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MURAL ARTS INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES NEW INITIATIVE FOR MULTI-YEAR PROJECTS WITH THREE CITIES

PHILADELPHIA – February 3, 2021 – Mural Arts Philadelphia announces the Public Art & Civic Engagement Capacity Building Initiative, a program of the Mural Arts Institute, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. With its Public Art & Civic Engagement (PACE) Capacity Building Initiative, Mural Arts aims to develop sustainable infrastructure to support the growth of socially-engaged public art in communities around the United States. The Mural Arts Institute is dedicated to advancing research on and development of participatory and socially-engaged public art practices. The PACE Initiative is the third initiative to be launched by the Institute since it began in 2017.

After a competitive selection process, three host institutions were selected to participate in a 30-month program, each gaining a range of tools, support, learning opportunities, and funding. The three institutions selected to participate in this inaugural cohort are **Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon in Portland, Oregon; Louisville Visual Art in Kentucky;** and the **South Side Community Art Center in Chicago, Illinois**. At the conclusion of the 2 and a half years, each organization will work with artists and community to create two works of public art in a civically engaged manner, including sending the artists for an immersion incubator program to Philadelphia (pending COVID restrictions). Participation in PACE is a unique growth opportunity for participating organizations, requiring significant time, commitment, and strategic alignment. The components of the initiative also include consultations, capacity building workshops, artist catalyst programs, a symposium in Philadelphia, as well as financial support for the participating organizations and the artist catalysts who will lead projects in their communities.

Vanessa Corrêa, spokesperson for The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation said, “The Public Art & Civic Engagement Capacity Building Initiative will be a powerful tool for generating dialogue, building relationships, and empowering communities. The Mellon Foundation is delighted to support this inaugural cohort of institutions dedicated to strengthening and advancing the practice of socially engaged art in and for their cities.”

“The Mural Arts Institute supports programs in six cities under our first two initiatives,” said **Netanel Portier, Director of the Mural Arts Institute**. “We are excited to build meaningful relationships with the new PACE initiative cohort from three new cities, and to share and learn together with them, their community, and artists.”

The goals of the PACE Capacity Building Initiative are to provide capacity building and technical assistance to artists and arts organizations in three United States cities, strengthen a national network of socially engaged public art practitioners, and produce and disseminate research, case studies and useful advice to a national audience. The Mural Arts Institute has hired [Sherman Cultural Strategies](#) to lead research and evaluation for the PACE Initiative.

About the Participants

The Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) unites Asians and Pacific Islanders to build power, develop leaders, and advance equity through organizing, advocacy, community development, and cultural work. We envision a just world where Asians and Pacific Islanders and communities who share our aspirations and struggles have the power, resources, and voice to determine our own futures, and where we work in solidarity to drive political, social, economic, and cultural change.

Louisville Visual Art (LVA) serves artists living and working in Louisville throughout their creative lifecycles. We nurture school age artists with education and programs that provide essential skills in art making, critical reflection, and advocacy, and supports young artists emerging from college into professional careers, recognizing the value of working artists in our city. LVA’s growing *Mural Arts Program* through these efforts, allowing school age students to learn by doing on-site with professional artists from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds in mural-making, supporting mid-career and emerging artists to create highly visible work, and inspiring leaders all across Louisville.



Founded in 1940, the **South Side Community Art**

Center (SSCAC) in Chicago is the nation’s only continuously operated community art center of the more than one hundred founded as part of the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration. It nourished the careers of many important American artists—Charles White, Elizabeth Catlett, Gordon Parks, Eldzier Cortor, Margaret Burroughs, the artists of AFRICOBRA, and many others. Today, the SSCAC continues its mission of conserving,

preserving, and promoting the legacy and future of African American artists while educating the community on the value of art and culture. It maintains an active slate of exhibitions, classes, and public programs and a deep engagement with community in all aspects of its work.

The Mural Arts Institute is supported by the JPB Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The Public Art & Civic Engagement (PACE) Capacity Building Initiative is made possible by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

About the Mural Arts Institute

Established in 2017 as an initiative of Mural Arts Philadelphia, Mural Arts Institute is dedicated to advancing research on and development of participatory and socially-engaged public art practices. The Institute's approach is centered around connection: building networks, developing partnerships, and convening artists, community and partners to collaborate around participatory, socially engaged public art practices. Our work is in service to a larger movement that values equity, fairness and progress across all of society. We bring the Mural Arts model to other change-oriented cities across the country to help build their capacity to sustain community-driven public art projects. We work with artists, activists, arts organizations, cultural institutions, municipal governments and more with the goal of igniting change with public art.

About Mural Arts Philadelphia

Mural Arts Philadelphia is the nation's largest public art program, dedicated to the belief that art ignites change. For more than 35 years, Mural Arts has united artists and communities through a collaborative and equitable process, creating nearly 4,000 artworks that have transformed public spaces and individual lives. Mural Arts aims to empower people, stimulate dialogue, and build bridges to understanding with projects that attract artists from Philadelphia and around the world, and programs that focus on youth education, restorative justice, mental health and wellness, and public art and its preservation. Popular mural tours offer a firsthand glimpse into the inspiring stories behind Mural Arts' iconic and unparalleled collection, which has earned Philadelphia worldwide recognition as the "City of Murals." For more information, call 215-685-0750 or visit muralarts.org. Follow along on social media: [@muralarts](#) on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and [@MuralArtsPhiladelphia](#) on Facebook, and [phillymuralarts](#) on YouTube.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: high-resolution images are available in the Mural Arts Philadelphia press room at <http://bit.ly/MuralArtsPressKit>.

Photo credit: I AM SINGING, painted by Darius Dennis, Jared Diaz and Charles Nunn in collaboration with Louisville Visual Art in Louisville, KY, The Nia Center, 2020 (Original photo by Danny Lyon).