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GREATER BALTIMORE CULTURAL ALLIANCE AWARDS 2015 RUBYS GRANTS IN MEDIA AND PERFORMING ARTS

Baltimore, April 27, 2015 – The Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance (GBCA) is pleased to announce the eight artists selected for the 2015 Rubys Artist Project Grants in media and performing arts. Grants from \$5,000 to \$10,000 will be made to support artists that reflect a diversity of talent and creativity for projects including experimental film, performance, outdoor aerial theatre and puppetry.

The 2015 Rubys grantees in Performing and Media Arts are:

ellen cherry, Baltimore: to support the music composition for and filming of *The Holey Land: An Allegory*, a ten-minute “crankie” (hand-cranked puppet piece) created by artist Valeska Populoh that examines current environmental issues and the consequences of industry on our communities.

Brian Francoise, Baltimore: to support the development of *Covenants*, a devised play infused with spoken word performance, physical theatre and digital storytelling that will celebrate “neighborhood voices” while exploring the history and legacy of restrictive covenants with residents who live in Greater Northwood.

Helen Glazer, Owings Mills: to support *Above, Below, and Within the Ice*, a series of hand-colored photographic prints and sculptures of ice formations, source material for which will be gathered during the artist’s upcoming research trip to Antarctica.

Naoko Maeshiba, Baltimore: to support *Subject/Object*, a solo performance project that investigates the nature of “self” through deconstruction and redefinition with the use of video, sound, poetry and clowning as the exploration tools.

A. Moon, Baltimore: to support *I Am Learning to Abandon the World*, a 16mm, silent film composed of the non-explicit shots culled from a trove of vintage “adult” films that will create a narrative that studies female subjectivity, mood without action and that which cannot be represented.

Mara Neimanis, Baltimore: to support *Cross Over Stories*, a series of three onsite aerial performance pieces designed to transform Baltimore urban spaces into innovative performance spots.

Juanita Rockwell, Baltimore: to support the creation of the script, lyrics and music for *A Little Patch of Ground*, a darkly comic play with songs set in the bloody aftermath of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*.

Olu Butterfly Woods, Baltimore: to support the creation of the first three installments of *Lookout*, a grassroots documentary film series on the rhythm and hustle of Baltimore’s performing arts and live music scene.

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All of the artist projects will begin immediately or are already underway and will be developed over the course of the next 12 months. Each project includes opportunities for public engagement such as readings, performances or screenings. Information on attending the public component of a project will be announced here: <http://www.baltimoreculture.org/programs/grants-and-awards/rubys-artist-project-grants>.

"In this second season of the Rubys, it was exciting to see so many talented applicants while at the same time seeing the projects of earlier grantees come to fruition. The breadth of creativity, artistic excellence and community engagement represented in this work is extraordinary and a true sign of the Baltimore region's position as a cultural powerhouse," **said Jeannie Howe, executive director of the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance**. "GBCA is grateful to its talented and thoughtful jurors and to the Robert W. Deutsch Foundation for their support of this program."

"Baltimore is home to a remarkably diverse and energetic creative community that has been severely under-resourced for far too long. The Deutsch Foundation is pleased to support the Rubys and delighted with the exceptional projects selected for funding in this round," **said Deutsch Foundation president Jane Brown**.

The 2015 Rubys jury panels for the Media and Performing Arts were comprised of the following noted professionals:

- **Maria Agui Carter**, filmmaker, scholar, and president of Iguana Films
- **Saverio Meddis**, journalist, founding staff member of usatoday.com and USA Today newspaper, professor, American University and George Mason University
- **Tewodross Melchishua**, artist, filmmaker, digital media producer, associate professor of visual communications and digital media arts, Bowie State University
- **Kenneth Rogers**, assistant professor of media and cultural studies, York University in Toronto
- **Holly Bass**, multidisciplinary performance and visual artist, writer, director, 2012 Best Performance Artist-*Washington CityPaper*
- **Jacqueline Lawton**, playwright, dramaturge, assistant professor in the department of dramatic art, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- **Colin Hovde**, producing artistic director, Theatre Alliance
- **D. J. Sparr**, composer, guitarist, 2011-2014 Young American Composer-in-Residence, California Symphony
- **Rebecca Wright**, artistic director of Applied Mechanics ensemble

The Rubys Artist Project Grant program was established by GBCA in 2013 to support the region's gems - the local creative community of performing, visual, media and literary artists. Created with the vision and initial funding from the Robert W. Deutsch Foundation, the Rubys provide meaningful project support directly to artists. The Rubys usher in a new era of arts grantmaking in Baltimore by offering citizen-philanthropists as well as foundations the opportunity to fund individual artists. The Rubys were inspired in part by Ruby Lerner, the visionary founder and leader of Creative Capital in New York City.

The Robert W. Deutsch Foundation invests in innovative people, programs and ideas that promote arts and culture, economic and community development, and social justice, with a primary focus on the City of Baltimore. The foundation has a history of supporting innovations in science and technology in Maryland's public colleges and universities, and views innovations in these fields as important drivers of social change.

The Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance (GBCA) nurtures and promotes a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable arts and cultural community essential to the region's quality of life. GBCA aims to promote the region's creative sector and significantly increase artists' and organizations' capacity to do great work.

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