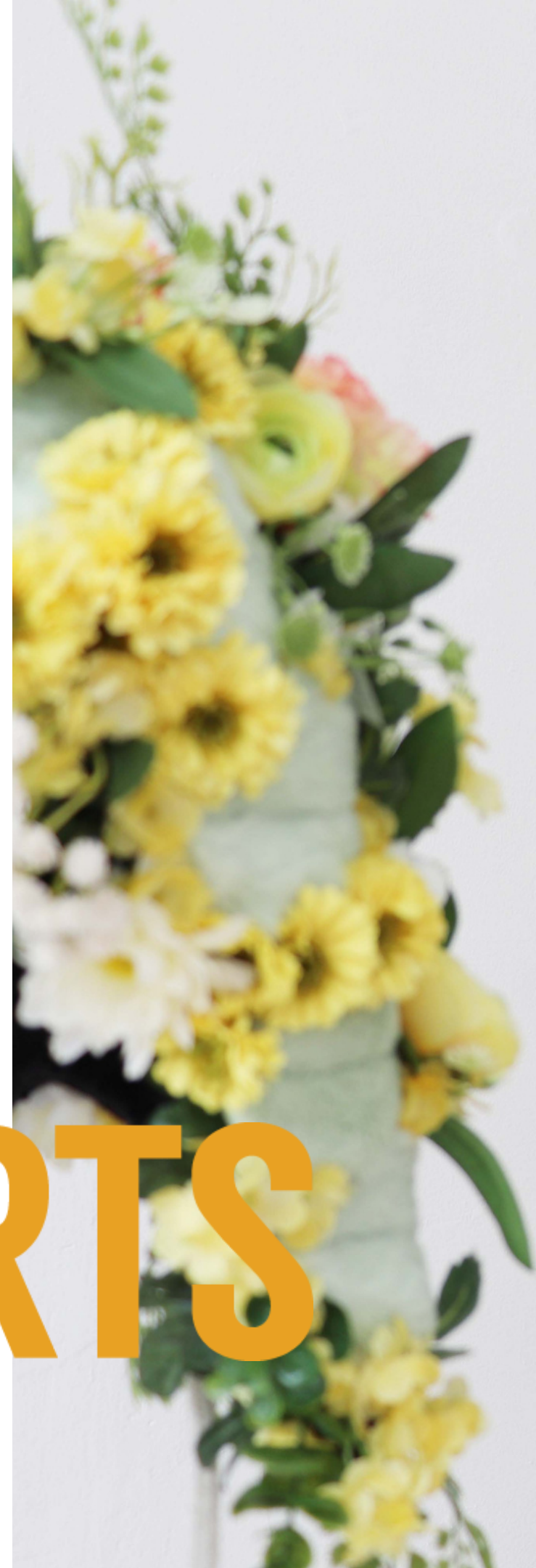


2021 ANNUAL REPORT AMPLIFYARTS



OUR MISSION:

To promote unity, innovation, and progress in the arts to build strong and vibrant communities.

STAFF

Andy Saladino
Executive Director

Caitlin Osborn
Deputy Director

Peter Fankhauser
Program Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Watie White, *Chair*
Jonathan Tvrdik, *Treasurer*
Manuel Cook, *Secretary*
JoAnna LeFlore-Ejike
Denise Blaya Powell
Jack Zerbe

In 2021 we continued our work to build an environment here in Omaha where artists can thrive. We directed almost \$50,000 to local artists through our Artist Grants and Alternate Currents programs. These programs gave artists access to holistic channels of support (financial, critical, and logistical) to:

- develop new work
- evolve their creative practices, and
- connect with their communities

Our 2021 grant recipients expanded their creative practices in new and innovative ways – organizing incredible projects and exhibitions, and building capacity to continue proposing alternatives to the status quo and helping us envision more just and equitable futures. Our 2021 Alternate Currents program explored questions surrounding institutional futures in both digital and real space, culminating in the first ever collaborative publication from the Alternate Currents Working Group – an anthology titled *Given All This: Collective Institutional Futures*.

