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ROBERT W. DEUTSCH FOUNDATION
ANNOUNCES 2018 RUBYS GRANTS IN LITERARY AND VISUAL ARTS

Baltimore, October 9, 2018 – The Robert W. Deutsch Foundation is thrilled to announce the seven artists and one artist collective that were selected for 2018 Rubys Artist Grants in literary arts and visual arts. The artists selected represent an expansive breadth of stories being told through poetry, biography, video, installation, and virtual reality. Moreover, this cohort of grantees cap off the five-year anniversary of the founding of the Rubys Artist Grant program. Since its launch in 2013, the Rubys have been established as an important and respected opportunity for artists in the Baltimore region that has, to date, granted over $680,000 to 90 artists.

The 2018 Rubys grantees in Literary Arts and Visual Arts are:

**Will Bryson**: to support the development *Milo’s Misfits*, an LGBTQ-centric episodic children’s show that features both human and puppet characters getting tangled into harebrained schemes and relatable problems.

**Nicoletta de la Brown**: to support the creation of garments and the sculptural environment for *Bañera de Flora*, an immersive multi-sensory installation that will be part of a performance-based ritual that focuses on healing, rebirth, and sacred space.

**Kristina Gaddy**: to support *Well of Souls*, a literary exploration of the little known history of the banjo in the Americas, its role as a spiritual device in the hands of enslaved Africans, and the instrument’s legacy in today’s culture and society.

**Andrew Holter**: to support *Hello, Fellow Worker*, the first biography of Baltimore-bred, Pulitzer Prize winning reporter Murray Kempton, whose professional life spans from H.L. Mencken to Tupac Shakur and which will give new insight to 20th century American history and politics.

**Ashlie Kauffman**: to support a collection of personal essays and short fiction vignettes that examines the dynamics and legacy of racial "passing," exploring its intersection with memory, loss, and other topics.

Fahimeh Vahdat: to support a mixed media installation that will include large scale wall pieces, a safe room, and sound recordings to look at the parallels and differences of the women’s movement and current state of domestic violence between Iran and the United States.

strikeWare collective (Christopher Kojzar, Jeffrey Gangwisch, Mollye Bendell): to support Renovations, an immersive art tour and multimedia exhibit that will mine the archives of Baltimore’s Peale Museum to present its unique history as the Number 1 Colored Primary School for African Americans in the late 19th century.

"Baltimore's creatives make our city a rich, diverse, and amazing place to live and work. We started the Rubys in 2013 to support and empower all types of artists to set ambitious goals and to receive the resources necessary to bring them to life. Our city benefits as a whole when arts and culture, and those who make it, are able to succeed," says Robert W. Deutsch Foundation president Jane Brown.

The 2018 Rubys jury panels for media arts and performing arts were comprised of the following esteemed professionals:

- Amy Bautz, artist, associate professor of studio art, Saint Louis University
- Myrtis Bedolla, curator, director, Galerie Myrtis (Baltimore)
- Hayes Davis, poet, writer (D.C.)
- Marion Gomez, poet, program associate, The Loft Literary Center (Minneapolis)
- Kyla Marshell, writer, poet, essayist (NYC)
- Susan Muaddi Darraj, writer, editor (Baltimore)
- Damon Reaves, artist, associate curator of education, community engagement and access, Philadelphia Museum of Art
- René Treviño, artist (Baltimore)

The selected artist-grantees will spend the next twelve months developing their creative projects and preparing public events, readings, and exhibits through which they will share their work with the community. More information about the Rubys Artist Grants may be found at: [https://www.rwdfoundation.org/rubys](https://www.rwdfoundation.org/rubys)

The Rubys Artist Grants were established in 2013 to support the region’s gems - the local artistic 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 were inspired in part by Ruby Lerner, the visionary founder 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.