

PRESS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE, DECEMBER 15, 2020



Contact:

Sean Thurman
Marketing & Communications Manager
407.628.0333, x229
Sean@UnitedArts.cc

UNITED ARTS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA AWARDS \$2.288 MILLION IN OPERATING SUPPORT GRANTS

ORLANDO – December 15, 2020 – On December 9, 2020, the Board of Directors of United Arts of Central Florida (United Arts) approved the recommendations to award \$2,288,000 in Operating Support grants to 34 Central Florida nonprofit cultural institutions. Due to closures and program changes caused by COVID-19, this year’s awards are based on prior year’s panel scores and the awards will remain the same for 2021 as they were in 2020.

“Since its inception, United Arts has invested more than \$162 million in the growth and development of local nonprofit cultural groups,” said Brendan Lynch, chair of the United Arts Board of Directors. “It is critical to the mission of United Arts to provide this essential support for our cultural organizations and ensure that Central Florida residents have access to intriguing, inclusive, and creative cultural programming.”

Operating support is essential funding for nonprofits. These critical dollars help “keep the lights on” by funding a portion of their entire season of operations and programming, allowing nonprofits to offer free and low-cost arts and cultural experiences for the public. Funding will provide vital income for the coming year as the cultural community continues to struggle with diminished revenue from lost ticket sales and reduced attendance at performances, exhibits, camps, and classes due to COVID-19.

“Opera Orlando is especially grateful during these uncertain and difficult times to have the support of United Arts of Central Florida,” states Gabriel Preisser, executive director of Opera Orlando. “The funds from the Operating Support grant enable us to keep our operations running without interruption and employ artists both locally and nationally for our current season.”

The value of these grants is clear: last year, United Arts’ Operating Support Grants helped 34 arts organizations mount 4,056 exhibitions and productions, provided arts access and arts education to 1,028,066 students, offered 1,170,753 free tickets, and attracted 2,889,952 guests. These grants support 392 full-time and 450 part-time staff positions, as well as 12,242 artists.

“This has been an extremely challenging year for arts and culture, especially the Orlando Museum of Art, due to the severely reduced number of visitors and income,” said Luder Whitlock, interim executive director at the Orlando Museum of Art. “I honestly don’t know where we would have been without the generous support of United Arts providing much needed grant funding and seasoned guidance as we navigate this unprecedented COVID-19 crisis.”

Funding for operating support grants comes from the generous support of United Arts Trustees, including Orange County Government and the City of Orlando, as well as community support of the

United Arts - *Arts for ALL* Fund. The United Arts Standards & Allocations Committee (an internal grants oversight group of eight board and community members) and United Arts staff reviewed these grant applications to assess each applicants' financial stability and programming, both during the pandemic and looking into the coming year.

"There are a lot of sources of funds for programming, but very few that support the day-to-day operations that make programming possible," said Christopher Belt, executive director at Timucua Arts Foundation. "Knowing that we have this support coming from United Arts every quarter allows us to focus less on fundraising and more on how we deliver inspiring arts and education experiences."

2021 Operating Support Grants – Grantee Descriptions

Awards for Calendar Year 2021 activities

LARGE BUDGET ORGANIZATIONS

Art & History Museums - Maitland (FY21 Award \$61,400) offers immersive art and history experiences throughout its five museums. A&H's largest museum is the Maitland Art Center, a 1937 artist colony and National Historic Landmark. A&H programs include artist residencies, exhibitions, and hands-on learning in unparalleled architectural environments.

Bach Festival Society of Winter Park (FY21 Award \$88,300) presents a full season of choral and orchestral concerts, the annual three-week Bach Festival, Visiting Artists, Insights & Sounds, Choral Masterworks, and educational programs for all ages to celebrate the legacy of J.S. Bach.

