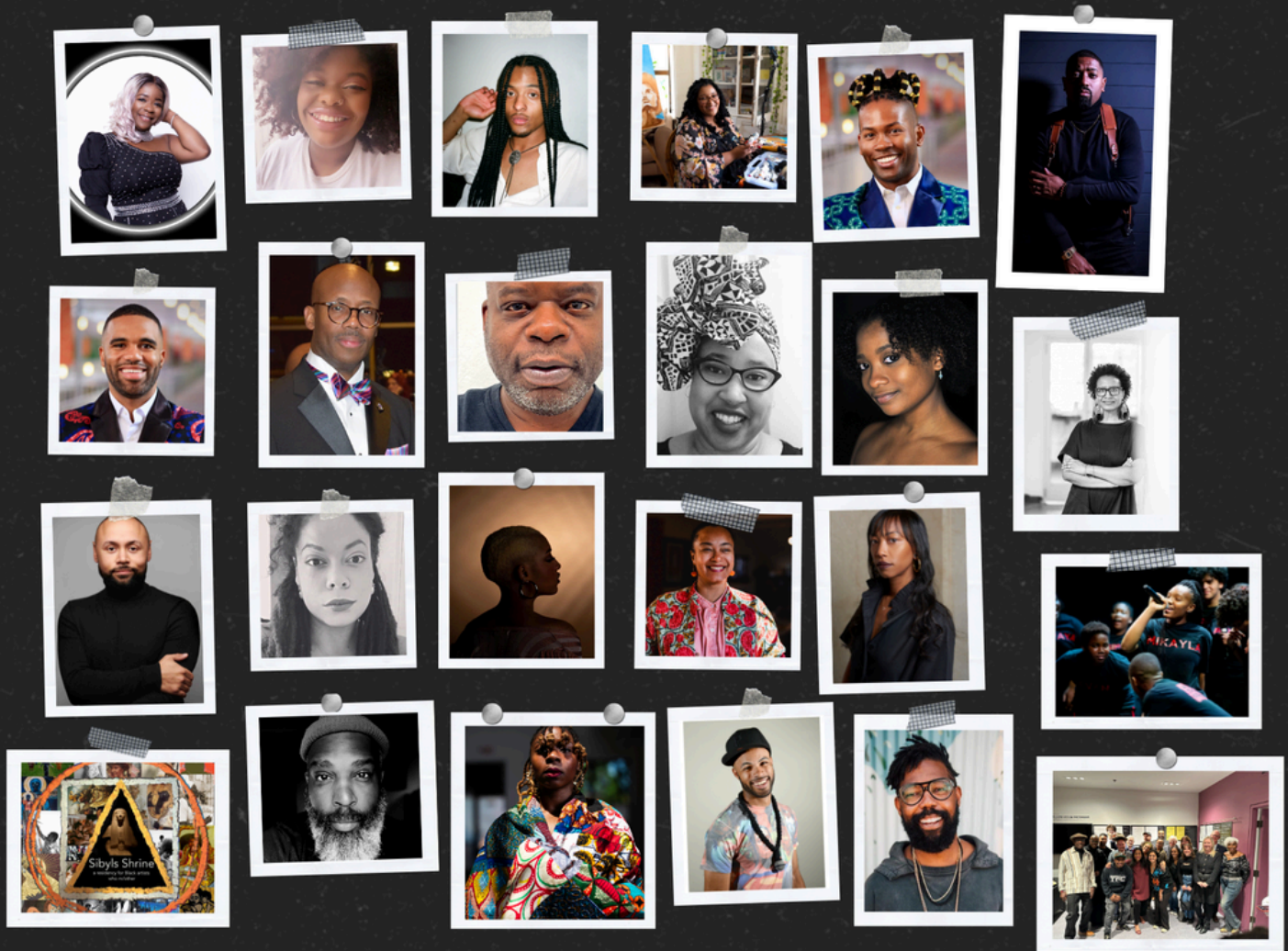


ADVANCING BLACK ARTS IN PITTSBURGH

2025 GRANT GUIDELINES



For a greater Pittsburgh.



