



## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

### Urbana Arts & Culture Program Monthly Progress Report

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month– August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019

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#### Introduction

The following Urbana Arts & Culture Program Monthly Progress Report describes activities of the Arts & Culture Program for the Urbana Arts & Culture Commission. The report includes information regarding projects that are in progress, recent requests and recommendations from the public, staff activities, and upcoming events.

#### Staffing Update

- **Illinois Arts Council Summer Youth Employment Grant:** The Urbana Arts and Culture Program hired two new Arts and Culture interns through the Illinois Arts Council Summer Youth Employment Grant. Aria Pleasure and Emilia Muckenhirn, both students of Urbana High School, have already put in numerous hours assisting with events, including Urbana's Downtown Get Down, Young Artist Studio, and Art at the Market. Both interns have been assisting with program planning in the office.
- **Community Learning Lab Masters Interns:** The Community Learning Lab (CLL) interns, Sheng Chiang (John) Ji and Lanjun (Leona) Wu, completed their internships this past week. John Ji will return to his home of Taipei, Taiwan to pursue a career in arts marketing and Leona Wu will move to Manhattan, NY to pursue a career in arts consulting.
- **CARE4U Program Intern:** The CARE4U Program intern, Kaylee Crushshon, continues to work part-time for the Urbana Arts and Culture Program, assisting with events, administrative support, and office tasks. The Arts and Culture Program is in conversations with CARE4U Program staff regarding academic year internship partnership opportunities.
- **SOCW 461: Professional Practice Seminar:** The Urbana Arts and Culture Coordinator will be a site supervisor for SOCW461 students from the University of Illinois for the fall 2019 semester. A group of 2-4 senior-level social work students will work 2 hours per week at the City, coordinating a project centered around arts and culture. Their office hours, a group project, and writing assignment will be supervised by the Arts and Culture Coordinator who will assign each student a grade at the end of the semester. The students will work from Sept 9<sup>th</sup> and end on Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> and receive class credit through the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

## Updates on Current Projects

- **Urbana's Inaugural Poet Laureate, Will Reger:** The City of Urbana's Mayor's Office and the Urbana Arts & Culture Program honored inaugural Poet Laureate, Will Reger, with an open reception on July 10<sup>th</sup> from 5pm-6:30pm at Analog Wine Library in Downtown Urbana. The reception was attended by over 50 people and the award was presented by Mayor Diane Wolfe Marlin and the Arts and Culture Coordinator.

Will Reger has been meeting with the Arts and Culture Coordinator to discuss upcoming projects and held a *Listening Session* on Wednesday, July 31<sup>st</sup> attended by about 20 people to gather public input on the Poet Laureate's priorities. A survey was also distributed on social media by the Arts and Culture Program and remains open for participation.

- **Poets on a Park Bench:** Urbana Public Television, Urbana Arts and Culture Program, and the Urbana Poet Laureate are jointly sponsoring a new TV mini-series called Poets on a Park Bench. Poets on a Park Bench will feature a short interview between a local poet and the Poet Laureate, followed by the local poet reading some selected works on camera. Each episode will be filmed in a different Urbana park and emphasize the diversity of our poetry community. The episodes will air on UPTV and be posted to YouTube. Episodes will also be turned into radio podcasts and air on 104.5 WRFU and potentially syndicated on WEFT, pending approval.
- **Poems on Glass:** This upcoming Murals on Glass cycle will not only incorporate the Utility Box Pilot Program, but will also feature "Poems on Glass," a new initiative of Urbana's Poet Laureate. Will Reger plans to release a call for submissions of poetry inspired by our Murals on Glass artworks. Selected artists will have their poems printed on adhesive vinyl and displayed next to the mural's art label.
- **Art Now:** August's edition of [Art Now](#) features Urbana's Inaugural Poet Laureate, Will Reger. A joint production by the [Urbana Arts & Culture Program](#) and [Urbana Public Television](#), Art Now airs at 6:15pm every Monday on UPTV6, re-runs at 11pm on Tuesdays, and online on the [UPTV6 Youtube Channel](#).
- **Downtown Get Down Series:** The Urbana Arts & Culture Program is working in partnership with the Urbana Park District, 40 North Champaign County Arts Council, and the Urbana Business Association to sponsor the *Downtown Get Down*, a downtown events series for Downtown Urbana that takes place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month May-August. The series features live concerts, DJs, an artist's street market, kid's zone, inflatables, games, live arts demos, and performing artists.

