

Kentucky Arts Council Board Meeting

Kentucky Artisan Center, Berea KY

Dec. 6, 2024, 10 a.m. – Noon

Staff Present: Chris Cathers, Sarah Schmitt, Dave Blevins, Macie Lowe, Cynthia Warner, Mark Brown, Tamara Coffey, Leeann Potter, Brett Ratliff

Board: Everett McCorvey, Randall Vaughn, Lynn Schrader, Elizabeth Griffith Mudd, Lennon Michalski, Marcheta Sparrow, Brook Forrest White, Nathan Mick, Dior Cotton

TAH Deputy Secretary: Sebastian Kitchen

Meeting called to order by Everett McCorvey. Attendees introduced themselves, both in-person and online.

Chris Cathers, Executive Director of the Kentucky Arts Council. reads the Kentucky Arts Council (KAC) land acknowledgement. Minutes from the September 20, 2024, meeting were approved unanimously after a motion from Lynn Schrader seconded by Marcheta Sparrow.

Aly Norton, Public Relations, reported that the Kentucky Artisan Center, celebrated its 20th anniversary, and shared a 20% discount offer for board members and state employees, valid until January 5, 2024. Kiana Mahjub, Executive Director of the Berea Arts Council, presented the *Berea Black History and Heritage Project*, which included an exhibit on African American history and heritage, drawing over 800 visitors and supporting cultural activities. The project also led to new funding for the preservation of local African American history.

KAC Staff Program and Grant Updates

Mark Brown shared a success story from the Community Scholars program, highlighting how research led to a community-driven exhibition.

Teaching Art Together & Transportation Grants: Cynthia Warner reported significant growth in applications for both programs, with changes to the application process to enhance accessibility. New arts education standards were also introduced.

Performing Artist Directory & Kentucky Touring Grants: Tamara Coffey introduced the expanded Kentucky Performing Artist Directory (PAD), now including diverse artists like rap/hip-hop performers. Kentucky Touring Grants will be available for schools and nonprofits; grants can support up to \$5,000 for performances by artists from the PAD.

Dave Blevins shared updates on the Kentucky Crafted Program, which accepted 28 new artists this year, including artists from diverse backgrounds, with a notable increase in applications from Hispanic artists.

Cathers reminded attendees that the Individual Arts Fellowship, offering \$7,500 to visual artists, is open for applications until March 15th. Transportation Grants will have a rolling application process; Teaching Art Together grants will open from April to July. Kentucky Touring Grant — In-kind funds are allowed for half of the match

Creative Industries Summit Series: A series of business-focused workshops for artists will run from January to July, covering marketing, contracts, and other business skills.

Native Reflections Exhibit Update:

The *Native Reflections* exhibit features 21 artworks by 11 artists, traveling statewide until May 2025. A reception will be held at the Center for Rural Development. A new exhibit, *Celebrating the Black Experience*, will launch in summer 2025.

Discussions with airports about rotating art exhibits have stalled due to logistical issues. Board members suggested involving state officials to help facilitate progress. Randall Vaughn will reach out to contacts at Lexington Airport. The Board recognized Mark for his sensitive and respectful work on the *Native Reflections* exhibit.

Consent Agenda:

Reviewed and approved performing arts directory, Kentucky Crafted Program, Teaching Art Together grants, and Transportation Grants. Two grant requests were removed due to low scores.

McCorvey motions to approve. Vaughn moves, Cotten seconds. The motion passes.

Executive Director's Report

The KY Guild of Artists and Craftsmen held the Fall Show at the KY Artisan Center at Berea. KFTA and KAC shared an informational booth at the event.

Asia Institute Crane House served as host to the Southern Cultural Treasures Cohort meeting in Louisville.

The **NASAA Assembly 2024** was held in San Juan, Puerto Rico in October. Some of the Kentucky Arts Council staff participated in four days of intensive networking and collaboration. This year's conference focused on essential topics such as artificial intelligence, data collection and management, climate change, and emergency preparedness, all of which are vital for state arts agencies to navigate effectively.