Black arts.
Black culture.
Black resources.
Black abundance.
Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh.

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Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh is intentionally designed to enhance the support made available to individual artists, programs and organizations advancing the art of the African diaspora.

pittsburghfoundation.org/abap

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

VISION

Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh envisions a greater Pittsburgh region where individual artists and organizations advancing Black culture have access to opportunities to thrive.

MISSION

Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh honors the acknowledgement, celebration, preservation and perpetuation of Black arts and culture.

PURPOSE

Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh acknowledges, uplifts and celebrates Black culture and its contributions to music, dance, fashion and all other arts, sports, history, values, traditions, games, crafts, literature, languages, faiths, cuisine and social habits.

We also hold that **Black culture** means identity, legacy, revolution, ritual, ceremony, spirituality, creation, innovation, joy, diasporic perspectives, freedom, community, Sankofa, resilience, resistance, revival/inspiration and empowerment.



GOALS

Modeling an equitable arts ecology within the region is a core objective/goal of Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh.

The program aims to:

Help build careers and support the lives of individual artists.

Increase the sustainability of cultural organizations that focus on advancing the art of the African diaspora by working to eliminate racial disparities within the larger arts sector.

Support collaboration in and community awareness of the Black arts sector.

Prioritize the documentation and discussion of artists' work and well-being as part of the region's cultural health.

Support work that directly addresses and calls for the eradication of systemic and structural racism.

THEORY OF TRANSFORMATION

We believe that the state of a society is measured by assessing conditions and livability of its most disenfranchised residents. To achieve an equitable society, we must realize, acknowledge, and then commit to eliminating gaps created by oppressive systems.

Working with others within the arts and culture ecosystem, we support artists and cultural institutions' abilities to exist, then sustain and then thrive.

Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh will effectuate this theory of transformation through the following strategic pathways towards long-term outcomes of self-determined success:

- **Grantmaking.**
- **Collective accountability.**
- **Evaluation and learning.**
- **Tools and resources.**



ELIGIBILITY

All applicants may only apply to one (1) stream of funding per year. If the applicant applies to more than one funding stream, the Foundation reserves the right to select which application will be allowed to move forward for consideration. General operating support applicants are not eligible for other funding streams.



WHAT WE DON'T FUND

- Organizational start-up support.
- Statewide or national organizations unless they have an established local office or chapter that meets the above eligibility criteria and priorities.
- Projects that expressly advocate for or endorse a candidate for elected office.
- Annual appeals or event sponsorships.
- Episodic and/or one-time programs and events.
- Capital expenses and/or campaigns.
- Payments on organizational debt.
- Costs and activities that are completed before a requested grant has received a decision from our board.
- University overhead costs.
- Single-disease support organizations.
- Educational scholarships.
- Academic research.



DEADLINES

All applications are due on Oct. 30, 2025 by 5 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Prospective applicants may only apply to one (1) funding stream.

NOTE: We expect to receive a large volume of requests for assistance. Please note that any questions received on the application due date may not be answered.

Apply Online

NEED ASSISTANCE?

- For project-support applicants: schedule a one-on-one appointment with Christiane Dolores.

Get Project-Support Grant Assistance

- For operating support applicants: contact the arts program team at arts@pghfdn.org.

