



Power of the Arts

[Knight Arts](#) Witnessing the Transformational

ARTS AND CULTURE

Home  
 About KnightArts  
 Communities »  
 Knight Arts Challenge »  
 What We're Learning »  
 Acts of Culture »  
 Contact

### **Meet the Detroit Knight Arts Challenge finalists**

Published on June 16, 2014 by [Tatiana Hernandez](#) in [Detroit](#), [KAC Detroit](#)

8



Ernest Camel from 555 Nonprofit Gallery and Studios paints wood pallets for a theater production.  
 Credit: Carl Goines.

Thank you, Detroit. For the second year of the [Knight Arts Challenge](#), we received close to 1,000 thoughtful ideas for how the arts can play a role in engaging people in creative play, in the development of new and innovative artistic forms and in the importance of building a supportive community for artists, to name a few.

Today, we share with you the list of 88 finalists for this year's [Detroit Knight Arts Challenge](#). Following last year's trend, we continued to see strong ideas from individual artists and small collectives, particularly in the visual and performing arts.

Detroit's artist community is growing. We saw collaborative and cross-disciplinary ideas from artists and arts organizations. It is clear that nurturing and supporting each other is a strong value in Detroit, one that we hope to continue to encourage.

Finally, we hope you'll find the finalist ideas represent all parts of the city – a sign that the arts are blooming throughout Detroit.

Below is the full list of finalists, with short descriptions of the projects. Let us know what you think! Later this year, we will announce five nominees for the People's Choice Award – an opportunity for **you Detroiters** to tell us who should be awarded a \$20,000, unrestricted prize via a text-to-vote campaign. Stay tuned, we will announce winners of this year's Knight Arts Challenge in October.

- [Tatiana Hernandez](#), arts program officer

#### **2014 Detroit Finalists**

##### **2739 Edwin / 9338 Campau**

To create "Emergency Cinema," an exhibition of short documentaries made by Syrian filmmakers shown continuously on a storefront screen

##### **555 Nonprofit Gallery and Studios**

To provide artists access to studios and equipment through residencies and monthly memberships at the gallery

##### **6th Street Dance Studio/WholeProject**

To build connections between the urban dance communities in Miami and Detroit through master classes in each city and via video conferencing, anchored by Hardcore Detroit and Miami's 6th Street Dance Studio/Whole Project

##### **∞ mile (infinite mile)**

To foster critical artistic discourse in Detroit through a newly launched online journal of art and culture

##### **A Host of People**

To celebrate the do-it-yourself movement in both food and the arts by creating a site-responsive theater piece performed in community gardens around the city

##### **African Bead Museum**

To enhance an educational center for African culture by creating and renovating an exhibition and programming space for the African Bead Museum

##### **Alibi Studio**

To reimagine neglected Detroit spaces into dining rooms for curated, locally sourced meals shared by neighbors

##### **Allied Media Projects**

To expand the annual Allied Media Conference to include a full music showcase, further exploring the intersection of art and social change

##### **Anders Ruhwald**

To explore the transformative qualities of fire – both destructive and constructive – by creating "The Charred House," a permanent art installation inside a Detroit home where the interior is made of charred wood and black ceramics

**Related Press Release:**  
["Knight Arts Challenge names Detroit finalists"](#) (June 16, 2014)

**Andrew Krieger**

To weave art into people's everyday lives by creating "Kamishibai Man," a bicycle-mounted wooden theater – based on a Japanese tradition – where performers use paper art to tell serial stories

**Ape Technology**

To create a post-industrial homage to the Javanese tradition of shadow puppetry through a modern performance with towering, robotic puppets and gongs

**Artifact Makers Society**

To promote contemporary craftwork by establishing a museum and retail shop featuring the works of local artists who design for homes or other living spaces

**ARTLAB J**

To support Detroit Dance City Festival, a three-day celebration that provides an opportunity for local and national artists to present their work and strengthen ties in Detroit's dance community