Why do we champion local artists and this work? We firmly believe that artists, not organizations, are the lifeblood of a cultural community. When artists have access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive, our city becomes a more vibrant place to live.

We thank you for your continued support of Amplify Arts and local artists!

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Right: Mentor Echelle Childers and Founder's Project Mentee Jessica Johnson. Founder's Project organized by 2021 Drew Billings Artist Support Grant recipient Anna Jordan. Photo: Debra Kaplan



Above: Open Book, July 2021 with Nathaniel Ruleaux, Joelle Sandfort, Pamela Conyers-Hinson, Kerron Stark, RIKÉ, Kyle Laidig Photo: Debra Kaplan

Left: Alternate Currents panel discussion From the Margins to the Center: Inclusive Curatorial Practices with panelists Jared Packard, Jared Ledesma, Mary Lawson, Natalie Bell

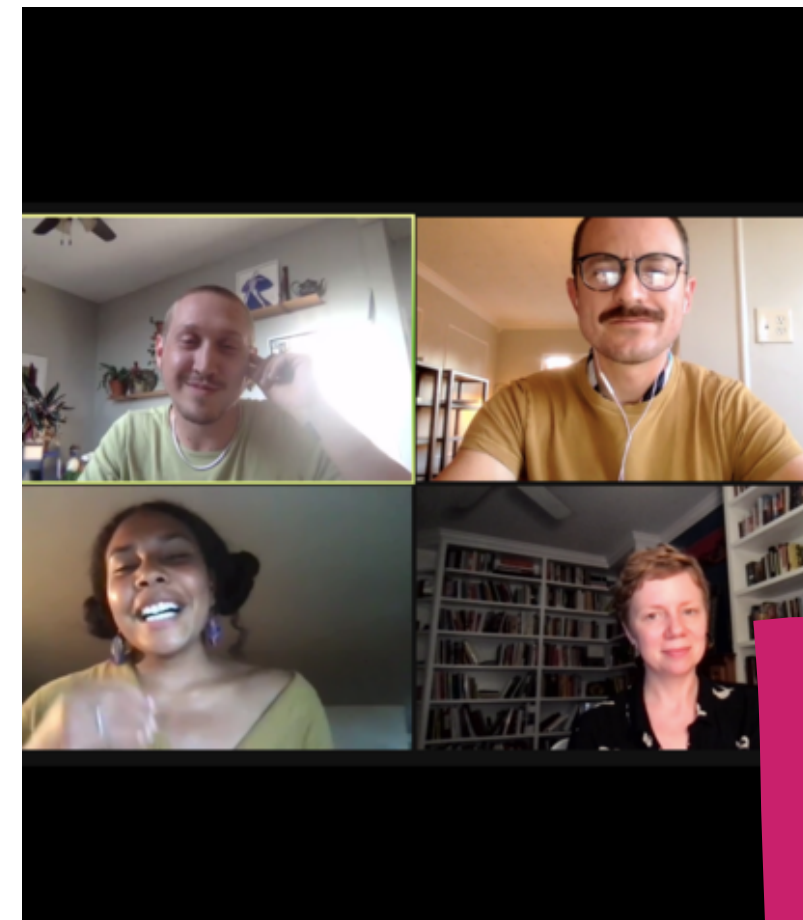
132 Served 132 artists and held 27 public programs virtually, at our gallery Generator Space, and across the Omaha metro

Awarded \$33,900 in Grants to 45 local artists **45**

21 Showcased the work of 21 emerging artists through Generator Grant exhibitions



Above: Cover image for the 2021 Arts and Culture Voters' Guide Design: Dan Crane



Facilitated the development of the **2021 Arts and Culture Voter's Guide** for the City of Omaha Mayoral and City Council primary election, created by the Municipal Arts Advocacy working group as part of the Artstock initiative

6 Hosted 6 Alternate Currents panel discussions focusing on the theme of Institutional Futures

ARTIST GRANTS

Awarded to individual artists, duos, and collectives, Amplify's Artist Grants program provides money, space, and critical support to artists working to question dominant systems, expand their practices, and engage with their communities. Awards become catalysts for artists at various stages in their careers to explore new ideas and establish more robust, critical practices.

