Traditional Arts Recovery awards announced;
15 traditional artists to receive awards of $5,000 for the creation of new works in partnership with Oregon Folklife Network

Salem, Oregon – Fifteen Oregon traditional artists will each receive $5,000 awards for the creation of new works through the Traditional Arts Recovery Program, a partnership between the Oregon Arts Commission and the Oregon Folklife Network. The program was made possible by National Endowment for the Arts American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

The Traditional Arts Recovery Program, administered by the Oregon Folklife Network, supports traditional artists who use a range of art forms to represent and express Oregon’s diverse ethnic, sacred, occupational, Native American, tribal and regional cultural arts.

“Our folk and traditional artists are critical keepers of our cultures,” said Arts Commission Executive Director Brian Rogers. “We recognized they had not yet been a focus of our artist relief funding programs and so we enlisted the support and expertise of our partners at the Oregon Folklife Network to develop this initiative.” The Oregon Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts recognize the Oregon Folklife Network as the official statewide folk and traditional arts partner.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has been especially devastating to folk and traditional arts,” said Emily West Hartlerode, Oregon Folklife Network interim director. “Artists lost essential income as craft inventories waned with supply chains and performance venues closed or limited operations. OFN is honored to link arms with our partners at Oregon Arts Commission to deliver relief funds through this unique opportunity.”

The artists to receive awards, with a description of their funded project, are:
Palestinian embroiderer Feryal Abbasi-Ghnaim (Milwaukie) will create embroidery panels that represent regional styles of traditional garments.

Persian manuscript conservator Marjan Anvari (Lake Oswego) will apply mixed-media Tazhib (Persian illumination) to interior and exterior home decor.

Hip-hop emcee Mic Crenshaw (Portland) will create two new collaborative albums, one addressing issues of continued social injustice amidst a global pandemic, and another featuring songs created with youth in Oregon public schools.

Warm Springs food gatherer Laurie Danzuka (Warm Springs) will sustain cultural foods practices by teaching others the traditional ways to identify, gather, and prepare first foods.

Cow Creek basketweaver Beth’Ann Gipson (Cow Creek Band of Umpqua) will consult with neighboring tribes and use designs from the few remaining in accessible collections to create a ceremonial tobacco basket.

Indian classical musician Nisha Joshi (Portland) will collaborate with other musicians and dancers in her cultural community for an event that supports Indian performers in a public showcase.

Wasq’u beader Roberta Joy Kirk (Warm Springs) will design and bead a headpiece and bag while teaching this technique to her granddaughters and others in a specialized class for the Museum at Warm Springs.

Aztec ceremonial dancer Jonathan Martinez (Beaverton), with his group Kualli Tonalli, will produce and perform in a public Dia de los Muertos community event in Portland.

Norwegian Rosemåling artist Patty Jo Meshnik (Eugene) will paint a large mural on the side of the Norway Sonja Lodge building.

Indian classical dancer, instructor and choreographer Jayanthi Raman (Portland) will create a documentary focused on Bharatanatyam, its transmission from India and its survival in Oregon.

Andean musician Alex Llumiquinga Perez (Otter Rock) and his daughter will make a hand-crafted charango, while documenting the process and writing a new song inspired by this shared experience.

Gospel and blues artist LaRhonda Steele (Portland) will create music and spoken words tracks focused on self-care, anxiety relief and self-love for women of color.
Wasq'u dressmaker Valerie Switzler (Wasco) will teach community sewing classes while documenting the history and stories that accompany the traditional process.

Samoan traditional artist Tuaopepe Tasi Keener (Keizer) will present Samoan dance and host workshops on the fabric printing technique used to make dance garments.

Cayuse/Nez Perce tradition keeper Celeste Whitewolf (Tigard) will create a dress and accompanying regalia that will be shared with younger tribal members and displayed in museums, and cultural centers throughout Oregon.

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Oregon Arts Commission
The Oregon Arts Commission provides leadership, funding and arts programs through its grants, special initiatives and services. Nine commissioners, appointed by the Governor, determine arts needs and establish policies for public support of the arts. The Arts Commission became part of Business Oregon (formerly Oregon Economic and Community Development Department) in 1993, in recognition of the expanding role the arts play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities. In 2003, the Oregon legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission's expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development.

The Arts Commission is supported with general funds appropriated by the Oregon legislature and with federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust. More information about the Oregon Arts Commission is available online at: www.oregonartscommission.org.

Oregon Folklife Network
The Oregon Folklife Network is the state of Oregon's folk and traditional arts program. Administered by the Museum of Natural and Cultural History at the University of Oregon, OFN comprises a network of partners working to document, support, preserve, and celebrate the diversity of Oregon's living cultural heritage.