



Ruth Foundation for the Arts focuses on Collectives for their third iteration of Artist Choice Awards

*The 2024 artist-led grant program awards
\$1.1 million to 35 artist collectives across the country.*

Milwaukee, WI — May 16, 2024 — Today, the Ruth Foundation for the Arts (Ruth Arts) is pleased to announce the 2024 recipients of the third annual Artist Choice—the Foundation’s flagship program uniquely guided by an artist-driven nomination process— to award \$1.1 million in unrestricted grants to 35 art collectives across the country.

Ruth Arts is dedicated to meeting the evolving needs and lived experiences of artists, communities, and arts organizations whose work is anchored by visual arts, performing arts, and arts education. Each year, the Foundation invites a different group of artists to participate directly in its grantmaking through Artist Choice. Anchored in the belief that artists are vital decision-makers and guided by participatory grantmaking, Artist Choice invites artists from varying disciplines and at all stages of their careers to recommend organizations that have deeply influenced their creative practices and contributed to the cultural imagination at large.

For the third iteration, Artist Choice focused on artist collectives— as both nominators and recipients— recognizing a critical but often underfunded facet of the artmaking ecosystem. The 2024 selection process was informed by the recommendation of 19 collectives, who acknowledged the inspiring work of other collectives for their commitment to artist-driven models of operation, their investment in peer mentorship and cultivating artistic communities, and for embodying the interdependence that is imperative to sustainable artistic practices.

“We recognize collectives as an integral part of the arts ecosystem—reflective of the possibilities and complexities of collaborative and democratized decision-making, of artist-driven models of learning and mentorship, and exemplifying what it truly means to build sustainable networks of survival and support,” **shares Ruth Arts Program Director Kim Nguyen.** “Collective work is not necessarily extraordinary nor is it new—it is in fact,

essential and deeply human, as much as it is inherently intergenerational and not beholden to geographies. Artist Choice guides us towards new directions each year, encouraging us all to reimagine and shift our own practices and processes. The breadth of this year's awardees demonstrate what happens when we work together and we work across, while showing us how we care for each other along the way."

The 2024 Artist Choice nominators were collectives from within the Ruth Arts grantee pool as well as several new nominators from across the country, including: AFRICOBRA, AMBOS (Art Made Between Opposite Sides), Black Image Center, Black Quantum Futurism, BUSH Gallery, Chinatown Art Brigade, Cog•nate Collective, Dark Noise, Kinetic Light, Las Nietas de Nonó, New Red Order, People's Kitchen Collective, Pu'uhonua Society, Related Tactics, Sixty Inches From Center, Smoke School of Art, Spiderwoman Theater, The Propeller Group, and The W.O.W. Project. Nominators were also eligible to be nominated for the award.

"I feel collectivity is something that comes naturally to artists and arts communities," **shared Tempestt Hazel, co-founder of Sixty Inches From Center.** "When Ruth Arts asked for the artist collectives who were inspiring us, it provided a chance to think about those we're in community with who are doing very deep, slow, challenging, and transformative collective work. Work that is rooted in cooperative values. They are the ones lovingly and unapologetically criticizing the methods, economics, containers, processes, and strategies that have been used to do community, cultural, and artistic work. They are moving beyond the words and putting their theory into practice. They aren't afraid to try, they aren't afraid to fail, and they aren't afraid to be radically transparent along the way. We're grateful that Ruth Arts opened an opportunity to lift their names in this way."

This year, Artist Choice awarded nearly \$1.1 million to 35 collectives across the country. Each collective received an unrestricted award of \$30,000. Special mention goes to Junior High Los Angeles, who received multiple nominations and was thus awarded \$60,000.

"We are honored to receive an Artist Choice grant from Ruth Arts," **said Muriel Miguel, founder of Spiderwoman Theater.** "Now in our 48th year, Spiderwoman Theater is the oldest, continually running, Native feminist theater in the Americas. We empower, inspire, nurture, and challenge Indigenous and women theater artists and their communities to discover and explore their dreams and their futures through collective storytelling and performance. Activism, self-determination, and ensemble storytelling are the foundation of our work which uses traditional and contemporary stories to bridge ancestral cultural practice and contemporary Western theater. We are pleased to be recognized for our collective practice and for the Indigenous community, which honors our vision and is the core of who we are."

