

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **UNITED ARTS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA AWARDS \$2.375 MILLION IN OPERATING SUPPORT GRANTS**

**ORLANDO – December 17, 2021** – On December 8, 2021, the Board of Directors of United Arts of Central Florida (United Arts) approved the recommendations to award \$2,375,400 in Operating Support grants to 37 Central Florida nonprofit cultural institutions.

“It is critical to the mission of United Arts to invest these essential unrestricted operating dollars to support cultural organizations in Central Florida and ensure that residents and visitors have access to intriguing, inclusive and innovative cultural programming,” said Jennifer Evins, president and CEO of United Arts. “We expanded this year’s funding pool by \$95,400 and we hope to continue this growth as our region grows. Operating dollars are very hard to come by, and we know these dollars will be used to strengthen our entire cultural sector.”

This comprehensive grant program recognizes the value of arts and culture in the community and the nonprofit organizations that provide this programming for the public year-round through their missions. Qualified grantees apply annually in July for these critical operating dollars, with the award amounts being between 3-8% of their reported three-year average revenue.

“Orlando REP is grateful for the continued support from United Arts,” said Chris Brown, executive director of Orlando Repertory Theatre. “These dollars are crucial in our mission of bringing arts programming to young people, and United Arts’ stability has created stability for us throughout the pandemic. These operating dollars will allow us to continue our strategic goals to hire more people, pay them well and ensure our organization not only survives, but continues to thrive.”

The value of these grants is clear: In Fiscal Year 2020 United Arts’ Operating Support grants helped 34 arts organizations mount 2,954 exhibitions and productions, provided arts access and arts education to 648,712 students, offered 1,086,901 free tickets, and attracted 1,808,429 guests. These grants supported 367 full-time and 281 part-time staff positions, as well as 8,439 artists.

“I can’t successfully express how impactful this investment from United Arts will be to our small arts organization,” said Julia Young, founder and executive director of Page 15. “The literary arts aren’t always as recognized or supported in the greater arts world so this investment in Page 15 is not only a validation of our work to inspire children through reading and writing, but also the need of this kind of arts programming in our community.”

Applications for the Operating Support grant program undergo a multi-level vetting process. First, applicants are screened by overall eligibility requirements set by the United Arts Standards and Allocations Committee (comprised of United Arts board members). Second, the applicants’ financial

documents are reviewed by a certified public accountant to identify trends in financial stability, sustainability and management. Third, applications are scored on the criteria of artistic (or historic/scientific) merit, management and fiscal responsibility and outreach and education during a panel review process. Panelists are vital to the integrity of the grant review process. They bring their understanding of the arts, arts education, nonprofit management and the community to evaluate each application.

"The whole region is filled with talented artists, skilled administrators and passionate volunteers that make Central Florida a truly special place to live or visit," said Zac Alfson, Operating Support grant panelist and executive director of The Milk District. "Panelists get a behind-the-curtain view of how these organizations run, and I am thrilled to be part of the vetting process."

Funding for Operating Support grants comes from the generous support of United Arts Trustees, including Orange County Government and City of Orlando, as well as community support of the United Arts - *Arts for ALL Fund*. To donate: <https://unitedarts.cc/support/give-now/>.

## **2022 Operating Support Grants – Grantee Descriptions**

### *Awards for Calendar Year 2022 Activities*

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**Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Gardens (FY22 Award \$32,000)** 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.

**Art & History Museums of Maitland (FY22 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.

**ArtReach Orlando (FY22 Award \$8,500)** 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 young Central Floridians can safely explore issues they face and build self-worth and emotional resilience.

**Bach Festival Society of Winter Park (FY22 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.

**Bay Street Players (FY22 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 operated continuously for over 40 years.

**Blue Bamboo Center for the Arts (FY22 Award \$5,000)** is an independent performance venue and art gallery with a mission to provide affordable, family-friendly music, spoken word performances and visual arts exhibitions and serve the community through the arts.

**Central Florida Ballet (FY22 Award \$42,000)** 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.

**Central Florida Community Arts (FY22 Award \$46,000)** exists to build and serve the community through both performance-based program areas (choir, orchestra, children and youth arts programs, dance and theater) and the School of Arts & Health (the Academy, Arts & Wellness, Arts in Action programs for senior citizens and outreach programs).

