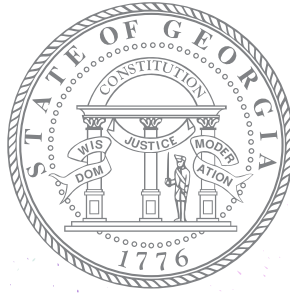




GOVERNOR'S
AWARDS

FOR THE ARTS
HUMANITIES





2021 GOVERNOR'S AWARDS

The Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities honor outstanding individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to Georgia's civic and cultural vitality through excellence and service to the arts and humanities. Presented by the Office of the Governor in partnership with Georgia Council for the Arts and Georgia Humanities, the Governor's

Awards recognize the value of the arts and humanities in the creation of a thriving economy and their contributions to education, innovation, growth and quality of life. The Governor's Awards pay tribute to the most distinguished citizens and organizations that have demonstrated a lifetime commitment to work in these fields.



Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA) is a division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development whose mission is to cultivate the growth of vibrant, thriving Georgia communities through the arts. GCA provides grant funding, programs and services statewide that support the vital arts industry, preserve the state's cultural heritage, increase tourism and nurture strong communities. Funding for Georgia Council for the Arts is provided by appropriations from the Georgia General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Georgia Humanities promotes and preserves the stories and cultural legacies of the state's people — from the past to the present and into the future — to enrich their lives and strengthen their communities. An informed and educated Georgia understands historical and cultural trends, respects the life of the mind, utilizes critical thinking in decision-making, and promotes mutual respect and civility. Funding for Georgia Humanities is provided by the Georgia General Assembly, the National Endowment for the Humanities, foundations, donors, and partners.

2021 AWARD RECIPIENTS



Didi Dunphy
Clarke County

Didi Dunphy is the program and facility supervisor at the Lyndon House Arts Center in Athens, Georgia, a civic arts campus dedicated to advocacy and the enrichment of visual art and arts education. Over the past eight years, Dunphy has overseen the growth of the programs and campus including the Harold Rittenberry Sculpture Garden and an open studio membership program which provides artists access to low-cost studio space and materials. Dunphy has expanded

education opportunities at the Lyndon House offering symposiums on professional practices for working artists and a funded curatorial program for underserved minorities. Dunphy is the director of the arts program at the Hotel Indigo-Athens, including quarterly exhibitions in the Gallery@Indigo and the project space, the GlassCube, and serves in the same role at the Classic Center. She has held the position of guest curator of contemporary art for the Albany Museum of Art, in Albany, Georgia, for the last four years and partners with the Georgia Museum of Art at UGA to organize a series of affordable traveling exhibitions that focus specifically on Georgia artists. Dunphy is an exhibiting artist represented by Whitespace Gallery in Atlanta.



Sheffield Hale Fulton County

Sheffield Hale is President & CEO of Atlanta History Center. Founded in 1926, the institution includes a 175,000 square foot museum and The Battle of Atlanta Cyclorama, the 33-acre Goizueta Gardens, Kenan Research Center and Archive, four historic houses, and a range of digital experiences and educational programs. Under Hale's leadership, Atlanta History Center has focused on addressing issues of history and memory that divide the community and country. Two key aspects

have been the Center's nationwide Confederate Monuments Initiative, which focuses on providing historical information and tools for communities deciding whether to contextualize, remove, or otherwise engage with monuments or named places; and the development of Guiding Principles defining how the Center will approach history in a way that cultivates broader, communitywide perspectives.

Hale has served on the boards of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Fox Theatre, the Georgia Historical Society, Georgia Humanities, Historic Oakland Foundation, and Sweet Auburn Works. Sheffield previously served for ten years as Chief Counsel of the American Cancer Society, Inc.



Lyrika Holmes Cobb County

Lyrika Holmes is an internationally known harpist, singer, songwriter, composer, actress, teacher, author, and founder of the nonprofit arts school Artz for the Harp. Holmes has had the honor of touring throughout Asia with the world-renowned company Cirque Du Soleil as their Kooza Soul Singer. She has also opened for several artists including Kerri Hilson, Joe, Laura Izibor, and Phil Perry, and has played alongside Aretha Franklin. As a composer and actress, she has created music for BET, Bobby Huntley Films, and for hip-hop and R&B

artists. She has also been a featured harpist on: Switching Lanes, The Originals, Coming 2 America 2 and The Walking Dead to name a few. Holmes has several music projects out on all streaming platforms, and is currently working on a new EP.

