





2023 Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities

December 12, 2023

Opening Performance

Welcome Tina Lilly, Executive Director,

Georgia Council for the Arts

Laura McCarty, President,

Georgia Humanities

Impact of the Arts and

Presentation of Awards

Pat Wilson, Commissioner,

Georgia Department of Economic

Development

Benediction Chelsea Rathburn,

Georgia Poet Laureate

Closing Tina Lilly and Laura McCarty

"God Bless America," Morris Robinson

The Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities honor outstanding individuals and organizations who have significantly contributed 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 the Georgia Council for the Arts and Georgia Humanities, the Governor's Awards recognize the value of the arts and humanities in creating 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.



Sharing stories that move us and make us

Georgia Humanities is a nonprofit organization that connects people and communities to inspire conversation, education, and understanding. With programming that engages all ages and backgrounds, Georgia Humanities encourages Georgians to explore what shapes us as individuals and binds us as a society. Funding for Georgia Humanities is provided by the Georgia General Assembly, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and various foundations, donors, and partners.

2023 AWARD RECIPIENTS



Jonathan Samuel Eddie Perkins Muscogee County

Jonathan Samuel Eddie Perkins is a teaching artist, spoken word comedian, actor, activist, and playwright, and is a graduate of Georgia Southern University. Mr. Perkins teaches K-12 students how to use creativity as a means for emotional health, personal growth, and professional prosperity. His poems have been featured on "Write About Now," "The Root," and "All Def Poetry." He was also a 2018 runner-up in "The Missouri Review"

Miller Audio Prize for Humor. He was a 2018 recipient of the "Columbus and the Valley Magazine's" "50 Under 40" award. Mr. Perkins was also included on "Georgia Trend's" 2020 "40 under 40" listing, recognizing his community efforts. He is a 2022 Apollo Stories Fellow with the Legendary Apollo Theatre in New York. He received with the 2022 Leadership Award by the Georgia After School & Youth Development Conference for exemplifying excellence in the field of expanded learning. He is the founder/director of the Fountain City Teen Poetry Slam. Mr. Perkins has developed and facilitated lessons for students at Aaron Cohn Regional Youth Detention Center, Muscogee County Department of Juvenile Justice, and Anne Elizabeth Shepherd Home for Girls. He is also on the Teaching Artist Registry for Georgia Council for the Arts.



Dr. Karan Berryman Pittman Randolph County

Dr. Karan Berryman Pittman is the Dean of Academic Affairs at Andrew College in Cuthbert, Georgia. Over the years, she has worked extensively to document the history of the local area. She wrote or co-authored several local history books, one of which, "The Lena Baker Story", was made into a movie. Dr. Pittman worked on the committee to save the Randolph County Courthouse, renamed the Randolph Welcome

Center and the Cuthbert Water Tower, among others. She assisted with historical exhibits now in the Welcome Center and catalogued and recorded the graves in several local cemeteries. In 2017, in an effort to save historic buildings in downtown Cuthbert, Dr. Pittman purchased several of the dilapidated old buildings and arranged for them to be saved. Today, the renovated buildings have led to a renewal in tourism and community development and has brought the Fine Arts of Andrew College downtown. The community enjoys farmers markets, concerts, theatre productions, festivals, and the annual Arts Around the Square event, all due to Dr. Pittman's passion to save the buildings of the town square.



Harold Rittenberry Clarke County

Mr. Rittenberry taught himself to weld after seeing an acetylene torch in a Sears catalogue. He put the tabletop-size sculptures he made in his front yard. His work became larger and more complex, and he turned the yard of his home into a rotating sculpture garden. In 1996, he created a welded stainless steel seating arrangement for the Atlanta Folk Art Park. In Georgia, his work can be found at the Georgia Museum of Art, the Athens-Clarke

County Library, the Lyndon House Arts Center, Centennial Olympic Park, the Atlanta Municipal Court and the East Point Library, among other sites. In 2003, Mr. Rittenberry's work was presented in an exhibit at the Georgia Museum of Art at the University of Georgia.



Morris RobinsonFayette County

An Atlanta native, Morris Robinson is a graduate of The Citadel and received his musical training from the Boston University Opera Institute and as a member of the prestigious Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Program. Since that time, Mr. Robinson regularly appears at the Metropolitan Opera. He has also appeared at the San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dallas Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Opera

Philadelphia, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Volksoper Wien, Opera Australia, and the Aix-en-Provence Festival.