ARTIST SUPPORT GRANTS:

Kerron Stark, *Black American Artist Support Grant*

Sarah Rowe, *Indigenous American Artist Support Grant*

Anna Jordan, *Drew Billings Artist Support Grant*

MICRO GRANTS:

Alajia McKizia

Aly Mlupi

Andrew Lindgren

Ang Bennett

Annette Guy

Baader-Meinhof

Black Harris

Brandi Long-Frank

Casey Callahan

Ellen Struve

Holly Pelesky

Joelle Sandfort

Keiria Marsha

Nathaniel Ruleaux

Osiris McKizia

Pamela Conyers-Hinson

RIKÉ

Rowena Cage

Stacey Barelos

Tateyna Jones

Virginia Kathryn



*Above: Black American Artist Support Grant recipient Kerron Stark performing Mister K's Clubhouse LIVE! at Joslyn Art Museum
Top right: Drew Billings Artist Support Grant recipient Anna Jordan, organizer of The Founder's Project, a mentorship program for emerging theatre artists. Photo: Debra Kaplan*



“Before taking on a project I typically have to fork over my own money and I’m left kind of in stress mode, so knowing that there is direct support, especially financial support, and the space to collaborate in all sorts of different ways throughout the community keeps artists here.”

—Sarah Rowe

GENERATOR GRANTS



“Engaging in a new and backward process (space, sound, costuming first, movement last) required me to surrender to uncertainties and unknowns in a way that was new to me. I was happily challenged by this and found a lot of value in trying out a new chronology of the components of dance making.” –Lauren Simpson, Celestial Real Estate

Generator Grants encourage creative risk taking by assisting Omaha area artists through the entire process of organizing, marketing, and presenting a curated group exhibition, performance, or project. These project grants provide funding and space that enable artist-generated content to take shape outside of larger institutional systems.

2021 GENERATOR GRANTS:

Alluvium, Corson Androski and Allis Conley

Celestial Real Estate, Lauren Simpson

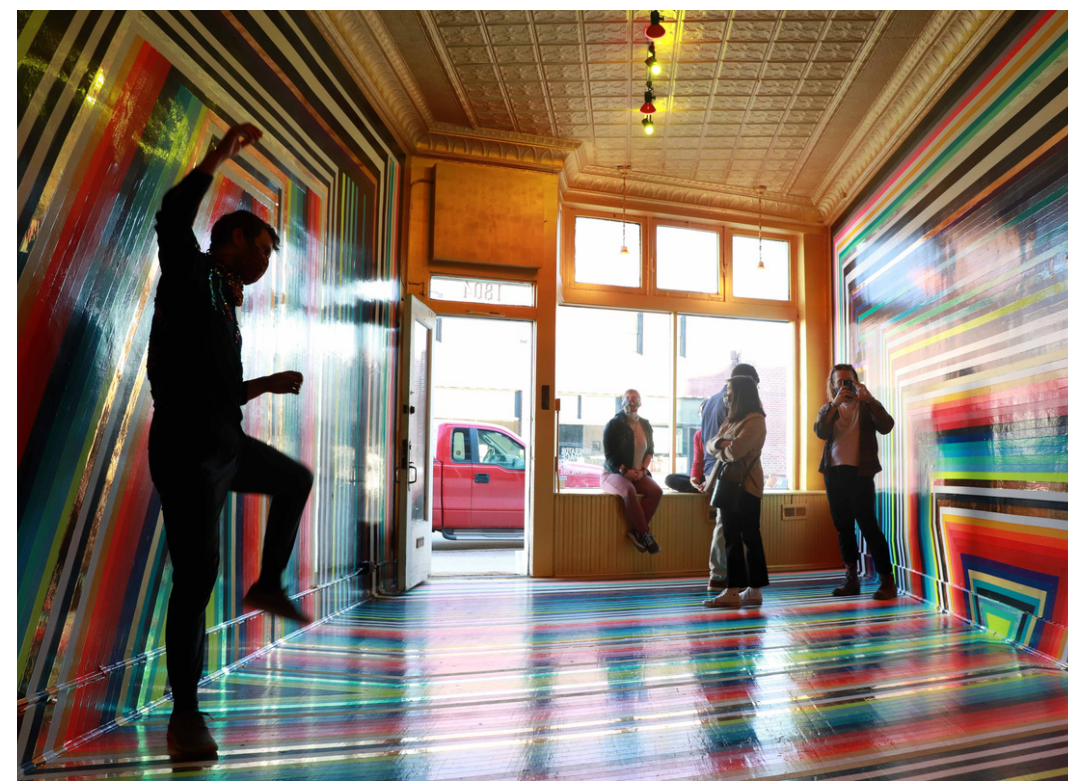
The People, The Human Beings, Unceded Artist Collective
ditch seed, Jared Packard