Holmes is a certified teacher with her associates degree from St. Louis Community College, bachelor's in music education from the University of Missouri, and her master's in music education from the University of Memphis and over 20 years' experience teaching music. She also has the distinguished honor of being a Georgia Council for the Arts Teaching Artist. Holmes started Artz for the Harp to provide harps and group harp music enrichment and music therapy programs to students of all ages. She is also the author of the AFTH Contemporary Method Book and is currently working on the second book. By connecting with students on a contemporary level, she provides a strong foundation in music, using pop, R&B, hip hop, electronic dance music, jazz, country, and classical music.



Donald L. Lovette

Liberty County

Donald L. Lovette is a life-long Liberty County resident and he is currently serving a third term as the Chairman of the Liberty County Board of Commissioners. He is a local playwright who has put a spotlight on local African American history. Lovette wrote the play *Come Sundown* to highlight local African American history which led to three sequels and resulted in Mr. Lovette receiving the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Award for Dramatic Arts. Lovette established Love-It Productions in 2007.

Love-It Productions is a source for employment for sound, video and staging personnel as well as the only local outlet for live theatre in Liberty County.

Love-It Productions has presented such stories as *The Tragedy at Ebenezer Creek*, the story of enslaved people so desperate for freedom that they died attempting to cross Ebenezer Creek to follow Union soldiers into Savannah. Many of these stories were unknown to a larger population. Presenting them in plays introduced them to local youth who do not learn these stories in school. It also has educated many people about the rich history of Liberty County.



Dad's Garage Theatre

Fulton County

Dad's Garage Theatre has a mission to transform people, communities and perspectives through laughter. Founded in 1995, Dad's brings more than 30,000 people annually to see original plays and world premieres. Dad's attracts a younger demographic than most theatres, and Dad's introduces them to other arts organizations through strategic programming collaborations, thus building a new generation of arts consumers.

Dad's has created free improv curriculums for Georgia high school teachers that teach students the value of collaboration, confidence and valuing others' ideas. The program is free to high schools in Metro Atlanta each year and culminates in a performance on Dad's Main Stage. This program builds confidence, failure resiliency, and teamwork in teens in a positive and uplifting environment.

The company offers several scholarships to those that want to participate in improv classes, including the Diversity and Inclusivity Scholarship, to ensure the tenets and benefits of improv are available to all. Most of the shows Dad's produces are created entirely in-house by the resident artistic ensemble, and the work incubated there goes on to other theatres. The individuals who make up Dad's artistic rosters consistently work in film, television and theatre in such critically acclaimed works as Archer, Aqua Teen Hunger Force, Too Many Cooks, and the film Selma.



Georgia Council on Economic Education

Located in Fulton County, serving all of Georgia

Georgia Council on Economic Education was formed in 1972 by business leaders looking to provide K-12 teachers with classroom resources and strategies designed to improve economic education in Georgia. For nearly 50 years, the Georgia Council has enriched the lives of tens of thousands of K-12 teachers by providing effective professional development that has helped them seamlessly integrate economic and personal financial literacy concepts into the history, geography, and government classes of hundreds of thousands of students.

The Georgia Council's rural initiative, which started five years ago, focuses exclusively on serving K-12 teachers and students from rural Georgia communities. The impact of the rural initiative has been tremendous as the Georgia Council has served teachers from 167 of Georgia's 181 public school systems in the last five years.



OUT OF HAND

Out of Hand Theater Fulton County

Out of Hand Theater works at the intersection of art, social justice, and community engagement. In April 2020, Out of Hand Theater launched Equitable Dinners: Setting the Table for Racial Equity, with the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, The King Center, Partnership for Southern Equity, and others. Equitable Dinners is a free, monthly, online series featuring art, experts, and conversation with a guest speaker, the performance of a new 10-minute play written in consultation with the speaker, and facilitated, small-group conversations in Zoom. Equitable Dinners and its predecessor, Decatur Dinners, have already served over 7,000 people.

