



Media Release

For immediate release

Wednesday, December 28, 2022

33 local creators awarded \$261,849 by the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund

Waterloo Region -- The Region of Waterloo Arts Fund (RWAF) is awarding a total of \$261,849 to 33 local artists and arts organizations for projects slated to take place between January 1 and December 31, 2023. The Fall 2022 round of funding fund received 98 applications, with requests totaling \$776,977.

Taken together, these figures underscore the ingenuity, drive, and needs of the region's diverse creators. These and other factors make the additional support of a \$50,000 donation from the Good Foundation invaluable. The Arts Fund's volunteer board is honored to have the trust and the opportunity to carry on the philanthropic legacy created by the Good family in the name of Milton and Verna Good.

Grantees and their projects are listed below. The information in brackets indicates where the project will take place. "Region of Waterloo" indicates that a project will unfold in more than one location.

Good Foundation

Since 2019, the Good Foundation Inc., a private foundation with deep roots in Waterloo region, has generously allocated funds to the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund to award through our Fall adjudication process. The 2022 Good Foundation grant recipients are:

CAFKA's 2023 Biennial Exhibition – Caitlin Sutherland (Waterloo): \$10,000 to mount "Stay With Me" Regional Artist Interventions, a program supporting the growth of individual artistic practices, ensuring professional artist fees, and providing platforms for disseminating work to Waterloo publics.

Geoff Martin (Kitchener): \$7,500 for *The Homeground Essays*, a literary collection of original work exploring the ecological, spiritual, and settlement histories of Waterloo Region, specifically, and North America, more broadly.

I, The Mountain -- Alison Djjach (Kitchener): \$1,650 for *Sing Yourself Home* album artwork. I, the Mountain is partnering with Hushpuppy Designs to create artwork for the group's upcoming album.

Irish Real Life Festival -- Sue Nally (Kitchener): \$3,200 for *Kindred Spirits: Irish and Indigenous Peoples*. Cape Breton Mi'kmaq fiddler/singer Morgan Toney will perform Mi'kmaq and original songs, and lead a master class for local musicians.

The Still Waters Collaborative -- Tamara Louks (Cambridge): \$7,480 for The 15-20-50 Film Showcase, curating and presenting a retrospective screening program that celebrates and highlights the work of digital media art practitioners in greater Waterloo.

Midtown Radio Dramas -- Danielle Deveau (Region of Waterloo): \$7,500 for Midtown Radio Dramas LIVE, a broadcast theatre experience with actors, musicians, and Foley sound technicians performing live on the air.

Peggy Plet (Kitchener): \$5,300 for researching, conceptualizing, and developing an exhibition on Waterloo's early Black settler, Levi Carroll.

Tri-City Stopgap Collective – Michael Ambedien (Cambridge): \$8,050 to curate an exhibition for the Gaslight District, Cambridge's premiere event space. The collective – Michael Ambedien, Nadine Badran, and Sheila McMath – aims to strengthen the grassroots arts community and provide opportunities for experimental exchange among artists and the larger community.

Organizations and Collectives:

Button Factory Arts – Heather Franklin (Waterloo): \$19,400 for Destination Art, a community arts approach to uplifting community spirit, engaging viewers, and celebrating the arts by featuring the poetry/writing and visual art of 18 artists on local bus shelters and Ion stations.

DiverseWorks Dance Co. – Raechele Lovell (Region of Waterloo): \$15,000 for the pilot DiverseWorks Dance Co. Apprenticeship Program, creating apprenticeship and training opportunities for racialized and marginalized youth who have been identified for professional development and mentoring.

Dundee Artisan Festival – Rosemary Arthurs (Wilmot): \$5,000 for a festival of local artisans and musicians to inspire craftsmanship, promote community togetherness, empower youth, and to support small business, including local food trucks.

The Innovative Productions – Sydney Schott (Waterloo): \$676 for this new, small, woman-run theatre company's development of *Hello, Love!*, a new comedy by a local playwright about five crazy singles hoping to find their love match during the Valentine's Day Festival.

Kaleidoscope Productions – Heather Majaury (Kitchener): \$12,000 for The Housing Project: Two Minute Plays, a theatre-devising project that results in a series of forum theatre re-enactments about homelessness and housing precariousness.

KW Punk Rock Flea Market – Stacie Robinson (Kitchener): \$7,000 for KW Punk Rock Flea Market – Stay Cold Fest, an alternative arts and music festival featuring artists and performers from diverse cultural backgrounds and talents.

Levant – Siba Al-Khadour (Region of Waterloo): \$5,000 for *The Beast*, a documentary featuring the journeys of refugees from Syria, Iraq, Ukraine, and Afghanistan as they face the struggles and triumphs of fleeing crises and coming to Canada. The production will involve local artists and technicians, and Levant will seek partnerships with newcomer and refugee artists.