**Ballet Folklorico De Los Renacidos**

To preserve Mexican culture by offering free, traditional dance instruction and costumes to Detroit's youth

**Ballet Folklorico Moyocoyani Izel**

To share the traditional dances of Mexico's La Huasteca region by partnering with a local dance group and professionals in Mexico to teach the choreography to Detroiters

**Biba Bell**

To invite the public to experience both dance and classic architecture by producing "It Never Really Happened," an intimate performance inside an apartment in the 1950s Detroit high-rise designed by Mies van der Rohe

**Body Rhythm Dance Theatre**

To celebrate Detroit's former Black Bottom neighborhood by creating a dance piece dedicated to its legacy

**Broadside Press**

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of Broadside Press, a Detroit-based publisher for many leading African-American writers, by helping digitize its works

**Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History**

To showcase how unique and connected global cultures are by hosting "Call of the Drum: A Drum Summit" featuring percussionists from around the world

**CLAVE**

To honor the spirit of Southwest Detroit by creating "Inspiración," a mosaic mural in the Springwells viaduct, one of the area's main arteries

**CMAP (Carrie Morris Arts Production)**

To present "The Living Room Series," an artistic experiment with intimate space that includes contemporary puppetry and multimedia works in a renovated, abandoned house

**Corktown Cinema L3C**

To expand Corktown Cinema's offerings to include music, performance art and filmmaker and artist talks

**Cranbrook Art Museum**

To mount performance artist Nick Cave's "Biggest, Baddest Performance of All Time!" a series of spectacles around the city

**Detroit Digital Stewards**

To tell the story of Detroit's neighborhoods through sound by creating "Detroit Music Box," a suite of community radio shows produced by the people who live there



Theatre troupe 'A Host of People' is known for breaking the traditional walls of theatre. Credit: Spilt Sugar Photography.

**Detroit Drumline Academy**

To build on a strong history of Detroit percussionists by having former drummers from Detroit-area schools teach and mentor middle and high school students

**Detroit Economic Growth Association**

To bring new life to vacant storefronts and properties by commissioning artists to design high-quality installations across neighborhoods and local business districts

**Detroit Fiber Works**

To push the limits of fiber as an art material by hosting free fiber art workshops for teens

**Detroit Future Schools**

To use the arts to help children tell their neighborhood stories by having them conduct research about their communities and convey their findings through "Data Murals"

**Detroit Symphony Orchestra**

To explore the role of art in shaping the history, recovery and resurgence of a city through "Coney Dog Jambalaya: Cities Collide," a cultural exchange between Detroit and New Orleans

**DIRT TECH RECK**

To create a video series profiling established and emerging artists that will explore the creative processes that drives Detroit's musicians

**DittoDitto**

To foster a dialogue around the arts and arts book by supporting a small publishing house focused on literary and visual arts books

#### **Forward Arts**

To enhance the natural and man-made space of the Dequindre Cut Greenway through a public art project

#### **GARAGE CULTURAL**

To engage Latino youth in the theater arts through a bilingual performing arts program in southwest Detroit

#### **Hastings Street Blues Project / Marsha Music and Juanita Anderson**

To explore the story of Detroit's mid-century, African-American community through a documentary on Joe Von Battle's seminal blues and gospel record store

#### **Haute to Death**

To showcase Detroit culture around the country by presenting the city's Haute to Death dance parties as a traveling exhibition

#### **HOWDOYOUSAYYAMINAFRICAN?**

To stage an opera based on the occupancy, vacancy, demolition and repurposing of a home, exploring urban planning issues and the life cycle of houses in Detroit

#### **InsideOut Literary Arts Project**

To host a techno-poetry performance exploring the history of Detroit DJs and their contribution to contemporary music

#### **Jacob Street/The Untitled Bottega**

To transform an abandoned property next to a North End art gallery into "The Coliseum," an outdoor theater and cultural hub meant to strengthen a neighborhood through the arts