Get Operating Support Grant Assistance



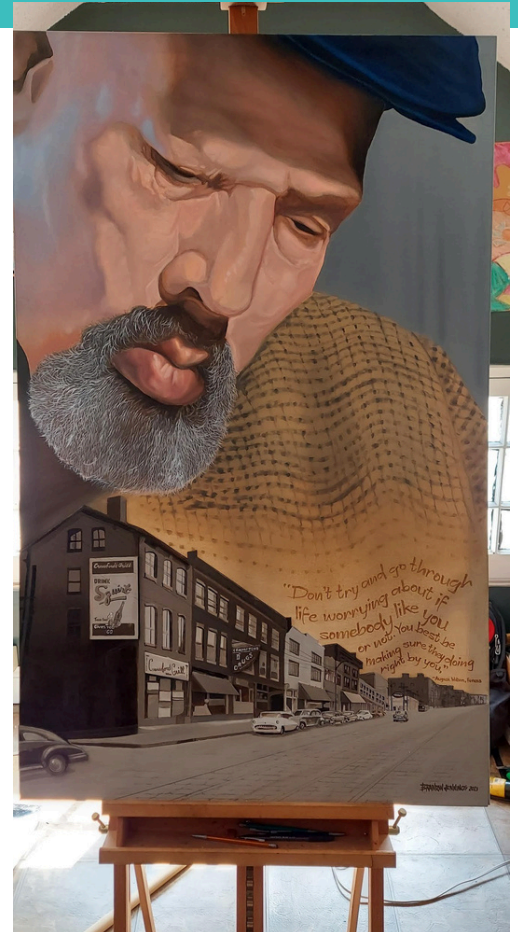
WHO CAN APPLY

INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS

To apply, individual artists must:

- Be at least 18 years of age by the time of submission.
- Have a documented history of regularly/consistently producing or presenting Black art and/or cultural events advancing the art of the African diaspora.
- Have their primary residence within Allegheny, Beaver or Westmoreland counties to be eligible to apply for funding.

NOTE: Previous grantees of this program must wait 12 months after the completion of their last grant to submit a new application, including submission of the required final report.



GRANTSEEKER INFORMATION SESSION

All applicants are **strongly encouraged** to attend the Grantseeker Information Session prior to applying for funding.

This will be held on **Oct. 2, 2025, at 3 p.m.** via Zoom. *Advance registration is required.*

For questions, email arts@pghfdn.org.

Register to Attend Info Session



WHO CAN APPLY

ORGANIZATIONS

To apply, organizations must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) organization or a fiscally sponsored project with a fiscal sponsor. If utilizing a fiscal sponsor: Please confirm that the applicant meets the requirements. **See requirements.**
- Have a documented history of regularly/consistently producing or presenting Black art and/or cultural events advancing the art of the African diaspora.
- Be located within Allegheny, Beaver or Westmoreland counties and/or primarily serve Allegheny, Beaver and Westmoreland Counties. Applicants in the following counties are eligible to apply for funding: Allegheny, Beaver and Westmoreland.

NOTE: Previous grantees of this program must wait 12 months after the completion of their last grant to submit a new application, including submission of the required final report.



GRANTSEEKER INFORMATION SESSION

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For questions, email arts@pghfdn.org.

Register to Attend Info Session



FUNDING STREAMS

PROJECT SUPPORT

UP TO \$50,000

OVER TWO YEARS \$25,000/YEAR

Provides grants to individual artists, nonprofit organizations and fiscally sponsored projects. See eligibility information to confirm applicant eligibility.

This funding stream accepts projects that align with the goals of the program and embraces the mosaic of varied artistic disciplines. Although not an exhaustive list, applications may include one or more of the following example elements:

- Planning a project.
- Hosting an artist or administrative residency in an organization.
- Designing and attending a self-curated artist residency.
- Presenting and/or producing work.
- Marketing a previously completed project.
- Projects in media and journalism.
- Arts-related research and cultural criticism.
- Projects that specifically address issues of social justice.
- Season support for a presenting organization/collective.
- Literary publishing.
- Projects that advance the role of artists and the community in shaping public policy and narrative change that advance racial justice.

In addition to direct project-related artistic expenses, eligible costs can be inclusive of supports necessary to be able to sustain the life of an artist during the creative process. These expenses can include costs like childcare, transportation, space and other necessities that strongly support life functions while a project is coming to fruition.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

All applications are **due on Oct. 30, 2025, by 5 p.m.**, unless otherwise noted.

