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NEWS RELEASE

The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage Announces Over \$10.2 Million in Pandemic Recovery Funding for Philadelphia Organizations and Fellowships for Artists

42 new grants support individual artists and assist arts sector in emerging from the effects of COVID-19 through technology and facilities upgrades, diversity initiatives, new business models

PHILADELPHIA (Sept. 9, 2021)—The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage (the Center) announced 42 grants today totaling more than \$10.2 million to support the Philadelphia region’s artists and cultural organizations. \$900,000 goes to Pew Fellowships, awarded to 12 individual artists working in music, visual art, dance, theater, film, and poetry. \$9.3 million goes to 30 recovery grants, including \$1.5 million provided as unrestricted general operating support, awarded to organizations as they move forward from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a pivot from the Center’s usual project grants for individual public programs and events, this year’s *Re:imagining Recovery* grants are designed to foster a stable future for the arts sector, helping organizations undertake critical adaptations needed to stabilize operations, reshape business and revenue models, and develop new approaches to programming and public engagement practices.

“Throughout this difficult period, Philadelphia’s cultural community has demonstrated great resilience and creativity, pivoting to provide essential platforms for artistic expression, understanding, and connection even during a pandemic,” says **Paula Marincola**, the Center’s executive director. “Artists and organizations have not only persevered in delivering their work to the public but are emerging from this period with new perspectives on how the arts can become more sustainable and relevant and play a key role in the resurgence of our region’s civic and economic vitality. These new grants support crucial work toward post-COVID recovery.”

The funded efforts respond directly to many of the unprecedented challenges and opportunities for transformation that have been heightened by the pandemic and calls for greater social justice over the last year and a half. They include facilities upgrades to optimize accessibility and safety for patrons and artists and the acceleration of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion initiatives to guide staff and organizational structures, programming, and audience relations. Several recovery grantees will build on successful shifts to digital platforms made during the pandemic, broadening their capabilities to create and deliver high quality content, reach new audiences online, and enhance earned revenue potential.

Thom Collins, The Barnes Foundation’s Neubauer Family executive director and president, explains how the Barnes’ newly funded research and expansion of a digital platform were informed by the success of its online presentations during pandemic-related public closures: “We were forced to reconsider our

delivery methods in order to sustain the educational programming that is central to the Barnes' mission. Our move to online programs drew larger and more diverse audiences, as class size was no longer limited by building capacity or geographical distance. With this grant support, the Barnes now has a unique opportunity to take a bold and intentional move toward expanding our mission-related service, creating a new earned revenue model, and transforming approaches to online arts education."

Anne Ishii, executive director of Asian Arts Initiative, which received a grant to develop a building master plan and strategies for revenue growth, says, "The pandemic exposed myriad challenges and also offered us an opportunity to double down on our values, to create an equitable and sustainable path forward for Asian Arts Initiative in service of our community. The grant from the Center will help us improve our physical space and augment our ability to serve artists and organizational partners."

Following is a partial list of artists and organizations receiving awards; a full list of grantees is available at pewcenterarts.org/2021grants.

Pew Fellowships provide unrestricted awards of \$75,000 to individual artists from all disciplines. In addition to monetary awards, Pew Fellows are offered focused professional advancement resources such as financial counseling and career-development workshops. This year's Fellows are Philadelphia-area artists working in music, visual art, dance, theater, film, and poetry. Among the Fellows are:

- **Emily Bate**, a composer and vocalist whose work focuses on collective singing and blends elements of theater, performance art, and choral and experimental music.
- **Rich Medina**, whose practice as a DJ, storyteller, and educator seeks to amplify Black culture and musical traditions.
- **Kambel Smith**, who builds large-scale, highly detailed sculptural recreations of iconic architecture, such as the Philadelphia Museum of Art and New York's Chrysler Building, and whose work is interested in changing perceptions of people living with autism.
- **Didier William**, a visual artist whose paintings and prints feature intricate patterns and ornamentation and draw from his Afro-Caribbean lineage, personal narrative, and mythology.

Re:imagining Recovery grants are awarded to arts and history organizations in amounts up to \$400,000 for a single organization or an aggregate of up to \$800,000 for collaborative efforts. As with previous Center project grants, an additional 20 percent in unrestricted general operating support is added to each award, bringing the maximum for a single grant to \$480,000. This year's list includes:

- Major technology upgrades and expanded digital strategies that enable state-of-the-art media production and accessible online programming and create new revenue sources, including new web-based platforms for exhibitions and events at the **African American Museum in Philadelphia**, arts education courses for pre-K–12 students and adult learners from **The Barnes Foundation**, and film screenings and talks presented by **BlackStar Projects**; as well as significant audio-visual enhancements in the **National Constitution Center's** three largest public spaces to augment delivery of the museum's programs for both on-site and online audiences.

- Building and facilities improvements, such as upgrades to air quality systems at the **Mann Center for the Performing Arts** that will increase safety both onstage and behind the scenes; acoustical enhancements and the creation of a livestreaming production room at the American Philosophical Society's Benjamin Franklin Hall that will support the **Philadelphia Chamber Music Society's** in-person and online performances; renovations to backstage and public areas at **People's Light** to better and more safely accommodate performers and audiences; and redesigned spaces to optimize health and safety as well as patron flow and accessibility in **FringeArts'** Delaware River waterfront performance space.
- Deepened commitments to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) in both internal operations and public engagement, including initiatives to elevate DEAI values within **Opera Philadelphia's** artistic and administrative procedures through new staff roles, professional development, and community advisory councils; a collaborative, community-based process at the **Institute of Contemporary Art** that will inform staff, curatorial, and audience development processes; advancement of DEAI strategies that will broaden the relevance and reach of **The Philadelphia Orchestra's** programming while transforming internal policies and practices; and the creation of a hybrid indoor/outdoor gallery space and art-handling job-skills training program for Black young adults to preserve and amplify Black histories at **The Village of Arts and Humanities**.
- Newly envisioned business models to create sustainability, develop audiences, and diversify revenue streams, such as a collaboration between **Cliveden, Historic Germantown, and Stenton** that will consider how shared resources can be leveraged within an 18-member consortium of historic sites in Northwest Philadelphia to strengthen community relationships that were disrupted during the pandemic; a data-driven reimagining of **Eastern State Penitentiary's** approach to programming and fundraising to better align with its mission to interpret the United States' legacy of criminal justice reform; and an equitable real estate model with which **Asian Arts Initiative** can provide an accessible, affordable artmaking and programming space in its multi-tenant arts facility in Chinatown North.

Since the pandemic began, the Center has provided support to area artists and organizations, first in May of 2020 with over \$535,000 in additional unrestricted funds to its current grantees (at that time, 23 individual artists and 39 organizations) to help offset lost revenues. In October of 2020, 41 new grants totaling over \$10.5 million were awarded to individual artists and organizations. Organizational projects at that time were designed for both in-person and digital programs as organizations responded to evolving pandemic-related public health and safety guidelines.

About The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage

The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage is a multidisciplinary grantmaker and hub for knowledge-sharing, funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts and dedicated to fostering a vibrant cultural community in Greater Philadelphia. The Center invests in ambitious, imaginative, and catalytic work that showcases the region's cultural vitality and enhances public life, and it engages in an exchange of ideas concerning artistic and interpretive practice with a broad network of cultural practitioners and leaders. For more information, visit pewcenterarts.org.