Cathers recalled Dr. Maria Rosario Jackson, chair of the National Endowment for the Arts. She shared important developments regarding how the NEA is fostering cross-sector collaborations to elevate the arts. These initiatives are designed to enhance public health, promote human development, grow a creative workforce, enliven public spaces, and strengthen our democracy. We are excited about the possibilities these discussions present and are eager to implement what we've learned to further advance the arts in Kentucky.

Team Kentucky, the Kentucky Arts Council, the Kentucky Native American Heritage Commission and the Kentucky Heritage Council worked together to invite American Indians living in Kentucky to share their visual art. A panel of American Indians and experts on Native American heritage selected works to include and the result is this amazing collection.

As required by law and custom, the Native Reflections exhibit labels indicate whether an artist is an enrolled member of a state- or federally recognized tribe, or if they are not currently enrolled or recognized. Each artist is listed as either "Enrolled Member" or "Native Inspired."

To learn more about how American Indian people receive or apply for enrolled status, contact the Kentucky Heritage Council or find links and resources at <http://heritage.ky.gov>.

Native Reflections exhibit schedule 2024-2025:

Oct. 3 - Nov. 13, 2024 - [Kentucky Capitol Rotunda](#)

700 Capital Ave., Frankfort, Ky.

Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Eastern

Dec. 4 - Jan. 2, 2025 - [Center for Rural Development](#)

2292 S. Highway 27, Somerset, Ky.

Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Eastern, and during evening and weekend events

Jan. 8 - 29, 2025 - [Kenton County Public Library - Erlanger Branch](#)

401 Kenton Lands Road, Erlanger, Ky.

Mon. - Thur. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Sun. 1 - 5 p.m. Eastern

Feb. 5 - 21, 2025 - [Murray Tourism - Convention and Visitors Bureau](#)

206 S. 4th St., Murray, Ky.

Mon. - Thur. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Sun. 1 - 5 p.m. Eastern

March 12 - April 4, 2025 - [Berea Arts Council](#)

444 Chestnut St., Berea, Ky.

Wed. - Fri. Noon - 5:30 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Eastern, and during evening and weekend events

April 10 - 29, 2025 - [Cumberlands Falls State Resort Park](#)

7351 Highway 90, Corbin, Ky.

Mon., Thur., Fri., Sat., Sun. 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Eastern, closed Tue. and Wed.

May 2 - 29, 2025 - [John James Audubon State Park](#)

3100 US Highway 41, Henderson, Ky.

Every day 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Central

A “meet and greet” for the artists of the Native Reflections Exhibit at the Capitol Rotunda to kick off Native American Heritage month. Venus Evans and Chris Robinson with the Native American Heritage Commission were on hand along with dancers Lydia Green Miller of the Anishinabe and Trevor James of the Cherokee and Choctaw Nations. Susan Mullins, a KAC Teaching Artist and Mohawk performed a song in her native language. An exhibit of Native American Voting Rights from the KFTC was on display.

The **Kentucky Book Festival** is coming this weekend with a slew of exciting authors, special events, and bookish fun, the festival draws readers from across the commonwealth and beyond.

Kentucky State Parks 100-Year Celebration: Writing Retreat with Silas House

To honor the 100-Year Anniversary of Kentucky State Parks, Kentucky Poet Laureate Silas House is conducting a writing retreat at Lake Barkley State Resort Park. The retreat includes writing workshops that allow attendees to engage in guided discussions and sessions. As part of the retreat, attendees can enjoy a one-night stay in the lodge, enjoy dinner and breakfast, and explore Lake Barkley State Resort Park. The retreat begins on the evening of Saturday, Nov 16, and concludes on Sunday, Nov 17. Registration fee includes lodging and meals (dinner on Friday and breakfast on Saturday). The writing retreat is limited, and packages are first-come-first-served.