Apply Online

QUESTIONS?

Please contact us at arts@pghfdn.org.

FUNDING STREAMS

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

UP TO \$100,000

OVER TWO YEARS \$50,000/YEAR

Provides grants to nonprofit arts organizations that have a history of consistent annual programming.

- Organizations seeking support must have a documented history of regularly/consistently producing or presenting Black art and/or cultural events advancing the art of the African diaspora.
- Grantees must show reasonable attendance and accessibility to a broad and diverse public audience.
- General operating support applicants are not eligible for other funding streams.

To be eligible for a general operating support grant, the applicant must:

- Have been in operation for at least two years.
- Not be a current grantee receiving operating support through The Pittsburgh Foundation's foundation-directed grantmaking for the last three years.
- Have a mission and core programs consistent with the guidelines of this program.
- Be able to report on the results achieved by its programs.
- Have an executive director or staff person in an equivalent leadership role that has been in place for at least 12 months.
- If the organization is undergoing a leadership transition, must demonstrate that there is a board-led transition plan that includes a defined strategy for interim leadership.
- Have an audit completed within the last two years (if applicable) and/or up-to-date financial records (current board-approved budget, balance sheet, profit and loss statement, etc.) that demonstrate sound financial management.

NOTE: Individual artists and applicants using a fiscal sponsor are not eligible to apply for operating support. Please [review our fiscal sponsor guidelines](#) for more information.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

All applications are due on **Oct. 30, 2025, by 5 p.m.**, unless otherwise noted.

[Apply Online](#)

QUESTIONS?

Please contact us at arts@pghfdn.org.

HOW TO APPLY

Before you apply....

We recognize the immense creativity and work represented by each of these proposals and would like to express gratitude for your time, energy, effort and labor put forth throughout this process.

1. ATTEND THE GRANTSEEKER INFORMATION SESSION

All applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the Grantseeker Information Session prior to applying for funding.

The session will be held on **Oct. 2, 2025, at 3 p.m. via Zoom**. Advance registration is required.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the meeting. For questions, email arts@pghfdn.org.

[Register to Attend Info Session](#)

2. GET ASSISTANCE WITH YOUR APPLICATION (IF NEEDED)

For project-support applicants: schedule a one-on-one appointment with Christiane Dolores.

[Get Project-Support Assistance](#)

For general operating support applicants: Contact the arts program team at arts@pghfdn.org.

[Get General Operating Support Assistance](#)

3. APPLY ONLINE BY OCT. 30

Applicants must establish an accurate personal account on the online application portal. After you create an account, you may start and complete your application in the same session or save your work and finish the submission later. All applications are **due by Oct. 30, 2025, by 5 p.m.**

[Apply Online](#)

REVIEW AND NOTIFY

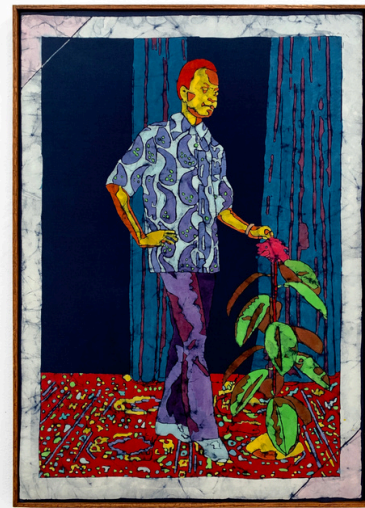
REVIEW PROCESS

Applications are reviewed by Foundation staff members for eligibility and a grant review panel of local and national artists from varied artistic disciplines make funding recommendations to Foundation staff. General operating requests will be reviewed by Foundation staff.