Squiggles, Spirals, and Straight-Line Splices: Glitches of the Off-Modern Revolution, Adrian Silva and Hilary Wiese

Bluebird, Steve Tamayo



Images from 2021 Generator Grant projects (from top left to bottom right) *Alluvium*, *Squiggles*, *Spirals*, and *Straight-Line Splices*, *Celestial Real Estate*, and *ditch seed*. Second and fourth photos: Debra Kaplan



ALTERNATE CURRENTS

In 2021 the Alternate Currents program explored questions around the theme of 'Institutional Futures,' examining the relationship between artists and cultural institutions, and cultural institutions and Omaha as an Indigenous place. Through the blog, bimonthly panel discussions, and working group, Alternate Currents makes space for conversation, ideation, and action around national and international discussions in the arts, and uplifts cross-sector dialogue and artist-driven community change.

QUICK LOOK:

Blog – 17 blog posts, 11 guest contributors, 1,617 blog visitors

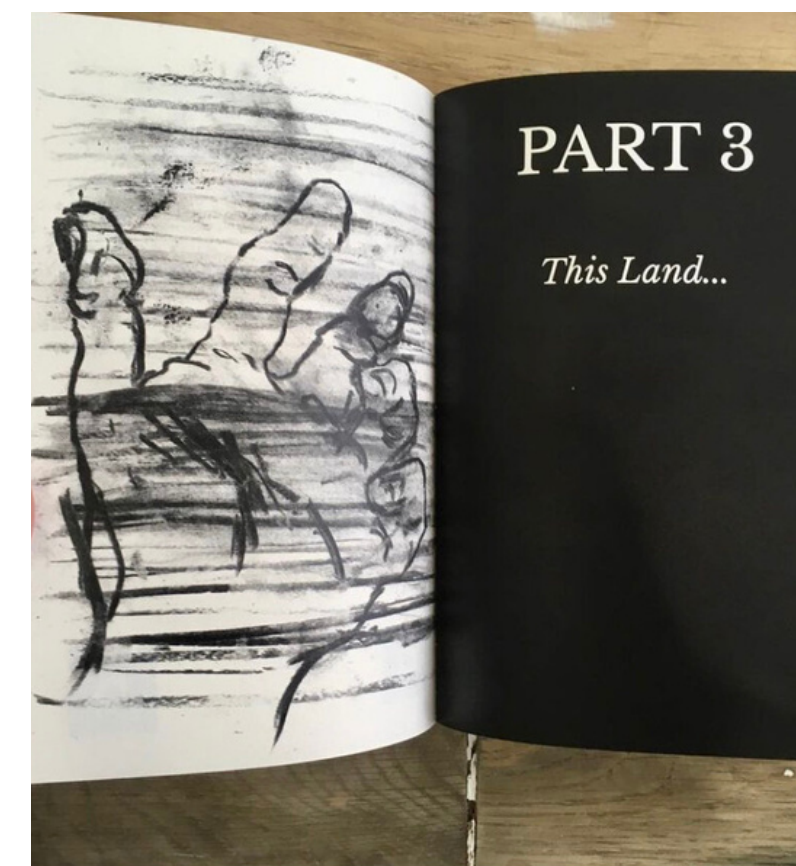
Panels – 6 virtual panel discussions, 28 panelists, 181 attendees

