



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

### Urbana Arts & Culture Program Monthly Progress Report

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month– July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019

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#### Introduction

The following Urbana Arts & Culture Program Monthly Progress Report describes activities of the Arts & Culture Program for the Urbana Arts & Culture Commission. The report includes information regarding projects that are in progress, recent requests and recommendations from the public, staff activities, and upcoming events.

#### Staffing Update

- **Program Specialist Position Update:** The Urbana Arts and Culture Program and Urbana's Market at the Square welcomed the new Program Specialist, HeatherAnn Layman. HeatherAnn brings a wealth of experience performing administrative and managerial duties in previous positions and works part-time for Parkland College Theater. She has a strong passion for the arts.
- **Illinois Arts Council Summer Youth Employment Grant:** The Urbana Arts and Culture Program is proud to report that the program received the 2019 Summer Youth Employment Grant from the Illinois Arts Council, allowing for \$1,800 of funding towards employing an area high school student. A number of applications have been received and interviews will take place this week.
- **Community Learning Lab Masters Interns:** The Community Learning Lab (CLL) interns, Sheng Chiang (John) Ji and Lanjun (Leona) Wu, continue to work on summer projects for Urbana's Arts and Culture Program, including marketing and promotions, events management, and administrative support.
- **CARE4U Program Intern:** The CARE4U Program intern, Kaylee Crushshon, continues to work part-time for the Urbana Arts and Culture Program, assisting with events, administrative support, and office tasks.

#### Updates on Current Projects

- **Urbana's Inaugural Poet Laureate, Will Reger:** The City of Urbana's Mayor's Office and the Urbana Arts & Culture Program are proud to announce the inaugural Poet Laureate in City of Urbana history, Will Reger. Will Reger was born and raised in the St. Louis, Missouri area. He obtained his Ph.D. in History from the University of Illinois and

lives in Champaign, Illinois, with his wife and two youngest children. A co-leader of CU Poetry Group, Reger has lent his energies towards initiatives such as MTD Poetry, CU Haiku in the News Gazette, and Poets at the Post, a monthly open mic held at the Iron Post in Urbana. Reger teaches within the Department of History at both Illinois State University and Parkland College and has read his poetry work at The Urbana Free Library, Boneyard Arts Festival, Imbibe Urbana's Love for All Poetry Crawl, SPEAK Café, Respect the Mic, and as part of an annual reading at Danville Correctional Center.

His one-year term begins immediately. Reger was selected through a competitive application and interview process by a panel of literary experts. The poet laureate receives a \$2,000 honorarium for the one-year term, funded by the City of Urbana's Arts and Culture Program.

Will Reger impressed the jury with his proposal to generate deeper collaborations in and between Urbana's various poetry organizations, create greater visibility for the art of poetry through public readings and panel discussions, as well as spearhead a visual art project that would result in local poetry being displayed as visual art throughout the city. Reger will work closely with the Urbana Arts and Culture Program and Mayor Diane Wolfe Marlin to carry out his proposed community outreach project focusing on elevating the art of poetry in the local community.

The Poet Laureate will be honored at an open reception scheduled for July 10<sup>th</sup> from 5pm-6:30pm at Analog Wine Library in Downtown Urbana.

- **Downtown Get Down Series:** The Urbana Arts & Culture Program is working in partnership with the Urbana Park District, 40 North Champaign County Arts Council, and the Urbana Business Association to sponsor the *Downtown Get Down*, a downtown events series for Downtown Urbana that takes place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month May-August. The series features live concerts, DJs, an artist's street market, kid's zone, inflatables, games, live arts demos, and performing artists. Partners are still seeking sponsorships, booking artists, and finalizing planning details for the series.

Both events have been attended by between 700-900 attendees each and had a strong participation from community groups, sponsors, and area businesses.

June's event, held in conjunction with Jettie Rhodes Day featured Dance Music Therapy and Big Mo and the Phat Groove. The event was expanded to include a mini soccer game area provided by Soccer Planet and a brand new Pop-Up Performance tent, featuring over 10 additional live artists and performance groups including saxophonist Amunet the Sage, indie artists Corduroy and Nick Gundy, Brazilian Zouk Dance from Illini Zouk, Dance Demos from Urbana Dance Company, electric guitarist Branson Ravanh, and live painting from Matt Harsh and members of The Common Mind Art Collective. So far, the Downtown Get Down has featured over 50 individual local artists, over 35 unique community organizations and maker groups, and over 50 area events held by Downtown Urbana businesses.

The July 27<sup>th</sup> event is already slated to have increased participation in the Teen Maker Lab, Arts Market, and Community Corner. August's event is held in conjunction with Urbana Sweetcorn Festival.

- **Urbanalove Summer Movie Nights:** The City of Urbana's Arts & Culture Program is partnering with The Urbana Free Library, Kanopy, and Urbanalove to offer the Urbanalove Summer Movie Nights this summer of 2019, boasting a line-up of films for the whole family. Indoor films are screened at Broadway Food Hall and outdoor films are screened at Boneyard Creek Crossing next to 25 O'Clock Brewing Company on the corner of Race and Griggs Streets in Downtown Urbana. All films are free and open to the public. Food will be available for purchase at both locations.