TAX IMPLICATIONS

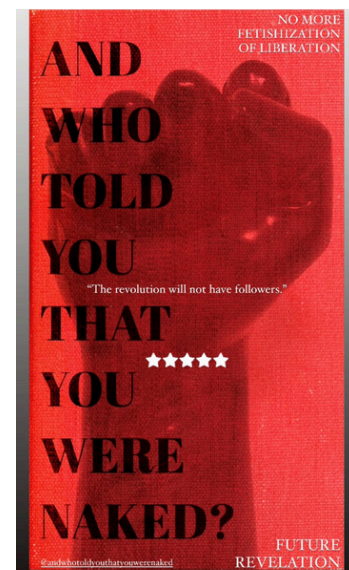
Funds awarded to individuals through this grants program are not excludable from gross income and must be reported to the IRS. Please consult a tax professional to review the impact of this grant on your personal tax liability. Grantees will be required to submit an individual IRS Form W-9.



NOTIFICATIONS

Applicants approved for a grant will be notified within five months of the application deadline. Activities to be funded by this grant request should not begin sooner than April 1, 2026.

Grantees must submit a final report on the project after the duration of the grant period (one to two years). An interim report is required for all multi-year grants. For further inquiries please contact arts@pghfdn.org.



DEFINITION OF TERMS

Many of the definition of terms provided by artistrelief.org.

ART: Art is generally understood as any activity or product done by people with a communicative or aesthetic purpose—something that expresses a culture, an idea, an emotion or, more generally, a world view.

ARTISTIC DISCIPLINE: Although not an exhaustive list, the following art forms may be represented in the applicant pool:

- Craft (ceramics, fiber, glass, jewelry, metals, textiles, etc.).
- Dance (dancers, choreographers, aerial, ballet, hip-hop, jazz, tap, etc.).
- Design (fashion, graphic, industrial, object, all forms of architecture, etc.).
- Film (animation, documentary, episodic, experimental, narrative, etc.).
- Media (work at the intersection of technology, aesthetics, storytelling and digital cultures, etc.).
- Multidisciplinary (combining or involving several artistic disciplines).
- Music (composers, musicians; classical, contemporary, experimental, folk, instrumental, jazz, pop, world, etc.).
- Theater and performance (directing, experimental, live action, playwriting, puppetry, tactical and site performance, etc.).
- Traditional arts (work related to the continuity and evolution of a tradition and/or cultural heritage such as cultural dance, cultural music, oral expression, and traditional crafts, etc.).
- Visual art (installation, painting, performance art, photography, sculpture, sound art, video, etc.).
- Literary arts (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, literature for children, criticism, graphic novels, journalism, arts writing, etc.).



DEFINITION OF TERMS

(continued)

ARTS ORGANIZATION: An arts organization is an IRS-registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation or organization working with a fiscal sponsor and with a mission to produce or present work in dance, film/video, digital applications, literature, music, theatre, traditional/folk arts, visual arts or interdisciplinary work. Eligible organizations may be of any budget size and must demonstrate the capacity to implement proposed activities. University arts departments, history museums or other nonprofit cultural entities are also eligible if a strong record of accomplishment and/or effective support system for working with creative artists can be demonstrated. See cultural relevance definition below for more.

ARTIST RESIDENCY: A residency is an immersive period during which an artist, arts worker, curator or arts administrator has access to resources for the expressed purpose of developing or supporting artistic work. The individual does not need to reside continuously in the region, but both the individual and organization must engage each other in an active exchange that adds value to both the artistic work and the host organization. Residencies should last at least three months to a maximum of 18 months.

BLACK: A racialized classification of people who may identify as Black, African American, African, Caribbean, Afro-Latinx or of the African diaspora.

CULTURAL RELEVANCE: Cultural relevance celebrates the unique cultural strengths of people of the African diaspora. The lens of cultural relevance gives first-person voice to the people of the African diaspora, so that the artists may share and celebrate their lived experiences and build on the artistic traditions of the diaspora. Cultural relevance is rooted in historical context, and considers contemporary issues, such as social climate and intersectionality in the artistic work and in the creative approach. Competitive projects will be designed by artists who bring their culture and experience to the development and execution of the plan. This will result in work that matters to a broad array of Pittsburgh residents and deepens understanding of the current social context in which the work is created.

