



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Urbana Public Arts Commission

FROM: Anna Hochhalter, Public Arts Coordinator

DATE: June 5, 2009

SUBJECT: **Urbana Arts Grants Program Award Recommendations**

Background

On January 5, 2009, the Urbana Public Arts Commission held a special meeting to develop program priorities for the remainder of the current fiscal year (July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009) and the upcoming fiscal year (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010). Upon completion of a prioritization exercise, several program concepts were identified as the top priorities for the remainder of the fiscal year (January – June 30, 2009). The first priority was the Urbana Arts Grant Program. At the following Public Arts Commission meeting, on January 13, 2009, the Commission created a Grant Subcommittee, composed of Commission members Michele Plante and Sarah Ross, to further develop the grant program for the Public Arts Commission.

Municipal grant programs are fairly common and a great variety of programs exist. The Urbana Public Arts Commission discussion on grants included numerous ideas of various types of grant programs that the City could potentially offer. During the Public Arts Commission meeting on February 10th, the Commission reviewed and approved the grant program structure and guidelines with the understanding that minor changes would be made by staff.

On April 6, 2009, the Urbana Arts Grants program, with a budget expenditure of \$50,000, was presented to and approved by the Mayor and City Council as part of the Public Arts Program of Work for FY 08-09. The City of Urbana allocated \$44,000 to Public Arts Projects in the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year Budget. This funding is available through the Tax Increment Finance Districts. The funding for the Urbana Arts Grants program is a combination of funding from the City of Urbana Public Arts Fund and a generous donation of \$15,000 from the Urbana Business Association Business Backs the Arts Initiative.

On April 15, 2009, the City of Urbana launched the first cycle of the Urbana Arts Grants Program. Applicants could apply through any of the following four categories:

1. Here and Now: Arts Grant Program for Artists Residing in Urbana
 - Open to artists residing in Urbana for projects in the arts to be completed within six months of notification

2. Envision 365: Arts Grants for Emerging & Professional Artists
 - Open to practicing artists for projects in the arts to be completed within twelve months of notification
3. Creative Mix: Art Grants for Groups, Troupes & Ensembles
 - Open to schools, arts organizations, collaborative groups, and curatorial initiatives for projects in the arts to be completed within twelve months of notification
4. Urbana Festivals Grant
 - Open to festival presenters for festivals located in Urbana

Process

At the end of Monday, May 11th, the application period deadline, the City had received more than 70 applications. The applications received included 28 applications for the Envision 365 category, 25 applications for the Creative Mix category, 13 applications for the Urbana Festival category and, 7 applications for the Here and Now category. The total amount requested for all categories combined was \$276,889.

The Commission Arts Grant Subcommittee, composed of Commission members Michele Plante and Sarah Ross, provided significant guidance in the development of the program and the creation of two juries that reviewed the application materials and formalized a recommendation for the Public Arts Commission. The Arts Grant Subcommittee recommended a list of community members with backgrounds in the arts to serve on the two juries. These jurors were then confirmed based on their qualifications and availability. Each jury included representation from a variety of arts areas including: music, dance, visual art, theater/literature, and the community at large.

The jurors were diligent, insightful, and essential in the process of recommending projects to award in the first Urbana Arts Grants program. The jurors who served on the panel to review the Here and Now and Envision 365 applications included:

- Geoff Bant, Public Arts Commissioner; Teaching assistant, Wiley Elementary School; Studio supervisor and teacher, Champaign Park District
- Amy Rueffert, Independent glass artist
- Gabriel Solis, Associate Professor of Musicology, University of Illinois; Ethnomusicologist
- Walter Matherly, Long-time community member and arts patron
- Ken Salo, Lecturer in Urban and Regional Planning, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Illinois

The jurors who served on the panel to review the Creative Mix and Urbana Festivals applications

included:

- Robin Hall, Public Arts Commission Chair; Director, Office of Recreation and Park Resources, U of I; former Executive Director, Urbana Park District
- Michele Plante, Public Arts Commissioner; jeweler; Instructor and Coordinator of Career Services, College of Fine and Applied Arts, U of I
- Mark Rubel, Audio and music consultant; Owner of Pogo Studio; Assistant Professor of Music, Millikan University; Associate Professor, Parkland College
- Sharon Irish, Art and Architecture Historian; Project Coordinator, Community Informatics Initiative, University of Illinois
- Lisa Gaye Dixon, Associate Professor of Acting, University of Illinois
- Audrey Petty, Associate Professor of Creative Writing, Department of English, University of Illinois
- Kate Kuper, Teaching Artist; Visiting Lecturer, Department of Dance, University of Illinois

