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SEVENTY-TWO NONPROFITS APPLY FOR CUYAHOGA ARTS & CULTURE OPERATING GRANTS 2011-2012 Awards Expected to Deliver Impact throughout Cuyahoga County

CLEVELAND (April 22, 2010)—Seventy-two (72) Cuyahoga County organizations are hoping to secure a share of the funds slated for distribution during the 2011-2012 cycle of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's General Operating Support grant program. Included among the groups that met the April 7, 2010 application deadline are nine organizations hoping to obtain Cuyahoga Arts & Culture (CAC) operating support for the first time. Funding decisions will follow a public, peer review process scheduled to take place on May 26 and 27, and the board's approval of award amounts in fall.

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's General Operating Support (GOS) grant program provides unrestricted core support for established, fiscally sound arts or cultural organizations that consistently offer high quality services to a broad audience. The 2001-2012 GOS grant cycle represents the second round of operating awards made available through the proceeds of a ten-year excise tax on cigarette sales approved by Cuyahoga County voters in November 2006. Since 2007, the initial cycle of CAC General Operating Support has made grants totaling nearly \$45 million to more than sixty Cuyahoga County-based nonprofits.

CAC Executive Director Karen Gahl-Mills celebrated the continued vitality of a program that aims to fill the greatest need of Cuyahoga County's arts and cultural organizations. According to Gahl-Mills, "CAC has become widely recognized as a steady and significant source of public funding for arts and culture at a time when organizations and institutions throughout the county—and across the nation—face unprecedented economic challenges. Cuyahoga County's arts and cultural sector is extraordinary; I would argue that the scope and reliability of CAC operating support is likewise an extraordinary resource whose impacts unfold daily."

Steven Minter, who chairs CAC's five-member Board of Trustees, cited the significance of the nine applicant groups seeking their first Cuyahoga Arts & Culture GOS award. "With the addition of nine organizations that have not previously received CAC operating support, our field of prospective grantees, which is already incredibly diverse, continues to grow."

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According to Minter, “The expansion of the GOS applicant pool—geographically and in terms of artistic discipline, genre, size, and audience—enables us to cast an even wider net, something that is fundamental to the mission of Cuyahoga Arts & Culture. In order ‘to sustain the excellence of Cuyahoga County’s arts and cultural assets,’ the responsibility with this body has been charged, the impact of our investment and its reach must grow and evolve with the times.”

Minter continued, “The quality and scale of Cuyahoga County’s arts and cultural sector are key to this community’s appeal—to residents and those relocating to Northeast Ohio, to tourists, to the employers we wish to attract, and to those we are committed to retaining. The significant, secure source of funds that CAC offers is an absolutely vital piece of the equation.”

Karen Gahl-Mills, who began her tenure as CAC executive director on February 1 of this year, reiterated Minter’s positive response to the expanded applicant pool and its inclusion of nine prospective first-time GOS grantees. “We must never lose sight of the fact that CAC funds are public dollars and that the responsible stewardship of those funds presents us with an enormous obligation—and an incredible opportunity—to be transparent, fair, and inclusive. More applicants, new applicants are essential to generating impacts that genuinely reflect not only the breadth and depth of this community’s arts and cultural landscape, but also the public nature of CAC’s massive investment.”

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture makes grants using public funds to support the arts and cultural assets that enrich Cuyahoga County and the lives of its citizens. Since 2007, CAC grants have delivered in excess of \$48 million to more than one hundred Cuyahoga County organizations and programs, helping to secure CAC’s place among the nation’s largest sources of local public support for the arts. Detailed information on CAC grantmaking including the group’s *2009 Report to the Community* is available online at <http://www.cacgrants.org>.

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