

# PRESS RELEASE



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## ***UNITED ARTS AWARDS PROJECT GRANTS TO 17 ARTS AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS***

**ORLANDO – September 21, 2021** – United Arts of Central Florida announced the recipients of its September cycle of Project Grants. Seventeen organizations were awarded Project Grants totaling \$27,000.

“This grant process ensures that Central Florida residents are receiving inspired programming from cultural institutions, no matter their size.” said Jennifer Evins, president and CEO of United Arts.

These grants support the incubation of ideas and creativity by providing funding for cultural events held by burgeoning multicultural, grassroots groups, and art therapy programs. These grants are supported by gifts to the United Arts – *Arts for ALL Fund*. Nearly 3/4 of grantees receive their first grant from United Arts through this program, and 52% of funding goes to culturally diverse organizations.

“The grant will help Open Scene to produce *Exquisite Corpse*, the first interactive art installation based on the same-name surrealist technique using virtual reality, performed in the heart of Downtown Orlando,” said Thamara Bejarano, executive director at Open Scene, Inc. “It’s a new level of collective art and collaborative creation developed in a virtual space. Thanks to this support, we keep fulfilling our mission of connecting people through the arts.”

Project Grants help fund programming by arts, science and history nonprofit organizations, increasing the variety of cultural experiences available to residents and visitors in Central Florida. This grant program recognizes the high value of arts and culture for our region and the institutions that provide cultural programming for the public year-round.

This cycle’s grant recipients are:

**Asia Trend** – Awarded \$1,000 for *Asian Cultural EXPO 2021*. The annual *Asian Cultural EXPO* will showcase the culture of Asia through performances, workshops and art/craft exhibitions. Asia Trend is inviting local arts organizations to perform and hold free workshops after each performance. The expo will be presented together with the GWN Orlando International Dragon Boat Festival.

**CABETCAL** – Awarded \$1,000 for *Latin Celebration of Art*. The *Latin Celebration of Art* will showcase artists from different Latin countries including Colombia, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, El Salvador and more. These artists will showcase their paintings and techniques as well as share their experiences as artists making a new life and integrating into a community without losing their identity. This project will serve as an opportunity to educate and appreciate art that represents a diverse ancestry and culture.

**CAYA Network** – Awarded \$2,000 for *arTron (Art Tron)*. The project will function as a live painting VR experience with artists using Oculus Quest and the Tilt Brush app to create digital masterpieces. Live participants can see what the artist is making on a large TV screen/projector. During the weekend, the public can come into the location and view the artist's masterpiece via VR headset.

**Celebration Theatre Company, Inc.** – Awarded \$2,000 for *RENT*. Celebration Theatre Company, Inc. is proud to present their fifth season of live musical theater this year, culminating in the Tony- and Pulitzer Prize-winning *RENT*, with book, music, and lyrics by Jonathan Larson.

**Central Florida Sounds of Freedom Band and Color Guard** – Awarded \$1,500 for *Darkness into Light*. *Darkness into Light* juxtaposes the experience of moving from darkness to light as highlighted by the musical selections. This season, the organization hopes to branch out their programming to reach at-risk LGBTQ+ youth with plans of having a small chorus of LGBTQ+ youth perform with the band.

**Chance 2 Dance (C2D)** – Awarded \$2,000 for *Winter Showcase 2021: A Charlie Brown Christmas*. With this adaptation of *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, C2D breaks new ground by presenting its first musical-theater production. This production builds on C2D's tradition of producing progressively ambitious and higher-quality shows featuring performers with special needs.

**Child of this Culture Foundation (COTC)** – Awarded \$1,500 for *Urban Art Project*. In hopes of disbaring the myth that Graffiti is just vandalism, COTC strives to allow artists to tell their story through Hip Hop arts traditions. The project will provide 1-2 hour classes once a week for 8-12 weeks. COTC highlights street art, murals, pop surrealism and other genres from the contemporary underground movement by providing an open, safe & free paint session, urban arts apprenticeship for youth (free or small fee) and workshops by renowned local street artists.

**HAPCO Music Foundation** – Awarded \$1,500 for *Winter Jazz Clinic 2022*. 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. Students that attend this workshop will learn information and concepts that will add to their musical database for present and future use.

