

VIA ART FUND AND WAGNER FOUNDATION AWARD \$200,000 TO 2019 INCUBATOR GRANT RECIPIENTS

Two years of general operating support awarded to five small-scale visual arts nonprofit organizations across the United States.

VIA Art Fund and Wagner Foundation have awarded grants totaling \$200,000 to five U.S.-based visual arts organizations for general operating support. The recipients of the inaugural VIA | Wagner Incubator Grant Fund grant are: Burnaway (Atlanta, GA), The Coleman Center for the Arts (York, AL), Midway Contemporary Art (Minneapolis, MN), PS1 – Center for Afrofuturist Studies (Iowa City, IA), and SPACE (Portland, ME). Each organization will receive \$40,000 for general operating support to be dispersed in \$20,000 installments over two years.

VIA Program Director Tali Cherizli said: “The first cohort of VIA | Wagner Incubator grantees exemplifies the richness of our cultural landscape. While each organization is utterly unique, all are united by a mission to create innovative contemporary arts programming that resonates at home while steering discourse further afield. This integration of the local with the global infuses our national arts ecosystem with various models for artistic excellence, ensuring that artists based in both rural and urban communities have the platforms they need for developing experimental work.”

Building upon their respective philanthropic missions and achievements, VIA Art Fund and Wagner Foundation partnered in 2019 to establish a \$1 million Incubator Grant Fund. This fund aims to build a robust and inclusive national arts ecosystem by awarding unrestricted funding to small nonprofit visual arts organizations throughout the United States, with a particular focus on regional diversity.

Wagner Foundation Program Director Caroline Hart added: “Each of the organizations selected in the inaugural year of the Incubator Grant Fund individually represent the transformative role that cultural institutions can play in their communities. We are proud to support five extraordinary cultural spaces that serve as vital gathering places where communities can build stronger civic bonds, discover their own voices, and listen to the voices of others. Small cultural institutions such as these are uniquely able to foster distinct communities by reflecting diverse histories, locales, and visions.”

2019 Incubator Grantees

[Burnaway \(Atlanta, GA\)](#) – A decade-old online publication that has earned international recognition for its focus on the art and artists of the American South. Burnaway incubates critical writers who feed micro arts ecologies in the vast, artistically active, but critically neglected region of the South/Southeast.

[Coleman Center for the Arts \(York, AL\)](#) – An alternative art space and artist residency that is redefining what it means to be an arts organization in the rural South. With a focus on regional artists, the Coleman Center activates contemporary art to confront the challenges faced by a community that has experienced broad disinvestment across social services.

[Midway Contemporary Art \(Minneapolis, MN\)](#) - An alternative art space with an internationally-facing program that nurtures the vibrant artistic community in the Twin Cities. This European-style Kunsthalle presents conceptually rigorous programming that elevates contemporary arts discourse through exhibitions, publications, and a publicly accessible research library.

[Public Space One | Center for Afrofuturist Studies \(Iowa City, IA\)](#) – A presenting organization and discursive platform that binds the local to the global by bringing artists working at the forefront of

contemporary arts practice to engage with local practitioners. Together, they create a dynamic space in which Black creativity and intellectual exchange can thrive in the heart of a largely white midwestern city.

[SPACE \(Portland, ME\)](#) – An alternative art space and artist residency whose multidisciplinary programming has made it a regional leader. Deeply rooted in local Portland, SPACE also manages to be internationally outward facing, as demonstrated by their responsiveness not only to larger contemporary art trends but also to their local refugee population.

About Us

[VIA Art Fund](#) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity founded by an international coalition of individuals and private foundations who believe in the central role art plays in society. VIA's activities support innovative, ambitious and rigorous works of art and endeavors with far-reaching public impact realized in various forms including institutional production and acquisition, exhibitions, public installations, curatorial research, publications and symposia. Funding artists, curators and arts organizations around the world, VIA Art Fund awards grants in three categories – Artistic Production Grants, Incubator Grants and an annual Curatorial Fellowship grant – that exemplify VIA's core values of *Artistic Production, Thought Leadership, and Public Engagement*.

[Wagner Foundation](#) is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit private foundation working to build just and robust community where all people have equitable access to opportunity and the ability to live a life of purpose and dignity. Wagner Foundation supports organizations that improve health equity, increase economic mobility, expand institutional fairness, and strive for cultural transformation. In these efforts, we welcome creative solutions bringing communities together. We are committed to encouraging visionary individuals, as well as arts institutions that expand cultural access. The willingness to explore, ask questions, and support one another makes new solutions possible, transforming culture in the process.

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