

PRESS RELEASE



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UNITED ARTS AWARDS MINI-GRANTS, DIVERSITY GRANTS, AND ACCESSIBILITY GRANTS TO 21 ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

ORLANDO – September 22, 2020 – United Arts of Central Florida announced the recipients of its September cycle of Mini-Grants, Diversity Grants, and Accessibility Grants. Thirteen organizations were awarded Mini-Grants totaling \$25,000 and eight organizations were awarded Diversity and Accessibility Grants totaling \$28,500.

Mini-Grants

Mini-grants support the incubation of ideas and creativity by providing funding for cultural events held by burgeoning multicultural and grassroots groups, art therapy programs, and a full season of offerings for organizations with budget sizes of less than \$75,000.

This cycle's grant recipients are:

Central Florida Sounds of Freedom Band and Color Guard– Awarded \$2,000 for *Making Music Reimagined*. This performance of *Sounds of Freedom* meets appropriate safety protocols to protect members and patrons while providing a much needed musical and visual experience for both.

Curry Ford West, Inc. – Awarded \$1,000 for *Utility/Art Box Painting and Holiday Drive-In*. The Curry Ford West Main Street is working with two local mural artists to paint two Utility/Art Cabinets along Curry Ford Road. Curry Ford West Main Street is also partnering with Central Florida Community Arts to organize a Drive-In Holiday experience.

HAPCO Music Foundation – Awarded \$2,000 for *HAPCO Winter Jazz Clinic 2021*. This event is designed to offer middle and high school jazz students direct, comprehensive instruction on an array of jazz concepts. The topics being covered range from improvisation and music theory to breaking into the music industry and what it takes to be a professional jazz musician.

Life Concepts d/b/a Quest – Awarded \$2,000 for *Quest Kids Academy Music and Dance Programs*. This program for children with developmental and learning disabilities will continue Quest's arts programming focus in two areas: the art of movement and dance in partnership with Chance 2 Dance; and a music program through a partnership with Joyful Music Therapy.

Messiah Choral Society – Awarded \$2,000 for *A Virtual Performance of Handel's Messiah*. Under the direction of Dr. John Sinclair, on November 29, 2020, MCS will present its 48th free professional performance of Handel's "Messiah" virtually on MCS's website.

Music To My Mind – Awarded \$2,000 for *So You Want Your Name In Lights Talent Showcases*. These two-hour showcases will provide disadvantaged, at-risk youth opportunities to perform their talent in song, dance, music, and poetry.

Orlando City Ballet d/b/a Russian Ballet Orlando – Awarded \$2,000 for *20th Anniversary Season of Dance*. Russian Ballet Orlando (RBO) will perform four productions in celebration of its 20th Anniversary. In October, RBO will present "Carmen," in collaboration with Opera Orlando. In December, 2020 RBO will present "The Nutcracker". In April 2021, RBO will present "Don Quixote". In June 2021, RBO will present "Little Mermaid".

Orlando International Film Festival, Inc. – Awarded \$2,000 for *OIFF Arts and Culture Experience in the COVID Era*. This program will create arts experiences for schools by focusing on creating art and career development. Virtual classes will be taught by professional artists and arts leaders.

Orlando Metropolitan Ballet Academy, Inc. – Awarded \$2,000 for *The Sleeping Beauty Ballet*. The Sleeping Beauty Ballet is a full production where Orlando Metropolitan Ballet Academy (OMBA) continue their training as performers. The main characters are performed by our most advanced students (pre-professional division) and professional ballet dancers hired from other companies or freelancers.

Playwrights' Round Table – Awarded \$2,000 for *Original Works & New Play Development in Central Florida*. Playwrights' Round Table (PRT) will expand development opportunities for local playwrights while also bringing cutting-edge new works to the Orlando community.

Swamp Sistas La La Foundation, Inc. – Awarded \$2,000 for *Fall Events*. Swamp Sistas' fall 2020 focus is supporting Central Florida women in the arts create virtual music, spoken word, comedy and visual art performances. "See, Hear & Say" is an online showcase with a collaborative twist. "Month of Sundays" is a curated video blog series featuring established artists with performances, demonstrations, interviews and interactive Q&As.