PANEL DISCUSSIONS:

- On Native Land: Land Acknowledgments in Cultural Institutions
- Who Needs Who the Most: Artists and Cultural Institutions
- Charity or Solidarity: Philanthropy and Cultural Institutions
- From the Margins to the Center: Inclusive Curatorial Practices
- DIY or Don't: Artist-Run Spaces and Cultural Institutions
- Given All This: Collective Institutional Futures

“[The pandemic] gave us an opportunity to realize projects in spaces that might have otherwise not been considered. That's been exciting to observe and see these spaces not only be taken seriously, but really thrive and something that is temporally relevant to us, but also an exciting model to move forward.”

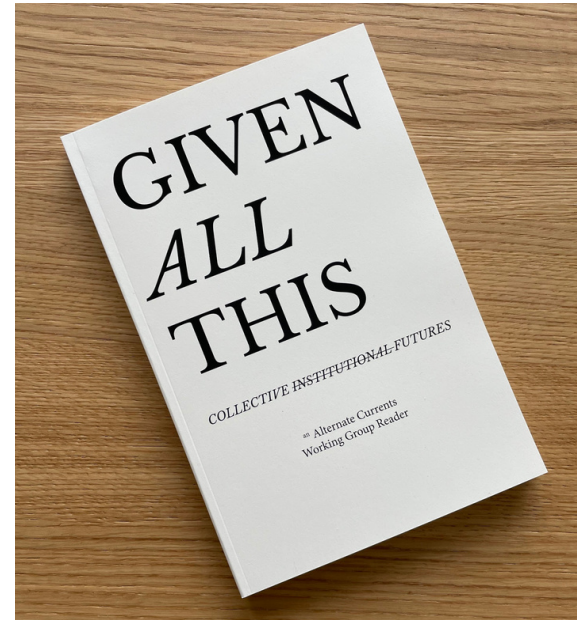
–Kyle Laidig, DIY or Don't panel



Right: Alternate Currents panel discussion On Native Land: Land Acknowledgments in Cultural Institutions with panelists Marisa Miakonda Cummings, Steve Tamayo, Risa Puleo, and Annika Johnson

Above: Inside image of Given All This: Collective Institutional Futures, a collaborative publication by the 2021 Alternate Currents Working Group

ALTERNATE CURRENTS WORKING GROUP



The Alternate Currents Working Group is a cohort of 10 artists and culture workers who meet monthly over the course of a year to develop project-based work in response to the central theme of Alternate Currents for that year. Group members lead monthly discussions informed by critical readings, receive peer generated feedback and logistical project support, contribute editorial content to the blog, and share their work via collaborative exhibition or publication

2021 WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

Corson Androski, Katie Bettin, Jody Boyer, Allegra Hangen, Lex Jonae, Jared Packard, Ilaamen Pelshaw, Sarah Rowe, Lillian Snortland, and Jose Trejo-Maya

Given All This: Collective Institutional Futures features research and work by Working Group members in response to broad questions around the theme of ‘Institutional Futures’ – Given the pandemic, given renewed calls for racial equity and justice, given the accelerated impacts of a changing climate – *all this* – the collected works in this publication are not offered as “solutions” to institutional failings, but rather as invitations to more critically examine the ways in which our cultural institutions might become a collective commons to question where we’ve been, how we’ve changed, and what the future might hold.

