer has been a strong advocate for preserving Fort Point’s artist studios and for the role of the arts community and the creative economy in the growing Fort Point/Seaport area. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for Midway Artist Collective, Boston’s largest artist live-work studio building.

Jennifer brings over 25 years’ experience in urban design, development planning and community preservation to the Fort Point Arts Community. Her consulting practice provides services to both public and private sector clients, and she has worked with communities across the Commonwealth on master plans, downtown revitalization, strategic planning, placemaking and cultural planning.

Morel Orta
Designer & Painter, Midway Studios (Current board member)

The designer and artist Morel Orta is a native of Caracas, Venezuela, and has resided in Boston since 2000. He holds a Bachelors of Science degree from Wentworth Institute of Technology and a Master’s Degree in Architecture from the Boston Architectural College. For the past decade he has worked for the renowned architectural firms of Gensler, Bruner/Cott & Associates, and is currently a project designer at Perkins+Will where he specializes in the design of both architectural and interior commercial projects. His architectural work reflects his keen interest in contemporary aesthetics.

Also a painter, Morel perceives his art as “...nothing more than the physical representation of my way of thinking. Through paintings I can evoke all the colors, feelings, aromas, and passions that resonate with people who grow up in Venezuela. Being the grandson of a master carpenter from Margarita Island, I carry with me a profound love of the sea, of sailing, of nature, and that permanent pursuit of the awareness of being alive and free — that is what I strive to communicate through my art.”

Eileen Riestra
Designer, The Muse – 63 Melcher (New board member)

Changing the World Through Design - that is Riestra’s motto. Eileen Riestra has a B.F.A. Degree in graphic design from The New England School of Art and Design at Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts. She is the founder of DYAStudio in Puerto Rico and Depict Brands in Boston, MA. Depict Brands focuses on branding development, and offers design services that cater to the American and Hispanic Market. Riestra has been exposed to different cultures by traveling to foreign countries and engaging with people from all corners of the world. This has helped her attain a comprehensive understanding of the Latin American Market, enhanced her creative process, and strengthened her aesthetic viewpoint. In October 2013, Eileen won a Hispanic Graphic Design Award from GD USA Magazine. Riestra has been able to learn from master designer Massimo Vignelli, renowned designer Louise Fili, and writer Steve Heller. Riestra was featured in “PEOPLE TO WATCH 2017” from GDUSA MAGAZINE. Now Riestra is back to developing her oil painting skills at her Fort Points studio. She created a series of paintings called “We are all Immigrants” that aims to capture faces of well known immigrants depicting their culture and their history.