



2017 Annual Report

www.u-ca.org

In 2017, The Union engaged over 10,000 community members in our programs & projects... more than twice the number of people we were able to serve in our first five years combined.

When I started The Union for Contemporary Art in 2011, I couldn't possibly imagine that the plan I was setting into motion from my kitchen table would one day connect 10,000 people with the arts. But then, 2017 was a year of seeing the impossible made possible for The Union—a brilliant new facility to house our programs, a full staff of committed, passionate advocates, the capacity to create opportunities for thousands of people to learn, connect, create, and celebrate the arts in North Omaha.

After two years of planning and renovation, we celebrated the opening of our new facility in the historic Blue Lion Center in January 2017. Our new home at North 24th and Lake allowed The Union to become the organization I dreamed it could be and has afforded us the capacity to truly serve our mission. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our donors, we've been able to sustain our growth—expanding our programs and staff to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

The year was filled with many incredible milestones for our organization: the launch of our Performing Arts Collective, which provided opportunities for 26 Black actors in our

community to share their talents; the completion of a new three-year strategic plan; expansion of our support to local artists through our fellowship program; and a commitment to pay every artist working to support our mission—whether they are teaching the youth we serve or exhibiting their work in our gallery.

I am so sincerely grateful to everyone who helped make 2017 one of the most amazing years ever for The Union and those we serve... thank you for your unwavering belief in our mission, for your support of our work, and commitment to making the arts accessible to everyone in our city.

My best to you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brigitte". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Brigitte McQueen Shew
Executive Director

Youth



Over **200 North Omaha youth** participated in our free cultural programs, which provided them with access to visual and performance art opportunities. Through **2,500 hours** of free after school programs, summer camps and our Saturday Art Club we work to help our young artists find their individual voice, empowering them to be agents for change in their personal lives and communities.

“I cannot say enough positive things about the Art Club at The Union. Both of my children have attended since it began and I have seen their artistic and social skills grow as they are surrounded by a variety of wonderful children from all different walks of life.”

— Theresa Lankford, Art Club Parent

Exhibition



With the opening of our facility in the Blue Lion, our exhibition program found its first permanent home for the Wanda D. Ewing Gallery, allowing for greater community access to the arts and elevating regional and national connectivity. Our inaugural season of five exhibitions showcased the the diversity of work being made my local, regional and national artists, bringing over **2,000 people** to North 24th Street to celebrate the arts and accomplishments of our creative community.

EXHIBITION SERIES

Alexandria Smith \\ Try a Little Tenderness

Angie Seykora \\ Part to Part

Jordan Weber, Lachelle Workman + Zora Murff \\ Where We Land

Nancy Friedemann-Sanchez \\ Chapter 5: River

2017 Union Fellows Exhibition

A new addition to The Union's program line-up in 2017, The Union's Performing Arts Collective creates opportunities for actors of color and showcases the talents of Black playwrights. Nearly **600 people** attended our performances and labs in 2017, helping us to connect our community with relevant and diverse narratives about the Black experience.

2017 SEASON

The Divine Order of Becoming by Carla Stillwell

Cast: TammyRa + Dani Cleveland

Asst Director: Nik Whitcomb

Stage Manager: Dorreitte Jordan

Lighting Designer: Homero Vela

Smart People by Lydia R. Diamond

Cast: Eric Lawson, Nick Zadina, Eliza Barr, Cecilia Poon & Simon A Lovell

Director: Nik Whitcomb

Lawd the CVS is Burning by Carla Stillwell

Cast: Alexander Bridgman, Anthony Dupree Holmes, Rusheaa Smith-Turner, Doriette Jordan, TammyRa, Dani Smith & Eric "E Rawq" Lawson

Music Director: Eric Jordon

Unfinished Women by Aishah Rahman

Cast: Alexander Bridgman, Rusheaa Smith Turner, Eliza Barr, Shane Adams, Giovanni Jones, Shanaë Adams, Karlee Currin, Shomari Higgins,

Anthony D Holmes & Dani Smith

Musician: Ramell Ruffin

Bourbon At The Border by Pearl Cleage

Cast: Dani Cleveland, LaQuanna Billingsley, Kabin Thomas & Anthony Holmes

Assistant Director: Andre McGraw

Assistant Stage Manager: Precious Young

Resident Lighting & Scenic Designer: Homero Vela

Graphic Designer: Alexander Bridgman

PAC





CO-OP *Studios*

In 2017, nearly **150 local artists** became active members of the Co-Op, utilizing our state-of-the-art equipment and studio spaces for ceramics, print, darkroom, fiber arts, digital design and woodworking to strengthen their creative practice. The Union also hosted nearly **100 workshops** last year, covering everything from darkroom basics to chine-colle printing, and provided over **400 community members** with hands-on access to the arts.