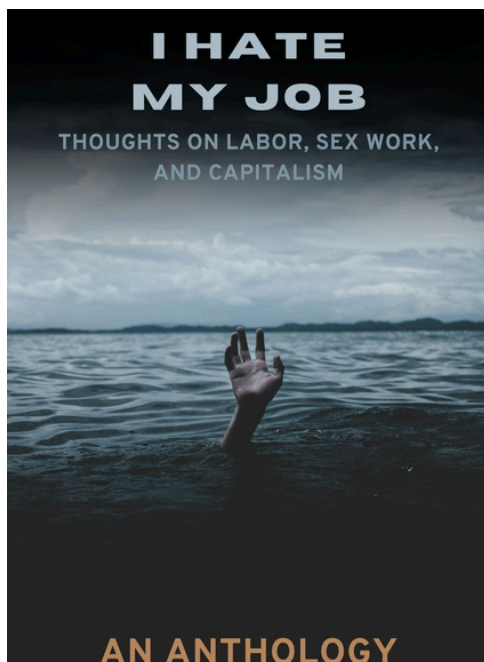


DEFINITION OF TERMS

(continued)

FISCAL SPONSOR: The practice of nonprofit organizations offering their legal and tax-exempt status to groups—typically projects—engaged in activities related to the sponsoring organization’s mission. Please review to confirm your organization is eligible to utilize a fiscal sponsor and that the fiscal sponsor meets the requirements listed here. [More about fiscal sponsorship.](#)

INDIVIDUAL ARTIST: A professional artist is an individual who has devoted significant time and training to building a career creating or interpreting works of art. Our definition includes playwrights and choreographers, as well as those who bring works of art to life for audiences, such as stage directors, actors, dancers or designers. Interpreters of art, including journalists, art critics and curators may also apply. Professional artists may be emerging, mid-career or established. In assessing an artist’s qualifications, we will take the following into consideration as appropriate to the art form and stage of career: Quality of creative work; evidence of formal or informal training; history of exhibitions, performances, screenings or other public sharing of work; and critical reviews or letters of recommendation from professionals in the field.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge those who came before us.

In 1989, The Multicultural Arts Initiative was created to advance culturally diverse arts programming, with an emphasis on Black and African American programs, and to celebrate the diverse cultures of western Pennsylvania by supporting and strengthening arts programming through funding, advocacy and technical assistance.

In 2010, the board of directors voluntarily dissolved the organization and disbanded the board. Later that same year, Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh was launched as a shared initiative of The Pittsburgh Foundation and The Heinz Endowments. In 2021, after a large donation from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, the Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh team dreamed with community members about the program's future. In 2022, both Foundations decided to move the program to The Pittsburgh Foundation and, since the fall of 2023, it has been managed by The Pittsburgh Foundation with monetary support from The Heinz Endowments. We remain grateful for all of the artistic excellence our partnership has allowed for both now and in the future.

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the artists, ancestors, individuals, donors, research and evaluation efforts, foundation and program staff whose vision, hard work and dedication to individual artists and programs and organizations advancing the art of the African diaspora has made today's Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh program possible.

PHOTO CREDITS

FRONT COVER [Left to right, from top row]:

1st row

- Dr. Aameela Boyd. Photo by Antonio Livingston.
- Adrie Rose. Photo courtesy of Adrie Rose.
- London Pierre Williams. Photo by Makayla Camile.
- Jasmine Green. Photo by Kitoko Chargois.
- Marques Redd. Photo by Emma Alaquiva.
- Corey Lankford ("Her Dreams" project). Photo courtesy of Corey Lankford.

