

create me

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION

LATE FALL 2016

You've Got Grants. And we've got increases in applications and funding

The Commission received 35% more applications for this current funding cycle, Fiscal Year 2017, than for the previous cycle (FY16). Applications for Fiscal Year 2017 were reviewed in June and confirmed and announced in July.

We received 249 applications totalling \$ 1,140,134 in funding requests for this current cycle.

We have funded 141 of these for a total of \$392,550, a more than 25% increase in funding over the previous year.

Included in this funding were 106 organizations, funding for which totaled \$337,850; and 35 artists, funding for whom totaled \$54,700. These totals do NOT include some of our biggest programs for individual artists: the Maine Artist Fellowships and Traditional Arts Apprenticeships awards. The Fellows and Apprentices will be profiled in our winter newsletter.

Grant awards were made in the following categories: Project Grants for Organizations; Project Grants for Artists; Partnership, Organizational Development, and Arts Learning grants; the Jane Morison Film Fund and Arts & Humanities grants; as well as eight Creative Aging project grants.

This is all good news: more constituents continue to be aware of our programs and resources, and there is high demand for support for arts and cultural related projects.

At the same time, it provides even further impetus for us to continue our efforts to raise more funding for the field. The ability to cite data on demonstrated demand strengthens our work.

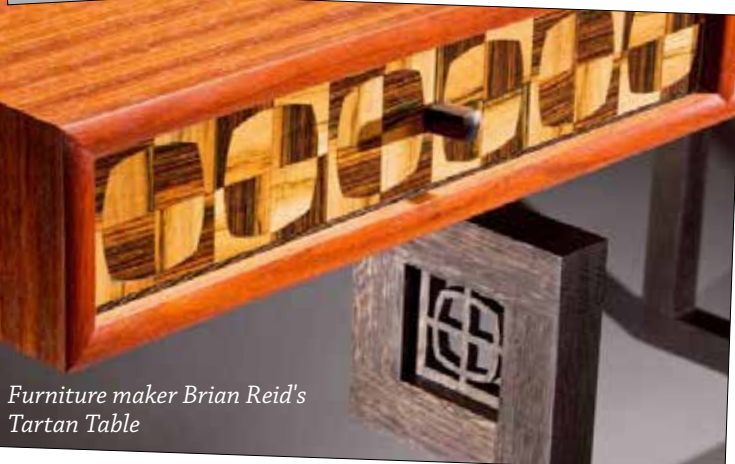
Congratulations and thanks to all!

Full results plus funding map at mainearts.com.

Boy with Down syndrome contends he's

Not Always Happy

written & performed by
Kari Wagner-Peck
directed by Bess Welden



Furniture maker Brian Reid's
Tartan Table



Jazz Residency Initiative
Denmark, ME

ARTS EDUCATION
HAPPENINGS

MICA 2016: SEE WHAT
YOU MISSED

POETRY IN MAINE

WHAT'S ON
THE CALENDAR?

From Our Executive Director



Julie Richard, Executive Director

Dear Friends & Colleagues,
The holiday season is upon us and we have much to be thankful for this year.

Most recently, we are all thankful that our Maine International Conference on the Arts was a huge success (see pages 4 & 5). We brought together over 250 people to be inspired,

educated and elevated. Now on to planning for 2018!

One special addition to the conference was a discussion we held, just prior to the opening, on cultural equity. Pam Breaux, the CEO of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, was our moderator. Over 40 people from across Maine were invited to be part of this experience. What emerged will help shape future discussions around cultural equity that we will hold throughout the state this winter during our Arts Iditarod.

Why cultural equity and why now? Arts organizations across the country have been discussing equity, diversity and inclusion for years but over the past year the dialog has ramped up. Grantmakers in the Arts, Americans for the Arts, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, and the New England Foundation for the Arts, among others, have either adopted statements or are working on statements regarding cultural equity to guide their organization's work, and thereby to influence what is happening in the field. It is important for all of

us, especially now, to consider this topic and how we can all make our work more equitable.

We are just in the beginning stages of this exploration. Please look for our Arts Iditarod schedule coming your way soon. We would love to have your voice around the table.

In addition to the MICA overview, in this issue, you will find a Spotlight on a few of our grantees – something we will feature in every issue moving



Photo: courtesy Judith Allen

Visual Arts' project grantee Judith Allen, Mapping the Walk

forward; a summary of our recently awarded grants; info about upcoming Arts Education workshops; an update on Poetry Out Loud; and another poem by Poet Laureate Stu Kestenbaum. Enjoy!

Have a wonderful holiday season and be safe.

Best,

Julie A. Richard, Executive Director

OUR VISION

Increase the impact of arts and culture on Maine's livability, vitality and prosperity.

