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Hermitage 2024 STARs Announced!

Special Program Announced for July 12th in a partnership between Hermitage Artist Retreat, FAAE, The Boys & Girls Club of Sarasota & Desoto County, and the Englewood YMCA

Five exceptional Florida teaching artists were selected for a July residency at the Hermitage Artist Retreat. This year's recipients hail from Columbia, Hillsborough, Leon, Polk, and Seminole Counties.

These educators and artists, selected from across the State of Florida, will present a family-friendly showcase of their work on Friday, July 12th at the Hermitage.

June 10, 2024 — **The Hermitage Artist Retreat** (Sarasota County, Florida) announced today that five Florida public school arts teachers will spend part of their summer on Manasota Key while working on their own artistic endeavors. They are the recipients of the 2024 State Teachers Artist Residency program (STARs) – now in its fourteenth year – presented by the **Hermitage Artist Retreat** in partnership with the **Florida Alliance for Arts Education** (FAAE). This year's recipients were selected from dozens of impressive applicants, and the five teachers selected from across the State of Florida include three visual arts educators working in various mediums, a musician who leads the steel band at their high school, and a theater teacher recognized for his playwriting talents. The five receive a residency at the nationally renowned Hermitage Artist Retreat, where they can focus on their own work as creative artists. **These five teaching artists will present a family-friendly showcase of their work on Friday, July 12th starting at 2pm. This special event will be held throughout the**

Hermitage’s beachfront campus on Manasota Key; entrance at 6660 Manasota Key Road, Englewood, FL 34223.

The program is presented in partnership with the **Boys & Girls Club of Sarasota and Desoto Counties** and the **Englewood YMCA**. In addition to the students and families attending from the YMCA, this Hermitage community program will be free and open to the public with a \$5/person registration fee. Due to capacity limitations, **registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org**.

“These exceptional educators are also talented artists and creative minds in their own right,” says **Andy Sandberg**, Artistic Director and CEO of the Hermitage. “During the academic year, their attention is devoted to their students, and this has been a particularly challenging few years for educators throughout the State of Florida. The STARs program offers five distinguished teachers the opportunity to experience what leading artists from around the world have come to the Hermitage for – to focus on their craft and their creative process. Over the years, the STARs have created some stunning works of art, music, theater, dance, and literature during their time at the Hermitage. Many Hermitage teaching artist alumni have shared that this program enables them to return to their students with a new fire and passion for arts education.”

The five recipients of this honor, selected among dozens of impressive applicants, include: **Greg Burdick**, a theater arts educator, director, and playwright in Central Florida (Polk County); **Dealey Dansby**, a sculpture and ceramics visual artist currently teaching elementary and middle school art at Carrollwood K8 in Tampa (Hillsborough County); **Shaun Fergus**, a passionate art instructor at Fort White Middle School (Columbia County); **Dr. Kayleen Justus**, Director of Steel Bands at Leon High School in the Tallahassee area (Leon County); and **Vanessa Watkins**, a distinguished glass artist with a focus on restoration art at Markham Woods Middle School (Seminole County). *Full bios are included below.*

Since the start of the Hermitage STARs program in 2011, 67 teachers have represented over 30 Florida counties. These prestigious residencies culminate with a free community program, this year hosted in partnership with the **Boys & Girls Club of Sarasota and Desoto Counties** and the **Englewood YMCA**.

The STARs program is one of the only Hermitage residency programs open to application; arts educators from schools throughout the State of Florida are eligible, including music, theater, visual art, dance, and creative writing teachers. For more information about the Hermitage STARs program and how to apply, Florida arts educators are encouraged to visit FAAE.org/STAR.

A leading national arts incubator, the Hermitage is the only major arts organization in Florida’s Gulf Coast exclusively committed to supporting the development and creation of new work across all artistic disciplines. The Hermitage hosts artists on its Gulf Coast Manasota Key campus for multi-week residencies, where

diverse and accomplished artists from around the world and across multiple disciplines create and develop new works of theater, music, visual art, literature, dance, film, and more. As part of their residencies, Hermitage Fellows participate in free year-round community programs, offering audiences in the region a unique opportunity to engage with some of the world's leading artists and to get an authentic "sneak peek" into extraordinary projects and artistic minds before their works go on to major galleries, concert halls, theaters, and museums around the world. These free and innovative programs include performances, conversations, readings, interactive experiences, open studios, school programs, teacher workshops, and more, serving thousands in our regional community each year.

