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ASCA ANNOUNCES \$180,000 IN FELLOWSHIPS AND CULTURAL FACILITIES GRANTS

Montgomery, Ala. – At its June meeting in Montgomery, the Alabama State Council on the Arts (ASCA) awarded fifteen fellowship grants including one arts administration fellowship totaling \$75,000, and five Arts and Cultural Facilities grants totaling \$105,000, for a grand total of \$180,000. Fellowship grants are awarded to individual artists and are based on merit of work, career achievement, professional development and service to the state. Arts and Cultural Facilities grants are awarded for planning, design or construction of an arts space. All projects must involve top professionals with demonstrated expertise in urban and/or community planning, architecture, landscape design or historic preservation. This round of grants will support activity taking place between October 1, 2014 and September 30, 2015.

The cultural facilities grants program provides support to organizations large and small in an effort to enhance spaces for arts creation and presentation. In all cases where a grant is awarded, evidence of community support is a key element. Al Head, Executive Director of the Council said, *“In the past nine years since the inception of the program for cultural facilities, the Council has provided support for diverse projects in communities from all parts of the state. This year’s support of Arts Revive in Selma is a great example of an adaptive reuse of an old gas station for use as a community arts center. In a very different project, funds supporting the restoration of the Lyric Theatre in Birmingham help bring life back to a significant historic arts venue that will once again be able to host a wide range of performing arts programs.”*

Fellowships are grants awarded to outstanding individual artists from Alabama who create important works of art and make valuable contributions to the entire state. Vaughan Morrissette, Chairman of the Council emphasized, *“Our state is fortunate to have so many artists from every artistic discipline producing works of the highest quality.”*

Fellowships are given to individual artists working in arts administration, crafts, dance, design, media/photography, music, literature, theatre, and visual arts. These awards recognize artistic excellence as well as professional commitment and maturity. Recipients may use funds to set aside time to create art, improve their skills, or to do what is most advantageous to enhance their artistic careers.

These grants are in response to applications submitted under a March 1, 2014 deadline and are awarded for the 2015 fiscal year beginning October 1, 2014 and extending through September 30, 2015. Vaughan Morrisette of Mobile chairs the 15-member Council which makes final decisions on all grants awarded. The next deadline for the submission of Fellowship and Arts and Cultural Facilities applications is March 1, 2015. For more information, visit www.arts.alabama.gov

County	Grantee	City	Description	Discipline	Amount
Baldwin	Dusty Bias	Orange Beach	Media Arts Fellowship	Visual Arts	\$5,000.00
Dallas	Arts Revive-Selma, Alabama	Selma	Phase I Construction for Carneal	Design Arts	\$30,000.00
DeKalb	Toney Russell Gulley	Fort Payne	Arts Administration Fellowship	Community Arts	\$5,000.00
Hale	Greensboro Opera House	Greensboro	Phase 1 Construction	Design Arts	\$25,000.00
Jefferson	Birmingham Landmarks, Inc.	Birmingham	Lyric Theatre Restoration Project	Design Arts	\$12,500.00
	Jonathan Fuller	Birmingham	Theatre Fellowship	Performing Arts	\$5,000.00
	Smriti Bharadwaj Krishnan	Hoover	Dance Fellowship	Performing Arts	\$5,000.00
	Jasper Lee	Birmingham	Music Fellowship	Performing Arts	\$5,000.00
	David Roby	Birmingham	Theatre Fellowship	Performing Arts	\$5,000.00
Lee	Samantha Lawrie	Auburn	Design Arts Fellowship	Visual Arts	\$5,000.00
Lowndes	Michael Vaughn Sims	Tyler	Visual Arts Fellowship	Visual Arts	\$5,000.00
Madison	Curtis Benzle	Huntsville	Crafts Fellowship	Visual Arts	\$5,000.00
	Guadalupe Lanning Robinson	Huntsville	Crafts Fellowship	Visual Arts	\$5,000.00
Mobile	Centre for the Living Arts	Mobile	Art Park	Design Arts	\$25,000.00
	Gideon C. Kennedy	Mobile	Media Arts Fellowship	Visual Arts	\$5,000.00
Randolph	Roanoke Rotary Charities	Roanoke	Phase 1 Construction	Design Arts	\$12,500.00
Shelby	Bryn Chancellor	Montevallo	Literary Arts Fellowship	Literary Arts	\$5,000.00
	Ted Metz	Montevallo	Visual Arts Fellowship	Visual Arts	\$5,000.00
Tuscaloosa	Sarah M. Barry	Tuscaloosa	Dance Fellowship	Performing Arts	\$5,000.00
	Jason McCall	Tuscaloosa	Literary Arts Fellowship	Literary Arts	\$5,000.00
				TOTAL	\$180,000.00