Commission Members

Charles Stanhope (Southwest Harbor)

Kate Beever (Ocean Park)

Paul Benjamin (Rockland)

Dr. James Conneely (Augusta)

Rick Fournier (Bangor)

Suzanne Grover (Norway)

Jonathan B. Huntington (Wayne)

Rowan Morse (Falmouth)

Cynthia Murray-Beliveau (Hallowell)

Cynthia Orcutt (Kingfield)

Laurence Rubinstein (Scarborough)

Spotlight on Recent Grantees

We randomly selected two of the Commission's recent grantees to profile in this issue. Additional profiles of grantee success stories will be added to our website at http://bit.do/mainearts_grantees.

Hip Hop Arts and Educational Series in Maine Public Schools: Eric Axelman, Norridgewock

Eric Axelman is a hip hop artist, filmmaker, and educator focused on multidisciplinary art and identity work, inspired and motivated by the radical nature of hip hop culture and anti-oppression thought. He was awarded an Artist Project Grant for a 10-school arts and educational tour of rural Maine middle and high schools. The series will include interdisciplinary arts and humanities events such as hip hop performances, artistic instruction, and discussions on cultural diversity. Eric and his teaching/artistic partner Oliver Arias will lead these events. Students will write and recite hip hop poetry, as well as discuss what it means for privileged social groups to consume and replicate the art of those with less privilege.



Recording and teaching artists Eric Axelman and Oliver "SydeSho" Arias lead school discussions about the ethics of cultural appropriation, the state of racial inequality in the U.S., and ways in which the media influences perceptions about race and identity.



A "Chimasaur," one of Jim Doble's interactive musical instruments to be installed at the Western Maine Play Museum.

Interactive Music for Maine Children the Western Maine Play Museum

Western Maine Play Museum is an emerging children's museum in Wilton, Maine. The museum, scheduled to open in 2017, will create a harmonious retreat for families and visitors that includes percussion musical instruments and gardening. Their Organizational Project grant will support the creation of three hand-made instruments by Jim Doble of Union. Each interactive instrument will be made using recycled and/or sustainable materials, using a pentatonic scale that is both pleasing to the ear and inspiring to budding musicians. The instruments will include an Amandinda, a "Chimasaur," and a Whale Drum, all to be placed in the museum's courtyard where visitors of all ages will be encouraged to start making music on their own.

Here's Just Some of What You M

The Maine International Conference on the Arts in Lewiston/Aub

The second Maine International Conference on the Arts, held in Lewiston/Auburn October 6-7, boasted two days packed with inspiration, performance, dialogue, networking, and professional development.

250 participants attended various conference components. Performances by the Edward Little High School Marching Band (bottom right) and the Franklin County Fiddlers officially opened the conference at the Gendron Franco Cultural Center. Poet Crystal Williams (top left), Vice President for the Office of Diversity at Bates College, delivered the inspiring opening keynote, "Practical Approaches to Creating Impact: Getting to Cultural Equity."

The conference offered something for everyone: a work session on cultural equity lead by NASAA CEO Pam Breaux; a Craft Apprenticeship Gathering, and a special, first-time exhibit of the work of the new Craft Apprenticeship Program. And more: a community "art crawl," implemented by LA Arts, showcasing the creativity of local artists; a Maine artist Idea Lab featuring five Maine artists from different disciplines, including spoken word poet Salim Salim (top right). Twenty breakout sessions offered professional development for artists, arts organizations, arts educators, and communities, and



Opening keynote Crystal Williams



Above: Maine native basket maker Theresa Secord and Muhadin Libah of the Somali-Bantu Community Association at the craft apprentice and traditional arts gathering.



Pam Breaux

included special appearances by national presenters Matt Lehrman (far right) of Audiences Everywhere, and Crista Cloutier, aka The Working Artist; and an entire track on Cultural Tourism in collaboration with the Maine Department

of Tourism. Plus: a dozen pop-up performances by a diverse array of Maine artists. Breakfast by Forage Market, lunch by DaVinci's. And the super special secret ingredient that makes any conference a success: you.

Missed

Turn



Don't Miss Out Twice
The Maine International Conference on the Arts is held every two years. Mark your calendars: the next MICA will be held September 27-28, 2018. Keep your eye on mainearts.com/MICA for details!



Idea Lab: Salim Salim

Matt Lehrman, Audiences Everywhere



Arts Education pre-conference: Cheryl Hulteen



Opening pop-up performance: Edward Little High School pep band

All photos copyright Arthur Fink 2016.

THE MEGA-REGIONALS ARE COMING!

6 all day professional development opportunities in arts education for teachers and teaching artists

The Commission's Maine Arts Leadership Initiative (MALI) program, now in its sixth year, is collaborating with the Maine Learning Technology Initiative's (MLTI) Apple Learning Specialists to present six all-day professional development opportunities in arts education.