For more information about the Hermitage and upcoming programs, visit:
HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

Full Program Description

"2024 Hermitage STARS" Friday, July 12, 2pm: The incredible talents of Florida's arts educators reach well beyond the boundaries of the classroom. The State Teaching Artist Residency (STAR) program, now in its fourteenth year, is designed to nourish and replenish the passionate artist within each of the remarkable teachers selected for the honor. This year, they represent multiple disciplines of visual art, theater, and music and come from all across the state of Florida. **Greg Burdick** (Theater, Polk County), **Dealey Dansby** (Ceramics, Hillsborough County), **Shaun Fergus** (Visual Art, Columbia County), **Kayleen Justuce** (Music, Leon County), and **Vanessa Watkins** (Stained Glass, Seminole County) will have two weeks to create new work, culminating in a sharing with the community on Friday, July 12th on the Hermitage campus. **Family and student friendly program – all are welcome!** *Presented in Partnership with FAAE, Boys & Girls Club of Sarasota & Desoto Counties and the Englewood YMCA. **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org (\$5/person registration fee). Hermitage Beach, 6660 Manasota Key Road, Englewood, FL 34223***

The Hermitage Artist Retreat

Sarasota County, Florida
Andy Sandberg, Artistic Director and CEO

The Hermitage is a leading national arts incubator and nonprofit artist retreat located on Manasota Key, Florida. For more than two decades, the Hermitage has invited accomplished artists across multiple disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Hermitage artists are invited to interact with the local community, reaching thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors each year with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage Fellows have included 15 Pulitzer Prize winners, Poets Laureate, MacArthur 'Genius' Fellows, and multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy, Oscar winners and nominees. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse and accomplished group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. Each year, the Hermitage awards the Hermitage Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, the Hermitage Major Theater Award

for an original theater commission, and the Aspen Music Festival's Hermitage Prize in Composition.

For more information, visit HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

The Hermitage is supported by:

Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts; Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues; the State of Florida through the Division of Arts and Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts; as well as the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Sarasota & Desoto Counties:

Boys & Girls Clubs of Sarasota and DeSoto Counties have played an integral role in the lives of local youth for more than 50 years, providing daily programs and services to thousands of young people. The mission of Boys & Girls Clubs of Sarasota and DeSoto Counties is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. The vision is to provide a world-class Club experience that assures success is within reach of every young person who walks through our doors, with all members on track to graduate from high school with a plan for the future, demonstrating good character and citizenship, and living a healthy lifestyle. For more information, visit BGCSDC.org.

Englewood YMCA:

The mission of the YMCA is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. We envision our non-profit organization – in partnership with others – as an intergenerational community hub with programs, services, and resources available to all persons, regardless of status or ability to pay, that will enable them to improve their quality of life. The Y is an all-inclusive organization dedicated to making an impact through life-changing services and programs that make our community stronger than yesterday by giving promise for a better future and providing a safe place where everyone belongs. For more information, visit YMCSSWFL.org.

Florida Alliance for Arts Education:

Since 1981, Florida Alliance for Arts Education (FAAE) has worked to bring schools and communities together to improve, enhance, and promote lifelong learning in and through the arts. The arts are essential to the vitality and quality of life in schools and communities. Education is even more powerful when it includes arts instruction and broad-based cultural programs. As the statewide umbrella organization for arts education, FAAE impacts thousands of lives each year, serving educators, administrators, students, families, and advocates in rural and urban communities throughout Florida.

ALL ANNOUNCED HERMITAGE PROGRAMS:

Friday, June 7 @ 6:30pm, “Standing on the Beach’s Edge: London to Sarasota,” featuring 2024 **Hermitage Major Theater Award** winner **Chris Bush**, on the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key) *The Hermitage Major Theater Award and Chris Bush’s residency are made possible with generous support from **Flora Major** and the **Kutya Major Foundation**.*

Wednesday, June 26 @ 6:30pm, “Stealing the Show: Broadway, Beach, and Beyond,” featuring Hermitage Fellow and 2024 Tony Award Nominee **Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer**, on the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key)
*Presented in partnership with our regional theater collaborators **Asolo Rep, Sarasota Players, Urbanite Theatre, Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, Venice Theatre, and West Coast Black Theatre Troupe***

*Leslie Rodriguez Kritzer's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by the **Huisking Fund of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County***

Friday, June 28 @ 6:30pm, “We Were the Universe,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Kimberly King Parsons**, at Bookstore1 (Sarasota) *Presented in partnership with Bookstore1*
*Kimberly King Parsons' Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by **Robyn & Charles Citrin***

Friday, July 12 @ 2pm, “2024 Hermitage STARS,” featuring **Florida Arts Educators**, on the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key) *Presented in partnership with FAAE, Boys & Girls Club of Sarasota & Desoto Counties, and Englewood YMCA*

Thursday, July 25 @ 6:30pm, “Interrupted History,” featuring Hermitage Fellows **Jeffery Renard Allen** and **Yasi Alipour**, on the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key)

Friday, August 9 @ 6:30pm, “Translation-Traducción,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Mónica Lavín** and Translator-Collaborator **D.P. Snyder**, on Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key)
Presented in partnership with UnidosNow