July's event featured DJ Grapes and DJ Funky Phil followed by a live musical performance from Ther'Up.Y. The event was expanded to include a mini soccer game area provided by Soccer Planet, demos from Veoride, and theater style-seating in front of

the Pop-Up Performance tent that featured 10 additional live artists and performance groups. Moreover, this past month featured live art from artist, Matt Harsh and Gilbert Gallery artists, Marc-Anthony Macon, James Minor, and Jillian Nichell. So far, the Downtown Get Down has featured over 60 individual local artists, over 45 unique community organizations and maker groups, and over 70 area events held by Downtown Urbana businesses. The July event was attended by between 800-1,000 attendees and had a strong participation from community groups, sponsors, and area businesses.

August's event is held in conjunction with Urbana Sweetcorn Festival and will feature a mini Makerlab in the Busey Lot and performances by DJ Silkee and New Souls.

- **Urbanalove Summer Movie Nights:** The City of Urbana's Arts & Culture Program continues to partner with The Urbana Free Library, Kanopy, and Urbanalove to offer the Urbanalove Summer Movie Nights this summer of 2019, boasting a line-up of films for the whole family. Indoor films are screened at Broadway Food Hall and outdoor films are screened at Boneyard Creek Crossing next to 25 O'Clock Brewing Company on the corner of Race and Griggs Streets in Downtown Urbana. All films are free and open to the public. Food will be available for purchase at both locations.

**Aug 14: Loving Vincent (2017) – Rated PG-13**

Outdoors at Boneyard Creek Crossing at sundown (show time 8:30pm)

**Aug 29: Kedi (2016) – NR (recommended 8+)**

Indoors at Broadway Food Hall (show time at 5:30pm)

- **Urbana Arts Grants:** For the 2019 cycle of the Urbana Arts Grants Program, the Urbana Arts and Culture Program awarded \$80,000 to artists, arts organizations, and festival presenters for creative projects that enrich the lives of Urbana residents and visitors. Grantees are currently initiating projects.

Upcoming downtown festivals funded through the grant program include CU Jazz Festival, CU Black and African Arts Festival, Sweetcorn Festival, Pygmalion, Heartland Makerfest, CU Folk and Roots Festival, and more!

- **Artist of the Corridor:** The current Artist of the Corridor exhibition on display is *LINOLEUM & INK* curated by Arts in the Schools grant recipient, Lisa Kesler. *LINOLEUM & INK* is an exhibition of prints created by Urbana High School art students in collaboration with Artist-in-Residence, Lisa Kesler. Forty student artists participated in a 3-week intensive class in linoleum block printmaking and reduction printing with the artist, creating their own work in the process. The opening reception held on June 6<sup>th</sup> was attended by Mayor Diane Wolfe Marlin, City staff, Urbana Arts and Culture Commissioners, and five UHS students and their families. Works will be on display through August, with a student panel discussion on August 15<sup>th</sup> from 12pm-1pm at The Urbana Free Library.

- **Art at the Market:** In partnership with Urbana's Market at the Square, the Urbana Arts & Culture Program, continues to offer mid-morning concerts and arts workshops led by local artists at Market IN the Square every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month. The July 13<sup>th</sup> activities included a performance from Appalachian folk music from The Young and the Fretless and juggling workshop from flow artist, Michael Moxie.

This past Saturday, August 10th, Art at the Market celebrated *National Farmer's Market Week*, featuring creative family-focused farmer's market activities in addition to a live performance from Jean Rene Balekita and Bomoyi.