Sample session topics being offered include:

* *Where are your Art Standards within the Studio Habits of Mind!*

* *Using Multiple Intelligences to Teach Students with Disabilities*

* *Evidence of Learning Through Google*

* *Visual Notetaking/Doodling in Class*

* *A special session, using the recently completed Arts Ed Census data, providing practice in ways to select data, create visuals and tell stories at the state, regional and local levels.*

The final mega-regional conference, on April 26 at UMaine-Orono, is specifically a Theater Professional Development Day organized by Northeast Thespians. This conference is sponsored



by Maine EdTA, the Department of Education, and the Maine Arts Leadership Initiative. It will feature sessions on teaching Shakespeare; costuming on a budget with students; using theater across the curriculum; and more. For further details go to <http://www.northeastta.org/maine-pd-workshop.html>.

The registration fee for attending the mega-regionals -- EXCEPT FOR the March 22 and April 26 dates, which are free -- is \$25 per person. 5.5 contact hours are available for full-day participation.

MEGA-REGIONAL SCHEDULE

All Mega-regional conferences will take place between 8:15 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

November 21: Ellsworth High School

January 4: USM, Portland

February 2: UMaine, Orono

March 17: Hebron Station School, Hebron

March 22: Easton Schools, Aroostook County

April 26: UMaine, Orono

Register at <http://bit.do/MALI-WORKSHOP-REG>

POETRY OUT LOUD

Maine two-time Poetry Out Loud champion Rose Horowitz of Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham took special national honors in Washington, D.C. last spring when she was awarded first place in the written category of Poetry Ourselves. This new opportunity, offered in honor of the NEA's 50th anniversary, encouraged the 53 state champions to submit an original work of poetry in two categories—written poems or spoken word—both of which were judged by noted poet Patricia Smith. Rose's original narrative poem, "Mythomania - Compulsive Lies," took first place! Read the full text of Rose's poem at <https://meartsed.wordpress.com/2016/08/06/roses-poem/>.

Poetry Out Loud 2017 has now begun! School-wide learning is taking place and participating schools will register for workshops and regional finals to be held in February. Poetry Out Loud is a national competition organized by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation, and administered throughout Maine by the Arts



Maine's two-time Poetry Out Loud champion Rose Horowitz with National Endowment for the Arts chairman Jane Chu at the national finals in Washington, D.C., May 2016.

Commission. It recognizes the resurgence of poetry as an oral art form, as seen in the slam poetry movement and the immense popularity of hip-hop music among our youth; and builds on this momentum by inviting the dynamic aspects of spoken word and theater into the English class. You'll want to attend the FREE state finals March 13 in Waterville!

For more details go to <http://bit.do/MaineArts-POL>.

Maine Arts Commission Staff

Julie A. Richard, Executive Director
Julie.Richard@maine.gov

Linda Nelson, Assistant Director
Linda.L.Nelson@maine.gov

Kerstin Gilg
Media Arts and Performing Arts Director
Kerstin.Gilg@maine.gov

Julie Horn, Visual Arts Director
Julie.Horn@maine.gov

Argy Nestor, Director of Arts Education
Argy.Nestor@maine.gov

Kathy Ann Shaw, Senior Grants Director
Kathy.Shaw@maine.gov

Christine Norris, Office Manager
Christine.Norris@maine.gov

Priscilla Kelley, Office Associate
Priscilla.Kelley@maine.gov

MARK YOUR CALENDAR ARTS IDITAROD 2017

That's right: the Arts Commission is hitting the road again, this time during the Maine winter in order to open further dialogue with communities and artists from across the state.

This January and February, Commission staff plan to visit approximately seven Maine communities from Presque Isle to York and venues in between.

On the agenda: a grants mini-

workshop; data collection tips and tricks; results and implications of our just-completed Arts Education Census; extended cultural equity discussions; and the NEA's Creativity Connects program. Stay tuned for further details.



Stuart Kestenbaum was appointed Maine's fifth Poet Laureate in late March and will serve a five year term. He is the author of four books of poetry.

Prayer for Joy

What was it we wanted
to say anyhow, like today
when there were all the letters
in my alphabet soup and suddenly
the 'j' rises to the surface.
The 'j', a letter that might be
great for Scrabble, but not really
used for much else, unless
we need to jump for joy,
and then all of a sudden
it's there and ready to
help us soar and to open up
our hearts at the same time,
this simple line with a curved bottom,
an upside down cane that helps

us walk in a new way into this
forest of language, where all the letters
are beginning to speak,
finding each other in just
the right combination
to be understood.

- from *Only Now* (Deerbrook Editions,
Cumberland, Maine 2014)

**Poems from Here on Maine Public
Tune in each Friday as Stuart selects a
poem by a Maine or regional poet and
shares with us how language has the
power to move and surprise us.**