On November 21, the Kentucky Arts Council proudly hosted the **Governor’s Awards in the Arts** in the Capitol Rotunda. This exceptional event celebrated the contributions of Kentucky’s artists and arts organizations, honoring their profound impact on our communities and our state. Through their creativity, our honorees remind us of the power of human connection, inspiring us to create a more inclusive, resilient, and compassionate world for everyone.

For the 2024 Governor’s Awards in the Arts, commissioned artworks were created by Yoko Nogami, a dynamic interdisciplinary artist born and raised in Tokyo, Japan. Nogami’s work is deeply rooted in themes of cultural displacement, gender, parenthood, and identity. A recurring character in her pieces, Toko, is a blend of Nogami herself and her daughter, Tora, navigating the complexities of the world around them. In these commissioned works, Toko merges nature,

music, and visual media, reflecting Nogami's commitment to both her personal heritage and her love for the cultural richness of Kentucky.

The third cohort of the **National Leaders of Color Fellowship** (LoCF) program will bring together 55 leaders from across the United States to participate in a transformative eight-month leadership development experience designed to establish multicultural leadership in the creative and cultural sector. Curated by [Creative West](#) (formerly WESTAF) and in partnership with the five other U.S. Regional Arts Organizations (RAOs) ([Arts Midwest](#), [Mid-America Arts Alliance](#), [Mid Atlantic Arts](#), [New England Foundation for the Arts](#), [South Arts](#)), the no-cost program will take place online and provides fellows with access to specialists in the field, strategic learning objectives determined to deepen thought on anti-racist and culturally-oriented leadership practices, and national-level network and cohort building. Upon completion of the no-cost program, participants transition to alumni status and have opportunities to collaborate with the U.S. RAO in their region as advisors, funding panelists, and/or other professional capacities.

An expansion of Creative West's [Emerging Leaders of Color \(ELC\) program](#), which has been partnering with and supporting 100+ BIPOC arts and culture leaders since 2010, the program has expanded nationwide and its mission has become a national endeavor with collective support and commitment from the collaborative of the six RAOs.

Mariel Gardner was born at the mouth of the Susquehanna River in Havre de Grace, Harford County, Maryland, and hails from another French river city on the banks of the Ohio, Louisville, in Jefferson County, Kentucky. A graduate of the J. Graham Brown School and the University of Louisville, Mariel was raised in the Algonquin neighborhood of Louisville's West End.

A seventh-generation Kentuckian by way of Christian County, Mariel's family moved to Louisville during the Great Migration, seeking refuge from the violence of the Deep South. They settled in neighborhoods later devastated by urban renewal, a history that deeply informs Mariel's work. As a community organizer, writer, and advocate, Mariel focuses on preserving Black land, promoting sociopolitical education, and building networks of solidarity across Kentucky.

With roots in the land and a commitment to justice, Mariel carries forward the legacy of the women who came before her, weaving art, history, and community care into her mission to create a more equitable future.

National Arts Funding Update:

Lori Meadows and Teresa Day of Kentuckians for the Arts highlighted concerns over potential federal cuts to the National Endowment for the Arts, which would impact Kentucky's arts budget. She urged board members to advocate for increased arts funding. Kentucky Arts Day & Legislative Advocacy: Kentucky Arts Day will be held on February 13th, with an emphasis on

meeting legislators to advocate for arts funding. Board members were encouraged to start conversations with local legislators. Despite Kentucky being ranked 48th in arts funding, the Arts Council continues to be a vital organization. Board members were encouraged to promote the benefits of arts programs. Meadows discussed the importance of channeling state funding through the Arts Council to ensure equitable support for all parts of Kentucky. Report concluded.

Due to time constraints, updates on arts activities were skipped and will be emailed to board members.

Closing Remarks:

Cathers thanked attendees and McCorvey reminded them of upcoming dates:

Kentucky Arts Day: February 13th

Kentucky Crafted Market: March 9th at the Horse Park in Lexington

Writers' Day & Induction Ceremony: April 24th

Cathers encouraged everyone to take advantage of the 20% discount at the Artisan Center.

McCorvey motion to adjourn. Schrader moves, Vaughn seconds. The motion passes.