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ROBERT W. DEUTSCH FOUNDATION
ANNOUNCES THE 2019 RUBYS ARTIST GRANTEES

Baltimore, October 8, 2019 – The Robert W. Deutsch Foundation is thrilled to announce the 19 projects that were selected for 2019 Rubys Artist Grants. For the first time, all artistic categories were offered on one grant cycle, resulting in a large and robust cohort that represents the best of the creative talent in the Baltimore region. The 2019 artistic projects selected span all facets of literary, media, performing, and visual arts, with the Foundation providing the cohort with over $150,000 dollars of support. 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 $820,000 to support 107 projects featuring 113 artists.

The 2019 Rubys Artist Grantees are:

Adetola Abdulkadir & Safiyah Cheatam: to support Obsidian, a speculative fiction podcast series based in Afrofuturism. Each episode will tell a story that sits at the crossroads of Blackness, technology, and science, and will tackle issues such as surveillance, artificial intelligence, and alternative realities.

Abdul Ali: to support the writing of a manuscript of poems that explore the history of parenting by African Americans, with a particular focus on the perspective of fathers.

Kevin Blackistone: to support Extensions of the Self, a multi-media installation that will explore the current state of interpersonal understanding by using virtual reality to present participants a view of their immersed selves through another’s eyes.

Precious Blake: to support the pilot of Celestial Beings, a collection of oral stories, portraits, and visual ephemera documenting Black femme creative spiritual practices that will culminate in audio recordings, an illustrated zine, and community healing events.

Phill Branch: to support Rolling Stops, a one-person storytelling show that examines living outside the prescribed definitions of blackness and masculinity.
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Caitlin Carbone &amp; Josh Thomas</td>
<td>to support a hip hop adaptation of Shakespeare’s <em>Julius Caesar</em>, which will focus on Brutus and Cassius’ relationship as complex, emotional, and intimate in order to challenge the idea of “Roman stoicism” as a pillar of masculinity.</td>
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<td>Rachael Uwada Clifford</td>
<td>to support the writing of <em>What the Year Will Swallow</em>, a novel-in-stories that explores the lives of three interconnected black families living in the United States and Nigeria. The project will imaginatively examine what it means to come of age through the context of migration, both forced and voluntary, past and recent.</td>
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<td>Shannon Leah Collis</td>
<td>to support <em>Strata</em>, an immersive multimodal exhibition that will use video mapping and sound to experience the complex story of the oil extraction industry in Northern Alberta, Canada, and its environmental effects.</td>
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<td>Chelsea Lemon Fetzer</td>
<td>to support <em>The Shape of a Boat</em>, a young adult novel that weaves parallel stories between Sophia, a biracial fifteen year old living in a small Minnesota town in 1990 and Samuel, a southern U.S. born enslaved man brought by his owner to the same landscape in the 1840s.</td>
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<td>Anna Fitzgerald</td>
<td>to support the beginning phase of <em>When You Make a Broken Heart</em>, a crankie-based performance that will explore stories of motherhood, destruction, broken hearts, and finding peace in chaos.</td>
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<td>Helen Glazer</td>
<td>the support travel and development of a photography and sculpture project that will investigate climate change through the lens of a remote Arctic village in Greenland.</td>
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<td>JaMar Jones</td>
<td>to support <em>11:11</em>, an experimental short film that employs elements of magical realism and Afrofuturism to explore near death experiences, precarious lives, mortality, and celestial bodies on earth and other planes.</td>
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<td>Travis Levasseur</td>
<td>to support <em>Döner Party</em>, a multimedia installation centered around a pioneer-themed playground that explores the continuing manifestation of theft, violence, and greed as principles that founded the United States.</td>
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<td>Jackie Milad</td>
<td>to support <em>It Means Desert Desert</em>, a body of work featuring collage and experimental animation that will explore the artist’s Egyptian ancestry and its shifting histories, ideas, aesthetics, and philosophies.</td>
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Michele Minnick: to support House Calls, a performative response to the climate crisis and participatory art process that invites strangers to consider together our past, present, and future as inhabitants and stewards of planet earth.

Lisa Moren: in collaboration with biologist Tsvetan Bachvaroff, to support the development of Stories Under the Bay, which imagines the underwater life of the Chesapeake Bay through originally composed music, stories, and visualizations and which will be accessed via an augmented reality application.

Clarence Harlan Orsi: to support Still in the Body I’ve Always Had, a book of essays that focuses on the cultural conversations by and about transgender people in the 21st century United States, from stand-up comedy to radical pornography.

Candace Scorborough: to support velvet pony, the first of a series of dance episodes that uses rhythmic footwork, mapped pathways, imaginative storytelling and guitar to introduce an audience to an eccentric land and fictional universe.

Jung Yun: to support the completion of O Beautiful, a novel set in the oil fields of western North Dakota, which follows a journalist who returns to her home state to write about the oil boom and the prosperity and challenges that come along with it.

"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 2019 Rubys jury panels were comprised of the following esteemed professionals:

**Literary Arts**
Mejdulene Shomali, poet, assistant professor, Gender + Women’s Studies, UMBC (Baltimore)
Derrick Weston Brown, poet, author, educator (Washington, DC)
Gregg Wilhelm, author, Director of Creative Writing, George Mason University, (Virginia)
Yolanda Wisher, poet, educator, curator, 2016 Poet Laureate of Philadelphia

**Media Arts**
Carver Audain, digital/sound/intermedia artist (NYC)
Sara Zia Ebrahim, filmmaker, curator (Philadelphia)
Arden Sherman, director and curator, Hunter East Harlem Gallery/Hunter College (NYC)

**Performing Arts**
Arielle Julia Brown, civic practice theatre artist, dramaturg, cultural producer (Philadelphia)
Kurt A. Douglas, associate professor of dance, Boston Conservatory at Berklee
Neena Narayanan, marketing director, Joe’s Movement Emporium (Washington, DC)
Juanita Rockwell, playwright, librettist, lyricist, songwriter, and director (Baltimore)
Visual Arts
Zoë Charlton, artist, associate professor of art, American University (Baltimore)
Hoesy Corona, artist, cofounder, LabBodies (Baltimore)
Elisa H. Hamilton, multimedia artist (Boston)
Charlie Tatum, writer, editor, art critic (New Orleans)

The selected artist-grantees will spend the next twelve months developing their creative projects and preparing public events 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

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.

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