

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ANDOVER CULTURAL COUNCIL AWARDS GRANTS ACROSS TOWN

The Andover Cultural Council is awarding 17 grants for a broad spectrum of cultural programs to take place in the community over the next year. The grants, totaling \$9,600, support a range of visual arts, music, humanities, theatre arts, historical programs, humanities, and interpretive sciences. The projects include a cross-cultural initiative between storytellers in New England and India that enhances the middle school curriculum; family-oriented art and nature videos of the Mary French and Ward Reservations; a virtual art lecture series; an art hanging display system for the new Robb Center; a broad scale virtual choral production featuring multiple local choruses; an outdoor distanced drumming and percussion circle, and more.

Because of ongoing COVID 19 concerns and protocol, many of the funded projects are either in virtual format, or are easily adaptable to meet safety requirements. According to Andover Council chairperson, Leslie Seaton Malis, that was an important criteria in evaluating this year's applications.

"This was an extraordinary year on so many levels," explained ACC chairperson Leslie Seaton Malis. "Because of the pandemic we were faced with many delays, and early questions as to whether or not there would even be a funding cycle this year. Then we had a record number of requests vying for \$9,600 in funding. They were all deserving, and we had to make some very tough decisions, but we were also truly impressed by the energy, resiliency, and fresh thinking behind many of these projects."

State Representative Tram Nguyen, a strong supporter of the arts funding program, stated "The Andover Cultural Council does a great job using its limited resources to promote a thriving cultural environment. These grants will support some truly exciting work that is being done by both cultural groups and individual artists across town. As the State Representative and an Andover resident, I know first-hand how important it is to invest in the arts and humanities – they benefit us in so many ways. Not only do they enrich the quality of our life, but they are also integral to the town's economic livelihood. We support the ACC's work in building a thriving local arts scene, which benefits us all."

The Andover Council is part of the Massachusetts Cultural Council's network of 329 local councils serving all cities and towns of the Commonwealth. It is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the country, which every year funds thousands artists and educators who develop and present programs that nurture the states artistic, cultural, and historic life. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which in turn allocates funds to each community.

The Andover Cultural Council will seek applications again in the fall. For further information concerning programs and applications, visit the website <https://andoverculturalcouncil.org/> or follow it on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/AndoverCulturalCouncil> or Instagram

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A complete list of the 2021 recipients and their programs:

Andover Center for History & Culture: “Andover History at Home”, virtual adaptations of popular school programs for K-2, 3rd grade, and Middle School

Nicolette Nordin Heavey: “The Advisor Within”, cross-cultural collaboration between story tellers in New England and Bhopal India, bringing ancient tales to life through virtual performance and discussion

Natural Deathcare Collaborative: “Making Art While Grieving Death”, an exploration of art-making as a means to commemorate loss

Jennifer Pieroni: “Custom Creations for Clubs”, Andover High School Art Club will work with student clubs to create a stronger student culture through the design of logos, banners, t shirts and other material

West Elementary School: “Virtual Visit with author Dan Gutman”

Wonderland Spectacle: “Art and Nature Videos for Kids”, videos that invite viewers on family hikes to the Mary French and Ward Reservations

Spotlight Playhouse: 2021 Production (in person or virtual to be determined)

Northeast Massachusetts Youth Orchestra: Virtual Season

Friends of Andover Memorial Hall Library: “Culturally Curious” Virtual Art Afternoons

Delvena Theater Company: “Jack the Ripper”, performance highlighting the mystery surrounding the notorious killer, for seniors (in person or virtual to be determined)

Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild: Virtual Programming Workshops with Andover High School Drama

Jane Burns: Hanging display system for art exhibits at new Robb Senior Center

Francesca Lionetta: Creation of “What is Opera Anyway?” podcasts

Katherine Simko: “First Sight”, recording by local singer/songwriter

Andover Choral Society: “Musicians of the Merrimack Valley”, a virtual concert collaboration, featuring ten local choruses in a wide range of works and genres

Shawsheen River Watershed Association: “Art by the River; Making Art with the River Muse”, an afternoon of art-making beside the banks of the Shawsheen River

Timothy Kane: “All Together Drumming”, outdoor, socially distanced drum and percussion circle