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Local arts groups to receive \$580k in grants during COVID-19 crisis

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By Bo Emerson

The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta will join the effort to help metro area arts groups survive the COVID-19 crisis with \$580,000 in grants.

The foundation's Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund supports arts groups with budgets under \$2 million.

Many of those groups have been stressed by the pandemic, as performances have been canceled and facilities shuttered, closing off significant sources of revenue.

The grants raise the amount promised to arts organizations this year to nearly \$2 million.

In reviewing grant applications, the foundation staff examined how the arts groups adjusted to the crisis -- many of them switching to an online presence -- and how they planned to provide programming for the remainder of the year.

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“We’re investing in leadership from both organization staff and their boards of directors, recognizing that strong vision, leadership and innovation are essential,” said Virginia Hepner, former president and chief executive officer of the Woodruff Arts Center and member of the arts fund advisory committee, in a statement.

These grants come in addition to the \$17.3 million granted to 320 nonprofit organizations by the Community Foundation, in coordination with the United Way of Greater Atlanta.

The arts grants are as follows:

[Actor’s Express](#) will receive \$100,000. Because of the pandemic, the theater group was obliged to cancel a fund-raising event and to halt its fourth 2020 production after only five performances.

[Atlanta Celebrates Photography](#) will receive \$50,000. The group, formed in 1997, has had to cancel all programming, performances and fundraising this spring due to the outbreak. Traditionally it has presented its exhibitions free of charge. It now offers free online camera classes for young people.

[Burnaway](#), the journal of the arts in the South, will receive \$25,000.

[Dad's Garage Theatre](#) will receive \$100,000. The 25-year-old improvisational comedy group expects to slowly return to live performances, but is offering an abundance of online programming in the meantime.

[The Horizon Theatre Company](#) will receive \$75,000. The sturdy theater company, with its home in Little Five Points, had to postpone a spring play that was in production as well as two summer plays. Horizon expects to be moving two or more plays from the 2020 season to the 2021 season.

[MINT](#) will receive \$20,000. The gallery, studio and educational center has had to cancel collaborations, has lost rental revenue and has pivoted to provide virtual programming.

[Moving in the Spirit](#), which uses dance education to promote youth development, will receive \$100,000. Formed in 1986, the organization had just moved into a new Candler Park facility this March when the coronavirus pandemic shut down its in-person activities.

[The Roswell Arts Fund](#) will receive \$10,000. The group was founded to strengthen the arts in the city of Roswell, but had to cancel key fundraising activities in the wake of the pandemic. The group recently launched an initiative called RosWELL, an online, photographic archive of the city's collective response to the health crisis.

[7 Stages](#) will receive \$50,000. Founded in 1979, 7 Stages is a professional nonprofit theatre company with an emphasis on new plays, new playwrights and new methods of collaboration. During the COVID-19 crisis, 7 Stages has set up an Artist Relief Fund to support nearly 100 artists.

[The Creatives Project](#) will receive \$10,000. A supporter of artist residencies, The Creatives Project has had to cancel or postpone residencies and other programming. Shifting gears, the group is launching Drive Thru ATL, a drive-through gallery experience in which artists can display their works outside of The Creatives Project studios.

[Voices of Note](#) will receive \$40,000. Created in 1981 as the Atlanta Gay Mens' Chorus, it has since also launched the Atlanta Women's Chorus.

The Community Foundation encourages arts organizations to apply for funding on its [website](#). In its history, the Metro Atlanta Arts Fund has awarded nearly \$15 million to arts organizations. Its contributors, including Fulton County Arts & Culture, have built an endowment of more than \$10 million.

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