



John S. and James L. Knight Foundation  
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **55 Finalists Named in 2012 Knight Arts Challenge Philadelphia**

***Visual artists, musicians, performing arts organizations, community groups and more offer innovative ideas to engage and enrich the Philadelphia community***

**PHILADELPHIA – Jan. 10, 2012** – The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation has announced the finalists for the second year of the Knight Arts Challenge Philadelphia. The 55 finalists – which include individual artists, artist collectives, community groups, music organizations and theater companies – offered a wide array of innovative ideas, rising above a field of 1,267 applicants.

The full list of finalists and ideas is included below and available online at [KnightArts.org](http://KnightArts.org). Knight Foundation will announce the 2012 winners in the spring.

The three-year, \$9 million community-wide contest seeks the most innovative ideas in the arts to engage and enrich Philadelphia's communities by asking one simple question: What's your best idea for the arts in Philadelphia? In the Challenge's first year, Knight Foundation awarded \$2.7 million to 36 winners representing a broad spectrum of the community – from individual artists and artist-driven organizations to some of the city's premier cultural institutions.

“We look for ideas that can engage this community and bring its artistic excellence to an even higher level – and Philadelphia continues to deliver,” said Dennis Scholl, Knight Foundation's vice president/arts.

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“The diversity of finalists proves that good ideas really can come from anywhere. We’re seeing ideas from across our many neighborhoods that we believe will help bring us together through the arts,” said Donna Frisby-Greenwood, Philadelphia program director for Knight Foundation.

Winning ideas from 2011 have enriched and engaged Philadelphia’s communities in a variety of ways. For example, artist Darla Jackson won funds to establish the Philadelphia Sculpture Gym to help sculptors create their works safely; the African American Museum in Philadelphia built new community relationships with the launch of “RAAMP It Up Wednesdays,” showcasing local performers in free weekly concerts at the museum’s Seventh Street Plaza; and Pig Iron Theatre Company opened the Pig Iron School for Advanced Performance Training, to strengthen the contemporary performing arts scene with a two-year training program for actors and directors.

The Knight Arts Challenge Philadelphia is open to anyone with a great idea for the arts. The Challenge has just three rules: 1) The idea must be about the arts; 2) The project must take place in or benefit Philadelphia; 3) The grant recipients must find funds to match Knight’s commitment.

The Knight Arts Challenge began in 2008 in Miami, where the initiative is now in its fifth year. Philadelphia is only the second city in which Knight is offering this program.

For more on Knight Foundation’s arts initiative and to view a full list of Knight Arts Challenge finalists, visit **[www.KnightArts.org](http://www.KnightArts.org)**. Philadelphians can also learn more, ask questions, and share ideas on the Knight Arts Challenge Facebook page, and on Twitter via @KnightArts.

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## **Knight Arts Challenge Philadelphia 2012 Finalists**

### **Artists and Musicians of Latin America**

To cultivate new audiences for Latin Jazz by presenting “pop-up” performances of local artists using a portable stage

### **Arden Theatre Company**

To diversify artistic offerings by presenting theater performances alongside the dozens of gallery events during Old City’s monthly First Fridays

### **Art Sanctuary**

To celebrate two art forms that use the human voice to tell profound stories by creating a “Hip H’Opera” using the stories of urban life

### **Asian Arts Initiative**

To provide everyday artistic experiences in Chinatown and South Philadelphia by creating site-specific works for nontraditional places like restaurants, storefronts and public plazas

### **Bearded Ladies Cabaret**

To attract new audiences to theater – and use the medium as a way to explore politics, gender, sexuality and identity – through a series of original, late night cabarets

### **Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra**

To showcase diverse cultures by transforming a symphonic “pops” concert into a celebration of world music

### **Brandywine Workshop**

To celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this printmaking institution by commissioning 10 emerging and established artists to create prints

### **Campus Philly**

To foster a lifelong appreciation of the arts by offering free or discounted admission to venues and performances for college students

### **Catzie Vilayphonh**

To promote storytelling within the Lao-American community through a writing, performing and filmmaking workshop

**Center City District**

To help transform historic Dilworth Plaza by commissioning internationally recognized sculptor Janet Echelman to create an artwork inspired by the site's historic association with water and steam

**Center City Opera Theater**

To attract more Hispanics to the opera by launching a Spanish-language opera festival featuring a new piece by a Philadelphia-based Hispanic composer

**Center for Emerging Visual Artists**

To bring visual art to a wider audience by placing locally produced art in public advertising spaces in the same neighborhood where the piece was produced

**Chestnut Hill Friends Meetinghouse Project**

To spark dialogue about contemporary art by incorporating the work of internationally acclaimed light artist James Turrell into a new Quaker meetinghouse that is open to all

**Community Cultural Exchange**

To bring the South Street business district together through music and culture by introducing family-friendly street performances to the area

**COSACOSA art at large**

To transform overgrown and abandoned spaces into "sacred" art parks for the community by engaging residents to create visual and sound gardens in the Niceville-Tioga neighborhood

**Crane Arts**

To raise the international profile of local artists by organizing an artist and exhibition exchange between Crane Arts and London's V22 Collection

**David Clayton**

To help residents fully experience the city's two main waterways by creating a floating workstation along the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers where artists can interpret and explore the surroundings

**Delaware River Waterfront Corporation**

To use world rhythms – from cowbells to congas, beat-boxing to Bhangra – to learn about cultures at an interactive music and dance festival