2nd row

- Mikael Owunna. Photo by Emma Alaquiva.
- Brandon R. Jennings (KBK Foundation). Photo courtesy of Brandon R. Jennings.
- Gavin Benjamin. Photo by Rona Chang.
- TaMara Howard. Photo courtesy of TaMara Howard.
- Kaila Carter. Photo by AJ Smith.
- Kilolo Luckett. Photo by Tara Geyer.

3rd row

- James Manning. Photo by Tony Moux.
- Joy Priest. Photo courtesy of Joy Priest.
- Anyah Nancy. Photo by Madison Vaughn.
- Addoley Dzegede. Photo by Seth Culp-Ressler.
- Jessica Gaynelle Moss/Sibyls Shrine. Photo by Thurner Photography.
- Alumni Theater Company performance. In photo: Marvaya Hampton, Evan McKenzie, Nia Dupree, Mikayla Keys, Phoenix Gordon and Javier Drahnak.

4th row

- Visual symbol of art collective Sibyls Shrine, a network of Black artists who m/other in Pittsburgh. Image courtesy of Sibyls Shrine/Jessica Gaynelle Moss.
- Ricardo iamura Robinson. Photo by Sonarcheology Studios.
- Diarra Imani. Photo by Tyrell La'Rue Photography
- Day Bracey (Barrel & Flow founder and executive director). Photo by Christopher Horner.
- Damon Young. Photo by sarah huny young.
- August Wilson House. Photo features Italian Jitney with director/producer Renzo Carbonera, Italian actor Alessandra Arcangeli, August Wilson House Chief Executive Denise Turner, Board members, Director of Programming and August Wilson House, Founder Paul Ellis, University of Pittsburgh Library System staff, University of Pittsburgh Honors College members, actor Carter Redwood and Reginald Howze.

PAGE 1:

- Image of cover of yet-to-be-published poetry collection by Joy Priest, titled "The Black Outside."

PAGE 2:

- Christine, Tricia, Gavin, Greensburg, 2021, from Museum Pictures. Photo by Gavin Benjamin.

PAGE 3 [top to bottom]:

- Barrel & Flow design on a bus. Art design by HUNY.

PAGE 4 [top to bottom]:

- Combined art from Healing by Deizigs.
- Image provided by Jasmine Green. The Golden Hour.

PAGE 5:

- Image by Marques Redd. [Left to right]: Billy Hawkains III, Ashley Eleby, Rishell Maxwell, and Jordan Cowan

PAGE 6:

- Painting by Brandon R. Jennings/KBK Foundation.
- Artwork by London Pierre Williams.

PAGE 7:

- Urban Academy and the P.R.I.D.E. Program. Photo by Tyrell La'Rue Photography.
- James Manning at CAPA/Pittsburgh Public Schools. Photo courtesy of James Manning.

PAGE 11 [top to bottom]:

- Artwork by Addoley Dzegede titled, "Papa," 2024. Fiber reactive dye on cotton (batik and painted). 32"x22".
- Artwork by Mikael Owunna.
- Cover art for book titled, "And Who Told You That You Were Naked?" by Ricardo iamura Robinson. Photo by Sonarcheology Studios.

PAGE 12:

- Cover art for "Her Dreams" documentary, directed by Corey Lankford/Unshakeable Motherhood.

PAGE 13:

- Elizabeth J. Tucker pictured holding quilt by TaMara Howard in 2023.

PAGE 14 [left to right]:

- Cover art for an upcoming anthology project titled, "I Hate My Job," by Adrie Rose.
- Photo of dancers choreographed by Kaila Carter. Dancers: Jaden Murphy and Indira Cunningham. Photo by Jacob Woodyard.

ADVANCING BLACK ARTS IN PITTSBURGH

A program of The Pittsburgh Foundation.

Funded by The Heinz Endowments and The Pittsburgh Foundation.

The Pittsburgh Foundation

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pittsburghfoundation.org/abap