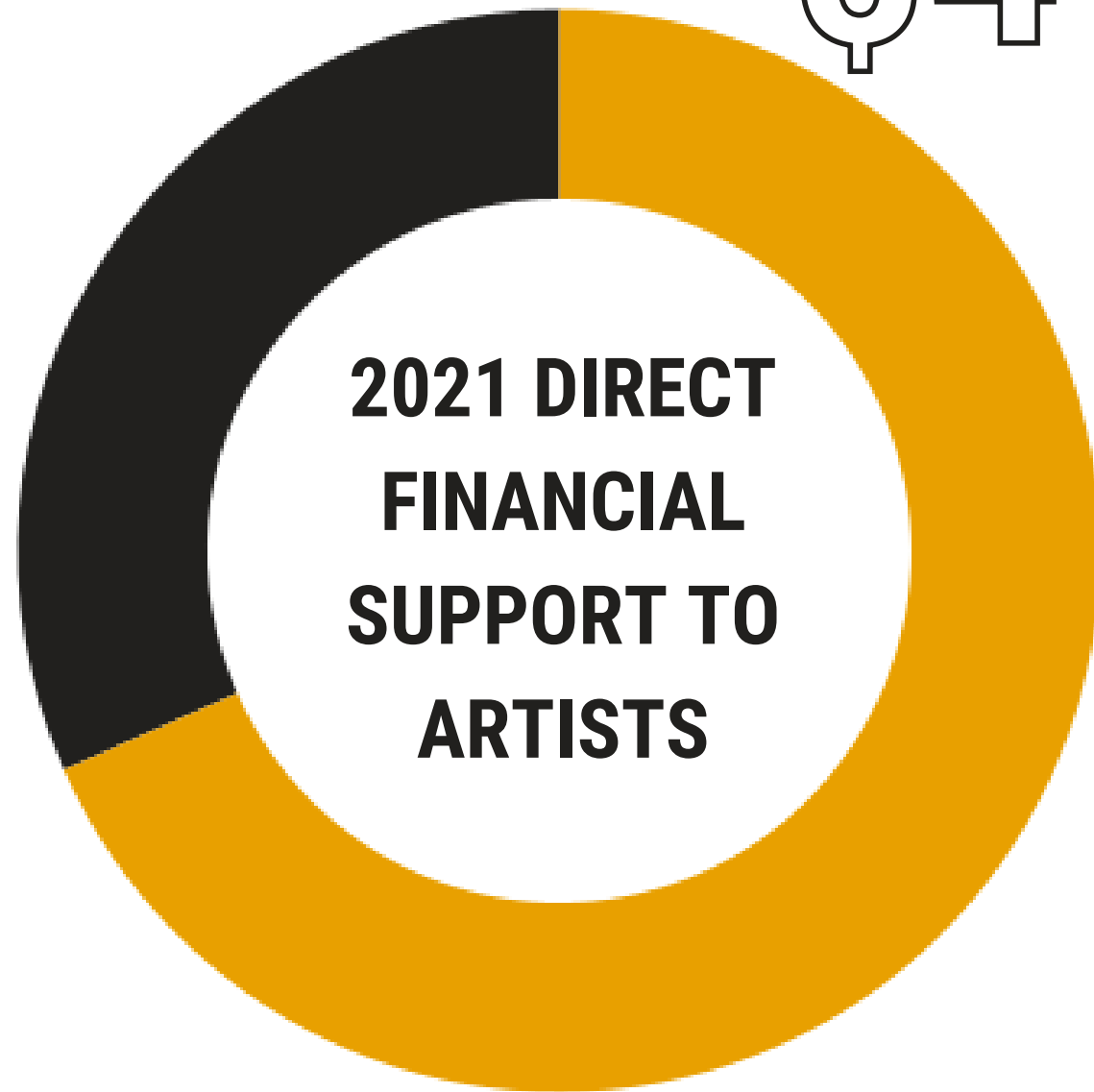
Given All This is available for purchase on our website, and all proceeds support the future of the Alternate Currents program.



