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ARTS AND EDUCATION COUNCIL ANNOUNCES 2017 OPERATING SUPPORT GRANT RECIPIENTS

22 arts organizations will receive unrestricted funding to strengthen impact in region

ST. LOUIS, MO (September 18, 2017). The Arts and Education Council (A&E) announced today that 22 arts organizations will receive Operating Support grants in 2017. Operating Support grants provide annual unrestricted support to help strengthen infrastructure, build sustainability and grow education and outreach programs.

These 22 arts organizations join 72 additional organizations and students that A&E supports through funding programs including PNC Project Grants, the Maritz Arts and Education Fund for Teachers, the Monsanto Rural Community Arts Education Program, the Art Education Fund and the Monsanto Creative Impact Fund. Program support includes Arts Leadership Management Academy, Arts Marketers and the Executive Director’s Roundtable. A&E supports twenty organizations with office space in the Centene Center for the Arts, A&E’s incubator which serves as a hub of arts innovation and entrepreneurship in the Grand Center Arts District.

Grant applications were reviewed by a volunteer panel and evaluated based on a number of criteria including merit, budget, mission and community education and outreach efforts. The Operating Support grant recipients represent St. Louis’ diverse artistic community in budget size, age and artistic discipline.

“A thriving arts and cultural community – one that is well supported and well recognized – enriches the quality of life for residents and visitors and, in doing so, inspires new thinking, spurs innovation and accelerates the creative vitality of the region,” says Cynthia A. Prost, A&E president and CEO. “A&E recognizes the importance of funding that helps these businesses ‘keep the lights on’ and remains committed to ensuring our most iconic institutions have this most basic, yet critical, support to continue their artistic excellence.”

Operating Support grants are made possible by annual gifts from thousands of individual, corporate and foundation donors in the St. Louis region to the Arts and Education Council. Organizations receiving 2017 Operating Support grants are:

- Cinema St. Louis
- Circus Flora
- Community Music School of Webster University
- COCA - Center of Creative Arts
- Contemporary Art Museum
- Craft Alliance Center of Art + Design
- Dance St. Louis
- Jazz St. Louis
- Laumeier Sculpture Park
For more information about the Arts and Education Council’s 2017 Operating Support grantees, visit KeepArtHappening.org/OperatingGrants.

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**About the Arts and Education Council:** _When the Arts Thrive, Our City Thrives._ – The Arts and Education Council (A&E), is the St. Louis region’s United Arts Fund providing financial, technical and educational support for arts organizations. A&E’s mission is to build appreciation, participation and support for arts and arts education throughout the St. Louis community. A&E is the only privately funded arts umbrella organization that serves the 16-county, bi-state St. Louis region. A&E builds a thriving arts community and impacts millions of people through multi-faceted programs, including: Operating and Project Grants; Arts Education Grants for Teachers; Arts Incubation at the Centene Center for the Arts; a Catalyst Innovation Lab; a stARTup Competition for Arts Entrepreneurs; stARTup-StL Crowdfunding Platform; Arts Leadership Management Academy (ALMA); Executive Directors Roundtable; Arts Marketers Professional Development; the Annual St. Louis Arts Awards; and Young Friends of the Arts.

Since its inception in 1963, the Arts and Education Council has raised and distributed more than $100 million in private funding for the arts – a significant contribution that directly impacts the quality of life in our region. A&E meets all 20 Better Business Bureau Charity Standards and has earned the Wise Giving Seal of Approval, a three-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Guidestar Exchange Silver Participant rating.

How to find us – **Website:** KeepArtHappening.org **Phone:** 314.289.4000. **Facebook:** ArtsandEducation **Twitter:** @ArtEdSTL **YouTube:** ArtsandEducSTL **Instagram:** Arts_Education_Council