

DECEMBER 15, 2025

The Labor
Pains Project

Annual Report 2025

Highlighting our first year of archival
discovery and community building.



PRESENTED BY
Jae Gayle

A Word from the Lead Artist



Dear Friends and Family,

If we were together right now, I'd be pouring you a cup of tea (or maybe something stronger) and asking you to get comfortable. That's exactly the vibe I want to bring to this year's reflection.

This journey with Labor Pains has been nothing short of a revelation. From the archives in Albany to the community circles in Oakland, we have been busy connecting the dots of Black women's labor histories. It's been a year of bicoastal building, deep listening, and "Map & Meet" sessions that turned strangers into sisterhood.

We are doing dope, heavy, beautiful work—tracing the invisible subsidies of our mothers and grandmothers and turning that data into art. But even with all the moving parts, the core remains simple: we are documenting our worth.

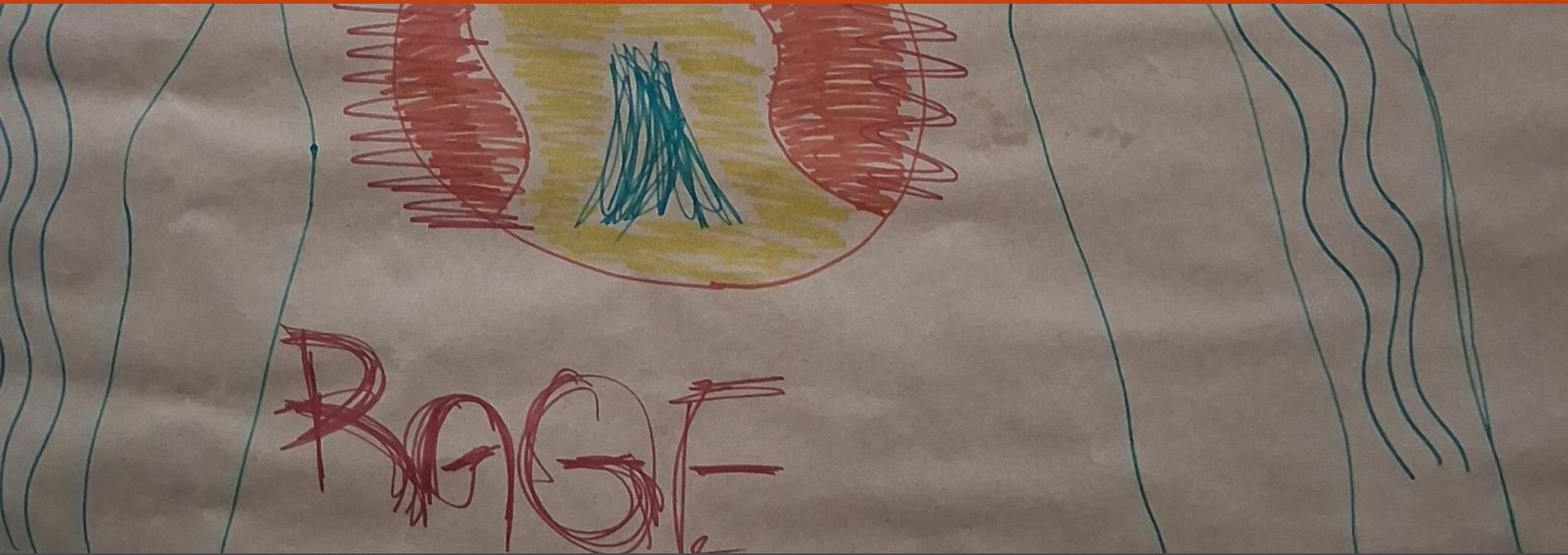
So, consider this our little catch-up session. I happen to have some receipts—and some incredible progress—to share with you. Here is what we've built this year.

With gratitude,

Jae Gayle Founder, Labor Pains Project

Our Mission

Build a living archive of the embodied labor and lives of Black women.



The Labor Pains Project is dedicated to building a living archive of 150 oral histories documenting the labor experiences of Black women in Albany, NY, and Oakland, CA. Our mission is to demonstrate the significant contributions Black women make to the care economy while highlighting the systemic deficit of care they receive in return.

Guided by the thesis that unpaid and paid labor by Black women supports society's most vulnerable, we utilize somatic body-mapping and oral history interviews to translate stories into shapes, symbols, and slogans. This work lays the foundation for "Myth & Marrow," an immersive performance art installation designed to reclaim these narratives and visualize the journey of Black women's independence.

Research and Collection Insights

**IT'S ALL
FODDER
FOR MY
RESEARCH**

1,050
Hours

Archival Research

10

contemporary narratives
from Black women in Albany,
NY and Oakland, CA
collected so far.



Key Accomplishments in 2025



Establishing Foundations & Building Momentum

2025 marked the birth of the Labor Pains Project, a year defined by deep archival excavation and building a robust digital footprint. We successfully established a digital presence reaching over 2,000 unique visitors across our platforms. We secured key partnerships with institutions like the **Underground Railroad Education Center** and the **East Oakland Boxing Association**, whose **fiscal sponsorship** has made all financial contributions tax-deductible. Financially, we **raised over \$19,000** to fuel our workshops, including significant support from the **Albany Alliance Fund for the Arts**. Most crucially, we defined our narrative framework—validating our core thesis that Black women’s labor is the backbone of the American care economy.

Project Partners



UNDERGROUND RAILROAD
EDUCATION CENTER



BLACK THEATRE TROUPE
OF UPSTATE NY



Albany **Public** Library



EAST OAKLAND BOXING ASSOCIATION

LABOR PAINS: A VIRTUAL BODY-MAPPING SESSION!

WHERE DOES WORK LIVE
IN YOUR BODY?

Join us for an intimate, one-hour virtual workshop
dedicated to the stories written on our bones.

In this small-group session (limited to 7 women), we will:

Project Growth

In 2025, we successfully expanded our outreach efforts, increasing community engagement by 30%, fostering collaboration among local organizations, and enhancing support for families in need.

Narrative Literature Review

Produced manuscript from archival research for
peer review and presentation in 2026.

Over
1,400 blog
visitors

Long-term strategy to
generate an audience for
the *Myth & Marrow*
performances in 2026



Looking Ahead

Strategic Plans for The Labor Pains Project



As we look to the future, The Labor Pains Project remains committed to **expanding our reach** and enhancing our services. Our first priority is the **expansion** of our project sites, allowing us to serve more communities in need. We will focus on increasing **outreach** efforts through awareness campaigns and collaboration with local organizations. Additionally, we plan to enhance our research capabilities by integrating **technology** to improve data collection methods. We also aim to foster new **collaborations** with healthcare providers to strengthen support networks. Lastly, our commitment to **innovation** will drive us to develop new strategies and resources to address the evolving challenges faced by our beneficiaries. Together, these initiatives will pave the way for a more impactful and sustainable future for The Labor Pains Project.

Thank You

The Labor
Pains Project

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