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Strauss Artist Grants Honor Contemporary Artists Working in Dance, Photography, and Sculpture



Fairfax County, VA – the Arts Council of Fairfax County announces the 2015 *Strauss Artist Grants recipients* — choreography and dance performance collaborative **Katherine Horrigan and Arturo Garcia**; visual artist **Andrew Watson**; and sculptor **Andy Yoder**.

“The *Strauss Artist Grants* program recognizes outstanding contemporary artists in Fairfax and helps support their future contributions to the arts and our communities.”

— Linda S. Sullivan, president & CEO, Arts Council of Fairfax County

Katherine Horrigan and Arturo Garcia are a choreography and dance performance duo and co-founders of the *Company Danzante*, a Fairfax based contemporary dance company, for which they choreograph, perform, and teach master classes. **“Throughout our careers, Arturo and I have collaborated as performers and choreographers, and now we have created our own dance company to have a platform to continue to develop our choreography together and share our work with the local community. We have evolved from performers to teachers and our hope is to be able to continue exploring new choreographic ideas and methods of composition while expanding our choreographic voices. We are proud to now make Fairfax our home where we can provide opportunities for young professional dancers based in the region,”** said Horrigan.

Horrigan and Garcia have performed, taught, and toured with numerous dance companies and as visiting artists both overseas and in the US. Horrigan is the assistant director of *Adagio Ballet and Dance School* and teaches at George Mason University. Garcia has been awarded with numerous grants from *The Mexican National Foundation for the Arts* for his work as a choreographer and performer and is on faculty at the *Adagio Ballet and Dance School* where he directs the student modern dance company and coaches contemporary solos for the *Youth American Grand Prix*. To learn more about Horrigan and Garcia visit <http://companydanzante.org>.

Andrew Watson is an artist and arts educator residing in Springfield. Watson's work is on display at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art and on loan at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) as well as in private collections in the United States, Australia, Finland, and United Kingdom.

His photographs are constructed from altered toys and miniature models which he then paints white and prints on aluminum surfaces to both convey a sense of preciousness and to create a reflective surface that invites the viewer to take part in the art and to reexamine their own role in society. Watson's work covers overarching motifs ranging from Americanism, the American dream, U.S. history, patriotism, to existentialism.

"In my artwork I explore American cultural identity by investigating social issues and historical events. I strive to create rich narratives that balance allegory and ambiguity in an attempt to prompt discussion," said Watson.

Sculptor Andy Yoder, a City of Falls Church resident, makes use of everyday objects, deploying changes in scale and unconventional materials to put them in a new light and provide new meanings. "Early One Morning" is a 2014 sculpture of a globe comprised of 300,000 painted wooden matches. It depicts the beauty and danger of the natural world, including Hurricane Sandy, and brings to mind issues such as overpopulation, human conflict, and climate change.

"I have used everything from licorice, wooden matches, and boulders to make my work. Sometimes found materials or a site trigger ideas, while at other times the idea comes first, and I look for the visual means to express it. I like commissions because they often push me to find new approaches, and allow me to work on a larger scale," said Yoder.

Yoder currently exhibits his work in New York City, works on public commissions, teaches art, and has been a visiting artist around the country. To learn more about Yoder visit <http://www.andyyoder.com>.

The *Strauss Artist Grants* program, currently in its 8th year, is named after Bill Strauss (1947-2007), gifted writer and cofounder of the Capitol Steps and the Cappies. The grants program is an investment in the sustained growth and development of the arts in Fairfax County as well as a way to honor contemporary artists' commitment to an artistic discipline and their contributions to Fairfax County. For more information on the Arts Council's grant programs visit <http://artsfairfax.org/grants>. All *Strauss Artist Grants* recipients can be seen at <http://artsfairfax.org/strauss-artist-awards/recipients>.

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NOTE: High resolution photos are available upon request.

Images: (From left to right: 2015 Strauss Artist Grant awardees Katherine Horrigan and Arturo Garcia. Photo by Maggie Picard; "Patriarchs" by 2015 Strauss Artist Grant awardee Andrew Watson; detail of "Early One Morning" by 2015 Strauss Artist Grant awardee Andy Yoder.

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About the Arts Council of Fairfax County

Founded in 1964, the Arts Council of Fairfax County, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization designated as Fairfax County's local arts agency. It is the only umbrella organization serving and representing all forms of art in Fairfax County. The Arts Council of Fairfax County is the voice of the arts, dedicated to fostering dynamic and diverse local arts, ensuring that arts thrive by providing vision, leadership, capacity building services, advocacy, funding, education, and information.

The Arts Council is funded in part by Fairfax County, corporations, foundations, individuals, Virginia Commission for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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