Friday, August 23 @ 6:30pm, “The Lazour Brothers: A Lifelong Collaboration,” featuring 2024 Hermitage Greenfield Prize Finalists **Daniel Lazour & Patrick Lazour**, on the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key)

Hermitage 2024 STARS Teaching Artist Bios

Greg Burdick (Polk County)

Greg Burdick is a theater arts educator, director, and playwright originally from the South Hills of Pittsburgh, PA. His plays have been produced by BoxFest Detroit at Planet Ant Theatre, Rhino Theatre, Studio Theatre Tierra Del Sol, Itinerant Theatre, Radio Theatre Project of the Studio@620, the Asolo Center for the Performing Arts, and developed in spaces nationwide. His critically acclaimed educational drama *Accommodation* made its world premiere at the Odyssey Theatre in Los Angeles in 2023. Greg is the winner of the 2022 Verna Safran Prize at Theatre Odyssey's 10-Minute Play Festival in Sarasota for *Sign Here For All That Remains*. His short drama *I'll Love You 'Til the Cows Come Home* was produced by Queens Theatre and featured internationally at the Bird Theatre Festival in Tottori, Japan. In 2019, his play *Monessen Falls* made its U.S. premiere at Good Luck Macbeth Theatre Company in Reno, NV. Proud member of the Dramatists Guild, Greg lives in central Florida. Find him online at GregBurdickPlaywright.com.

Dealey Dansby (Hillsborough County)

Dealey Dansby received her B.A. in Art with a concentration in Sculpture and Ceramics from the University of South Florida. After many years working in the ceramics industry, she made the switch to teaching young artists. She currently teaches elementary and middle school art at Carrollwood in Tampa, Florida. Five years ago, she rediscovered a love of printmaking from her college days and has been working with reduction Lino printmaking. She has been exhibiting her work across the state and in a few international print shows. When she is not in the classroom she can be found working on prints in her home studio.

Shaun Fergus (Columbia County)

Shaun Fergus has a 22-year career educating art students at Fort White Middle School, where he has dedicated his time, passion, and energy to empowering them to discover their personal paths in creativity. Parallel to his passion for teaching, he is continuously exploring new approaches to his personal creative vision that focuses on the origin of thought, personality, and soul shared by the breadth of humanity, a path

of discovery which started when he was inspired by a sculpture class at the University of Central Florida. He is currently finishing a series of personal art pieces in response to a difficult path through the valley of cancer, from which he has emerged with a renewed passion to express that which lies within all humankind.

Dr. Kayleen Justus (Leon County)

Dr. Kayleen Justus is Director of Steel Bands at Leon High School, where she teaches the beginning, intermediate, advanced, stage side, and community pan ensembles. Prior to her appointment at Leon 2021, Dr. Justus was Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology and World Music at Kennesaw State University, where she taught courses in world music, music history, music appreciation, Caribbean/African/Latin American musical cultures, and more. Dr. Justus frequently performs and records as a pan player, percussionist, and performance clinician in the U.S. and the Caribbean. She has shared the stage/studio with notable musicians, including the calypsonian Willard “Lord Relator” Harris, Bollywood composer A.R. Rahman, jazz pianist Andy Narell, Trinidadian arranger Ray Holman, drummer Stephen Perkins of Jane’s Addiction, drummer Mike Portnoy of Dream Theater, and bassist Billy Sheehan of Mr. Big. She has recorded several world music albums, including *Sasa Nifanye Nini* with members of the Tanzanian group “Mlimani Park Orchestra,” and two albums by the Miami University Steel Band – *One More Soca* and *Burnin’* Kayleen is also an active member of “Pan Rocks!” and has been featured on two album and documentary projects with the group: *Pan Rocks! Project L.A.* and *Pan Rocks! RUSH*. Her work has been published in many notable musicology journals.

Vanessa Watkins (Seminole County)

Vanessa Watkins is a distinguished glass artist whose mastery in stained glass, including Tiffany and leaded glass techniques, has garnered acclaim in the art world. With a focus on historical restorations and repairs, Vanessa’s expertise shines through in her meticulous craftsmanship and unwavering commitment to preserving the heritage of stained-glass artistry. Her formal training began at Vetrare Artistiche Toscane in Siena, Italy, where she immersed herself in the rich traditions of Italian stained glass. Vanessa further honed her skills through an apprenticeship at Willet Hauser & Associated Craft, the world’s largest stained-glass studio located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Her contributions to notable projects including collaborations with Disney’s glass art partner, Arribas Brothers, underscore her status as a luminary in the field. Vanessa is also a passionate educator, dedicated to inspiring the next generation of artists through her teaching endeavors. As a former corporate trainer turned middle school art teacher at Markham Woods, she empowers students to explore their creativity and discover the transformative power of glass art.

HermitageArtistRetreat.org

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