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Arts Council of Indianapolis Announces 2019 ARTI Awards and Artist Fellowships at 33rd Annual *Start with Art* Season Kickoff

2019-2020 High Art Billboard Artists Announced; "People's Choice" Voting Opens September 2

INDIANAPOLIS – Today more than 1,000 arts, business, and civic leaders came together to celebrate the kickoff of the 2019-2020 Indianapolis arts season at the 33rd annual *Start with Art* event presented by the Arts Council of Indianapolis and Schahet Hotels. Keynote speaker Xavier Ramey, CEO and Lead Strategist of Chicago-based [Justice Informed, LLC](#) shared perspective on sustainable 21st century practices to improve equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility to and through the arts as part of this year's theme: *A Full Creative Life for All*.

In addition to Ramey, the program featured remarks by Mayor Joe Hogsett, and local artists and arts organizations including Rob Dixon's 3 Ring Circus, poet Manon Voice, Kids Dance Outreach, Classical Music Indy, and Indianapolis Ballet. The Arts Council of Indianapolis also announced 2019 ARTI Award winners presented by The National Bank of Indianapolis, celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship supported by Lilly Endowment, and announced 2019-2020 artist fellowship recipients including the Robert D. Beckmann, Jr. Emerging Artist Fellows and DeHaan Artists of Distinction.

"*Start with Art* is a beautiful Indianapolis tradition," said Julie Goodman, Arts Council of Indianapolis President and CEO. "Indy is bursting with creativity, innovation, and an appetite for more arts and culture. It's incredible to see 1,000+ business, civic, and arts leaders come together to kickoff the new season and celebrate the significant economic and community impact the arts are having in our city and neighborhoods."

2019 ARTI Award Winners

The ARTI Awards recognize outstanding contributions to the Indianapolis arts and cultural community by leaders in business, patronage/volunteerism, arts education, impact, and equity. This year's awards were created by Indy visual artist and Creative Renewal Arts Fellow, Beatriz Vásquez, who explores

the process and culture within the traditional Mexican craft of papel picado, or cut paper, often incorporating the indigenous craft of loom weaving into large scale paper and textile works.

2019 ARTI Award Recipients

2019 Corporate ARTI Award: Kroger

Kroger was recognized with the 2019 Corporate ARTI Award for their major commitment in taking over title sponsorship of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's Symphony (ISO) on the Prairie after a 35-year partnership with Marsh, including their shared commitment with the ISO to reach new audiences through programming and community engagement.

2019 Small Business ARTI Award: Tea's Me Cafe Indy

Tea's Me Cafe Indy was recognized for the intentional integration of arts into their business model and their growing influence as a venue and gathering place for artists -- especially for artists of color. Owned by Tamika Catchings (former Indiana Fever star for 15 years), Tea's Me Cafe hosts open-mic nights, art exhibitions, book clubs, a "Reader's Chair" to promote neighborhood stories and more.

2019 Volunteer/Patron Awards:

Martha O'Connor & Greg Henneke

Martha O'Connor and Greg Henneke were recognized for their role in blending longtime patronage, financial support, advocacy, and audience development with significant contributions of professional expertise and guidance in helping the Phoenix and Cabaret navigate new funding sources, infrastructure improvements, and more to set up these important new arts venues for success.

Joyce Rogers

Joyce Rogers was recognized for her leadership role in forging the strategic partnerships necessary to restore the historic Madam Walker Legacy Center as an anchor on Indiana Avenue, a gateway to downtown Indianapolis, and a vibrant new cultural center in our community.

2019 Larry Hurt Excellence in Arts Education ARTI Award: David Newman

David Newman, Fine Arts Instructional Coach for Indianapolis Public Schools was recognized for his leadership to bringing arts organization resources to IPS students including 5,000 students in 14 schools engaged through the Any Given Child Indy program.

2019 ARTful Impact ARTI Award: Women's Fund of Central Indiana

The Women's Fund of Central Indiana was recognized for its \$750,000 grant to Asante Children's Theatre to create the Sankofa Paradigm Program, a trauma-informed, healing centered, therapeutic theatre program for girls ages 8-18 at Boys and Girls Club of Indianapolis. The program is a partnership between Asante, Boys and Girls Clubs of Indianapolis, Community Health Network, and Dr. Sally Wasmuth of IUPUI School of Health and Human Science. The collaboration relies on the therapeutic benefits of culturally relevant theatre and art as a healing technique to help girls process trauma and adverse childhood experiences and connect them to more services as needed.

2019 A Full Creative Life For All Award: Flava Fresh Contemporary Art Series

Flava Fresh Contemporary Art Series was recognized for the critical role the Flava Fresh exhibition and its leadership in providing an inclusive and accessible development and contemporary art exhibition program in Indianapolis. Flava Fresh has been a leader in building bridges and connecting artists, with a focus on artists of color, to opportunities in the Indy arts scene and beyond. They have created and nurtured community for artists of color and have collaborated to create meaningful partnerships with the Eiteljorg, Indiana Black Expo, Indiana State Museum, Christel DeHaan Fine Arts Center, the Indianapolis Airport, Indianapolis Arts Center, Indianapolis Public Library, Carmel Art and Design Center, IUPUI, Clowes Hall/Butler Arts Center, Arts Council and more.