- **The Young Artist's Studio:** The Young Artist's Studio series presented by the Urbana Public Arts Program and the Urbana Free Library features youth arts workshops every once a month on Sundays at 3pm. The July 21<sup>st</sup> workshop features Kvn Tajzea of the D.O.S.E. Foundation teaching theater games. Our upcoming workshops include a Manga Workshop from Kofi Bazell-Smith on August 18<sup>th</sup> and an African Drum Workshop from Susan and Cindy Ogwal of the CU Black and African Arts Festival on September 15<sup>th</sup>. All workshops are held 3pm-3:45pm in the Urbana Free Library's Children's Library.
- **Urbana Sculpture Project:** Urbana Arts and Culture Coordinator, Rachel Storm, served as a juror on the most recent national call for sculptures from Public Art League. While this is not a year in which Urbana Arts and Culture Program sponsors sculptures, local group MCDJ (Mike and Connie Hosier, David and Janet Peshkin) have pledged to sponsor a new sculpture this cycle as part of the Urbana Sculpture Project, *Tumble Arch*, by Jim Gallucci from Greensboro, NC. The sculpture's exact location is still being determined and the installation will be announced later this summer. A sincere thank you to the MCDJ Group for their ongoing support of public art!
- **Murals on Glass/Urbana Utility Wrap Program:** Murals on Glass, an initiative to feature local artworks on downtown Urbana windows, will soon open an application period. Now the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle, Murals on Glass selects artwork from a resident artist from Champaign County to have their work reproduced in adhesive vinyl and adhered to the front windows of a municipal building. The selected location this year will be the Cunningham Township Office's front windows. Staff are developing the plan for the Urbana Utility Wrap Program.
- **Outreach and Partner Presentations:** Arts and Culture Coordinator, Rachel Storm, is attending committee meetings for the Welcoming Collaborative, a group of area nonprofits, municipal, and community organizations working towards initiatives that create welcoming and inclusive communities for local immigrants.
- **Immigrant Welcoming Week:** Created by YMCA of the USA's national partner Welcoming America, Welcoming Week, which takes place each year in September, celebrates the growing movement of communities that fully embrace new Americans and their contributions to the social fabric of our country. It's a chance for neighbors—both

immigrants and U.S.-born residents—to get to know one another and celebrate what unites us as a community!

Locally, there are over 30 Welcoming Week events happening throughout Urbana-Champaign—from concerts to advocacy trainings, celebrations and educational events. The Urbana Arts and Culture Program is joining dozens of local organizations and the Mayors of Urbana and Champaign for the kick-off event outdoors Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> from 4pm-7pm at Orpheum Theater in Downtown Champaign. Commissioners are encouraged to sign-up to volunteer at our booth. Further, the YMCA is seeking nominations for the 2019 Immigrant Welcome Awards. Welcoming Week 2019 takes place September 13-22.

- **Belonging(s) Exhibition:** In celebration of Welcoming Week, the Urbana Arts and Culture Program, The Urbana Free Library, and Spurlock Museum of World Cultures are proud to present the latest installment of the City of Urbana’s Artist of the Corridor exhibition series. BELONGING(S) is a collection of photography and short stories from local immigrants exploring identity, artifact, memory, and the meaning of home. Participants in the project identified an object from their home and through storytelling, illustrated its relationship to their personal experience with immigration. For the first year ever, the exhibition includes a display of the objects themselves at Spurlock Museum.

The opening reception will be in conjunction with the Immigrant Welcome Awards Ceremony and Celebration at The Urbana Free Library. Join us for live music, awards, and a chance to view the exhibit on display. The exhibition will be on display from September through November, with a closing reception and story slam on November 20<sup>th</sup> at Spurlock Museum.

- **The 6th Annual Immigrant Welcome Awards:** Saturday, September 21 from 3:00 - 5:00 pm at The Urbana Free Library, come celebrate the diversity of cultures that make up our community with an afternoon of food, music, and special guests. The Immigrant Welcome Awards Ceremony recognizes the contributions of individuals and organizations that have created a welcoming atmosphere for immigrants in the Champaign-Urbana community. The event will also feature the opening of BELONGING(S), the latest installment of the City of Urbana’s Artist of the Corridor exhibition series. BELONGING(S), which has been curated by Urbana Arts and Culture Program, is a collection of photography and short stories from local immigrants exploring identity, artifact, memory, and the meaning of home. The Welcome Awards are sponsored by C-U Immigration Forum with cosponsors The Urbana Free Library, Urbana Arts and Culture Program, University YMCA New American Welcome Center, the Channing Murray Foundation, the City of Champaign, and the City of Urbana.
- **Volunteer Support:** The Urbana Arts & Culture Program is seeking volunteers through new listings with CU Volunteer and the University of Illinois’ Office of Volunteer Programs.

Arts & Culture Commissioners and the public are encouraged to get involved with the Urbana Arts & Culture Program's ongoing events and initiatives. Those interested in volunteering with the Urbana Arts & Culture Program can join planning efforts or sign up to volunteer at: [https://www.urbanaininois.us/arts\\_support](https://www.urbanaininois.us/arts_support).