



**For Immediate Release**    **Contact:**    Dana Larson or Kate Lydecker  
Ruder Finn Arts & Communications Counselors  
917.345.9841 / 212.715.1602  
[larsond@ruderfinn.com](mailto:larsond@ruderfinn.com) / [lydeckerk@ruderfinn.com](mailto:lydeckerk@ruderfinn.com)

**A POWERFUL NEW COLLABORATION OF FOUNDATIONS AND FEDERAL AGENCIES  
PUTS ARTS AT THE CENTER OF THE REVITALIZATION OF CITIES AND TOWNS  
ACROSS THE U.S.**

**Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts Convene Private Partners  
and Federal Agencies to Launch the ArtPlace Initiative**

**Initial Grants Invested in 34 Projects Nationwide**

**CHICAGO, IL, September 15, 2011** -- In an unprecedented private-public collaboration, 11 of America's top foundations have joined with the National Endowment for the Arts and seven federal agencies to establish ArtPlace ([www.artplaceamerica.org](http://www.artplaceamerica.org)), a nationwide initiative to drive revitalization in cities and towns with a new investment model that puts the arts at the center of economic development.

ArtPlace today announced its first round of grants, investing \$11.5 million in 34 locally initiated projects in cities from Honolulu to Miami. Each project supported by ArtPlace has been selected for developing a new model of helping towns and cities thrive, by strategically integrating artists and arts organizations into key local efforts in transportation, housing, community development, job creation and more.

ArtPlace grants are given through the combined support of Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Ford Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Rasmuson Foundation, The Robina Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation and an anonymous donor. In addition to the NEA, federal partners are the departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Education and Transportation, along with leadership from the White House Office of Management and Budget and the Domestic Policy Council. Federal partners do not provide funding to

ArtPlace but participate in the ArtPlace Presidents' Council and Operating Committee meetings, ensuring alignment between high-priority federal investments and policy development and ArtPlace grants.

ArtPlace will also be supported by a \$12 million loan fund capitalized by six major financial institutions and managed by the Nonprofit Finance Fund. Participating institutions are Bank of America, Chase, Citi, Deutsche Bank, MetLife and Morgan Stanley.

In a shift from earlier approaches to economic development and the arts, ArtPlace neither treats the arts as an add-on nor expects development to follow on its own from stand-alone investments in cultural projects. Instead, ArtPlace supports projects in which cultural groups operate in concert with other community partners, private and public. By leveraging the arts and culture with all of a community's other existing assets, ArtPlace aims to help communities achieve vibrant growth while doing more with less.

ArtPlace sees its role as providing venture capital, seeding entrepreneurial projects that already enjoy strong local buy-in, connect to a community's economic development strategy and have the potential to attract additional private and public support to the community.

- In Wilson, NC, local government and businesses are betting their future on a park housing the large-scale whirligigs of 92-year-old sculptor Vollis Simpson. The art park will not only draw visitors but will anchor a new Industrial Artisan District, with everything from furniture restorers to glassmakers.
- In St. Paul, MN, Springboard for the Arts is working with residents and business owners in a string of diverse neighborhoods, where a new light rail project is under construction. More than a hundred arts projects will be launched before the dust settles, with the aim of minimizing disruption in business by using art to generate a continuing flow of people during construction and build up a new urban corridor along with the rail line.
- In the heart of Detroit, MI, a contemporary art museum, a non-profit developer, local governments, local foundations and Wayne State University are all working to revive a key stretch of Woodward Avenue. Their efforts are transforming this core area with a music center, pedestrian greenways, improved museum space and a new facility for start-up companies.
- In San Francisco, CA, real estate developer Forest City is partnering with the organization Intersection for the Arts to redevelop four downtown acres that include the old San Francisco Chronicle building, empty parking lots and vacant

warehouses. These partners have already begun converting the properties into a profitable hive of film and digital-media businesses, artists' workshops, social-entrepreneur offices and cultural event space.

- And in New York, NY, a community-driven project is transforming the abandoned P.S. 109 in East Harlem into a sustainable home for 90 artists and their families and for 13,000 square feet of space for community and cultural groups, spurring economic growth on the commercial corridor of Third Avenue.

