



# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ARTS

Maryland State Arts Council Part of the Maryland Department of Commerce

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MARYLAND STATE ARTS COUNCIL ANNOUNCES 2018 INDIVIDUAL ARTIST AWARD RECIPIENTS \$225,000 awarded to 78 outstanding Maryland artists

**BALTIMORE, MD (April 12, 2018)** - The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) announced today that \$225,000 has been awarded to 78 Maryland artists through the 2018 Individual Artist Awards (IAA). This year's awardees were chosen from a group of 367 applicants and represent some of the state's leading playwrights, craft makers, photographers, and non-classical music composers and performers.

"Maryland has a long history of artistic excellence," said Ken Skrzysz, MSAC Executive Director. "The Individual Artist Award specifically celebrates the accomplishments of creative energies, across our state, who are in their studios, in their communities, breathing life into innovative ideas through the creative process."

The MSAC's competitive IAA Program is administered in partnership with Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation and recognizes artists in 18 disciplines that are divided into three groups, with awards presented in each discipline every three years. This year's awardees represented the fields of Non-Classical Music Composition and Solo Performance, Crafts, Photography, and Playwriting. Awardees were chosen, based solely on artistic merit, by an out-of-state jury of discipline-specific experts.

"It's such an honor to receive an Individual Artist Award from the Maryland State Arts Council," said Nakeya Cook of Howard County, a first time IAA recipient in the Photography category. Cook's work is beginning to garner greater attention from a wider audience, and she expects that the unrestricted IAA grant that accompanies the award will help with the printing and distribution of her work to keep up with demand.

Awardees will be honored on May 20th during a ceremony at the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore and will receive grants of \$1,000, \$3,000 or \$6,000 in recognition of their outstanding achievement and in support of their continued artistic growth. The full list of 2018 IAA awardees can be found [here](#).

“Each award not only recognizes my creative talent but financially supports the work I put into my music behind the scenes,” said Cathy Fink, a musician from Montgomery County who is being honored with her fifth IAA this year. “These awards enable me to practice, compose and create so I am able to share new creative works with others!”

The 2019 IAA application period opens in May 2018, with a deadline of July 25th. Eligible categories for 2019 are Creative Non-Fiction/Fiction, Media/Digital/Electronic Arts, Theater Solo Performance, Painting, and Works on Paper. IAA Program and application information can be found on the Individual Artist Awards page on MSAC’s website.

#### About MSAC

Founded in 1967, the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is an agency of the State of Maryland Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts, and encourages and invests in the advancement of the arts for all Marylanders. Its grants and programs support artists and arts organizations in their pursuit of artistic excellence, ensure the accessibility of the arts to all citizens, and promote statewide awareness of arts resources and opportunities. MSAC awards grants to not-for-profit, tax-exempt organizations and individual artists, and provides technical and advisory assistance to individuals and groups. The agency is funded by an annual appropriation from the State of Maryland and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. MSAC may also receive contributions from private, non-governmental sources. For more information, go to [msac.org](http://msac.org).

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