Mel Brown Music Festival – Carlos Morgan (Region of Waterloo): \$11,000 for this multi-event, multi-venue festival celebrating Black artistry and music in Waterloo Region.

NUMUS – Kathryn Ladano (Kitchener): \$5,000 for the Anatomy of a Recovering Brain. Ontario-based composer Frank Horvat will be commissioned to create a new work on the theme of brain injury. Project partners include the Brain Injury Association of Waterloo Wellington (BIAWW) and the Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA).

People’s Climate Collective – Kai Reimer-Watts (Kitchener): \$9,500 for the “Passages” group exhibit planned for THEMUSEUM. The 6,000 sq. ft immersive exhibition on environmental themes merges sculptural installations with multimedia.

The COVERT Collective – Mark Walton (Waterloo): \$10,000 for The COVERT Collective Presents, in which three emerging local artists are identified, and their work presented at the Waterloo Information Centre in August of 2023 and in September, at Lumen 2023.

The Freedom Marching Project – Sherylee Honeyghan (Region of Waterloo): \$12,500 for Legacy: What Was / What Is / What Will Be, a showcase that fosters talent who want to use entertainment to celebrate and appreciate Black culture and excellence.

The New Hamburg Art Tour 2023 – Nancy Taves (Wilmot): \$2,500 to support “The Tour,” a collaboration of 23 artists in one centralized venue to increase engagement with the community, local businesses, and to help build an arts and culture hub in Wilmot Township.

The Relative Minors – Kiersten Robertshaw (Cambridge): \$6,000 for *Most of What We Do is Sleep*, the Relative Minors’ fourth studio album, featuring songs to entertain and inspire children in Waterloo Region and beyond.

Unwrap Theatre – Alten Wilmot (Region of Waterloo): \$10,000 for the 2023 Neighbourhood Series that will commission an artist to create work, curate a multi-disciplinary production around that work, then present the production at community organizations whose members face barriers to accessing live performances.

Virtu Arts – Vanessa C. Spence (Region of Waterloo) – \$8,045 for the Virtu Arts Play Development Intensive, an eight-month-long professional and experiential play development program for emerging and established Black artists.

Individual Artists:

Missy Bauman – Rachele Bauman (Cambridge): \$5,548 to support the marketing and promotion costs of *Bruises*, the artist’s third full-length album of original music.

Behnaz Fatimi (Region of Waterloo): \$5,000 for Mobile Safe Zones, a multi-media project in which the artist-built, mobile human-size structures allow community members to interactively share lived experiences or perceptions of oppressive regimes and social justice concerns.

Kate Kamo McHugh (Kitchener): \$10,000 for *20 Grains of Rice: Seeds of Reclamation*, a multidisciplinary theatre piece that explores the generational trauma of Japanese internment through dance, monologues, projections, and improvised music.

Mary Abdel-Malek Neil (Kitchener): \$5,100 for Good and Mad Podcast Mini-Series for women artists to reclaim their voices, bodies, right to have emotions, fury, and to fight for their art.

Oja – Oman Akot (Region of Waterloo): \$7,000 for Ana Taban – Juba Arabic for “I am tired” – a visual arts project resulting in a solo show that invites residents of the region to engage with new paintings to be created by the artist.

Mark Anthony Ramitt (Waterloo): \$4,900 for *AI: Altruistic Individuals*, a short film about a terminally ill programmer who develops custom smart-home technology to care for her partner after she is gone.

Sharl Smith (Other): \$15,000 to help in the creation of seven sculptures—ostensibly the largest freestanding bead-stitched sculpture ever made—to be exhibited at the Clay & Glass Gallery and the Grimsby Public Art Gallery.

Emily Urquhart (Kitchener): \$5,000 to assist with research and writing *The Pit*, a novel about ecological grief and the role art plays in amplifying hope and loss in the Anthropocene.

Vintage Black Canada Aaron T. Francis (Kitchener): \$15,000 for *Temple of Love: The Untold Story of Erroll Starr*, a Vintage Black Canada™ x Digital Sabbath documentary film about a Juno Award winning Black Canadian pop icon from Kitchener.

About the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund

“To Make Art Happen” is the Arts Fund’s mandate. The role of the fund is to enhance the creative vitality of this distinctive region of Ontario by providing meaningful grants and advocacy support to individual local artists and to arts-and-culture organizations. The not-for-profit corporation is one of the few granting bodies in Canada that awards grants directly to artist-led projects.

The Arts Fund welcomes grant applications in all arts disciplines, from individual artists and organizations throughout the region. Applicants may apply in the spring or fall of each year for projects slated to occur within the next 12 months.

Since it was established in 2002, the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund has supported 943 projects, for a total community investment of \$5,327,634.

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For more information regarding the Region of Waterloo Arts Fund, contact the Arts Fund at info@artsfund.ca.