**Central Florida Vocal Arts (CFVA) (FY22 Award \$6,800)** 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.

**Crealdé School of Art (FY22 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 cultural appreciation.

**Creative City Project (FY22 Award \$21,000)** is shaping the global perception of Central Florida as a hub for creativity and innovation, connecting residents and visitors to compelling art experiences. IMMERSE, the annual performing and installation arts event, is growing into a global-destination arts experience.

**Downtown Arts District (FY22 Award \$36,000)** 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 (FY22 Award \$90,000)** 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.

**Florida Symphony Youth Orchestras (FSYO) (FY22 Award \$35,500)** exists to encourage children and young adults to become passionate leaders and contributors in their community through music performance. Annually, over 300 students of diverse backgrounds travel from nine counties to participate in FSYO programs.

**Garden Theatre (FY22 Award \$45,000)** is a professional performing arts center that produces unique and culturally diverse programming that includes innovative live theater, concerts, special events, movies and impactful educational outreach programs benefiting youth in underserved areas.

**Global Peace Film Festival (FY22 Award \$12,000)** celebrates film and the arts, using creative media as a catalyst to inspire positive change. Global Peace Film Festival encourages public awareness of and engagement for peace and environmental sustainability locally, nationally and worldwide.

**Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center of Florida (FY22 Award \$62,000)** is dedicated to building a just, caring and inclusive community free of all forms of prejudice and bigotry. The 2022 season includes exhibits, films and programs that address contemporary social issues and is open to all members of the community.

The **Leesburg Center for the Arts (FY22 Award \$9,000)** 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.

**Mennello Museum of American Art (MMAA) (FY22 Award \$17,100)** celebrates the diversity of American art, offering thought-provoking exhibits and programs in a welcoming environment. MMAA's

2022 season presents work by emerging and prominent artists addressing timely issues including the environment, colonialism and identity.

**MicheLee Puppets (MLP) (FY22 Award \$18,000)** empowers lives through the art of puppetry. As Florida's only educational puppetry arts organization and a Puppeteers of America national award winner, MLP delivers original, issue-based plays, videos and puppetry classes in schools and public venues throughout Florida.

**Mount Dora Center for the Arts (FY22 Award \$21,000)** is a community-based organization committed to bringing arts alive in its 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 (FY22 Award \$30,000)** 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.

**Orange County Regional History Center (FY22 Award \$43,000)**, 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 (FY22 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 serves over 60,000 students each year through Community Enrichment Programs and is one of only five schools in the nation to be accredited by American Ballet Theatre®

**Orlando Fringe (FY22 Award \$46,000)** 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 Gay Chorus (FY22 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.

**Orlando Museum of Art (FY22 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.

**Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra (FY22 Award \$276,800)** is the region's premier professional orchestra, providing 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 (FY22 Award \$181,400)** creates experiences that enlighten, entertain and enrich the lives of families 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 (FY22 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 (**FY22 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.

**Page 15 (FY22 Award \$16,300)** provides community-based programs that enrich Orlando's literary landscape, such as youth writing workshops, public literary events and more.

**Russian Ballet Orlando (FY22 Award \$13,000)** is a multi-cultural Professional Ballet Company dedicated to serving Orlando's diverse community by staging full-length Classical Ballets, educating the new generation of dancers with the rich history of the arts and the impact it has made on our culture.

**Snap! Orlando (FY22 Award \$10,900)** is a leading Florida visual arts organization with a contemporary gallery and a roster of over 100 international multimedia artists. Snap! Orlando presents programming that is highly diversified and community-driven.

**Timucua Arts Foundation (FY22 Award \$9,000)** is an interactive, live-performance laboratory where guests from around the world expand their cultural awareness with affordable contemporary music, theater and visual arts experiences in an intimate setting.

**Winter Garden Heritage Foundation (FY22 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.

**The Winter Park Playhouse (FY22 Award \$35,000)** is a professional musical theater dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors in Central Florida by producing and developing year-round professional musical theater programming, in-house and out in the community, that entertains, uplifts and inspires.

Applications for 2023 Operating Support grants will be accepted in the summer of 2022. For a full list of qualifications and requirements to receive this grant, please visit: [UnitedArts.cc/grants](https://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.