“*The Co-Op is an arts community without the restrictions of a formal classroom setting or the hierarchy of the university. Artists with masters degrees are practicing right next to people who have just started making things. This is so valuable and liberating.*”

— Sara Adkisson Joyner, Co-Op Member

To date, our Fellowship program has strengthened the creative practice of **39 local artists** by providing them with free studio space, financial support and access to professional development and mentorship opportunities. In 2017, we received nearly **60 applications** for our 2018 cohort—more than double the amount we've ever received.

2017 FELLOWSHIP COHORT

Celeste Butler \\ fiber arts

Samone Davis \\ fashion design

Slowed Soul (Noah Sterba & Jeff Sedrel) \\ multi-media

Jamie Danielle Hardy \\ multi-media

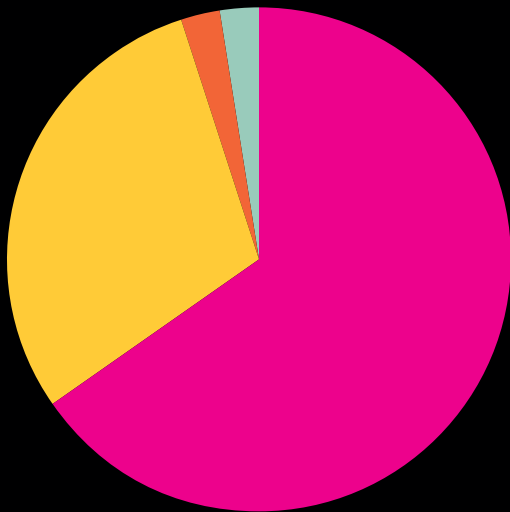
Edem Kegey \\ music composition & performance

A photograph of a woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a red patterned top, sitting on a patterned armchair and playing an acoustic guitar. She is in a room with exposed brick walls and large windows. To her left is a red and blue lantern. In front of her is a small table with a book and some flowers. To her right is a white armchair. The word "Fellowship" is written in large, white, italicized script across the bottom of the image.

Fellowship

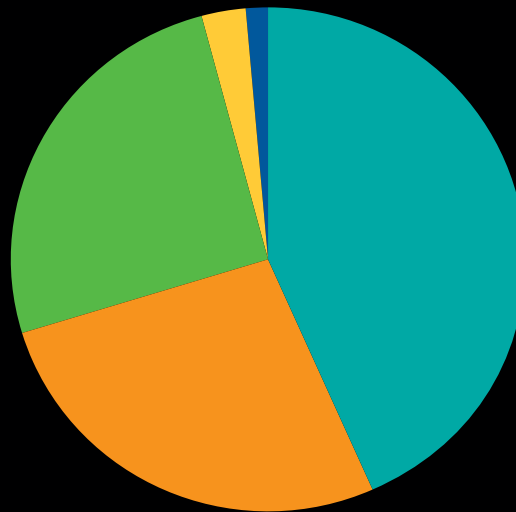
Income & Expenditures

CONTRIBUTED SUPPORT



Foundations	\$557,131
Individuals	\$253,145
Corporations	\$22,550
Government Grants	\$19,980
TOTAL	\$852,806

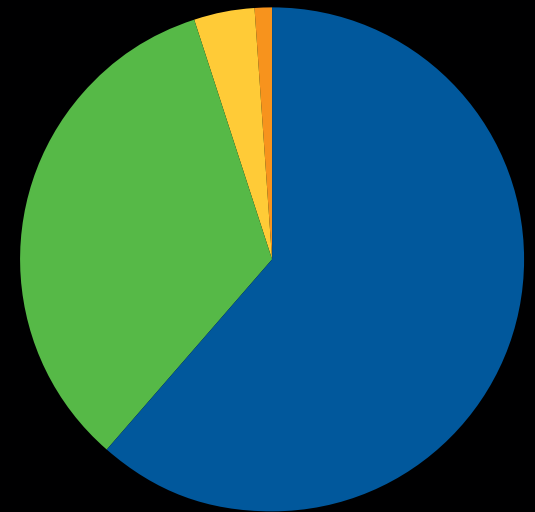
EARNED REVENUE



Membership Dues	\$14,912
Workshop Fees	\$9,216
Rental Fees	\$8,763
Ticket Sales	\$964
Product Sales	\$402
TOTAL	\$34,257