THE NUMBERS

**TOTAL \$ DIRECTED
TO ARTISTS:**

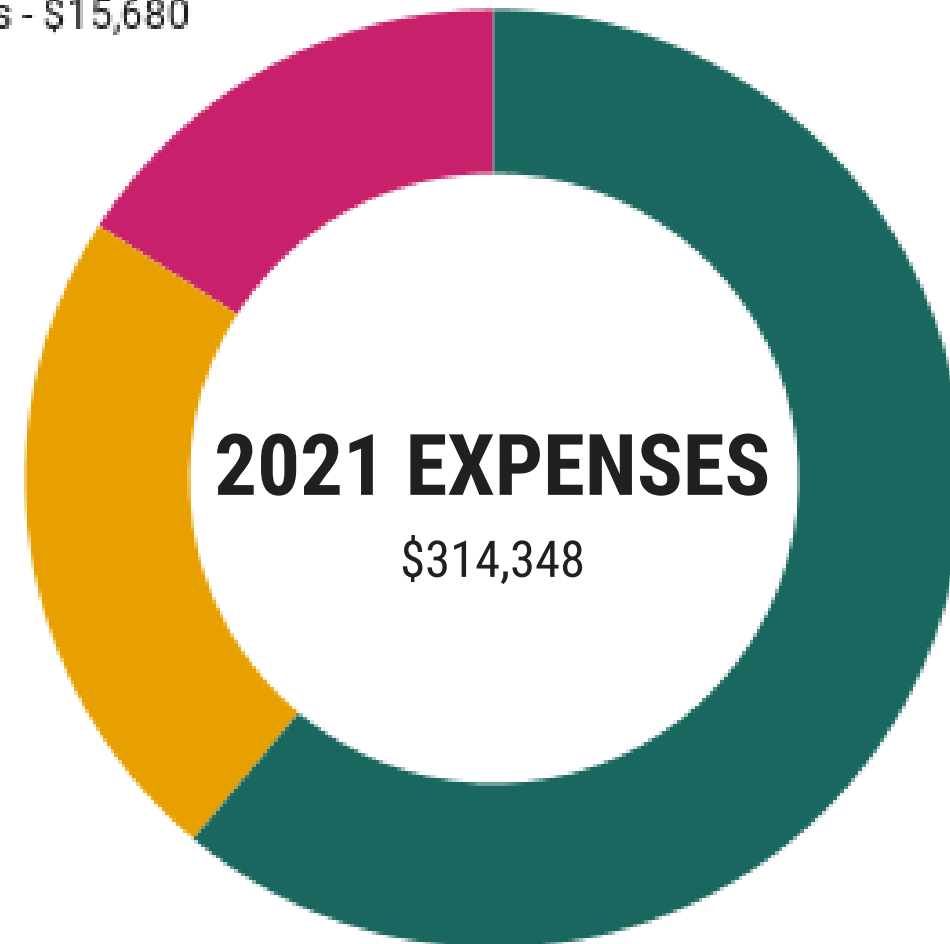
\$49,580



- Artist Grants - \$33,900
- Programs/Special Projects/Contracts - \$15,680



- Individuals - \$79,199
- Corporations - \$9,000
- Foundations - \$65,000
- Government (including COVID relief) - \$84,725
- Miscellaneous - \$1,811
- Program Fees - \$41,266



- Programs - \$191,961
- Management - \$72,267
- Fundraising - \$50,120

THANK YOU!

Thank you to our individual, government, foundation, and corporate supporters who power our critical mission!

HOW TO SUPPORT LOCAL ARTISTS:

- Buy art from local, living artists
- Buy tickets for local, live performances
- Promote local artists on social media
- Attend open studios, gallery openings, and art walks
- Give gifts from local artists and makers

HOW TO SUPPORT AMPLIFY ARTS:

- Donate (become a monthly supporter!)
- Partner (let's work together!)
- Share (find us on social media!)

AMPLIFYARTS

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www.amplifyarts.org

