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## OREGON ARTS COMMISSION

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### 2017 Individual Artist Fellowships Announced Salem, Oregon

Agnieszka Laska, a Portland-based dancer/choreographer and the founder of Agnieszka Laska Dancers, is the 2017 recipient of the Oregon Arts Commission's honorary Joan Shipley Award. Laska leads a group of seven Oregon artists selected for the Arts Commission's 2017 Individual Artist Fellowships. The 2017 fellowships support artists working in the performing arts; visual artists are reviewed in alternating years.

The Joan Shipley Award is named for Oregon arts leader Joan Shipley, who passed away in 2011. Shipley was a collector, philanthropist and supporter of many arts and humanities organizations. In 2005, she and her husband John received an Oregon Governor's Arts Award. Many in the arts community also counted her as a mentor and friend.

The Arts Commission's fellowship program is available to more than 20,000 artists who call Oregon home. Fellows are recommended by a review panel of Oregon arts professionals who consider artists of outstanding talent, demonstrated ability and commitment to the creation of new work(s). The Arts Commission reviews and acts on the panel's recommendations.

The following performing artists were awarded 2017 fellowships: Agnieszka Laska (Joan Shipely Award), Portland; Oluyinka Akinjiola, Portland; Leah Anderson, Ashland; Douglas Detrick, Portland; **Ashleigh Flynn, Portland**; Eliot Grasso, Springfield; and Lydia Van Dreel, Eugene. Brief biographies and photos follow.

**Ashleigh Flynn, Portland** 2016 was a terrific year for Ashleigh Flynn (see EPK here). She released a LIVE EP, "The Low Arc of the Sun," which has received acclaim from notable Americana rags including No Depression. She was featured by Folk Alley during her stay at 2016 30A Songwriter Festival. Flynn also recently contributed to an Emmylou Harris tribute CD for which her version of "Red Dirt Girl" received accolades from RollingStone and Elmore Magazine. Of late, Flynn has performed at 30A Songwriters Fest 2016, Red Ants Pants 2016, Delfest 2015, High Sierra Music Festival 2015 and Vancouver Folk Festival 2014. She has toured the country both under her own name and as support for such notables as Todd Snider, Hayes Carll, the Wood Brothers, Billy Joe Shaver, Nanci Griffith and more - all with great reviews and a growing fan base.



Ashleigh Flynn: Center

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Regional Arts &  
Culture Council

# RACC awards \$733,608 in project grants for 2017

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PORTLAND, ORE — The Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) has awarded \$733,608 in grants to 92 local artists and 52 nonprofit organizations for artistic projects that will take place in calendar year 2017. This represents a 10% increase over last year thanks to increased funding from Multnomah County, the City of Portland and RACC's workplace giving campaign, Work for Art. Additional funding was provided by Clackamas County, Washington County and Metro.

"As 2016 draws to a close, we can start looking forward to a tremendous variety of innovative arts activities scheduled to take place in 2017," said executive director Eloise Damrosch. "I am especially pleased that 57% of our grants this year are going to artists and organizations that have never received RACC project grant funding before."

Some examples of funded artists and organizations that are receiving their first-ever project grant from RACC include:

**Ashleigh Flynn**, \$5,600 in the Music category to help create an LP record of self-penned Americana songs inspired by "Rosie the Riveter," whose brand inspired a social movement in America. The recording will feature a band of highly talented musicians, all female, over 40 years old, and many who identify as LGBTQ, and will culminate in a celebratory performance at McMenamins Mission Theater.

RACC's peer review process involved 46 community volunteers who served on 14 different panels organized by discipline. They were guided by staff during the months of October, November and December, evaluating proposals based on artistic merit, audience development and financial accountability. Most volunteer panelists (96%) served on a RACC grants panel for the first time. The RACC Board of Directors unanimously approved all panel recommendations on December 14.

More detailed summaries of each grant are available at <http://bit.ly/RACC2017PG> (PDF).

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<https://racc.org/2016/12/15/racc-awards-733608-project-grants-2017/>