#### **Jefferson East Inc.**

To transcend the symbolic and physical boundary between Detroit and Grosse Point Park through art interventions at Alter Road

#### **Jessica Krmarik**

To preserve Detroit's historic signs by saving the typography around the city via photography and making them into useable, digital typefaces for local business and letterpress use

#### **Kremena Todorova and Kurt Gohde**

To promote civic pride via "The Detroit Tattoo Project," where a local poet is commissioned to create a piece about the city which is then divided and drawn for use on free tattoos that, when reassembled, reveal graphic elements containing a secret image representative of the city

#### **La Salonnere Nomade**

To build bridges with the Arab world by presenting an exhibition in Detroit on Arab Spring contemporary art from North Africa, and having the artists co-create and engage with the community

#### **Leith Campbell**

To use a sundial set to the cadence of the sun to reinterpret a piece by composer John Cage that was meant to be played as slowly as possible

#### **Lineage Studios International**

To teach local women the art of hand weaving, and create a new textile line that represents the city, as part of an international network providing economic opportunities for women

#### **Liquid Flow Media Arts Center**

To provide a space for people with limited resources to create, innovate and network about art, business and technology

#### **Literary Detroit**

To jumpstart a monthly series that includes communal composition, word games and more giving poets and audience members a space to co-create poems and stories and play with language

#### **LO & BEHOLD!**

To explore the array of cultures and music in Hamtramck by conducting "field recordings" of local music – for example, a Bangladeshi street fair or a gospel trio – presented with minimal editing

#### **Loveland Technologies**

To conduct a Story Census, whereby a production team records residents telling their stories and combines them into a short documentary about the city's neighborhoods

#### **Marygrove College**

To bring a northwest Detroit community together through the arts by staging a series of community-led art events that culminate in a festival surrounding Marygrove's campus

#### **Matrix Theatre Company**

To commission a well-known bilingual playwright to work with the city's Latino community in developing a new piece, "*Caridad in the Comunidad*"

#### **Michelle Andonian**

To mark the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide through a book of photographs and a live performances

#### **Michigan Underground Group**

To build on experimental musicians' interest in Detroit by inviting more artists from within and outside the city to share and record their works

#### **Mothlight Microcinema**

To highlight the work of local filmmakers by offering free monthly screenings of avant-garde and experimental film and videos where the artists discuss their work

#### **Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD)**

To invite international curator Jens Hoffmann to create a salon-style exhibition exploring a cross-section of Detroit's visual arts over the past 15 years

#### **Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts**

To make the Music Hall more accessible to Detroit arts organization by allowing theater, dance and music groups to use the space for free or at cost

#### **Nate Young**

To bring local and international musicians together by presenting "The Maggotbrain Fest," a two-day festival featuring electronic music in all its forms

#### **New Music Detroit**

To spotlight challenging and dynamic new music from the late 20th century through today during "Strange Beautiful Music," a daylong marathon concert

#### **Nina Marcus-Kurlonko**

To strengthen Eastern Market After Dark, an annual event that spotlights galleries and other creative businesses in the neighborhood

#### **Obsidian Blues Detroit**

To empower Detroiters to reimagine and co-create a united future through a series of meditation, writing and performance arts, culminating in an interactive show, "Playing the Matrix: Detroit's Shadow Effect"

#### **Organic Weapon Arts**

To form a new poetry slam series that will build a community of writers and performers to compete nationally

#### **Penny W. Stamps School of Art & Design**

To expand Brightmoor's community of makers by turning an abandoned home into the Brightmoor Maker Space where neighbors can develop creative skills

#### **Piper Carter**

To explore the role and impact of women on hip-hop through a gathering of leading figures in Detroit's digital media, art, dance and performance communities

#### **Ponyride**

To formalize and expand a visiting artist-in-residence program dedicated to producing art in and for Detroit

#### **Popps Packing**

To support the expansion of Popps' unique artist residency program, which caters to national and international artists with children, providing a holistic space for artists with families to create

**Power House Productions**

To celebrate the diverse work in art and culture that has been presented in the Banglatown neighborhood through a community-wide block party



MBADS African Bead Museum builds and organizes collections of beads and African relics. Credit: Charlene Uresy.

