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Vermont Arts Council Announces Creation Grants to 15 Outstanding Artists

Updated 12 p.m., 8/18/20: Estefania Puerta's project description

MONTPELIER, VT— The Vermont Art Council announces the 15 recipients of its most sought-after award, the Creation Grant, which supports Vermont artists in creating new work.

Among this year's winning proposals are works that span visual arts, literary arts, dance, music, circus arts, and multidisciplinary fields, including a poetry collection about growing up as a Korean American adoptee in rural Vermont; a solo dance show integrating aerial work and nonbinary, disabled identity; and several works that explore climate change.

Artistic excellence is the most important criteria in evaluating an application for this highly competitive award. More than 120 applications were received for the FY2021 program, collectively requesting a total of \$484,000. The Council typically has funding to support approximately 12-15% of requests for the annual grant.

Recipients were selected over the course of two independent panels comprised of 26 practicing Vermont artists and arts professionals. Six of the awardees are first-time applicants. The award is only available to artists who have not received a Creation Grant within the last five years.

Grant awards are \$4,000, which the artist may use for time spent to develop new work, to purchase materials, or to rent equipment or space for the process.

"In the midst of a pandemic, I know that Vermonters are deeply grateful to artists across our state, whose vision, courage, and imagination are needed right now. We are pleased to be able to support so many new, first-time applicants to this grant program," noted Executive Director Karen Mittelman.

The Creation Grant program has supported 140 Vermont artists since the program began in 2009.

This year's program was funded in part through a partnership with the Vermont Community Foundation. The Arts Council's grant programs are made possible by support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the state of Vermont, and private donors.

For more information about the Creation Grant program, visit <https://www.vermontartscouncil.org/grants/artists/creation>.

FY2021 Creation Grant Recipients:

William Alexander (Montpelier) to support the creation of a young adult fantasy novel inspired by the artist's Cuban-American heritage

Sarah Audsley (Johnson) to support the creation of a poetry collection that traces and weaves experiences of growing up as a Korean American transracial adoptee in rural Vermont

Big Teeth Performance Collective (East Dummerston) to support the creation of a theatrical show involving acrobatics, dance, physical theater, and aerial arts that engages audiences around the realities of mass extinction, climate catastrophe, and processing loss

Frances Cannon (Burlington) to support the creation of a graphic novel entitled *Vernal Thaw* that centers on women's bodies, bodies of water, trauma and tenderness, and toxic masculinity in lesbian relationships

Kate Donnelly (Burlington) to support the creation of a body of work that explores the concept of caregiving resulting in a live video performance

Misoo Filan (South Burlington) to support the creation of a series of paintings entitled the Giantess Project that serve as a cultural response to patriarchy and male dominance by reversing the male-female power dynamic

Stefania Flanagan (Londonderry) to support the creation of a sculptural installation that explores the past, present, and future of our forests and climate

Mary Lacy (Jericho) to support the creation of geometric-style figurative and portrait mosaics

Toby MacNutt (Burlington) to support the creation of a solo dance show integrating aerial work and nonbinary, disabled identity entitled *A Singular They*

Brian McCarthy (Colchester) to support the creation of a full-length jazz ensemble album entitled *AFTER/LIFE* inspired by a Carl Sagan quote

Rachel Moore (Stowe) to support the creation of a mixed media installation addressing the effects of climate change that encourages civic engagement and activism with the viewers

Otto Muller (Marshfield) to support the creation of a musical piece for mixed quartet and electronics that explores the concept of boundary resulting in an outdoor site-specific performance, studio recording, and hybrid text

Estefania Puerta (Burlington) to support the creation of sculptural works that create "new empathic worlds that have no defined borders and embrace excess and multiplicity through the exploration of self-sustaining bodies"

Kaylynn Sullivan TwoTrees (North Ferrisburgh) to support the creation of an immersive installation of video, paintings, and "vocables" entitled *Falling into Language - A Travelogue*

Dana Walrath (South Burlington) to support the creation of a full libretto based on a graphic memoir about the artist's mother's dementia journey entitled *Aliceheimer*

Photo: Big Teeth Performance Collective performs *Ordinary Creatures* from its Southern Tour Winter 2020.

Photo Credit: Seriffim Photography/Stacey Strange

Photo: Illustration from the work of artist Frances Cannon who is creating a graphic novel entitled *Vernal Thaw* centering on women's bodies, bodies of water, trauma and tenderness, and toxic masculinity in lesbian relationships.

Illustration Credit: Frances Cannon

About the Vermont Arts Council

The Vermont Arts Council envisions a Vermont where all people have access to the arts and creativity in their lives, education, and communities. Engagement with the arts transforms individuals, connects us more deeply to each other, energizes the economy, and sustains the vibrant cultural landscape that makes Vermont a great place to live. Since 1965, the Council has been the state's primary provider of funding, advocacy, and information for the arts in Vermont. Learn more at www.vermontartscouncil.org

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