



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND DCASE ANNOUNCE \$1.3 MILLION IN DIRECT SUPPORT TO THE LOCAL THEATRE COMMUNITY DURING THE 2019 YEAR OF CHICAGO THEATRE**  
*116 theatres and dance artist organizations will receive \$835,750 in financial grants and 157 theaters, and theatre-makers will receive \$448,650 to fund artist performance fees and commissions to maintain free public programming*

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) today announced more than \$835,750 in financial grants to 116 theatre and dance artists, nonprofit theatres and other community organizations as part of the 2019 Year of Chicago Theatre – with a special focus on organizations located on the South, Southwest and West Sides. In addition to these cultural program grants, DCASE will also provide more than \$448,650 to 157 theatres, theatre-makers and dance-makers to cover artist performance fees and commissions so these organizations can maintain their free public programs.

The City of Chicago and the League of Chicago Theatres have designated 2019 as the 'Year of Chicago Theatre.' This citywide, year-long focus on theatre is the first of its kind in the U.S.

"Theater has the power to bring people together, influence the way that we think and feel, encourages personal reflection, and fosters creativity and expression – all while making our lives better," said Mayor Lori Lightfoot. "Our performing arts organizations are integral to the fabric of Chicago and help to define its world-class status. It is only right that we support those organizations that add so much value and culture to Chicago."

DCASE grants, performance fees, and commissions are made possible by the City's annual budget and through the generous support of Chicago's philanthropic and business leaders.

"To truly fall in love with Chicago, you must go to our theatres. This is where the city bares its fearless soul," said DCASE Commissioner Mark Kelly. "From Broadway musicals or storefront plays and improv, the energy of the city comes alive in our theatres. And with a diverse collection of more than 250 dynamic theatres throughout our neighborhoods, there's always a seat waiting for you."

Financial grants awarded through the DCASE Cultural Grants Program:

**Year of Chicago Theatre Sector-building Grants**



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2019 CityArts Project Grants support initiatives and projects that have the potential to impact the Chicago theatre sector at large. The goal of this grant program is to incentivize creativity related to city-wide initiatives and to further the program priorities of innovation, community engagement, diversity, equity and collaboration. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

- \$319,750 awarded
- 17 organizations supported

### **Year of Chicago Theatre Micro-grants**

The 2019 Year of Chicago Theatre Micro-grants support projects which increase diversity and access in Chicago's theatre sector, with a focus on Chicago's South and West sides. Grants range from \$2,000 – \$5,000.

- \$50,000 awarded
- 13 organizations supported

### **CityArts Program Grants (specifically for theatre, dance and performance arts)**

The CityArts Program seeks to encourage nonprofit organizations to attain artistic excellence and financial stability by making general operating grants to Chicago-based, arts and culture-focused organizations of all sizes. DCASE gen-op funding has increased by 36% over the past two years. Grants range from \$2,000 – \$25,000.

- \$400,000 awarded
- 64 organizations supported

### **Individual Artists Program Grants (specifically for theatre, dance and performing arts)**

Through project grants, the Individual Artists Program aims to assist Chicago's professional artists in creating work that elevates their careers and brings value to the City of Chicago. Grants range from \$500 – \$5,000.

- \$66,000 awarded
- 22 artists supported

Examples of the organizations supported through financial grants include **Albany Park Theater Project** ("Port of Entry"), **Chicago Children's Theatre** (X Marks The Spot, an Extra-Sensory Tour), **Chicago Latino Theater Alliance** (DESTINOS – 3rd Chicago International Latino Theater Festival), **Deeply Rooted Dance Theater** ("Essence" Project), **DirectorsLabChicago in collaboration with Haven and the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society** (Stage Direction Masterclass Series), **Jackalope Theatre Company** (House Party: Youth Access Initiative), **Kuumba Lynx** (Chicago Hip Hop Theater Festival), **See Chicago Dance** (Expanding and Diversifying Dance Journalism) and **Victory Gardens Theater** (ACCESS 2.0).