CULTURAL FACILITY DESIGN GRANTS

Arts Revive in Selma was awarded an Arts & Cultural Facilities grant in the amount of \$30,000 for Phase I of Construction converting the Carneal building, a former gas station, into an arts facility. This facility will provide learning opportunities in the arts, support local artists, contribute to developing Selma as an arts destination, and inject vibrancy into this community.

Birmingham Landmarks, Inc. was awarded a \$12,500 Arts & Cultural Facilities grant for construction and restoration activities of the Lyric Theatre. The Lyric Theatre, a former vaudeville theatre is a significant building both to the city of Birmingham and the state.

Centre for the Living Arts in Mobile was awarded a \$25,000 Arts & Cultural Facilities grant for the design of an Art Park. The Center, located on Cathedral Square in Mobile's historic downtown

district, will expand creativity and innovation at this arts-centered gathering place. The park will feature permanent and changing exhibits and provide a gathering space in the heart of downtown Mobile.

The **Greensboro Opera House** in Greensboro was awarded a \$25,000 Arts & Cultural Facilities grant for phase I of planned restoration and construction. The funding covers construction of a cultural arts center on the first floor. The cultural arts center will serve as a space for performances, gatherings, and exhibits, enhancing the cultural, economic, historical and educational quality of life for citizens of the Greensboro community and the Black Belt.

Roanoke Rotary Charities in Roanoke was awarded a \$12,500 Arts & Cultural Facilities grant for phase I of construction to restore its community theatre. The theatre will involve the Interact High School Club members as well as other community groups in the use of the space.

FELLOWSHIPS - Grant Awards in the amount of \$5,000

Dusty Bias of Orange Beach is the recipient of a Fellowship in the field of Media Arts. His professional commitment to film is showcased by his samples of technically accomplished work. Bias's film work is narrative and not documentary, and because of its unique style it has the potential to encourage other filmmakers by presenting a fresh method of storytelling.

Toney Russell Gulley of Fort Payne is the recipient of the Council's single Arts Administration Fellowship for fiscal year 2015. Russell Gulley is the executive director of the Big Wills Arts Council in Fort Payne, AL. Big Wills Arts Council is moving toward establishing a cultural arts center in the 125 year old Fort Payne Iron and Coal building. Mr. Gulley will use the fellowship funds to attend conferences and/or workshops focused on program development, fundraising and building public value for the arts. Also, he will visit and network with similar organizations with cultural arts centers.

Jonathan Fuller of Birmingham was awarded a Fellowship in Theatre Arts. Fuller's body of work demonstrates the skills of a seasoned professional, poised with a commanding presence. His characterizations are strong and yet yielding throughout his scene work. He shows a sophisticated range of emotions and a skillful use of dialect/language in his authentic interpretations of texts by various playwrights.

Smriti Bharadwaj Krishnan of Hoover was awarded one of the Council's two Dance Fellowships. Krishnan is accomplished in the Bharatanatyam style of dance and exhibits a high level of professional artistry with clarity of movement and themes necessary for this art form. Her professional aspirations are laudable and the fellowship at this juncture of her career will help advance her to a new level of achievement as a young guru of Bharatanatyam.

Jasper Lee of Birmingham was awarded a Fellowship in Music. Lee's work is marked with originality, quality and a high level of musical and technical proficiency. His work was deemed clever, especially in his use of technology. He creates a unique voice as a composer of soundtracks for the 21st Century Silver Screen and shows great potential as a composer of New Age music.