**Rachel McCollough**

To foster the art of burlesque in Detroit by producing quarterly shows, ongoing classes and a costume rental exchange program

**RecoveryPark**

To support a new home for Detroit's traditional weekly blues jam session led by drummer John Estes

**River Raisin Ragtime Revue**

To highlight the city's role in creating ragtime music through workshops and performances at local schools and institutions

**Rola Nashef**

To foster a dynamic community of Detroit storytellers by offering "Detroit Film Labs," a series of workshops to first-time filmmakers in underserved communities

**rootoftwo**

To explore how fear is used in contemporary media by creating do-it-yourself kits for making dynamic sculptures that change colors to reflect the prevalence of fear-related keywords in news stories

**Rowe Niodior African Dance Company**

To create community through a four-day festival exploring how West and Central African groups use music and dance to celebrate their culture

**Sidewalk Festival of Performing Arts**

To expand an outdoor celebration of performance and installation art to neighborhoods across the city

**The Heidelberg Project**

To capture the richness of one of the city's oldest African-American communities by recording and sharing residents' oral histories

**The Hinterlands**

To explore Detroit's 20th century history of radical art and politics through "The Radicalization Process," a yearlong performance series built on interviews, artifacts and historic footage

**The N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art**

To create "Quarter Pop on Grand River," an arts incubator meant to strengthen local projects by providing access to new skills and storefront spaces

**The Raiz Up**

To use hip-hop to spark conversations about the city's cultural heritage and social issues through "Paint my Roots – Pinta mis Raices," a series of concerts, workshops and collaborative murals

**The Work Department**

To use design for the public good by creating a highly visual "toolkits" about complex social or policy issue affecting Detroit that will help residents understand and take action

**Trinosophes**

To create a commissioning program that will fund new works in music and the visual arts and award a prize to an artist for their contribution to Detroit's culture

**Walter Wasacz**

To foster an exchange of ideas between Detroit and Berlin-based artists on ways to bring about cultural revitalization

**Wayne State University**

To prepare aspiring musicians for the rigors of college programs through a free vocal music institute

**WDET**

To bring the stories of Detroit's ethnic communities to life by partnering with artists and galleries to create pop-up installations featuring photography, listening stations and ambient sound – as well as a segment on WDET

**What Pipeline**

To expand the narrative of the city's creative talent by publishing a series of art books on Detroit-based artists past and present

**Billy Mark**

To combine two of Detroit's iconic symbols – gospel music and cars – in the "Hammond-mobile," an organ-turned-automobile that will play music as it drives through Detroit neighborhoods

**Write a House**

To bring new vitality to the literary arts in Detroit by expanding "Write a House," which awards renovated homes to writers based on the quality of their work

**Y.M. Granata**

To produce a true "TV Dinner," a media art installation event at galleries that combines video art and a meal

**Young Nation**

To create a neighborhood gathering place by engaging local artists, youth and residents in Southwest Detroit in designing and building an art-filled public plaza

**YoYo School of Hip Hop**

To use hip-hop to teach students about technology, physical fitness, career goals and communications skills through a summer camp

**Yvette Rock**

To tell the rich and varied stories of Detroiters and their city through the panels of a quilt

