

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2017 Governor's Awards for the Arts Recipients Announced

Public awards ceremony to be held October 26th in Lancaster

Lancaster, PA – Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Executive Director Philip Horn today announced the recipients of the prestigious Governor's Awards for the Arts at a community arts event at the Lancaster City Alliance headquarters. The Governor's Awards for the Arts honor outstanding Pennsylvania artists, arts organizations, cultural leaders and patrons who have made significant contributions to the advancement of the arts.

"We are honored to announce this year's recipients, right here in a community that has become synonymous with art," Horn said. "The 2017 recipients all share an interest in and invaluable contributions to community, whether through the visual arts, public sculpture, youth theatre or voluntarism and arts advocacy."

Governor Tom Wolf will present the awards on October 26 at 7 p.m., at the Lancaster County Convention Center in downtown Lancaster. In keeping with tradition, Lancaster will be named the cultural capital of the commonwealth for that day. Private contributions support the ceremony, reception, award objects and related expenses.

The 2017 honorees are:

Pepón Osorio, Philadelphia – Distinguished Arts Award: Internationally-recognized visual artist whose work includes large-scale installations inspired by personal and community experiences. He is the Laura Carnell Professor of Community Art at Tyler School of Art/ Temple University and is the recipient of numerous awards, including a prestigious MacArthur Foundation Fellowship.

Barry Kornhauser, Lancaster – Artist of the Year Award: Nationally-recognized playwright, director and educator, whose works have been performed nationally and internationally and commissioned and produced by renowned theatre festivals and Tony Award-winning theaters.

Ann Benzel, Hollidaysburg – Patron Award: Dedicated arts advocate and patron of the arts who has served as Chair of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, and Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania.

George Junior Republic (GJR) Pointing the Way Program, Grove City – Arts Leadership & Service Award: An award-winning public/private art partnership program linking art making with community. GJR is a private, nonprofit residential treatment community for at-risk, delinquent, and dependent youth. Communities across western Pennsylvania have worked with GJR to complete and install more than a dozen sculpture projects to-date, through which participating GJR students gain a broad range of life and cognitive skills.

The Honorable J. Richard Gray & Mrs. Gail Gray, Lancaster – Special Recognition for Public Leadership in the Arts: Visionary public leader who, together with his artist wife, has implemented a path and process for Lancaster that has transformed the city into a thriving arts destination, coupled with modern amenities—welcoming visitors, enriching the lives of residents, and providing an environment that nurtures many artists and performers.

Governor Wolf continues the unique Pennsylvania tradition of holding the awards ceremony in a different community each year. This enables the host region to showcase its unique cultural assets to an audience of cultural leaders from across Pennsylvania.

Since Mayor Rick Gray took office in 2006, Lancaster has increasingly become known throughout the region and beyond as an arts and culture destination set amidst a picturesque, historic downtown. Local arts-related events will take place during the week leading up to the awards ceremony, to celebrate the occasion and highlight Lancaster’s many artistic offerings.

To see the events schedule, visit PAGovArtsLanc.com.

The Governor’s Awards for the Arts are administered by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency under the Office of the Governor. The Council’s mission is to foster the excellence, diversity and vitality of the arts in Pennsylvania, and to broaden the availability and appreciation of those arts throughout the state. For more information about the PCA, visit arts.pa.gov or call 717-787-6883.

Media Contact: Norah Johnson, 717-525-5549.

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