**Erica Hawthorne**

To give a boost to local artists by creating a mini grant program to help cover their costs with awards ranging from \$50 to \$1,000

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**Fleisher Art Memorial**

To engage the community in hands-on art making by expanding the reach of a mobile studio where participants create projects inspired by their neighborhoods

**Franklin's Paine Skatepark Fund**

To help transform neighborhoods by turning blacktop lots into art-laden skate parks

**Geoffrey Johnson**

To foster appreciation for public art by covering publically displayed statues in the city for a month – and then unveiling them with fan fare at a festival

**GoKash Productions**

To promote original plays through a free theater festival dedicated to the contemporary African-American experience

**Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation**

To engage new audiences in the visual arts by launching With Art Philadelphia, a two-year joint marketing program that includes late-night happenings for younger audiences at local museums

**Iron Age Theatre**

To create new performing arts experiences through a series of live-streamed, mini movies that patrons can watch throughout the city by scanning QR codes on their cellphones

**Katarina Dudas**

To develop the next generation of visual artists by pairing children with local artists to create site-specific environmental art in the Kensington community

**Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**

To engage new audiences in the performing arts by creating a residency program in the Kimmel Center's black box theater for innovative and emerging art groups

**Little Berlin**

To help transform the East Kensington neighborhood by turning an empty lot into an event space for musicians, art fairs and children's workshops

**Moore College of Art & Design**

To introduce the work of local visual artists and filmmakers to a wider audience by establishing an urban drive-in movie theater on the Parkway



**Music Row Philadelphia**

To support emerging musicians and create a destination for live music by fostering the growth of music venues along Girard Avenue

**Musicopia**

To empower and inspire Philadelphia's youth by providing them with weekly drumming lessons and performing opportunities

**Norris Square Neighborhood Project**

To preserve local Latino culture in North Philadelphia by creating a sound booth to record stories that will be featured in podcasts

**Orchestra 2001**

To celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by presenting a new concerto based on the civil rights leader's life and featuring local performers

**Partners for Sacred Places**

To expand the capacity of the city's theater community by providing a new space for theater designers and visual artists at a decommissioned church

**Philadelphia Art Alliance**

To re-imagine public space and civic life by organizing an all-night, free arts festival based on the Nuit Blanche/Bring to Light events in Paris, New York, Miami and other cities

**Philadelphia Photo Arts Center**

To encourage broader audience participation in the city's visual arts by expanding "Philly Photo Day," where the community is invited to take and submit a picture that is ultimately used in an exhibition

**Philadelphia Theatre Company**

To use the theater as a way to examine the United States' education system with a work that actor/journalist Anna Deavere Smith will create during a two-year residency

**Philadelphia Youth Media Collaborative**

To support the emerging creative underground in Philadelphia by establishing a festival that highlights the next generation of filmmakers, visual artists, musicians and performers



**Phillyjazz.org**

To foster the development of local jazz artists by formalizing mentor relationships between established and younger musicians, where the elders teach life lessons, and emerging artists offer tips on using new media

**RAIR, Inc.**

To create awareness about sustainability through art and design by establishing a yearlong series of projects that allow local artists to experiment with recycled materials

**Scribe Video Center**

To explore the city's relationship to mass transit by publicly displaying multiple digital video works in high traffic public sites

**Sean Stoops**

To support an innovative form of 3D storytelling by creating a series of outdoor video art events screened on local buildings

**Sharon Torello**

To engage younger audiences in classical music through the creation of a group with membership benefits that include discount ticketing and unique social gatherings

**Sojourner Ahebee**

To further cultural understanding by facilitating youth-led poetry workshops for Liberian teenage girls in Philadelphia and Liberia

**Swim Pony Performing Arts**

To weave the arts into the community by presenting revamped versions of plays in non-traditional spaces, including Eastern State Penitentiary and the Land Conservancy of Elkins Park

**The Brothers Network**

To introduce more diverse audiences to the performing arts by creating a multidisciplinary festival that features black male choreographers, filmmakers, actors, writers and composers

**The Clay Studio**

To explore the relevance of handmade ceramic objects in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by providing a handmade mug to people leaving coffee shops with disposable cups and encouraging them to post about their experiences on the Web

**The Crossing**

To introduce a wider audience to contemporary chamber music by establishing a series of new works designed specifically for a nontraditional venue – the recently restored Crane Arts' Icebox

**The Fabric Workshop and Museum**

To create a new sculpture series by artist Daniel Arsham at the museum that will debut along with a live performance and explore the boundaries between the galleries and theater

**The Hacktory**

To promote the use of technology in the arts by developing a corps of interactive artist teachers who will share their knowledge and expertise in programming and engineering with Philadelphia artists

**The University of the Arts**

To promote economic stability for the city's cultural community by offering support to emerging creative businesses with pre-seed funding, mentorships programs and workshops

**The Village of Arts and Humanities**

To develop young people's awareness of the city's vibrant cultural scene through interactive scavenger hunts led by local artists

**The Wilma Theater**

To enhance training for local actors by creating a series of master classes

**University City District**

To establish a new outlet for public art that showcases temporary installations to the city's tens of thousands of daily commuters

**Vic Reznik**

To help promote the city's cinematic identity by commissioning emerging filmmakers from Philadelphia to produce shorts for a new, local film festival





**About Knight Foundation**

Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. We believe that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged. For more, visit [www.knightfoundation.org](http://www.knightfoundation.org).

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