**Jun 13: A Cat in Paris (2012) – Rated PG**

Indoors at Broadway Food Hall (show time at 5:30pm)

**Jun 26: Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure (2017) – Rated PG**

Outdoors at Boneyard Creek Crossing at sundown (show time 8:30pm)

**Jul 11: Show Cats (2005) – Rated G**

Indoors at Broadway Food Hall (show time at 5:30pm)

**Jul 17: Hearts Beat Loud (2018) – Rated PG-13**

Outdoors at Boneyard Creek Crossing at sundown (show time 8:30pm)

**Aug 14: Loving Vincent (2017) – Rated PG-13**

Outdoors at Boneyard Creek Crossing at sundown (show time 8:30pm)

**Aug 29: Kedi (2016) – NR (recommended 8+)**

Indoors at Broadway Food Hall (show time at 5:30pm)

- **Urbana Arts Grants:** For the 2019 cycle of the Urbana Arts Grants Program, the Urbana Arts and Culture Program awarded \$80,000 artists, arts organizations, and festival presenters for creative projects that enrich the lives of Urbana residents and visitors. Grantees are currently initiating projects. Summer projects are already underway, including DMT Music Festivals, Arts at Play from KOOP Adventure Play, The Great Theater Project of 2019 (formerly called Experimental Theatre Performance Laboratory for Young Theatre Practitioners), and Community Puppet and Mosaic Making.

Further, look out for a number of upcoming downtown festivals funded through the grant program, including CU Jazz Festival, CU Black and African Arts Festival, Sweetcorn Festival, Pygmalion, Heartland Makerfest, CU Folk and Roots Festival, and more!

- **Art Now:** July's edition of [Art Now](#) features Urbana's Inaugural Poet Laureate, Will Reger. A joint production by the [Urbana Arts & Culture Program](#) and [Urbana Public Television](#), Art Now airs at 6:15pm every Monday on UPTV6, re-runs at 11pm on Tuesdays, and online on the [UPTV6 Youtube Channel](#).
- **Artist of the Corridor:** The current Artist of the Corridor exhibition on display is *LINOLEUM & INK* curated by Arts in the Schools grant recipient, Lisa Kesler. *LINOLEUM & INK* is an exhibition of prints created by Urbana High School art students in collaboration with Artist-in-Residence, Lisa Kesler. Forty student artists participated in a 3-week intensive in linoleum block printmaking and reduction printing with the artist, creating their own work in the process. The opening reception held on June 6<sup>th</sup> was attended by Mayor Diane Wolfe Marlin, City staff, Urbana Arts and Culture Commissioners, and five UHS students and their families. Works will be on display through August, with a student panel discussion on August 15<sup>th</sup> from 12pm-1pm at The Urbana Free Library.
- **Art at the Market:** In partnership with Urbana's Market at the Square, the Urbana Arts & Culture Program, continues to offer mid-morning concerts and arts workshops led by local artists at Market IN the Square every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month. The June concert, held on June 8<sup>th</sup>, featured local jazz band, John Offut Trio, and a "Nature Suncatchers" make n' take art activity with Sierra Murphy. The July 13<sup>th</sup> activities include a performance from Appalachian folk music from The Young and the Fretless and juggling workshop from flow artist, Michael Moxie.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of August, Art at the Market will join Urbana's Market at the Square to celebrate *National Farmer's Market Week*, featuring creative family-focused farmer's market activities in addition to Art at the Market's regularly scheduled programming. In years past, this has included a kale eating contest, arts activities, and games.

- **The Young Artist's Studio:** The Young Artist's Studio series presented by the Urbana Public Arts Program and the Urbana Free Library features youth arts workshops every one a month on Sundays at 3pm. The June 23<sup>rd</sup> event featured DIY Masks and Costumes with Laurel Nobilette. The upcoming July 21<sup>st</sup> workshop features Kvn Tajzea of the D.O.S.E. Foundation teaching theater games. All workshops are held 3pm-3:45pm in the Urbana Free Library's Children's Library.
- **Urbana Sculpture Project:** Urbana Arts and Culture Coordinator, Rachel Storm, served as a juror on the most recent national call for sculptures from Public Art League. While this is not a year in which Urbana Arts and Culture Program sponsors sculptures, local group MCDJ (Mike and Connie Hosier, David and Janet Peshkin) have pledged to sponsor a new sculpture this cycle as part of the Urbana Sculpture Project, *Tumble Arch*, by Jim Gallucci from Greensboro, NC. The sculpture's exact location is still being determined and the installation will be announced later this summer. A sincere thank you to the MCDJ Group for their ongoing support of public art!

- **Murals on Glass/Urbana Utility Wrap Program:** Murals on Glass, an initiative to feature local artworks on downtown Urbana windows, will soon open an application period. Now the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle, Murals on Glass selects artwork from a resident artist from Champaign County to have their work reproduced in adhesive vinyl and adhered to the front windows of a municipal building. The selected location this year will be the Cunningham Township Office's front windows. Staff are developing the plan for the Urbana Utility Wrap Program.
- **Outreach and Partner Presentations:** Arts and Culture Coordinator, Rachel Storm, is attending committee meetings for the Welcoming Collaborative, a group of area nonprofits, municipal, and community organizations working towards initiatives that create welcoming and inclusive communities for local immigrants.
- **Jettie Rhodes Day Mural Unveiling:** Arts and Culture Coordinator, Rachel Storm, attended the unveiling of the mural made possible through a collaboration between youth participants in Jettie Rhodes Day, the Urbana Park District, and local artist Lisa Kesler. The mural unveiling took place as part of Jettie Rhodes Day and depicted a portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Saturday marked the 20th Annual Jettie Rhodes Day and 1,200 people packed the park to celebrate!
- **Volunteer Support:** The Urbana Arts & Culture Program is seeking volunteers through new listings with CU Volunteer and the University of Illinois' Office of Volunteer Programs.

Arts & Culture Commissioners and the public are encouraged to get involved with the Urbana Arts & Culture Program's ongoing events and initiatives. Those interested in volunteering with the Urbana Arts & Culture Program can join planning efforts or sign up to volunteer at: [https://www.urbanaininois.us/arts\\_support](https://www.urbanaininois.us/arts_support).