TOTAL INCOME: \$887,062

EXPENDITURES



General Programs & Projects	\$546,680
General Operating & Administration	\$296,553
Professional Development & Strategic Planning	\$36,000
Fundraising	\$7,829

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$887,062

People & Partners

UNION STAFF

Nicole Caruth ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Denise Chapman ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PAC
Dan Crane CO-OP STUDIOS TECH
Kat Fackler PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Sarah Jones ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR
Megan King DEVELOPMENT MANAGER
Joey Lynch DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES
Patrick Mainelli COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER
Brigitte McQueen Shew EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Paige Reitz DEPUTY DIRECTOR
Jade Rogers YOUTH ENGAGEMENT MANAGER
Jesse Ross CO-OP STUDIOS MANAGER
Amanda Smith EXHIBITIONS AND FELLOWSHIP MANAGER
Jacqueline Smith YOUTH ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Erin Amdor-Cihal, Secretary
Karen Borchert
Adrian Duran
Cydney Franklin
Shaun Ilahi
Tahnee Markussen
Bruce Moritz, Treasurer
Amy Nelson
Aaron Shaddy, Vice-Chair
Wendy Townley
Cammy Watkins
Drew Weitz, Chair

The staff and board of The Union would like to thank founding board members **Mary Zicafoose** & **Kate Cavanaugh** for their incredible years of service.

2017 TEACHING ARTISTS

The Union is committed to paying artists for their time & talents. In 2017, we provided nearly \$64,000 in compensation to members of our creative community who helped facilitate our programs & projects.

Joe Addison
Maranda Allbritten
JonNielle Allen
Latrice Anderson
Jennifer Baker
Petrushka Bazin-Larsen
Jody Boyer
Alexander Bridgman
Celeste Butler
Cally Casteel
Tiana Conyers
Dave DeMarco
Adam Dienst-Scott
Emma Erickson
Allyson Gibbs
Jess Hamlin
Jaime Danielle Hardy
Camille Hawbaker
Taura Horn
Sarah Jones
Dorrette Jordon
Eric Jordon
Janelle Jurgens
Betni Kalk
Brian Kear
Edem Kegey
Harrison Martin
Alex Matzke
Tim Mayer
Jessica Mills
Lynnette Miranda
Emily Mitchell
Bridget O'Donnell
Gerard Pefung
Reagan Pufall
Brienne Reiss
Cornelius Rhone
Sarah Schneiderwind
Tracy Shell
Andy Smith
Rob Walters
Shea Wilkinson
Hugo Zamorano

2017 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

75 North
Abide Network
ACLU Nebraska
AIGA NE
Bemis Center for Contemporary Art
Benson First Friday
Black Votes Matter
Boys and Girls Club
Catholic Charities
City of Omaha Planning Department
Collective for Youth
College of St. Mary's
Creative Mornings
Creighton University
Center for Promoting Health and Health Equality
MLK Day Celebration Committee
Element Learning Center
El Museo Latino
Girls, Inc.
Habitat for Humanity
Heartland Family Services' Solomon Girls Program
Hope Center for Kids
Jesuit Academy
Joslyn Art Museum
Leadership Omaha
MAPA
Midtown Crossing Market
Montessori Co-Op School
Nebraska Appleseed
Nebraska Civic Engagement Table
Nebraskans for Civic Reform
New Leaders Council
Omaha Community Foundation
Omaha Creative Institute
Omaha Economic Development Corp.
Omaha Girls Rock
Omaha Public Schools
Omaha Small Business Network
Omaha Venture Group
Omaha Zine Fest
Opera Omaha
Peter Kiewit Foundation
Planned Parenthood
Sacred Heart Academy
TUG Collective
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Urban League of Nebraska
Valiant Studios
Visual AIDS Day With(out) Art
Women's Center for Advancement
YMCA - South Omaha

OUR STELLAR VOLUNTEERS

Shad Hovdenes
Emily Mitchell
Sally Otis
Kelsey Scofield
Melanie Sloger
Rusheaa Smith
Buffie Somers
Trent Toney
Maureen Waldron
Matt Wettengel

Supporters & Friends

Our work is made possible through the generosity of hundreds of incredible people who believe that the arts are vital to our community. We would be nothing without your support of our mission ... thank you!