Tavares Theater – Awarded \$2,000 for *Real Lives, Real Legends: Ruth Westheimer, Geo Burns*. Tavares Theater presents two full length productions from its series of biographical one-person plays. "Say Goodnight Gracie" and "Becoming Dr. Ruth."

The Celebration Foundation – Awarded \$2,000 for *Concert Series*. The Celebration Foundation (CF) Concert Series is celebrating 19 years of offering quality music. Concert Series events include: December 2020 - Gary Lovini, holiday concert; January 2021 - Ranky Tanky; February 2021 - Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra; February 2021 - Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra; March 2021 - Academy of St. Martin in the Fields; April 2021 - Balsam Range.

Diversity and Accessibility Grants

Diversity Grants incentivize cultural organizations to create programming that will appeal to a wide range of audiences, particularly racially and ethnically diverse communities in Central Florida.

Accessibility Grants encourage the creation of art and cultural programming that serves people with varying abilities in Central Florida. The goal of this grant is to increase the participation of people with varying abilities in arts and culture as attendants and as artists and performers in the programming.

This cycle's grant recipients are:

Central Florida Community Arts – awarded \$2,500 for *Buidling Diversity in Arts Membership and Audiences*. Central Florida Community Arts (CFCA) will expand its inclusion efforts through strategy sessions with board and staff.

Crealdé School of Art – awarded \$4,000 for *Promoting Crealdé's Exhibitions in Diverse Outlets*. This project supports the marketing of Crealdé's four major exhibitions and two events featuring ethnically diverse professional artists and artists with disabilities.

Downtown Arts District – awarded \$4,000 for *Access: Being Black in the Art World*. *Access* is a year's worth of educational programming surrounding the topic: *Being Black in the Art World*. It is the outcome of the Downtown Arts District's commitment to LISTEN and DO what is right to ensure strong equity practices within the local arts community.

Mad Cow Theatre – awarded \$4,000 for *Theatre Sparks: Plays for an Antiracist Tomorrow*. Mad Cow Theatre & Black Theatre Girl Magic present digital readings of 5 plays by playwright Idris Goodwin to spark conversation about race in America offering different insights about disconnects in racial conversation and the Black experience in America for multi-generational audiences.

Orlando Museum of Art – awarded \$4,000 for *Stock Image Collection: A Kenya (Robinson) Performance*. This collection aims to inspire necessary dialogue on Black representation in art and media. By providing stock images, participants will contribute to increasing visibility of Black people online.

Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra – awarded \$4,000 for *Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*. To help advance diversity, equity, and inclusion organization-wide, the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra will provide cultural competency training for staff, board, volunteers, and musicians to increase the organization's capacity to work effectively with diverse communities and support continued conversation and action.

Orlando Repertory Theatre – awarded \$4,000 for *Secret Agent 23 Skidoo*. Orlando Repertory Theatre will present two concerts by Grammy-award-winning family hip-hop artist *Secret Agent 23 Skidoo*, whose music (spiced with Motown, reggae, and club thump) focuses on emotional and mental health of young people. 23 Skidoo will also teach hip-hop writing workshops.

Orlando Shakes – awarded \$2,000 for *Diversity and Inclusion Efforts*. Training for Orlando Shakes staff and board is a key initial step to introduce concepts of unconscious bias and give opportunities in a safe setting. Orlando Shakes is seeking to develop practices of respect and community building vital to shifting the culture at the organization.

United Arts is now accepting applications for the next cycle of Mini Grants, Diversity Grants, and Accessibility Grants. The next application deadline for these two programs is February 1, 2021. Organizations can learn more or apply at www.UnitedArts.cc/grants.

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About United Arts of Central Florida

United Arts is a collaboration of individuals, businesses, governments and school districts, foundations, arts and cultural organizations, and artists. Its mission is to enrich communities by investing in arts, science and history. United Arts serves residents and visitors in Lake, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties through the more than 60 local arts, science and history organizations it supports. It does this by providing direct support through grants and contracts for services, collaborative fundraising, arts education opportunities, advocacy, and technical and administrative assistance. Since 1989, United Arts has invested more than \$162 million in Central Florida's arts and culture.

For more information, visit <http://www.UnitedArts.cc> or call 407.628.0333.