



Contact: Kathy DeBrosse
Vice President, Marketing & Engagement, ArtsWave
937.207.3079

ArtsWave announces availability of The Circle's African American arts grants and timing for Truth and Reconciliation Showcase

Cincinnati (June 18, 2021) – In anticipation of Juneteenth, ArtsWave, the engine for the region's arts, announces the availability of \$150,000 in new funding to support grants for African American arts as well as plans for a showcase of "Truth and Reconciliation" art works created by local Black and Brown artists.

The Circle's African American arts grants program that opens today is designed to strengthen the capacity and sustainability of arts organizations led by or predominantly serving Black Cincinnatians. These grants, along with other ArtsWave initiatives, are also meant to increase audience demand and appreciation for Black arts. While the Black arts ecosystem grows in both supply and demand, the Circle's African American arts grants program is growing in philanthropic support too, with this pool funded in part through donations by the Circle of African American Leaders for the Arts to the 2021 ArtsWave Campaign. This is the second year for the program and applications will be accepted through July 30 at artswave.org/apply.

A showcase of 27 projects on the theme of "Truth and Reconciliation," that ArtsWave in partnership with the City of Cincinnati announced earlier in the year with \$272,000 in grants, will be unveiled July 16-18 at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (NURFC) and Memorial Hall and will run through October 31. A multidisciplinary arts exhibition and performance showcase, including a set of film shorts, is planned. A press conference, ribbon-cutting and media tour are being planned for July 16 at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Details will be released earlier that week.

The collection of 27 funded projects reflect a variety of artistic disciplines and approaches to the complexities of "truth" and "reconciliation," after 18 months marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and stark displays of systemic racism, racial injustice and inequities that confront Black and Brown individuals.

Artists have collaborated with community members and other partners in their projects, so that the larger public can participate in reconciling the moment and imagining a more just and equitable future for the Cincinnati region through the arts.

Funding for the grants and showcase comes from the City of Cincinnati, Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Duke Energy, Fifth Third Bank, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and ArtsWave's Arts Vibrancy Recovery Fund. Artist selection through a competitive, community-based selection process was chaired by Toilynn O'Neal, founder of the Robert O'Neal Multi Cultural Arts Center ("The ROMAC").

In addition to these two projects, ArtsWave is funding various Juneteenth activities, including [Virtual Juneteenth](#), which will be broadcasted on area cable providers this weekend and through livestream on YouTube and Vimeo. In addition, ArtsWave is supporting [Paloozanoire's Juneteenth block party](#) at The Banks Friday, June 18, activating the zones for artist exhibitions. On Saturday, June 19, ArtsWave will support the musical entertainment as part of the [Juneteenth celebration at Findlay Market](#).

All of these investments in Black artists and cultural organization are part of ArtsWave's ongoing commitment to elevate a diverse array of artistic expressions. To help fund cultural diversity efforts like these, go to artswave.org/give.

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About ArtsWave:

ArtsWave, a nonprofit serving the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky Region, is the engine for the arts. Its roots stem back to the late 1920s when the Cincinnati Taft family provided initial investment matched by community support. In the late 1940s, it evolved to become the first united arts fund in the nation and in the mid-1970s, the first organization to initiate workplace giving for the arts. ArtsWave continues to innovate while leading, as illustrated by its No. 1 rank nationally in community arts fundraising; coordination of a sector-wide Blueprint for Collective Action; piloting of new technologies to maximize arts engagement; and development of resources for the arts.

Strong funding for the arts has allowed Cincinnati's arts and culture scene to become a national draw and regional asset, creating a wave of economic and community benefits. Each year, ArtsWave supports the work of over 100 arts organizations, school outreach programs, festivals, community centers, neighborhoods and various collaborations through impact-based grants. In 2019, ArtsWave raised over \$12 million, marking its sixth year in a row surpassing this milestone. ArtsWave remains the largest community campaign for the arts throughout the country, both in total contributions and number of donors.

ArtsWave is focused on helping the Cincinnati Region's arts sector weather the coronavirus crisis. The region's arts sector has an economic impact of more than \$300 million annually and includes more than 225 organizations that employ 10,000 individuals as artists, performers, and staff. When venue and performance closures were announced in early March 2020, ArtsWave worked quickly to accelerate \$2.4 million in grant payments for 43 organizations that receive operating revenues, expanded its \$10,000 Working Capital Bridge Loans for eligible arts organizations, provided Emergency Arts & Culture Organization grants to 47 organizations, and administered

\$3,700,000 in relief funds at the federal, county and city level to arts organizations and artists. Throughout the year, ArtsWave provided \$750,000+ in support to cultural organizations led by or serving primarily BIPOC audiences. ArtsWave amassed \$13+ million for the arts last year, through a combination its 2020 Campaign and an additional Arts Vibrancy Recovery Fund, focused on getting the arts through this challenging time. The public can help fund the Campaign and additional, evolving efforts at artswave.org/give