Discussion

The demands placed on the jurors were significant. Each juror was asked to review more than 35 applications which involved reading project descriptions, resumes, and budgets, in addition to listening to or viewing DVDs of work samples for each application. The jury members were given one to two weeks to review and score the application packets. The jurors used score sheets to assist in their decisions. The score sheets provided space for the jurors to evaluate the applicants in three main areas listed below:

- Artistic Quality—a determination of whether the applicant possesses the skills, creativity and discipline demanded to successfully complete the proposed project, and whether the proposal has creative merit.
- Project Feasibility—a determination of whether the applicant’s proposal provides a clear and appropriate budget, evidence of careful financial planning, and submittal of a realistic plan for implementation, including promotions.
- Community Integration—a determination of whether the applicant’s proposal addresses two or more of the following criteria:
 - Art that is integrated into the urban environment, creating a sense of place and purpose
 - Art that preserves and commemorates local and multicultural traditions and histories
 - Art that enriches the lives of Urbana residents and visitors
 - Art that is representative of the community in all its diversity

Each juror compiled a list of the top 3 or 5 proposals in the categories they were reviewing. Any jurors who were immediately involved with any of the proposals, or related to the applicant,

abstained from voting where they was a potential conflict of interest. From the collective list of most highly ranked proposals, the proposals with the most votes were discussed by the respective juries during a meeting at the Urbana Civic Center. During this meeting, the jury discussed the collective top proposals in regards to their artist quality, project feasibility, and community integration. The juries were interested in awarding proposals from both professional and emerging artists, and representing a broad range of art areas. Each jury reached consensus on their recommendations for funding.

The following list provides initial information on the recommendations made by the jury reviewing the Here and Now and Envision 365 categories. Additional information on each recommended project is attached (Exhibit A).

Here and Now				
Applicant	Project Title	Amt Requested	Amt Recommended	Arts Area
Elizabeth Simpson	Celebrate Urbana People's History	\$1,500	\$1,500	visual art
Scott Murray	WindowWall	\$1,500	\$1,000	architecture/ landscape
Aaron Ammons	As I travel My Creation	\$1,499.40	\$500.00	poetry
3 Total			\$3,000.00	
Envision 365				
Applicant	Project Title	Amt Requested	Amt Recommended	Arts Area
Karen Vaccaro	I Remember When: An Oral History of Urbana Seniors	\$2,500	\$2,500	theater
Moussa Bolokada Conde	Concert and Workshop Series with West African Master Drummer Bolokada Conde	\$2,500	\$2,500	music
Katheryn Fitzgerald	Puzzle Painting Project	\$2,500	\$2,000	visual art
Lori Caterini	River of Leaves	\$2,344.88	\$1,140	visual art
Kate Kuper	What Is Post-Modern Dance?	\$1,860	\$1,860	dance
Anastasia Pennington-Flax	Almost: A play by Anastasia Pennington-Flax	\$2,430	\$2,000	theater
6 Total			\$12,000.00	

The following list provides initial information on the recommendations made by the jury reviewing the Creative Mix and Urbana Festivals categories. Additional information on each recommended

project is attached (Exhibit A).

Creative Mix				
Applicant	Project Title	Amt Requested	Amt Recommended	Arts Area
IL Summer Youth Music	City of Urbana/Illinois Summer Youth Music Grant Program	\$4,970	\$5,000	music
iLAND, Inc	The Mahomet Aquirfer Project	\$5,000	\$3,000	dance
Center for Women in Transition, CAS, ASB	Voices of Women	3000-5000	\$1,000	multimedia
USD #116 Elementary Fine Arts	Art in Space	\$1,994.10	\$2,000.00	visual arts
HOBART	HOBART in Urbana Monthly Reading Series	\$5,000	\$1,000	lit/writing
Casey Gene Dierlam, Musicians, Composers	Contemporary Triptych	\$4,000	\$1,000	music
Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra	CUSO KinderKonzerts	\$5,000	\$2,000	music
7 Total			\$15,000.00	
Festivals				
Applicant	Project Title	Amt Requested	Amt Recommended	Arts Area
Fluid Events LLC.	The Urbana Blues, Brews, and BBQ Festival	\$10,000	\$5,000	music
Champaign Urbana Folk and Roots Festival Committee, Brenda Koenig	Champaign Urbana Folk and Roots Festival	\$10,000	\$5,000	music/dance/theatre/
The Nicodemus Agency, Seth Fein	Pygmalion Music Festival	\$10,000	\$3,000	music
40 North 88 West	40 North 88 West Boneyard Arts Festival	\$10,000	\$3,000	theater
Urbana Champaign Independent	IMC Film Festival 2010	\$10,000	\$2,000	film

Media Center				
Prompting Theater: Nikki Kopmann	9th Annual Theater in the Streets Festival	\$10,000	\$2,000	theater
6 Total			\$20,000.00	
22 Total Awards			\$50,000.00	

Following the Commission’s approval of the recommendations listed above, staff will work to match projects with funding sources, and will meet with the Urbana Business Association to award projects through the Business Backs the Arts donation of \$15,000.