**Howey Mansion Music Series Inc. (HMMS)** – Awarded \$1,500 for *2021-2022 Concert Music Series*. HMMS centers around their main jazz and classical concert series at the Howey Mansion. The series brings together diverse audience members, consisting of people of all different races and ages from Lake County, Central Florida, and beyond. Their concerts specifically attract many seniors living in Lake County. The current booked artists for the series include: Thomas Meglioranza, Reiko Uchida, Greta Pope & Band, Grimes Alley Blues Band; Sean Kennard; and The Chuck Archard Jazz Quintet.

**Life Concepts d/b/a Quest** – Awarded \$2,000 for *Quest Kids Academy Music and Dance Programs*. Children with developmental and learning disabilities have the ability to learn academic, social and recreational skills through artistic activities. Quest plans to continue its 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 (MCS)** – Awarded \$1,500 for *49th Annual Performance of Handel's "Messiah."* Under the direction of Dr. John Sinclair, Messiah Choral Society, along with four professional soloists and a professional orchestra, will present a free performance of Handel's "Messiah" marking the 49th year of this longstanding tradition. This year, the collaboration partner will be Orlando Repertory Theatre. MCS will also continue the collaboration with Second Harvest Food Bank (SHFB) inviting attendees to donate to SHFB.

**Open Scene, Inc.** – Awarded \$2,000 for *Exquisite Corpse at Immerse 2021.* Open Scene has created an interactive art installation using virtual reality, highlighting a new level of collaborative creation in a virtual space. Based on the surrealist Exquisite Corpse technique, the final product will be a collection of poems written in a virtual world by the participants. Participants will wear goggles to join the virtual room designed with artistic and literary references from the Latinx culture, guided through a voice-over.

**Orlando Community Arts** – Awarded \$2,000 for *Clare and the Chocolate Nutcracker.* Clare and the Chocolate Nutcracker is an adaptation of the holiday classical *The Nutcracker* by E.T.A. Hoffman, with a multicultural spin, rooted in the experiences of the African American culture. Children from underserved communities will learn choreography taught by professional dance artists. The holiday performance will feature local arts groups with approximately 150 community children participating on stage with dancers representing different countries, as well as include special guest artists, who formerly danced with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and as the Nutcracker Prince from Ballet Memphis.

**Orlando Health** – Awarded \$1,500 for *Returning Creative Interaction to Regional Cancer Centers.* Healing Arts Specialist Anne Hollander will return free, weekly creative interaction services teaching 14 different art mediums to adult cancer patients and their caregivers at Regional Care Centers during outpatient chemotherapy. The specialist will provide free art instruction in workshop settings to all cancer patients/caregivers living in Central Florida, regardless of which hospital they're treated at. Workshops on Zoom will also be available every month.

**Orlando International Film Festival, Inc. (OIFF)** – Awarded \$1,000 for *OIFF Art Educational Assistance.* On a monthly basis, OIFF will work with professional artists to provide a comprehensive arts program that features art instruction for drawing portraits, animals, and other subjects. Participants will be at-risk youth from 8 to 17 years of age. The program works with the younger youth participants to create books that integrate their artwork with writing skills, and the older youth participants, who desire to adopt an artist career, will be encouraged to pursue an art curriculum by participating in professional art instruction, theatre classes, and test preparation/ reading classes. This project includes UCF instructor volunteers, UCF Soldiers to Scholars staff and professional artists in a team structure.

**Playwrights' Round Table** – Awarded \$1,500 for *2021-2022 Fall/Winter Project.* This project will include their second-Saturday reading workshops, which may expand into a twice-monthly format; a new playwriting workshop; the return of Native Voices, a live production featuring Central Florida writers and the addition of the Black History Month Showcase, featuring new plays from black playwrights.

**Theatre South Playhouse** – Awarded \$1,500 for *Professional Benefit Play Read Festival.* The Professional Benefit Play Read Series offers the community an opportunity for the exposure, enjoyment, and education of a series of well-known, classic, and diverse plays in the middle of Theatre South Playhouse's educational season of musicals. The program is composed of three play readings for audiences of all ages that showcase an ethnically diverse cast and guest directors. Through these play readings, the festival will address several social themes

including domestic violence; social injustice; body-shaming and self-esteem. Currently the lineup of plays will feature "Lost In Yonkers," the Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Neil Simon; "To Kill A Mockingbird," the new revised version by Christopher Sergel, based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Harper Lee and "School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play" by Jocelyn Bioh.

United Arts is now accepting applications for the next cycle of Project Grants. The next application deadline is January 26, 2022. Organizations can learn more or apply at [www.UnitedArts.cc/grants](http://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 75 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 \$170 million in Central Florida's arts and culture.

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