

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOTS ALIVE GRANT AWARDEES ANNOUNCED

Program offers up to \$10,000 to support public art projects in vacant lots

The **Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA)** and the **Baltimore Office of Sustainability's Growing Green Initiative** are excited to announce the recipients of the second cycle of the **Lots Alive** grant program. Lots Alive supports the creation of temporary public art projects sited on vacant lots within the Baltimore City limits. Artists were invited to submit proposals for artworks with lifespans ranging from one day to one year that actively engaged residents and community members in the design of the project.

Developed in partnership with Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's Growing Green Initiative, Lots Alive aims to breathe life into underutilized vacant spaces through creative inventions.

The recipients are:

Project: Coldstream Homestead Montebello Sculpture Park and Fellowship Program

Artist: Lisa Dillin

Location: 1450 Homestead Street, Coldstream Homestead Montebello

Award amount: \$10,000

Project Description: The Coldstream Homestead Montebello Sculpture Park and Fellowship Program (CHMSP) is a temporary project created through a Lots Alive grant in collaboration with CHM Community Corporation. During the program, project director Lisa Dillin will oversee ten Baltimore artists as they work towards the creation of outdoor works which will be displayed in the park. A visiting artist program, field trip(s), critiques, and fellowship honoraria will prepare participants for the resulting exhibit. CHMSP is a scholarly opportunity for emerging and midcareer sculptors that will provide exposure to area artists while transforming a vacant lot into an engaging and serene public space.

About the Artist: Lisa Dillin is a Baltimore-based artist working in sculpture and participatory art practices. Dillin earned her BFA from Atlanta College of Art in 1998 and her MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2006. Her work has been selected for exhibition at various venues including the Baltimore Museum of Art and The Contemporary Museum in Baltimore, MD, Hamiltonian Gallery and Washington Project for the Arts, in Washington, D.C., Vox Populi and Practice Gallery in Philadelphia, PA, as well as Nurture Art and Transmitter in Brooklyn, NY. Art fairs include the Select Art Fair in NYC, Aqua Art Fair and Artist-Run Art Fair in Miami, FL. Dillin was a 2012 Sondheim Prize Finalist, and a 2014 MSAC Individual Artist award recipient.

Project: Garden Restoration Project**Artist:** Ashley Kidner**Location:** Park Heights, Location TBD**Award amount:** \$2,000**Project Description:**

This temporary installation in the Park Heights Major Redevelopment Area will utilize a combination of stone and native plantings to create a labyrinth yin/yang formation allowing visitors to walk through its meditative space.

About the Artist: Ashley Kidner is an environmental land artist who is based in Baltimore. Kidner has run his own landscape company (ILD) for the past 27 years, working mainly in stone, water and native plants. Through his expertise with these elements and his passion for the environment, Kidner has created a number of earth work pieces throughout Maryland, Iceland and England. His mixed media assemblages and drawings have also been exhibited in Baltimore, Thailand and Vietnam. He currently has installations in Leakin Park and Lake Roland Park in Baltimore, and at Adkin's Arboretum on the Eastern shore of Maryland.

Project: A LOT MATTERS**Artist:** Ariston Jacks and Jonathan Green**Location:** 734 N. Monroe Street, Midtown-Edmondson**Award amount:** \$10,000

Project Description: A Lot Matters (ALM) is an extension of the Community Walk Through Theater (CWTT), a project recently awarded the 2016 PNC Transformative Art Prize. For this project, Morgan State University's School of Community Health and Policy is partnering with Ground Root (formerly A New Day) to develop strategies to transform lots in West Baltimore. ALM is a transformable and transferable model of making a vacant lot and adjacent wall a canvas to create, restore and energize community members who live, work and play in Midtown as well as others who visit the area.

About the Artists: Ariston Jacks creates multi-medium images that serve as social commentary. Combining ancient African culture with American southern experience, he documents personal thoughts of the future. His painting, printmaking, and photography consist of honest images that inform onlookers of an outlook void of global stereotypes. Ariston Jacks's use of cultural icons, metaphysical philosophy and geometric compositions, are where the uniqueness in his artwork rest demonstrating the complex duality of Africans living in the American Diaspora.

Jonathan Greene is currently a senior at Morgan State University School of Architecture & Planning and is also pursuing an Associate's Degree in Engineering at Anne Arundel Community College where he also received an Associate's Degree in Architecture. Working with his mentor, Dr. Randy Rowel (Interim Chair of Morgan's Department of Behavioral Health Science), Jonathan was offered an opportunity to work on a community engagement project that put all of his skills to work. As a key member of Community Walk Through Theater, Jonathan developed landscape renderings that will transform a lot into usable community space in West Baltimore. He continued his work with this initiative and joined an artist and representatives from Ground Roots, a non-profit organization in West Baltimore, to create the A Lot Matters concept.

Project: Close Up Baltimore**Artist:** Jean Hill Studios**Location:** 723 W Lafayette St, 837 N Fremont St, 839 N Fremont St, 841 N Fremont St; UPTON**Award amount:** \$9,000

Project Description: Close Up Baltimore is a project, inspired by Humans of New York, that works to combat one-dimensional stereotypes about Baltimore by sharing the diverse stories and faces of Baltimoreans from across the city. These stories are collected by talented local photographers whose works have been featured everywhere from the Smithsonian to *The Baltimore Sun*. In Upton, Close Up Baltimore will create a public outdoor photography exhibition that will open alongside an outdoor community picnic, and gather the stories and photographs of community members in attendance. Similar to the way that a grandparent passes stories down to their children and grandchildren, the stories gathered at this event will be captured and preserved for those to come. The goal is that giving residents a chance to reflect on their past and look ahead to their collective future will help to build a more comprehensive understanding of the area and strengthen the sense of community.

About the Artist:

Storytelling isn't what Jean Hill Studios does-- it's who they are. Since the beginning of time, people have been gathering to tell stories and to listen to them. Stories have always been the way people build connections, shape culture, and decide who gets remembered. Good storytelling has immense power to create social change. Whether it's through film, design, photography, or social impact events, Jean Hill Studios is committed to sharing powerful stories that prompt conversations and shift paradigms.

About the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA)

The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization which serves as Baltimore City's arts council, events agency and film office. By producing large-scale events such as Light City, Artscape and the Baltimore Book Festival, and providing funding and support to artists, arts programs and organizations across the city, BOPA's goal is to make Baltimore a more vibrant and creative city.

About the Growing Green Initiative (GGI)

Managed by the Baltimore City Department of Planning's Office of Sustainability, GGI is a city-led effort to use sustainable, innovative, and cost-effective practices for stabilizing and holding land for redevelopment, and reusing vacant land to green neighborhoods, reduce storm water runoff, grow food, and create community spaces.

For more information on the **Lots Alive** program, call 410-752-8632 or visit www.promotionandarts.org.

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