

Bio | Cheryl T. Schiele

Cheryl T. Schiele (pronounced Shee-lee, pronouns: she/her) is an arts administrator, living cultural heritage specialist, and musician who believes artists bear witness to, interrogate, expand, and nurture our humanity. Her professional career has been propelled by a deep interest in artistic endeavors that enhance community engagement, action, and reflection.

Currently, as a folk & traditional arts specialist for the National Endowment for the Arts—an independent federal agency—Cheryl manages the National Heritage Fellowships honorific awards, the National Folklife Network, and the Folk Arts Partnership program. Respectively, these national programs honor master traditional artists and foster living cultural traditions in communities across the U.S. (also referred to as folklife, folk arts, or intangible cultural heritage).

Previously, Cheryl was the Registration Manager for the Education Department at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, in Washington, DC, a premier performing arts presenter, national monument, and living memorial. From 1998-2002, she was the Program Coordinator for Bargemusic Ltd., a renovated coffee barge turned concert venue. Moored under the Brooklyn Bridge, Bargemusic produced more than 200 concerts year-round. Cheryl was also a supervisor for the Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts box office in Vienna, Virginia, a performing arts center situated on a 117-acre national park.

A violist with a degree in music and concentration in music industry, Cheryl served as the founding board vice president of Dorian Baroque Orchestra in New York City and as union vice president of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 3403. She currently serves as a board member for the Network for Diversity in Concert Percussion. In her spare time, Cheryl enjoys reading books on African American history and culture and learning new skills as a novice seamstress.