2024 Artist Choice

**denotes recipients with fiscal sponsors*

AMBOS

Los Angeles, CA

Anti-Eviction Mapping Project*

National

Artist As First Responder*

Oakland, CA

Black Artists of DC

Washington D.C.

Black Image Center

Los Angeles, CA

Brew & Forge*

Amherst, MA

Chinatown Art Brigade*

New York, NY

Cooperation Racine*

Chicago, IL

Creative Artist Association

Chicago, IL

Dark Noise*

National

Feel the Beat

Denver, CO

For the Birds Trapped in Airports*

Los Angeles, CA

Ikidowin Theater Ensemble*

Minneapolis, MN

Junior High Los Angeles

Los Angeles, CA

Kamoinge Collective

New York, NY

Kinetic Light*

National

La La Lil Jidar*

Philadelphia, PA

Las Fotos*

Los Angeles, CA

Las Nietas de Nonó*

Carolina, Puerto Rico

Lenni Lenapexkweyok*

5 diasporic Lenape Nations (in Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Ontario)

Macro Waves*

San Francisco, CA

Ho'omau Nā Maka o ka 'Āina*

Kā'ū, Hawai'i

New Red Order*

Ojibway/Tlingit (National)

Onaman Collective*

Anishinaabeg Territory

Plataforma Eje

Puerto Rico

Press Press*

Baltimore, MD

QTViệt Cafe Collective*

Oakland, CA

Safe Harbors NYC*

New York, NY

Sari-Sari

New York, NY

Sixty Inches From Center

Chicago, IL

Slanguage Studio*

Wilmington, CA

Spiderwoman Theater

Kuna/ Rappahannock/ New York

The Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network

National

Tuesday Night Project*

Los Angeles, CA

Women Photograph

National

Ruth Arts will continue supporting organizations in the arts annually through the Artist Choice nominations. For more information about the Foundation's programming, artist nominators, or the awarded organizations, please visit the [website](#). All inquiries can be emailed to press@rutharts.org.

ABOUT THE RUTH FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

The Ruth Foundation for the Arts (Ruth Arts) is dedicated to meeting the evolving needs and lived experiences of artists, communities, and arts organizations whose work is anchored by visual arts, performing arts, and arts education. Ruth Arts honors our benefactor Ruth DeYoung Kohler II (1941-2020) with inventive approaches to philanthropy that are rooted in creativity, experimentation, and access. Since launching the foundation in 2022, the foundation has awarded more than \$35 million in grants across ten programs. Ruth Arts will be opening a new project space in Milwaukee later this year, with the full program launching in fall of 2024.

ABOUT THE FISCAL SPONSORS*

NYFA for Kinetic Light; Centro de Economía Creativa for Las Nietas de Nonó. Cousin Collective for New Red Order. Ecosystems of Care for Cooperation Racine. Little Tokyo Service Center for Tuesday Night Project. New York Theatre Workshop for Safe Harbors NYC. Lenni Lenapexkweyok is supported by Catalyst, fiscally sponsored by The Foundation for Independent Artists. Community Partners for Las Fotos. Seventh Generation Fund for Onaman Collective. Angels Gate Cultural Center for Slanguage Studio. CAAAV: Organizing Asian Communities for Chinatown Art Brigade. Sixty Inches from Center for For the Birds Trapped in Airports. Arab-American Development Corp for La La Lil Jidar. Ho'omau Nā Maka o ka 'Āina is a project of Pu'uhonua Society. Fractured Atlas for Dark Noise and Press Press. Peace Development Fund for Brew & Forge. Next River for Artist As First Responder. QTViệt Cafe Collective is a project of Asian Refugees United, fiscally sponsored by Chinese for Affirmative Action. Independent Arts & Media for The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project. SOMArts for Macro Waves. IkiDowin Theater Ensemble is a program of the Indigenous Peoples Task Force.