\$20,000+

Richard Brooke Foundation
Fund for Omaha:
Omaha Community Foundation
Peter Kiewit Foundation
Lozier Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
The Sherwood Foundation
Fred & Eve Simon Charitable Foundation
Paul & Annette Smith
Drew & Meredith Weitz
Katie Weitz
Weitz Family Foundation

\$19,999 to \$10,000

Lincoln Financial Foundation, Inc.
Bill & Ruth Scott
Turnback Tax Grant: City of Omaha

\$9,999 to \$2,500

Dan McCarthy
Nebraska Arts Council
Sarah Lopez
Tom McGowan
Todd & Betiana Simon
Kathryn Simpson
Roger & Kate Weitz
Woodman of the World Life Insurance Society

\$2,499 to \$1,000

Michael & Laura Alley
Kathleen & John Cavanaugh
Dicon Corp.
Joan Gibson & Don Wurster
Alexandra Grant
Amy Nelson
Murray & Shares Newman
Wells Fargo Foundation
Watie White

\$999 to \$500

Alley Poyner Macchietto
Anonymous
Catherine & Terrence Ferguson
Maria Fernandez
Jeff & Barb Green
Beverly & Randall Greer
Bill Hoover
Justin & Katie Kemerling
Melissa Kopplin
Michael & Nancy McCarthy
Brigitte McQueen Shew & Tim Shew
Reagan Pufall
Kenley & Jara Sturdivant-Wilson
Mary & Kirby Zicafoose

\$499 to \$250

Cathleen Amdor
Anonymous
Laurie Baedke
Ken & Ann Bird
Sandra Bruns
Erin Cihal
Curb Appeal Salon
John Deitisch &
Hillary Nather-Detisch
Adrian Duran & Alexandra Cardon
Elouise Ewing
Bruce & Marlene Haney
James Luyten
Megan King
Bruce & Lisa Moritz
Hobsen & Denise Powell
Mary & Kent Stormberg
Beth Summers
Kelli Sweet & Drew Hallock
Dan Walker
Jill & Brian Wetjen

\$249 to \$100

Sara Adkisson-Joyner
Joe Addison
Maranda Allbritten
Anne Alston
Adam Andrews
Anonymous
Robert Benzel
Brendan Bishop
Bluestem Prairie Foundation
Maureen Borman
Karen Bowerman & Larry Ferguson
Mary Lee Brock
Emma Buckley
James Buhrman Jr.
Maria Elena Buszek
Brian Byrd
Julia Campbell
Karin Campbell
Nicole Caruth
Colleen Cavanaugh & Darin Anthony
Machaela Cavanaugh & Nick Brotzel
Tiffany Clifton
Jacqueline Cook
Bryce Coulton
Robert Culver & Debra Reilly-Culver
Dana Damewood & Brian Hanson
Drew & Elisa Davies
Jeff Day
Amanda DeBoer
Martin Diaz
Janet Farber & Mike Krainak
Cody Fenske
Calandra Ferguson
Rebecca Forsyth
Meredith Fuller
Cynthia Gehrie
Cassie Geiken
Marcey Gibson
Jordyn Giddings
Suzanne GrozdichStan Hallock
Amy Haney
Judy Haney

Jack Heidel
Linda Hellfritsch
Clare Hiyama
Sharon Hofschire
Jackson Street Booksellers
Matthew Jeffries
Kate Jones
Simon Joyner
Brett Jurgens
Ree & Jun Kaneko
Andrea Kathol
Sally & Gary Kaplan
Jennifer Keys
Eric Kilma
Jeffrey & Jessica Kutash
Andrew & Shannon Lang
Christina Larney
Kara Larson
Scott Larson
Ian Leader
Julie Lund
Jeffrey Mack
Lauren & Lee Martin
Harrison Martin
Sarah Mayberry
Hannah Mayer
Kaitlan McDermott
John McIntyre & Laura Vranes
Othello & Tulani Meadows
Evan Meduna
Dana Mike
Jessica Mogis
Danielle Morgan
Lynne Mytty
Valerie Nelson
Holly & Lee Olson
Rebecca Osborn
Paula Owen
Jay & Mary Palu
Frank Plummer
Matt Pollard
Julianne Pope
Derek Pressnall

Stephanie Purcell
Alex Reed
Kenneth & Julie Reitz
Kristin Reitz
Jay Rich & Doug Boyd
Todd Robinson
William Rotert
Pascale Roussel
Barbara Schlott
Kelsey Scofield
James Sealey
Greg Searson
Todd Shalom
Helen & Elvin Shew
Louis Sloger
Kelly Smith
Stewart & Susie Smoler
Jared Spence
Michael Stevens
Sue & Mary Stroesser
Michelle Sukstorf
Michelle Sullivan
Susan Tracy
Aileen Tobin
Bart Vargas
Kylie Von Seggern
James Waldron
LaDeasha Watson
Maggie Weber
Reilly White
Robert William
John Wilwerding
Kristin Zahra
Kerri Zessau



www.u-ca.org

Design by Justin Kemerling Design Co

