

# Georgia Council for the Arts FY24 Bridge Grant Panelist Biographies

## Panel 1

### **Heather Heath**

*Executive Director, Golden Isles Arts & Humanities  
Glynn County*

Heather Heath joined the staff of Golden Isles Arts & Humanities in 1998 and became its Executive Director in 1999. Heather has more than 25 years experience working in the arts with a strong background in theatre. As Executive Director of Golden Isles Arts & Humanities, Heather is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization and programming all the many events they sponsor. A graduate of Oxford College of Emory University and Florida State University where she received her B.A. in Theatre, Heather worked professionally as an actor in over 50 productions in the Atlanta area and the Southeast. Her work as an actor has been critically acclaimed and she continues to perform as time permits.

### **Tate LeClair**

*Director of Development, Springer Opera House  
Muscogee County*

Tate is the Director of Development at Springer Opera House in Columbus, Ga. He has been working as an Arts Administrative professional for the past eight years, previously with Stone Mountain Park with Entertainment and Special Events. He is a professional actor and director with a BFA in Theatre Performance from Columbus State University where he was on the Dean's List and in the National Honors Theatre Fraternity Alpha Psi Omega. His Springer credits include the National Tour of Della's Diner, Sister Act, Beauty and the Beast, The Who's Tommy, Sweeney Todd, and Mary Poppins.

### **Laura Floyd**

*Business Manager, Canopy Studio  
Clarke County*

Laura Floyd is the Business Manager for Canopy Studio in Athens. She is a Certified Bookkeeper who has worked with a variety of businesses and nonprofit organizations in Athens over the past thirteen years. She has a background in music, visual art, and theater, and was a founding board member of ATHICA. She currently has paintings in local exhibitions and is a backdrop artist for Arts! Oglethorpe.

**Maria Zouves**

*Co-Founder and President, Savannah VOICE Festival  
Chatham County*

Maria Zouves is an educator, director, producer and writer. She is Executive Director of the Sherrill Milnes VOICE Programs – VOICEexperience Foundation and Co-Founder and President of the Savannah VOICE Festival – which she co-founded with her husband, Sherrill Milnes, to provide training for aspiring young artists and foster new audiences for the vocal arts. The Greek-American soprano has sung leading roles in the regional U.S., made her Carnegie Hall debut in 1997, and has recorded under the VAI label. Ms. Zouves has directed, taught, and produced events all around the world, having worked with the International Vocal Arts Institute (IVAI) in Montreal and Puerto Rico, the International Institute of Vocal Arts (IIVA) in Chiari, Italy, and at the Savonlinna Opera Festival in Finland. From 2007 to 2011, she served as Vice President and Associate General Director of Opera Tampa, the resident opera company of the Straz Center for the Performing Arts. She has taught workshops at Southern Illinois University, Drake University and served as interim opera director at Northwestern University.

**Karla Redding-Andrews**

*Executive Director, Otis Redding Foundation  
Bibb County*

Karla Redding-Andrews, Vice President/Executive Director at The Otis Redding Foundation, graduated Georgia Southern University (where she serves on the PR Advisory Board) in 1985. Following graduation, she was PR Director for the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce and went on to operate one of Georgia's finest retail stores, Karla's Shoe Boutique with her mother, Zelma. When the Foundation was created she donated her time and energy to music and arts education programs for people age 5-18. She co-founded the Otis Music Camp with Lisa Love in 2007 and has continued to work tirelessly to involve more and more talented young people in the programs. In addition, Karla is a member of the Leadership Macon Class of 2015 and the Macon Rotary Club. She currently is vice-chair of the Georgia Music Foundation and serves on the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings Board of Visitors. She also serves on the board of the Community Foundation of Central Georgia, and the executive committee of Macon's International Cherry Blossom Festival. She previously served on the Georgia Film, Music & Digital Entertainment Advisory Commission. Karla received the Macon Arts Alliance Cultural Award in 2016. In 2018, she received The Women's International Music Network's "She Rocks Award" alongside Pat Benatar, Melissa Etheridge, The B-52's Kate Pierson and Cindy Wilson. Redding-Andrews and husband Timothy have two sons, Justin and Jarred.

**Alexa DeStefano**

*Incoming Executive Director, Georgia Ballet Theatre  
Cobb County*

Originally from Columbus, OH, Alexa DeStefano began dancing at age 4. At age 11, she began training at BalletMet Columbus and then Columbus City Ballet School. She participated in many BalletMet company performances. She spent 2 seasons as a trainee with the North Carolina Dance Theater and one year as an apprentice. She taught classes in ballet at Columbus City Ballet School for the summer, and began teaching at The Georgia Ballet in the fall of 2013. Since then she has taught many genres of dance at 7

different schools in the metro Georgia area. In 2017, she was promoted to Assistant School Director, and in 2022 was promoted to School Director of The Georgia Ballet.