David Roby of Birmingham was awarded the second of two Theatre Arts Fellowships. Roby is being honored as a gifted playwright. His characters in *The White Woods of Bolivar County* and *Mercy Me* are clearly defined. The relevant themes are skillfully understated, and the well-arranged dramatic incidents create thoughtful driving plots.

Samantha Lawrie of Auburn is the recipient of a Design Arts Fellowship. Lawrie's work is visually arresting and engaging, while maintaining a clean and informative style. She has done extensive work with a number of Alabama organizations in support of various causes. Lawrie's design aesthetic is engaging and draws the viewer in. The fellowship funds will allow her to continue doing design work for worthy causes around Alabama.

Michael Vaughn Sims of Tyler was awarded a Visual Arts Fellowship. His work as a painter demonstrates a high level of craftsmanship and his compositions show a great understanding of light and control. Sims is highly involved in the arts in Alabama beyond his own studio. He is active in art guilds and volunteer efforts with various arts organizations.

Curtis Benzle of Huntsville was awarded the first of two Fellowships in Crafts. Benzle's work in porcelain allows light to pass through the thin walls he creates in his pieces. The texture and colors used by Benzle shows mastery of the materials and his experimental signature style. Benzle's high level of craftsmanship and his long track record as an artist and educator are reasons he was selected to receive a fellowship.

Guadalupe Lanning Robinson of Huntsville was awarded the second of two Fellowships in Crafts. Robinson's work shows mastery of materials and her forms and designs often reference more traditional Mexican symbols. She has morphed these designs into her own unique style with contemporary influences. Robinson's intricate forms and creative use of multiple textures consistently show a high skill level worthy of a fellowship.

Gideon C. Kennedy of Mobile was awarded the second of two Media Arts Fellowships. Kennedy's films blur traditional genre boundaries between documentary and narrative filmmaking. His knowledge of and active exploration of media has created interesting works of high quality. He is very

involved in the film community in Alabama and has helped run the South Alabama Film Festival and other projects that have expanded the film community statewide.

Bryn Chancellor of Montevallo was awarded a Fellowship in Literary Arts. Chancellor is an Assistant Professor of English and Creative Writing at the University of Montevallo. She has been involved in directing the Montevallo Literary Festival since 2009. In 2002, she received a Fellowship from the Arizona Commission on the Arts and was recently honored with the 2014 Maureen Egen Writers Exchange Award from Poets & Writers. Chancellor's short stories have been published in national and regional literary journals, and she is currently finishing a novel and a short-fiction collection. Her work has been described as "deeply felt" with beautiful imagery and offering a fresh voice that pulls readers immediately into the flow of the story.

Ted Metz of Montevallo was awarded a Visual Arts Fellowship. Metz has had a long and distinguished career as an artist and educator in Alabama. His work is unique, serious and thought-provoking. Metz's use of different materials in his sculptures combined with his thoughtful and technical skills create images that intrigue the viewer.

Sarah M. Barry of Tuscaloosa was awarded the second of the Council's two Dance Fellowships. The samples of her work were expansive and demonstrate intentional choreographic structures and dynamics with clarity of movement and themes. Barry has exhibited a high level of professional artistry throughout her career as a dancer, choreographer and instructor.

Jason McCall of Tuscaloosa was awarded a Literary Arts Fellowship. McCall is an instructor in the English Department at the University of Alabama. He has published two full-length poetry collections, titled *Silver* and *Dear Hero*, and two chapbooks and is working on his next manuscript. McCall's narrative is straightforward, but with layers of complexity. As a poet, he shows good control, maturity and originality. His poetry is beautiful and rhythmic, carrying the reader forward in a compelling way and often presenting an unexpected turn.

The Alabama State Council on the Arts is the official state arts agency of Alabama. The staff of the Council, directed by Al Head, administers the grants programs and provides financial assistance in arts planning and programming. The Council receives its support through an annual appropriation from the Alabama Legislature and funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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