Central Florida Community Arts (FY21 Award \$41,500) exists to build and serve community through both performance-based program areas (choir, orchestra, children and youth arts programs, dance and theater) and the School of the Arts (the Academy, Arts & Wellness, Arts in Action programs for senior citizens, and outreach programs).

Crealdé School of Art (FY21 Award \$74,500) offers 125 visual art classes and workshops for all ages taught by over 50 professional artists, scholarships and free classes to those in need, programs for emerging artists, and multidisciplinary exhibitions and educational events that promote diverse cultural appreciation.

Downtown Arts District (FY21 Award \$32,800) leads, stimulates, and guides the development of a vibrant and innovative arts district in downtown Orlando by managing cultural facilities, providing arts engagement programs, executing public art projects, and supporting local emerging and established artists.

Enzian (FY21 Award \$85,700) is Central Florida's only full-time alternative cinema café, offering mostly independent and foreign films, and home to Eden Bar and the Florida Film Festival. A member-supported, nonprofit arts organization, Enzian exists to entertain, educate, and connect the community through film.

As a professional performing arts center, **Garden Theatre (FY21 Award \$38,800)** produces culturally-diverse and unique programming that includes innovative live theater, concerts, special events, movies and impactful educational outreach programs benefiting youth in underserved areas.

Orange County Regional History Center (FY21 Award \$42,500), located in downtown Orlando, displays the Historical Society of Central Florida's collection of historical artifacts and permanent exhibits that tell the stories of the region's 12,000-year history.

Orlando Ballet (FY21 Award \$271,300) is the only resident professional ballet company presenting a full season of performances in Central Florida. The award-winning Orlando Ballet School is one of only five schools in the nation to be accredited by American Ballet Theatre® also serving over 60,000 students each year through Community Enrichment programs.

Orlando Fringe (FY21 Award \$45,700) is an internationally valued arts organization that produces the longest running Fringe Festival in the United States, offering free and low-cost activities by local, national and international artists to audiences of all ages, backgrounds and means.

Orlando Museum of Art (FY21 Award \$159,400) is a center for cultural engagement that seeks to inspire creativity, passion and intellectual curiosity by presenting compelling visual art exhibitions, exciting community events, and innovative and inspiring education and outreach programs for the public to experience.

As the region's premier professional orchestra, **Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra (FY21 Award \$276,800)** provides extraordinary symphonic performances, stimulating educational programs, and widespread community outreach that impacts more than 180,000 Central Florida residents and visitors annually.

Orlando Repertory Theatre (FY21 Award \$181,400) creates experiences that enlighten, entertain, and enrich the lives of family and young audiences through professional productions, an award-winning Youth Academy, community engagement programs, and a partnership with UCF hosting a Masters of Fine Arts program.

Orlando Science Center (FY21 Award \$271,200) inspires science learning for life, promoting hands-on learning through four floors of interactive exhibits, events, live shows and educational programming. The 207,000-square-foot facility features cutting edge technology such as immersive virtual reality in the Flight Lab.

Orlando Shakes in partnership with UCF (**FY21 Award \$245,700**) produces classic, contemporary and children's plays through its Signature Series and Children's Series productions, in addition to innovative programming in new play development, arts education and community outreach.

MIDSIZE BUDGET ORGANIZATIONS

Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Gardens (FY21 Award \$31,300) preserves a 200+ piece collection of works by world-renowned Czech-American sculptor Albin Polasek and offers tours of his home, studio and sculpture gardens. It also hosts the annual Winter Park Paint Out and is home to the historic 1885 Capen House.

Bay Street Players (FY21 Award \$15,800) has been providing quality live theater entertainment and education in Lake County since 1975. The Young People's Theatre, one of the first in the state of Florida, has been operating continuously for over 40 years.

Central Florida Ballet (FY21 Award \$45,200) keystones are innovative and powerful ballet productions, educational programs and international partnerships with glowing recognition from The White House, U.S. House of Representatives, ABC News, CNN Headline News, *USA Today*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Florida Symphony Youth Orchestras (FSYO) (FY21 Award \$35,500) exists to encourage children and young adults, through the performance of music, to become passionate leaders and contributors in their community. Annually, over 300 students of diverse backgrounds travel from nine counties to participate in FSYO programs.

Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center of Florida (FY21 Award \$61,900) is dedicated to building a just, caring and inclusive community free of all forms of prejudice and bigotry. The 2020 season includes exhibits, films and programs that address contemporary social issues and is open to all members of the community.

Mennello Museum of American Art (MMAA) (FY21 Award \$17,100) celebrates the diversity of American art, offering thought-provoking exhibits and programs in a welcoming environment. MMAA's 2021 season presents work by emerging and prominent artists addressing timely issues including the environment, colonialism and identity.

MicheLee Puppets (MLP) (FY21 Award \$17,900) empowers lives through the art of puppetry. As Florida's only educational puppetry arts organization and nationally awarded by Puppeteers of America, MLP delivers original, issue-based plays, videos and puppetry classes in schools and public venues throughout Florida.

Mount Dora Center for the Arts (FY21 Award \$21,000) is a community-based organization committed to bringing arts alive in our diverse community by mounting exhibits of high-quality, original art, providing educational art classes for adults and children, and hosting the nationally recognized Mount Dora Arts Festival.

Opera Orlando (FY21 Award \$27,000) is redefining the operatic experience with theatrical works of high artistic quality in the Central Florida area. The Opera creatively fuses various genres and mediums to engage the community with innovative productions and educational programs; making opera accessible to everyone.

Winter Garden Heritage Foundation (FY21 Award \$9,800) is the driving force behind the preservation of the rich heritage of West Orange County, fostering an understanding of the social, cultural, economic and environmental transformations that have shaped the area.

SMALL BUDGET ORGANIZATIONS

ArtReach Orlando (FY21 Award \$7,000) brings visual-arts programming to children and teens who are experiencing difficult economic and social situations and may not have access to the arts. Through art, these Central Florida young people can safely explore issues they face and build self-worth and emotional resilience.

Central Florida Vocal Arts (CFVA) (FY21 Award \$5,500) is dedicated to providing the highest quality training to young artists, while providing performance opportunities to currently emerging artists of all ages. CFVA creates a life cycle for the vocal arts through education, mainstage and Opera del Sol productions.

Creative City Project (FY21 Award \$13,700) is shaping the global perception of Central Florida as a hub for creativity and innovation, connecting residents and visitors to compelling art experiences. The annual performing and installation arts event, IMMERSE, is growing into a global-destination arts experience.

Global Peace Film Festival (FY21 Award \$9,700) celebrates film and the arts, using creative media as a catalyst to inspire positive change in communities. Global Peace Film Festival encourages public awareness of and engagement for peace and environmental sustainability locally, nationally and worldwide.

The **Leesburg Center for the Arts (FY21 Award \$8,900)** strives to enrich the quality of life through arts and culture in the Leesburg area, Lake County, and the contiguous counties by leveraging the arts to create a platform for creativity, community and cohesiveness.

Orlando Gay Chorus (FY21 Award \$9,700) inspires individuals, the community and the world through excellence in musical entertainment. Entering its 30th year, Orlando Gay Chorus uses music to bring the community together and make the world a better place.

Snap! Orlando (FY21 Award \$10,900) is a leading Florida visual arts organization, with a contemporary gallery, and a roster of over one hundred international multimedia artists. Snap!'s programming is highly diversified and community driven.

Timucua Arts Foundation (FY21 Award \$6,800) is an interactive, live-performance laboratory where guests from around the world expand their cultural awareness with affordable contemporary music, theater and visual arts experiments in an intimate setting.

Urban Think Foundation (FY21 Award \$16,300), the parent organization for Page 15 and Burrow Press, provides community-based programs that enrich Orlando's literary landscape such as youth writing workshops, literary publishing, public literary events, and more.

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.

###