

# Belonging is an Act of Resistance: A Conversation with Dorothy Lazard

“...it is increasingly vital for us as community members, educators, employees, students, public servants, etc., to find equitable and effective ways of getting to know those outside of ourselves, approach our positions of power or influence with understanding, and more actively participate in building the world we want to live in.”

by Vanessa Perez Winder



Left to right: Julia Grinkrug, Dorothy Lazard, and Tricia Brand

Photo courtesy of Jaime Austin

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Beginning the event with a quote from the book describing West Oakland, Grinkrug read Lazard's words aloud:

*"Like us, our neighborhood was in transition. There were a lot of promises being made to the people of West Oakland then. Everything was coming. Supermarkets were coming. Jobs were coming. Newer, affordable, modern housing was coming. Oak Center, as our section of West Oakland was called, was composed of large vacant lots waiting to be filled in the name of progress, of urban renewal. Across from our apartment, a large billboard on the corner boasted that new houses were coming, but several years would pass before any houses would appear in the lot."*



Photo courtesy of Jaime Austin







Left to right: Julia Grinkrug, Dorothy Lazard, and Tricia Brand  
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Vanessa Perez Winder (MA Visual & Critical Studies 2025) is a writer and RRR's Assistant Editor. They believe in working toward liberatory and experimental forms of art historical study and curatorial action, and are interested in collaborative, community based, and site specific artistic practices and public interventions.