Each season, Out of Hand produces Shows in Homes, performances on social justice topics in living rooms across Metro Atlanta. Last year's production, Conceal and Carry, tackled gun violence in America. This year's production is Calf, which addresses mass incarceration and the obstacles faced by people upon release from prison, and will be produced in partnership with Georgia Justice Project.

This year, Out of Hand is partnering with Georgia Council for the Arts, the Georgia Department of Education, Wellspring Living, and Street Grace to pilot See You, a child sex trafficking awareness and prevention program for Georgia middle school students featuring an original film or live play.

SYNCHRONICITY THEATRE

SMART. GUTSY. BOLD.

Synchronicity Theatre

Fulton County

Synchronicity Theatre has a mission to produce smart, gutsy and bold theatre to spark community connections and uplift the voices of women and girls by supporting women artists, forging long-term and effective community partnerships, and developing new work. Synchronicity has garnered much recognition including the Community Engagement Award from the American Society for Theatre Research and the Managing for Excellence Award from The Community Foundation.

Synchronicity's productions reach nearly 16,000 patrons a year, and its educational programming impacts upwards of 1,500 students a year. The Bold Voices Series focuses on supporting the work of women artists and sparking community dialogue. Synchronicity's Family Series reaches 3,500 adults and children every year, bringing popular children's books to the stage, sparking imagination and creating an early passion for theatre in children of all ages.

Synchronicity's Playmaking for Girls (PFG) is an arts empowerment program that uses theatre as a way to uplift the voices of girls ages 13-19 in group homes and refugee communities. PFG inspires and transforms young women by helping them to see that their voices matter.

HAMBIDGESM

The Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts & Sciences Rabun County

Since 1934 when Mary Hambidge established a 600-acre sanctuary in Rabun Gap, Georgia, The Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts and Sciences has been offering artists an inspiring residency program. The competitive, peer-reviewed Creative Residency Program offers artists two to eight weeks of space and solitude to incubate ideas, develop work and bring projects to fruition. Each year more than 180 creative thinkers visit Hambidge. In 2019, of the 188 Hambidge Fellows in residence, 63 were Georgia artists. In 2020, during a world-wide pandemic, 76 Georgians completed residencies. Demand for residencies is at an all-time high; only 25% of the total applicants are accepted each year. Partnering with companies and other organizations, Hambidge is able to offer 32 merit-based Distinguished Fellowships. These scholarships pay the fees for a two-week residency and provide a stipend to the artist. Hambidge Fellows include Grammy Award and Pulitzer Prize winners, Poet Laureates, Guggenheim Fellows, MacArthur Fellows and James Beard Award winners. Their books have been reviewed in The New York Times. Their plays have been produced on Broadway and their artwork showcased in the Venice and Whitney Biennales, among others. Currently, over 500 Hambidge alumni are represented in Atlanta as leaders of museums and art galleries, dance companies, university and secondary school faculty, public art and culture programs, restaurants and culinary companies.

ABOUT THE AWARD

The 2021 award is a sweet grass basket made by master basket maker and lifelong Georgia resident Yvonne Jackson Grovner. She weaves each basket by hand, collecting the natural basket materials, sweet grass and sawtooth palmetto, around Sapelo Island. Grovner's craft is one of the many ways she works to preserve the Gullah Geechee tradition of basket making.

Grovner is a recipient of the 2020 Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities.



Photographs courtesy of Bobby Haven, Golden Isles Magazine

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Yvonne Jackson Grovner

Yvonne Jackson Grovner was born and raised in McIntosh County, located in the low country of coastal Georgia. She married Iregene Grovner and moved to Sapelo Island in 1980, where she met master basket maker Allen Green, who taught her the art of making sweet grass baskets. She worked for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources as a tour guide on Sapelo Island for 30 years. Having become a master basket maker herself, she has taught many classes over the years to keep the art of sweet grass basket making alive. Yvonne and two of her friends also wrote a cookbook called *Food of the Barrier Islands*. She retired recently from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and continues to give basket-making classes and private tours of Sapelo Island.



*Photograph courtesy of
Brian Austin Lee*



A division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development