Upon confirmation of funding source eligibility, staff will inform each applicant of the status of their application. Additionally, staff is creating the final report form and working with the City Legal Division to formalize a standard grant agreement to be entered into with each grant recipient. Award announcements are anticipated to be made in mid-June.

Because the Urbana City Council approved the budget for the Urbana Arts Grants Program budget in the Urbana Public Arts Program of Work for FY 08-09 on April 6, 2009, and because all projects are temporary installations, the Urbana Public Arts Commission has the authority to approve the project recommendations.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the grant recipients recommended by the Urbana Arts Grants Juries with the understanding that final awarded projects are subject to funding eligibility and agreement by the applicant.

Attachments:

Exhibit A: Brief Project Descriptions of Recommended Arts Grants

Brief Project Descriptions of Recommended Urbana Arts Grants Projects

The following projects have been recommended by the Urbana Arts Grants Juries for funding in the first cycle of the Urbana Arts Grants Program. The list below provides preliminary information submitted by the applicants for the Urbana Arts Grants Program and are subject to change. Formal agreements between the City and applicants will be developed and executed upon approval of the Urbana Public Arts Commission. Award notifications are expected to be distributed and publicized in mid-June, 2009.

HERE AND NOW

Applicant: Elizabeth Simpson

Project Title: Celebrate Urbana People's History

Brief Project Description: This project will use a participatory process to identify current and historical citizens of Urbana who have made a significant contribution to the social well-being of the community and celebrate them through the design and distribution of silk-screened posters in their honor in local businesses and on CUMTD buses. **Timeline:** Project proposed to begin with a community forum and research between June 15 – July 15, 2009. Project proposed to end with a project display and poster sale at the Urbana Market at the Square in October 2009.

Applicant: Scott Murray

Project Title: WindowWall

Brief Project Description: A temporary public art installation in AMBUCS Park utilizing recycled windows to create a hybrid of architecture and sculpture. **Timeline:** Project proposed to begin with the final design and construction planning between July and August, 2009. Project proposed to end with an art opening in mid-September 2009.

Applicant: Aaron Ammons

Project Title: As I Travel My Creation

Brief Project Description: The project is designed to complete a 115 page poetry collection that highlights the transformation of the artist from community nuisance to community activist. **Timeline:** Project proposed to begin with a project team meeting in May 2009 and end with an open mic book release at the UC IMC and Krannert Art Museum in September 2009.

ENVISION 365

Applicant: Karen Vaccaro

Project Title: "I Remember When: An Oral History of Urbana Seniors"

Brief Project Description: To document the oral histories of Urbana senior citizens, and turn those stories into a theatrical piece for the public. **Timeline:** project proposed to begin with workshops at Provena's Center for Healthy Aging between July and October, 2009, and end with performances of "I Remember When" at Heartland Gallery in the Spring of 2010.

Applicant: Moussa Bolokada Conde

Project Title: Concert and Workshop Series with West African Master Drummer Bolokada Conde

Brief Project Description: Concerts and workshops at King School and Urbana Free Library, and a concert at the Common Ground Food Co-op patio. **Timeline:** All project activities are proposed to occur in September and October, 2009.

Applicant: Katheryn Fitzgerald

Project Title: the Puzzle Painting Project – A Community Collaboration

Brief Project Description: The public will be invited to collaborate in the deconstruction/reconstruction of famous paintings. The painting process will take place on the sidewalk in front of Amara Yoga and Arts during the Market at the Square hours.

Timeline: Project is proposed to begin with collaborative painting workshops in June through August, 2009, and end with an art show in the Amara Yoga and Arts and Lincoln Square Hallway in May, 2010.

Applicant: Lori Caterini

Project Title: River of Leaves

Brief Project Description: the river of leaves installation integrates art into daily life. The project involves filling the north section of Crane Alley with yellow ginkgo leaves, a foot deep. **Timeline:** project is proposed to occur over the course of 1 – 2 weeks with the installation of leaves in Crane Alley to take place during one day in the fall, 2009.

Applicant: Kate Kuper

Project Title: What is Post-Modern Dance?

Brief Project Description: A lecture-demonstration and workshop series for all Urbana Elementary Schools in partnership with the UIUC Department of Dance. **Timeline:** Project is proposed to begin with the Leal Elementary Workshop and Performance in November, 2009, and end with a workshop and performance in the Prairie Elementary School in February 2010.