The 2020 Robert D. Beckmann, Jr. Emerging Artist Fellows

The Robert D. Beckmann, Jr. Emerging Artist Fellowship Program awards two \$3,500 fellowships each year to qualified and talented artists in music, dance, theatre, literature, media, and/or the visual arts. The program consists of a monetary award in the amount of \$3,500 that can be used for supplies, instruction, workshops, studio or rehearsal space, or other uses specifically related to the growth and development of the artist's work. In addition, the fellows receive professional development and growth opportunities through the Arts Council of Indianapolis. The Robert D. Beckmann, Jr. Emerging Artist Fellowship Program seeks to introduce and provide experiences, connections, and relationships with professional arts institutions and professional artists in central Indiana.

The 2020 Robert D. Beckmann, Jr. Emerging Artist Fellows are **Joshua Thompson** and **Manon Voice**.

Indianapolis native Joshua Thompson began taking piano and trumpet lessons at a very young age. He attended DePauw University, originally as a trumpet performance major before earning his B.A. in Sociology. In 2010, Thompson combined his passion for advocacy and music education by working closely with cultural arts organizations such as the Arts Council of Indianapolis, Music for All, and Indy Jazz Fest with a focus on making educational resources accessible throughout the city of Indianapolis. Thompson was a Featured Artist for *Art & Soul at the Artsgarden* in 2019.

Thompson will use his 2020 Fellowship to research cultural through-lines in Classical music from composers of African descent. This 10-day research-intensive will be under the guidance of the Smithsonian research associate and Director of the Center for Africana Studies at Berklee School of Music. Thompson's research fellowship will afford him access to one of the most extensive archives of manuscripts from composers of African descent.

Indiana University graduate, Manon Voice is a poet, writer, spoken word artist, hip-hop emcee, and social justice activist. In 2017, Voice was awarded the Power of Peace Award from the Peace Learning Center of Central Indiana and in 2018 she traveled to Avila, Spain with the organization, Mystic Soul, to study contemplative practices through the lens of Saint and Mystic Teresa de Avila. In 2019, Voice was nominated for the Pushcart Prize in Poetry.

Voice will use her 2020 fellowship to study the poetic influences of 13th Century Sufi Poet and Mystic, Jalal ad-Din Muhammed Rumi by traveling to visit the key places of his life including his

resting place in Konya, Turkey. Guided by Duke University scholars, she will visit Rumi's shrine and the mosque of his spiritual master. She will also energize her new work by studying the Masnavi, one of the greatest poems of the Persian language.

The DeHaan Artist of Distinction Award

Established in 2017, the DeHaan Artist of Distinction Award program awards up to five contemporary visual artists annually with a grant of up to \$10,000 for quick turnaround project funding to promote and celebrate excellence. The aim of the program, which includes a retrospective exhibition, is to propel the artist forward in their career and support exceptional and aspirational projects.

Artists awarded in 2018, **Anila Quayyum Agha, Artur Silva, Kassim Norris, Stefan Petranek, and Cory Robinson** will be featured in a group exhibition in Gallery 924 which opens during First Friday on September 6 with a reception from 6 - 9 pm and runs through September 27. The next deadline to apply for the program is [November 29](#).

2019 High Art Billboards Launch September 2: Vote for “People’s Choice Award”

Each year, the Arts Council of Indianapolis partners with **Reagan Outdoor Advertising** (formerly Fairway Outdoor), to produce High Art, a city-wide public art program which celebrates works by 10 central Indiana artists on billboards around the city. Each artwork is featured on a rotating basis for one year on billboards throughout Marion and the seven surrounding counties. The public has the opportunity to [vote for their favorite artwork](#) to receive a “People’s Choice” award.

The Arts Council and Reagan Outdoor Advertising are pleased to announce that the 2019-2020 High Art Billboard Program will feature works by the following artists:

- Jenny Ambroise
- R. A. Buys
- Pheary Heak
- Mallory Hodgkin
- Eric Lubrick
- Omar Rashaan
- Rebecca Robinson
- Nick Smith
- Charise Tallent
- Danielle Winger

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 administers the City of Indianapolis Annual Grants Program providing funding to arts and cultural organizations through a competitive public panel review; offers artist fellowship opportunities including the Creative Renewal Arts Fellowship supported by Lilly Endowment Inc., 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 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.

The Arts Council of Indianapolis receives ongoing support from: Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation, the Indiana Arts Commission, Lilly Endowment Inc., The Indianapolis Foundation, A CICF Affiliate, and the City of Indianapolis.

Connect with the Arts Council of Indianapolis on Facebook/**indyarts**, Twitter and Instagram **@artscouncilindy**, and online at indyarts.org.

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