

Arts, Equity, & Education Fund™

A QUARTERLY SPOTLIGHT - FEBRUARY 2024

PearlArts: Movement + Sound



The Center in Braddock is shaping up. Photograph by Njaimeh Njie

We caught up with Staycee Pearl, Choreographer and Co-Founder of PearlArts, following a whirlwind visit to Rhode Island and New York City. In bringing her unique and inclusive vision for dance to new venues, Staycee makes the kind of in-person connections in the dance community that have not come easily during the Covid era. While traveling, PearlArts presented multiple shows including the New York premier of *CIRCLES: going in* with Kelly Strayhorn Theater at the Flea Theater in Manhattan. PearlArts impresses us with their drive to achieve their vision step-by-step while continuing to find new ways to help local communities flourish.

What does performing, teaching, creating, and connecting outside of PearlArts' homebase mean to you?

I'm proud to represent Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh sometimes has a way of looking outside of itself for what's good and better. Travel definitely gives me a new perspective on our work. When we work outside of Pittsburgh, I come to learn that the art that we're making isn't "too weird" or isn't something that people can't understand.

We got a lot of good feedback and the dancers were so good. They were really into it and professional. They looked amazing! I come back rejuvenated and ready to share the energy that I got while I was out there in the world here in Pittsburgh.

PearlArts currently operates in residence at Kelly Strayhorn Theater, but you are on your way to opening a new space. How does it feel to see your vision, The Center in Braddock, becoming a reality?

I've only recently let myself get truly excited about it, because it's a big project and we've been working really hard on it! Back in 2018, I was having dreams about the space and then, over the last month or so, we've been getting pictures from the developer, and it's like "The elevator is going in!" Now I'm starting to plan certain things: choosing colors, all that fun stuff!

We are thinking about different programs that we hadn't thought about before. For instance, we talk about how hard it is to find people of color in arts administration. We're trying to support and give jobs to young people and the skill set isn't there for them yet. A training program for youth who are interested in arts could give them the opportunity to be exposed not only the performance side, but also producing and backstage. How can we show them that there is this option? Who is going to tell them? I never heard it was an option, until I was leading an organization! So, with the new space, you start imagining things you couldn't imagine before.

AE&E Fund is proud to support PearlArts with a capacity building grant. Visit <https://www.pearlartsstudios.com/newfuture> to learn more about The Center and the New Future Campaign.

News & Updates

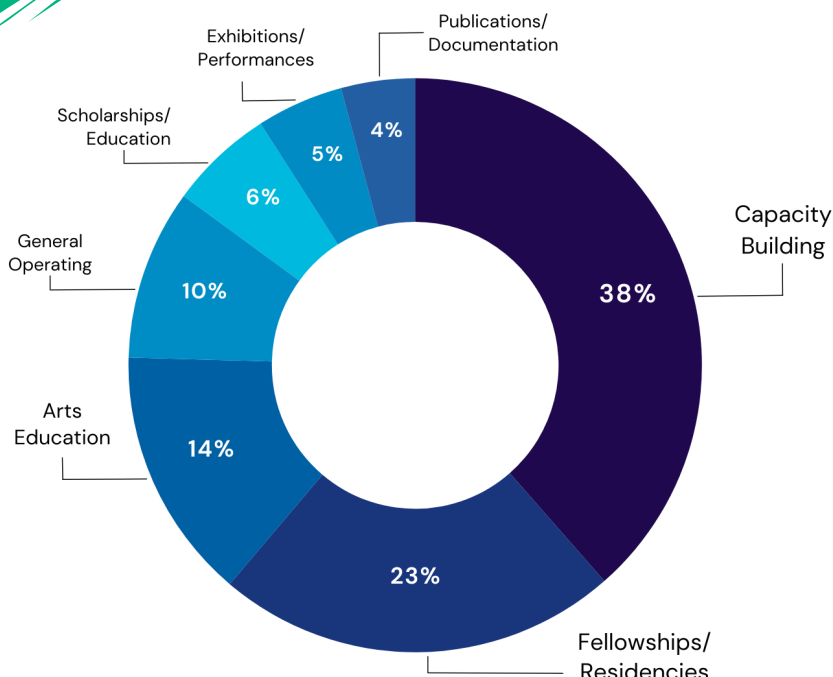
AE&E Fund Spring 2024 Grants Cycle opens today!

We are delighted to share our *2023 Summary of Grantmaking* with you.

As our Spring 2024 Grants Cycle begins, you will notice that we have made some changes. If you are planning to complete a LOI, please review our grant categories and reach out with any questions.

Thank you to our partners for helping us improve our application process with their feedback.

We are excited to learn about innovative projects that advance change in the arts and education ecosystems this spring.



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Photograph by Chris Uhren

CCS + AAP: Fiber Art Exhibition

Creative Citizen Studios artists have partnered with **Associated Artists of Pittsburgh** fiber artists to create works using mediums such as sewing, felting, and embroidery.

The exhibition opened to the public on January 12, and will run until February 23 at:

Associated Artists of Pittsburgh
Exhibition Space
100 43rd St. Unit 107
Pittsburgh, PA 15201

Arts, Equity, & Education Fund™ strives for a better reflection of the real world in arts and education.

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