Applicant: Anastasia Pennington-Flax

Project Title: “Almost”: A play by Anastasia Pennington-Flax

Brief Project Description: Workshopping and producing the play “Almost”. **Timeline:** project proposed to begin with meetings to workshop the play in July 2009, and proposed to end with seven productions between March and May, 2010.

CREATIVE MIX

Applicant: Illinois Summer Youth Music

Project Title: City of Urbana/ Illinois Summer Youth Music Grant Program

Brief Project Description: To provide for the youths of Urbana an opportunity to attend one of the country’s most comprehensive summer youth music programs. **Timeline:** Camps, instructional activities and public concerts take place between June and July 2009.

Applicant: iLAND, Inc.

Project Title: The Mahomet Aquifer Project

Brief Project Description: Dance Performances, Panel Discussions, lectures/demonstrations in elementary schools inspired by research of the Mahomet Aquifer. **Timeline:** Project proposed to begin with a panel discussion at the Urbana Free Library in October, 2009, and end with performances in Urbana during May and June 2010.

Applicant: Center for Women in Transition (CWT), Create Africa South (CAS), U of I
Alternative Spring Break (ASB)

Project Title: Voices of Women

Brief Project Description: A community arts project that coordinates narrative quilting workshops and culminates in local and South African display and events. **Timeline:** Project proposed to begin with collaborative Organizational Planning Meetings/ Project research in August 2009. Project proposed to end with exhibitions, displays, and evaluation between April and June 2010.

Applicant: USD #116 Elementary Fine Arts

Project Title: Art in Space

Brief Project Description: Urbana third grade students visit the Wandell Sculpture Garden. The program enhances concepts that are introduced the areas of visual art and math in the third grade curriculum. **Timeline:** All proposed visits will be scheduled for next school year and will occur before June 1, 2010

Applicant: HOBART

Project Title: HOBART in Urbana Monthly Reading Series

Brief Project Description: A monthly reading series that brings the different elements of C-U – the University of Illinois and the larger community – together with a larger audience. **Timeline:** Proposed readings will take place beginning in October 2009 and end in March 2010.

Applicant: Casey Gene Dierlam, Musician, and Composers

Project Title: Contemporary Triptych

Brief Project Description: A Concert Series of three concerts, each featuring contemporary music by local composers. The project intends to debut a new piece by at least one composer on each concert, thus encouraging 3 world premiers in Urbana during the next year. **Timeline:** Proposed concerts will take place in November, 2009, and February and April, 2010.

Applicant: Champaign – Urbana Symphony Orchestra

Project Title: CUSO KinderKonzerts

Brief Project Description: CUSO will present two live symphonic concerts held in Krannert Center for the Performing Arts for 5,000 grade school students. **Timeline:** Proposed concerts will take place in April, 2010.

URBANA FESTIVALS

Applicant: Fluid Events, LLC

Project Title: “The Urbana Blues, Brews and BBQ Festival”

Brief Project Description: Blues and food festival featuring live entertainment, family activities, art boulevard and more. **Timeline:** Festival to occur June 26-27, 2009.

Applicant: 40 North | 88 West – Champaign County Arts, Culture & Entertainment Council

Project Title: 40 North | 88 West Boneyard Arts Festival

Brief Project Description: Presented annually by 40 North, the Boneyard is a four-day even showcasing the range of creative activity flourishing in our community. **Timeline:** Festival to occur April 15-18, 2010.

Applicant: Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center (IMC)

Project Title: IMC Film Festival 2010

Brief Project Description: The IMC Film Fest is a three day celebration of the art of cinematography highlighting local independent and emerging artists. **Timeline:** Festival to occur February 5, 6 & 7, 2010.

Applicant: Champaign Urbana Folk and Roots Festival Committee

Project Title: Champaign Urbana Folk and Roots Festival

Brief Project Description: A participatory festival with local, regional, national folk musicians and artists. **Timeline:** Festival to occur September 25-26, 2009.

Applicant: The Nicodemus Agency

Project Title: Pygmalion Music Festival

Brief Project Description: Now in its fifth year, Pygmalion Music Festival is a four-day event that celebrates both national touring and locally-based artists in Urbana. **Timeline:** Festival to occur September 16-19, 2009.

Applicant: The Prompting Theater, Developmental Services Center

Project Title: 9th Annual Theater in the Streets Festival

Brief Project Description: An outdoor festival created and hosted by the Prompting Theater showcasing local theater troupes, ensembles, venues, and actors. **Timeline:** Festival to occur April 17th, (2010).