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GRIT FUND 2019 GRANTEES

The Grit Fund Announces nine grantees for the 2019 cycle.

BALTIMORE, JUNE 18, 2019 -- The Grit Fund, an award that supports collaborative, artist-led projects in Baltimore, is pleased to announce the nine projects that will receive funding for the 2019 grant cycle. This year, the **Afro Archives Project** by Savannah Wood; **Charm City Night Market (CCNM)** by the Chinatown Collective; **De-Capin': Healing the Black & Brown Superwoman Myth** by blkottonkandy; **GRL PWR Presents: SEASONS** by GRL PWR; **I.Henry Photo Project** by I.H. Webster Phillips III; **String Theory Theater** by Dirk Joseph; **Sweaty Eyeballs Animation Festival** by Phil Davis and Rachel Bone; **The BlkRobot Project (BRP)** by Jason Harris; and **UnMonument Baltimore Print and Share Series** by April Danielle Lewis, have been **awarded grants of \$7,000** each to enact their creative visions over the next year.

The Grit Fund is a **project-specific award** that encourages the development and presentation of projects that contribute to the vibrancy and advancement of Baltimore's arts and cultural landscape. We prioritize artistic initiatives that present opportunities for artists, cultural organizers, and community members to develop unexpected collaborations that investigate place and space. In the 2019 grant cycle, we received applications from ninety-seven artists in Baltimore City and County. Through a layered and intentional process, a panel of five local and regional jurors narrowed down our final awardees using criteria made up of the Grit Fund values (collaboration, cultural integrity, accessibility, risk taking, and stickiness) and considerations for artistic strength, project feasibility, and the public facing component of the work.

Below are brief descriptions about each project. Please check out <https://gritfund.org/grantees> to read more about their collaborators, and the specific areas of their work the Grit Fund supports.

- The **Afro Archives Project** is an online exhibition made in collaboration with the Afro-American Newspapers and three contemporary artists. Chosen artists will conduct research in the Afro-American Newspapers' archives, which chronicle 127 years of Black journalism, culture, entrepreneurship and resilience in Baltimore and beyond.
- **Charm City Night Market** highlights the rich history and contributions of Baltimore City's Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) immigrant community and creates a platform for Baltimore's growing community of AAPI creative entrepreneurs, performing artists, restaurateurs, and residents, activating a new generation of thought leaders and community organizers through community-based events.
- **De-Capin': Healing the Black & Brown Superwoman Myth** is a series of free writing, dance, visual art, and healing crafts workshops to discuss and unpack the Black and Brown Superwoman myth. The workshops will focus on the notion that Black and Brown women must be readily available for other's needs while neglecting their own, leading to the development or exacerbation of mental illnesses.
- **GRL PWR** is a Baltimore-based collective that provides a platform for LGBTQ, femme, and women performers/artists. Their project is a series of four events in fall 2019, winter 2019, spring 2020, and summer



2020, including an all ages, gender-inclusive drag show; an immersive, multidimensional visual art and sound based neon fantasyland; a queer social dinner party and art market; and traveling show.

- The **I.Henry Photo Project** intends to make this collection of historic photographs of Baltimore life, photographed over eight decades by I. Henry Phillips Sr., his son Irving H. Phillips, Jr. and grandson, Webster Phillips III, more easily accessible to a broader audience. This project is a multi-faceted endeavor designed to start a conversation that instills pride and ownership of the contributions of African Americans in Baltimore and beyond.
- **String Theory Theater** is a small puppet troupe founded by Dirk Joseph that will collaborate with some of Baltimore's own homegrown puppeteers to produce a traveling theater show that will bring the magic of puppetry theater to Baltimore communities. Performance formats run the full range of puppetry styles, including marionettes, hand and rod puppets, shadow puppets, and crankies, demonstrating the value of puppetry as a storytelling device and history-keeping mechanism.
- **Sweaty Eyeballs Animation Festival** is a three-day juried festival of cutting-edge, quirky, and boundary-pushing animation. With a focus on innovation in craft, storytelling, and work that questions preconceived notions of what animation can and should be, Sweaty Eyeballs seeks to place Baltimore on the national animation map by creating a significant presence and space for peer discussion on the artform.
- **The BlkRobot Project** (BRP) is a multiyear, multimodal experiential educational endeavor. Entering its third year, the project currently involves expanding STEAM classes to include a comic book workshop and a community memory workshop. Continuing the robotics workshops, the BlkRobot Project is working towards final phase of SoulBot 3.0, which will be a 27 foot tall metal African robot sculpture to be built on a vacant lot in the Park Heights community in Baltimore City.
- **UnMonument Baltimore Print and Share Event Series** is a collaborative 3D printed UnMonument to Liberation and Black Joy (ULBJ), an artistic response to a monument or a counter-monument. Inspired by the removal of Baltimore's confederate monuments in 2016, ULBJ challenges the notion that local denizens should honor the legacy of those whose work has perpetuated the injustices that divide our country and our communities.

We are excited to see how these projects develop over the next year, and thank everyone who has been a part of the process thus far. For more information about our **grantees and jurors** please visit: <https://gritfund.org/grantees>. For information about grantee events, our upcoming 2020 cycle, and other points of interest, please [sign up](#) for our mailing list and follow us on Instagram [@thegritfund](#).

About

The [Grit Fund](#) (TGF) provides monetary awards--up to \$7,000--to encourage the development and presentation of projects that contribute to the vibrancy and advancement of Baltimore's arts and cultural landscape. The Grit Fund is a project specific award that prioritizes artistic initiatives that present opportunities for artists, cultural organizers and community members to develop unexpected collaborations that investigate place and space. We accept proposals from unincorporated artist-led initiatives that utilize the visual arts as a means to produce collaborative public facing projects. TGF was established in Baltimore in 2015 by [The Contemporary](#) (TC) with funding from the **Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts**, as a part of the [Regional Regranting Program](#)--which "aims to support vibrant, under-the-radar artistic activity by partnering with leading cultural institutions in communities across the country." Under the stewardship of The Contemporary (2015-2017), the Grit Fund granted over 30 Baltimore specific, artist-organized projects, totaling over \$170,000 in three rounds of funding. In 2018 the Andy Warhol Foundation partnered with Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation to steward the Grit Fund through the 2019-2020 grant cycles.



Andy Warhol

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

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