



Roanoke Arts Commission
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MEDIA INVITATION & PRESS RELEASE
SPECIAL EVENT
Wednesday, June 1, 2022, 5:30 PM

The earlier embargo has been lifted. Please share the story at your pleasure.

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ART MATTERS AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Local artists funded to advance wellness, justice and inclusion
*Awards to be announced in a virtual meet-the-artists session at
5:30 p.m. on June 1, 2022.*

<https://fb.me/e/2uewIMzfJ>

Roanoke, Va.— (June 1, 2022) — Media representatives are invited to a special online press event on **Wednesday, June 1, at 5:30 p.m.** The “meet the artists” event will highlight the first awards in Roanoke’s *Art Matters* grant program.

Participate in the event and ask questions via chat at <https://fb.me/e/2uewIMzfJ>

The ten announced grants will fund the first of more than thirty projects proposed by Roanoke area artists to advance wellness, justice, and inclusion throughout the city. The awards are a component of the Roanoke Arts Commission’s *Year of the Artist* initiative exploring the role of artists and individual changemakers in key aspects of community development.

“We live in a community in which each individual can make a difference,” says Roanoke Arts Commission Chair Cari C. Gates. “That’s a key part of a conversation the artists are having. The projects they’ve proposed will not only illustrate the power of getting involved, but over the coming year, the artists will engage

Roanoke residents in arts-based strategies. The arts can transform, and through them, we’re shaping the community in which we want to live.”

The \$3,000 grants, funded by National Endowment for the Arts through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the City of Roanoke, are awarded to individual artists to support the development of their community-based arts practices.

Up to 20 additional grants are available in the second round of funding, which is now open. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling base through August 1. The application is available at www.roanokearts.org/yota.

Wednesday’s virtual meet-the-artists session will be hosted by [Verses Roanoke](#). Toya Jones, the energetic proprietor of the listening lounge and collaborative community center, is leading one of the funded projects, the [“Back to Black Art Show.”](#) one of the first *Art Matters* events to be held on Saturday, June 25.

The full list of projects announced in round one, alphabetically by artist, follows. Links are included for projects in which more information is available.

Artist	<i>Art Matters</i> Project	Description	If interested in the project, contact:
Charlie Brouwer	The Benediction Project	The Benediction Project is designed to connect places of worship to each other and their surrounding communities through a public-facing, rotating temporary artwork. https://www.facebook.com/pg/benedictionproject/posts/	cbrouwer@swva.net
Brian Counihan	Daisy Chain World Art Parade	The Daisy Chain World Art Parade (April 15, 2023) will celebrate and support art makers of all skill levels in a collaborative celebration of a diverse and spirited arts community.	brian@communityhigh.net
Bryan Hancock	National Youth Poet Laureate Program	The Roanoke Youth Poet Laureate Program will engage young people in the National Youth Poet Laureate Program, exploring community, place, and identity through spoken and written word, encouraging young voices in the city. https://roanokearts.org/2022/05/30/national-youth-poet-laureate-program-launching-in-roanoke/	harvestblaque@gmail.com

Toya Jones	Back to Black Art Show	The Back to Black Art Show (June 25, 2022 in Downtown Roanoke) will exhibit and celebrate diversity and Black culture through all forms of art -- ensuring that the art and stories of Black people are presented and valued. http://www.versesroanoke.com/black-arts-show.html#/	versesroanoke@gmail.com
Heather Marshall	Youth Art Workshops /Oliver Hill Justice Center Waiting Room Art	The artist will Install a collection of artworks generated by Roanoke youth that will create a calming, supportive environment for community members in the Juvenile and Domestic Court waiting area of the Oliver Hill Justice Center. https://roanokearts.org/2022/05/30/free-youth-artists-workshops-for-roanoke-city-youth/	marshall.hm@gmail.com
Jane Gabrielle McCadden	The Singing Tree Project	The Singing Tree Project will involve city youth in a peace building based in art and nature.	jgabriellered@gmail.com
Kathryn Schnabel	Artist Workshops for Sustained Engagement	The project will help artists develop best practices for sustaining an inclusive and engaging community arts practice that fosters artistic, personal, and community growth.	katschnabelstudio@gmail.com
Katie Trozzo & Joy Truskowski	Singing Circles	The project will result in collaborative community singing circles around diversity, unity, and healing as well as a video and culminating 'big event.' https://m.facebook.com/StarCityCirclesinging/ https://www.meetup.com/Star-City-Circlesinging/	katie.trozzo@gmail.com
John Woodrum	I Heart Southeast Sculpture Project	The artist will develop and install a three-dimensional artwork fostering community pride in a neighborhood of Southeast Roanoke.	johnwdrm@gmail.com
Lynsey Wyatt	Queer Your Aerial Arts and Activism Project	Queer Youth Aerial Arts & Activism project will provide LGBTQ+ youth from Roanoke and the surrounding areas the opportunity to learn fundamental acrobatic and aerial skills and plan and execute a youth-led public event that addresses a social issue of their choice.	lynsey@circulation.com

About the Roanoke Arts Commission

The Roanoke Arts Commission (RAC) was established in 1983 to “advise and assist City Council on matters relating to the advancement of the arts and humanities within the city.” Fifteen volunteers appointed by council work to increase the collective impact of arts and culture in the community by

- Guiding City investments in arts and culture.
- Advancing the City’s Arts and Cultural Plan.
- Developing and Implementing the City’s Public Art Plan.
- Advocating for arts and cultural initiatives and investment.

About The Year of the Artist

The Roanoke Arts Commission invites artists who live, work, or are civically involved in the Roanoke community to participate in the Roanoke’s [Year of the Artist](#) (YOTA) activities. During the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the City of Roanoke will invest more than \$300,000 in community-driven and artist-led projects advancing the community in a variety of key areas.

The YOTA network will offer **free artist trainings** in a variety of professional development topics, including business practices, community development and facilitation, self-care, and specific engagement strategies. The next virtual training series will begin on Tuesday, June 7 at 6:30 PM and focus on inquiry, exploration and upending assumptions. Those interested in participating can learn more and register to receive login information at www.roanokearts.org/YOTA.

The Year of the Artist is funded by National Endowment for the Arts through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the City of Roanoke.

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