## **Panel 2**

### **Susan Welsh**

*Executive Director, Museum of Arts and Sciences  
Bibb County*

Susan Welsh serves as the Executive Director of the Museum of Arts and Sciences. She is a graduate of the University of Georgia but also studied studio art and art history at Wesleyan College. Susan is an active member of the Macon Rotary Club, the co-chairman of the Macon Cultural Master Plan, and serves on the Visit Macon Board of Directors, Coliseum Health System Board of Trustees, One Macon Steering Committee, Friends of Macon Music Executive Board, and Wesleyan College's Confucius Institute Advisory Board, among others. Before joining the Museum in 2012, Susan served as the Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Wesleyan College, where she provided leadership and strategic direction for the offices of development, alumnae relations, and marketing communications.

### **Mandy Maloney**

*Former Executive Director, Rome Area Council for the Arts  
Floyd County*

Former executive director of Rome Area Council for the Arts (RACA) in Rome, Ga., Mandy Maloney is a Calhoun, Ga., native who studied Communications at Columbus State University. After spending time in California, she returned to Northwest Georgia where she has lived for nearly a decade. No stranger to the arts, Maloney made her acting debut at age 5 as Mrs. Claus. She has remained closely connected to her passion ever since, active in the Rome Little Theatre where she directs, produces, acts and serves on the board of directors. She has also been an integral part of local arts programming as a Young Actors Camp instructor and youth education instructor, and also as the Rome Little Theatre junior program director. Maloney attends St. Mary's Catholic Church. She currently serves as Director of the South Rome Early Learning Center. She has a Bachelor's degree from the University of West Georgia.

### **Tina Cox**

*Executive Director, Paradise Garden Foundation  
Chattooga County*

Tina Cox, Executive Director of Paradise Garden Foundation or PGF, leads PGF's operations, restoration, development, fundraising, membership, and financial management. While on the PGF board of directors, 2016-2017, she chaired the development team to create the 2017-20 and 2020-2023 Paradise Garden strategic plans. She is on the editorial team for Folk Art Messenger Magazine, and National Advisory Board for Folk Art Society of America. She was on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee for the High Museum of Art, Trustee Board for The Woodruff Arts Center and Board of Directors for the Hudgens Center for Arts & Learning. An avid folk art and self-taught collector and

champion, Cox was a friend of Howard Finster. She organized a team of 27 volunteers to work with art conservationist, Tony Rajer, on the works of art from Paradise Garden acquired by the High Museum of Art in 1992. She recruited and assisted an art conservationist volunteer team for Paradise Garden and Pasaquan in 1994 as part of Save Outdoor Sculpture Project sponsored by the Smithsonian American Art. Tina's prior corporate experience was in operations with KPMG (25 years), Deloitte and Booz Allen. Tina's honors include the Folk Art Society of America Award of Distinction.

### **Reishal Cummings**

*Development Director, Augusta Mini Theatre  
Richmond County*

Reishal Monique Cummings is an Augusta, Ga., native. Reishal holds a Bachelor of Arts in Professional Theatre Studies/Drama from South Carolina State University. She is actively working in film, stage plays, and web series, globally as well as locally. Reishal joined the Augusta Mini Theatre family in 2010 as a volunteer, later serving on the Board of Directors and currently serves as the theater's Development Director.

### **Krystal Odom**

*Assistant Director of Youth Programs, National Black Arts Festival  
Fulton County*

Krystal Odom , NBAF's Assistant Director of Youth Programs for Move/ Dance!, has over 15 years of non-profit experience in the dance industry. She is from Washington DC where she was the Interim Executive Director at Joy of Motion Dance Center with a major focus on programs and the artistic direction of the organization. At JOMDC, she held many roles from directing a youth multidisciplinary dance company to directing youth programs that focused on scheduling and programming over 100 classes per week and supervising over 35 teaching artists. Krystal is very passionate about youth development using performing arts and dance as the vehicle. Krystal is currently overseeing nine in-school dance programs in partnership with Atlanta Public Schools.

### **Jennifer Kimball**

*Managing Director, Essential Theatre  
Fulton County*

Jennifer has been a production and stage manager in the Atlanta performing arts community for over 20 years, serving currently as the Managing Director at the Essential Theatre, Production Manager and interim Managing Director for Théâtre du Rêve, and co-producer of the Stripped Bare Arts Incubator program with Synchronicity Theatre. She is the Assistant Stage Manager for the Concert Hall at the Schwartz Center for the Arts at Emory University, a member of the Network of Ensemble Theaters, and most recently joined the Board of the Atlanta Green Theatre Alliance.