Additionally, DCASE supports artist performance fees and commissions totaling \$448,650 to 157 theatres, theatre-makers, and dance-makers as part of its free public programming. Examples include the new Millennium Park theatre series, a new Millennium Park theatre-themed public art activation, theatre exhibitions and special events at the Chicago Cultural



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Center, theatre performances at the Taste of Chicago, and dance performances and lessons offered as part of the Chicago SummerDance series.

Examples of the organizations supported through performance fees and commissions include **Aguijón Theater Company, Barrel of Monkeys, CircEsteem, Chicago Dance Crash, Chicago Full Moon Jam Productions, Collaboraction Theatre Company, Emerald City Theatre, eta Creative Arts Foundation** and **Free Street Theater** (Millennium Park Theatre Residencies, presented in partnership with the Bayless Family Foundation).

The first half of 2019 has been a busy one for DCASE and the League of Chicago Theatres, including the launch of a new theatre asset mapping project aimed at bolstering theatre on the South, Southwest and West Sides. Other initiatives include a major advertising campaign and global media events with Choose Chicago, and theatre-themed cultural programming at Millennium Park (including the Film Series programmed in collaboration with theatres), the Chicago Cultural Center, and the Chicago Riverwalk (including Art on theMART and lantern processions). DCASE and the League of Chicago Theatres have also partnered with the Chicago Park District for “Night Out in the Park” for more than 200 free performances from 40 theatres in all 77 of Chicago’s community areas. Over 100 arts industry volunteers serving on committees to advance this important initiative.

Earlier this year, DCASE and the League of Chicago Theatres announced significant foundation support for the Year of Chicago Theatre from BMO Harris Bank, Bayless Family Foundation, The Chicago Community Trust, Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, Illinois Arts Council Agency, The Joyce Foundation, Lloyd A. Fry Foundation Endowment at Millennium Park Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Millennium Park Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts, Richard H. Driehaus Foundation and Robert R. McCormick Foundation. Promotional and programming support for the Year of Chicago Theatre is provided by Art on theMART, Chicago Loop Alliance, Choose Chicago, FCB Chicago, HMS Media, Illinois Restaurant Association, LUMA8, The Magnificent Mile Association, Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority and others—plus many City departments and sister agencies including the Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Library, Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Transit Authority and the Department of Aviation.

For more information about the Year of Chicago Theatre, visit [ChicagoPlays.com](http://ChicagoPlays.com) and join the conversation on Social Media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) @ChicagoDCASE and @ChicagoPlays (#2019isYOCT #ChiTheatre).

### **2019 Year of Chicago Theatre:**

The City of Chicago and the League of Chicago Theatres have designated 2019 as the ‘Year of Chicago Theatre.’ This citywide, year-long focus on theatre is the first of its kind in the U.S. The initiative includes performances and special events for the public at hundreds of cultural venues, theaters, parks and neighborhood locations throughout the city. The City of Chicago and its partners will also launch a marketing campaign; provide additional financial grants to theatre projects; encourage dialog around inclusion and equity; and call on civic, philanthropic, arts and business leaders to support the theatre community. To truly fall in love with Chicago, you must go to our theatres - where the city bares its fearless soul. From



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Broadway musicals to storefront plays and improv, there's a seat waiting for you at one of our 250+ theatres. Book your next show today at [ChicagoPlays.com](http://ChicagoPlays.com).

**Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events:**

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is dedicated to enriching Chicago's artistic vitality and cultural vibrancy. This includes fostering the development of Chicago's non-profit arts sector, independent working artists and for-profit arts businesses; providing a framework to guide the City's future cultural and economic growth, via the 2012 Chicago Cultural Plan; marketing the City's cultural assets to a worldwide audience; and presenting high-quality, free and affordable cultural programs for residents and visitors.

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