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Oregon Community Foundation Invests \$1 Million in Visionary Oregon Arts and Culture Projects Through 2022 Creative Heights Initiative

Fourteen Grantees Working to Celebrate Culture, Preserve History and Build Community in Oregon

Portland, Ore. – Thursday, August 11, 2021 – Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) announced today that the foundation will invest \$1 million in visionary Oregon arts and culture projects through OCF’s 2022 Creative Heights Initiative.

Many of this year’s Creative Heights grantees are elevating cultural voices, shining a light on little-known history and launching significant new structures for artists to thrive.

“We are deeply honored to receive a Creative Heights grant from Oregon Community Foundation to commission and produce ***Nu Nah-Hup: Sacajawea’s Story***,” said Lisa Lipton, Executive Director, Opera Theater Oregon. “We are so fortunate to be guided by Sacajawea’s descendent, Rose Ann Abrahamson. Working together to share Sacajawea’s story through opera will help preserve her Agai-Dika / Lemhi Shoshone language as well as celebrate her Indigenous perspective and contributions.”

OCF’s 2022 Creative Heights awards support projects by visionary artists and arts and culture organizations that are working to celebrate culture, preserve history and build community in Oregon.

“We’re thrilled to announce this group of 2022 Creative Heights awards. These artist-driven projects represent some of the most ambitious and important proposals that we’ve ever seen,” said Jerry Tischleder, Senior Program Officer, Arts and Culture, Oregon Community Foundation. “We’re grateful for the incredible work that artists across Oregon are creating to spark the connection and inspiration that bring communities together.”

Following is a snapshot of just a few of the extraordinary projects that OCF is supporting with the 2022 Creative Heights Initiative:

Joshua Caraco and Tumelo Michael Moloi / Lane Arts Council

\$100,000 2022 Creative Heights Grant

To develop a musical theater performance using elements of Tumelo Michael Moloi’s personal journey growing up in South Africa to living on a farm in Junction City as a medium to connect the struggle against apartheid in South Africa to the US Civil Rights and Black Lives Matter movements.

“This Creative Heights grant from Oregon Community Foundation will allow us to bring ideas we have talked about for years out into the world,” said co-lead artist Joshua Caraco. “We hope it will bring perspective and help foster global understanding and support. We also want to create art that people can’t wait to tell their friends about.”

Opera Theater Oregon / Rose Ann Abrahamson

\$100,000 2022 Creative Heights Grant

For Rose Ann Abrahamson's Nu Nah-Hup: Sacajawea's Story, which reimagines the extraordinary Shoshone woman who was a crucial member of the historic 1804-1806 Lewis and Clark Expedition, from her Agai-Dika / Lemhi Shoshone Indigenous perspective in a new opera-theater work.

“Sacajawea’s story will be told with some of the most amazing music in the world,” said Rose Ann Abrahamson, great-great-grandniece of Sacajawea. “To be able to share her voice and the stories of her people through opera, ‘Oose’ from the bottom of our hearts.”

[**Editor Notes:** *Oose: Gratitude and thanks. Thank you, twice. Photo available. **Photo caption:** Rose Ann Abrahamson and Justin Ralls at the Sacajawea Education, Interpretive and Cultural Center in Salmon, Idaho – the ancestral homeland of the Agai-Dika / Lemhi Shoshone people. August, 2021. **Photo credit:** Courtesy of Opera Theater Oregon and Oregon Community Foundation.]*

Warm Springs Community Action Team / LaRonn Katchia

\$72,500 2022 Creative Heights Grant

To write, film, and edit a full-length documentary entitled "A Bridge to the Future," by Warm Springs tribal member LaRonn Katchia that captures the transformation of community in the de-/re-construction of the 125-year-old Warm Springs (BIA) Commissary - a symbol of a tribal community claiming a new future.

“With the Creative Heights grant from Oregon Community Foundation, we will be able to tell our story, transforming the oldest building on the Warm Springs reservation into a business incubator to help tribal entrepreneurs thrive,” said LaRonn Katchia, Filmmaker, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. “It is important to help build our economy within the reservation and to document this journey through an authentic indigenous lens.”

A complete list of all 14 2022 Creative Heights grantees can be found online, in OCF’s Press Room.

OCF’s Creative Heights initiative provides opportunities for artists and culture bearers to stretch their creative capacity, share new works and test new ideas. The initiative has invested roughly \$1 million per year since 2014, encompassing 112 projects across a range of visual art, dance, folk and traditional arts, film/video/media, literary arts, museum exhibitions, humanities projects, music, theater and performance arts, history and heritage projects, and multidisciplinary artistic works.

About Oregon Community Foundation

Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) works with donors and volunteers to award grants and scholarships to every county in Oregon. From 2020 to 2021, OCF distributed more than \$560 million, supporting more than 4,000 nonprofits and 6,000 students. With OCF, individuals, families, businesses, and organizations create charitable funds that meet the needs of diverse communities statewide. Since its founding in 1973, OCF has distributed more than \$2 billion toward advancing its mission to improve lives for all Oregonians. For more information, please visit: oregoncf.org.

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