The approach being taken by ArtPlace, known as “creative placemaking,” has emerged over the past twenty years as a promising way to increase the vitality of communities and help them grow. In 2011, the National Endowment for the Arts built on its two decades of work in creative placemaking by announcing the first grants in its new Our Town program, designed to support public-private partnerships to strengthen the arts while energizing the overall community. ArtPlace takes this movement a step further, as the first major public-private partnership to encourage creative placemaking across America.

“ArtPlace is accelerating creative placemaking, where cities and towns are using the arts and other creative assets to shape their social, physical and economic futures,” said Rocco Landesman, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. “This approach brings new partners to the table to support the arts and recognizes the arts as vital drivers of community revitalization and development.”

“Economic development historically has been about bagging the buffalo—competing for the big employer to move operations to your city,” said Carol Coletta, President of ArtPlace. “But now we know the economic development game is all about how you deploy local assets to develop, attract and keep talent. So why would you not deploy every asset you have—including artists and the arts—to do that? That’s what ArtPlace is all about.”

“ArtPlace represents a new paradigm,” said Luis A. Ubiñas, President of The Ford Foundation and Chairman of the ArtPlace Presidents’ Council. “It brings to the arts the kind of economic development thinking that has long been pursued for attracting and developing businesses, big and small, across the country. ArtPlace’s integrated, interwoven approach has the potential to kick-start local economies and transform communities. The arts can play a central role spurring local economic activity.”

Concurrent with announcing its first round of grants, ArtPlace has initiated its second funding cycle. A Letter of Inquiry has been posted on [www.artplaceamerica.org](http://www.artplaceamerica.org) as of September 15, 2011. Submissions may be made through November 15, 2011.

## **ArtPlace Investments**

The first 34 ArtPlace grants have been invested in places that range across the country and vary in size from Wilson, NC (population 49,000) to New York, NY. The initial round of grants totals \$11.5 million, with an average grant size of approximately \$350,000. Funds committed to ArtPlace are overseen by the Nonprofit Finance Fund, a nonprofit lender and financial consulting organization that serves as investment and grant manager for the collaboration.

ArtPlace has invested in initiatives to revitalize neighborhoods; stimulate job growth and economic development; create new anchors for communities; increase the appeal of transit corridors; bring new economic opportunities to rural communities; build brand for communities; address urban challenges; connect people and help them tell their stories; provide artists' housing and workspace; and foster research in creative placemaking.

## **First Cycle: Investments by Locale and Grantee**

### **California**

Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Repertory Theatre

Los Angeles, CA: GOOD Ideas for Cities; Watts House Project

San Francisco, CA: Intersection for the Arts

San Joaquin Valley, CA: Creative Work Fund

San Jose, CA: 1<sup>st</sup> ACT Silicon Valley; ZER01

Yolo County, CA: Yolo County Art & Ag

### **District of Columbia**

Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Government of the District of Columbia

### **Florida**

Miami, FL: Performing Arts Center Trust, Inc.

### **Hawaii**

Honolulu, HI: Artspace

### **Idaho**

Boise, ID: Trey McIntyre Project

**Illinois**

Chicago, IL: Rebuild Foundation

**Indiana**

Indianapolis, IN: Central Indiana Community Foundation

**Louisiana**

New Orleans, LA: Mayor's Office of Cultural Economy

**Massachusetts**

Massachusetts Gateway Cities: MassINC

**Michigan**

Detroit, MI: Midtown Detroit Inc.; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit; TechTown

**Minnesota**

St. Paul, MN: Springboard for the Arts

**New York**

New York, NY: Artspace; Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, for Spaceworks; Queens Council on the Arts

**North Carolina**

Wilson, NC: City of Wilson

**Ohio**

Cincinnati, OH: ArtWorks

**Oregon**

Portland, OR: Portland Institute for Contemporary Art; Vibrancy Indicators

**Pennsylvania**

Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe; The Reinvestment Fund

**South Dakota**

Pine Ridge, SD: Red Cloud Indian School

**Texas**

Houston, TX: Houston Grand Opera

**Washington**

Seattle, WA: Wing Luke Museum

**Wisconsin**

Milwaukee, WI: Greater Milwaukee Committee

Sauk County, WI: Wormfarm Institute

**For a complete list of grants and project descriptions, please visit [www.artplaceamerica.org](http://www.artplaceamerica.org).**

#