Like 1.5k 2 Tweet 138 Share 2

8 Responses to "Meet the Detroit Knight Arts Challenge finalists"

*Suzanne Conti* says:  
[June 16, 2014 at 10:31 am](#)  
 Dear Knight Foundation,  
 I am so grateful for the efforts and support you are giving to artists in Detroit. I would like to highlight the one finalist "Infinite Mile" which is doing a tremendous job to continually highlight and promote Detroit artists working in many media in this city. Without this kind of creative exposure and discourse artists struggle to draw the needed understanding and appreciation for their work. I also am constantly impressed with the journal's aesthetics, diversity and photographs. It provides a forum for artists to discuss varied issues that impact their thinking and work. This journal is drawing international attention to Detroit and its artists and that is great for the both the artists and the city of Detroit. Please seriously consider the positive and wide impact "infinite mile" is having on Detroit's art scene. I also commend this journal for providing an open and safe place to objectively express diverse opinions and ideas that increase understanding of the work, artists and the city. I admire your foundation for recognizing this journal and hope it receives funding from you to assure its needed contribution to this city's art community. I am thrilled to see that Detroit has such an incredible art journal. Bravo to the co-founders for seeing this need and filling it with such integrity and commitment for the city of Detroit and its artists.

[Reply](#)



*Vince Carducci* says:  
[June 16, 2014 at 11:31 am](#)  
 Totally agree. Infinite Mile rocks.

[Reply](#)



*James Willer* says:  
[June 16, 2014 at 12:21 pm](#)  
 At most, I see maybe six actual artists relieving funding here. Most of these winners are in direct conflict with the submission requirements which stated that the KAC would not accept proposals from groups / organizations that used 'arts' to achieve their goals.  
 Seriously disappointed.

James Willer

[Reply](#)



*Tatiana Hernandez* says:  
[June 16, 2014 at 1:53 pm](#)  
 James, thank you for your feedback.  
 The Knight Arts Challenge is open to arts groups, organizations and individual artists. Anyone can apply and win the contest. We believe the finalists reflect that openness.

[Reply](#)



*Nigelle Hatch* says:  
[June 16, 2014 at 9:16 pm](#)  
 I am only disappointed at the small number of grants issued to projects that would have directly benefited the children of Detroit. The majority of these projects will only impact children that have the type of culturally supportive environment that many Detroit children do not have.

[Reply](#)



*antielite* says:  
[June 16, 2014 at 2:27 pm](#)  
 Most the same people as every year. Popularity game

[Reply](#)



*Travis Welks* says:  
[June 16, 2014 at 9:25 pm](#)  
 Really do hate to agree, but how can anyone not see this is true. Every grant these days around here is popularity, familiarity in local circles. An echo chamber. Heck you've got some examples of that in this thread. And don't forget it's about sticking to the "script" of Detroit arts.

[Reply](#)

**Trackbacks/Pingbacks**

[Marygrove College Announced as Detroit Knight Arts Challenge Finalist | Marygrove Campus News](#) - June 16, 2014  
 [...] of 88 finalists in this year's challenge! To read more about the Knight Arts Challenge, click here or watch the video [...]

**Leave a Reply**

Name (required)  Email (required)  Website (optional)

Type your comment here...

Submit

**Search KnightArts.org**

Enter search keyword  Submit

**Communities**

- [Akron](#)
- [Charlotte](#)
- [Detroit](#)
- [Macon](#)
- [Miami](#)
- [Philadelphia](#)
- [San José and Silicon Valley](#)
- [St. Paul](#)

....  
**KnightArts Newsletter**

Subscribe to our weekly newsletter here:



- About
- Archives
- Contact
- Knight Arts Challenge
- Miami
- Charlotte
- Detroit
- Philadelphia
- St. Paul
- Akron
- Macon
- San Jose & Silicon Valley

[CC] Creative Commons Attribution-only License. Contents may be republished with the link [Cross-posted from KnightArts.org](#) at the top and bottom of the republished content.

'Random Acts of Culture' and 'Random Act of Culture' are registered trademarks of John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, all rights reserved.  
**Please see our Privacy Policy**

**Trust-E**

