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Arts Council of Indianapolis announces two DeHaan Artist of Distinction Award recipients for 2019

INDIANAPOLIS --- The Arts Council of Indianapolis is pleased to announce two new recipients of the 2019 DeHaan Artist of Distinction Award which supports aspirational and innovative projects by contemporary visual artists in central Indiana.

The first recipient is community-based artist LaShawnda Crowe Storm, who was selected for her project “Sista Song: The Requiem.” She will collaborate with 40 community members in the co-creation of mixed-media small scale installations, proposed as womb-shaped vessels cast in pure aluminum, that explore the intergenerational trauma associated with the enslavement of Black women. Crowe Storm has long used her art as a vehicle of transformation rooted in dialogue, community healing, and community development, and she believes strongly in the co-creative process in producing these opportunities. “Sista Song: The Requiem”, is an expansion on a work she produced in 2017 entitled “Origins”.

The second recipient is photographer Jacinda Russell, selected for her project “Metaphorical Antipodes,” which explores opposites and extremes in location, age, attitude, and language. Russell will travel to border towns in Texas, Arizona, and California and use photography to comment on the United States’ relationship and ideological differences with the southern boundary line. Russell has proposed to use a 7-foot inflatable globe in her photographs to contrast the differences in geography represented on the globe and the physical land where it is placed. Loss, longing, and storytelling epitomize Russell’s work, and she hopes her new photographs will open the door for deeper reflection in the divisive, political dialogue around environmental change.

2019 marks the third year of the DeHaan Artist of Distinction Award program made possible through the generosity of the Christel DeHaan Family Foundation (CDFF). Each awardee receives \$10,000 in quick turnaround funding to execute their proposed project, followed by an exhibition of their work in a group show at Gallery 924 at the Arts Council of Indianapolis.

Crowe Storm and Russell are the first two of five potential awards to be granted to visual artists in 2019. Each round, applicants submit a detailed proposal outlining the intended project, its impact on their career, and how financial assistance would allow them to take the next steps to add this project to their portfolio. Awardees are then selected for their artistic quality, innovative approach, and impact on the visual arts field.

There are three available awards remaining for 2019 with application deadlines on August 23 and November 29.

“As this prestigious award evolves, we continue to see the high level of investigation our Indy-based artists are capable of when supported in this way. We now have two more artists in Crowe Storm and Russell who are pushing their creative practice in the exploration of difficult topics; investigating concepts that are timely, challenging, and necessary,” said Shannon M. Linker, Vice President, Arts Council of Indianapolis. “Both projects have national implications which is also especially exciting for the program.”

About the Christel DeHaan Family Foundation:

Since 1997, CDFF Board Members have overseen grants in excess of \$60 million to arts, arts education, education, child welfare, and human need organizations. Throughout its history, the Foundation has refined its giving strategies and operations to optimize its support provided to arts and cultural organizations with a special emphasis on the performing arts. Support for the DeHaan Artist of Distinction Award program is a new opportunity to engage the visual arts community.

About the Arts Council of Indianapolis:

The Arts Council of Indianapolis is a nonprofit service organization dedicated to fostering meaningful and equitable engagement in the arts by nurturing a culture where artists and arts organizations thrive. The Arts Council allocates public funding to arts and cultural organizations through a competitive grant program; offers fellowship opportunities including the Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship, the Robert D. Beckmann, Jr. Emerging Artist Fellowship, and the DeHaan Artist of Distinction Award; provides programs, services, and technical assistance for artists and arts organizations; manages the city’s public art program including the Public Art for Neighborhoods initiative; supports arts education and arts integration in partnership with Indianapolis Public Schools; and owns/operates the Indianapolis Artsgarden, Gallery 924, and IndyArtsGuide.org.

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