Also a prolific concert singer, Mr. Robinson's many concert engagements have included appearances with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, among others.

With Tomer Zvulun, General & Artistic Director of The Atlanta Opera, Robinson developed "The 96-Hour Opera Project," which is held in Atlanta. This is a program to support the careers of BIPOC emerging creative artists, both composers and librettists, through a competition and performance opportunities.



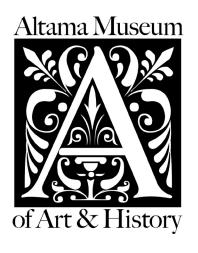
Mack Scogin and Merrill Elam Fulton County

Mack Scogin and Merrill Elam, the two principals of Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects, Inc., have worked together in architecture for

over 40 years. Both pursued architecture studies at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Their initial projects, including the Georgia Power Company Headquarters, attracted attention from the world of academia and in 1990, at the High Museum of Art, their work was the subject of a symposium titled "Critical Architecture/ Architectural Criticism" – the Work of Scogin Elam and Bray.

In 1990, Mr. Scogin was appointed Chair of the Department of Architecture at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, where he continues as the Kajima Professor in Practice of Architecture, Emeritus 2021. In addition to his commitments at Harvard, Mr. Scogin has also lectured and taught at over 50 different colleges and universities. Ms. Elam has lectured and taught at over 70 schools of architecture nationally and internationally.

Mr. Scogin and Ms. Elam have a career-long engagement with the Georgia arts communities – including projects with NEXUS (now Atlanta Contemporary), Clark Atlanta University Art Galleries, the High Museum, and MOCA GA. Around the country, they have worked with institutions such as MIT, Harvard, and Wellesley College; Federal agencies such as the U.S. Courts and U.S. General Services Administration; and Corporations such as Herman Miller.



Altama MuseumToombs County

The Altama Museum is a critical regional institution in Vidalia dedicated to preserving and developing community identity, promoting visual and performing arts, offering educational opportunities, fostering connection, and supporting area businesses, artists, performers, and historians. No similar organization exists within a 90-mile radius. The museum houses a number of collections, including original prints of the renowned ornithologist John Gould, one of the largest collections of 18th

and 19th-century Staffordshire porcelain on public display in the country, and vintage local photographs. The Museum also includes an art gallery that features work by regional artists. Annual events include Kid's Art Day and the Student Art Show as well as the Artisan's Market which showcases the work of local artisans.



Atlanta Dogwood Festival Fulton County

Launched in 1936, the Atlanta Dogwood Festival has a long history of celebrating and supporting the arts in Georgia. In the 1980s, the Music in the Marketplace lunchtime concert series was added, and in the 2000s, the festival welcomed more than 220 fine artists annually to participate in the Artist Market held within Piedmont Park. The festival

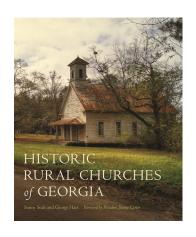
added the International Stage in 2009. Additionally, the festival has worked with some of Georgia's most vibrant arts organizations which offer hands-on activities and demonstrations at the festival. Another major achievement of the Atlanta Dogwood Festival has been its support of young artists and youth art programs through its Atlanta High School Art Exhibition (AHSAE), which includes nearly 20 counties in the greater metro-Atlanta area. The Festival has welcomed as many as 250,000 visitors to the three-day event. With more than \$40,000 in scholarships and prizes distributed among AHSAE winners and area high school art programs each year, the Atlanta Dogwood Festival funnels nearly \$500,000 into youth arts in Atlanta each decade.



Ballethnic Dance CompanyFulton County

Ballethnic Dance Company is a classically trained, culturally diverse arts organization providing training and performance opportunities to professional and pre-professional dancers, children, and emerging artists. Ballethnic Dance has distinguished itself from other professional ballet companies by its unique and authentic praxis of blending ballet with African

dance concepts. Ballethnic Dance was founded in 1990 by Nena Gilreath and her husband Waverly T. Lucas II who are both former dancers with the Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Atlanta Ballet. In June 2022, Ballethnic Dance was featured in a week-long, sold-out engagement at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. as one of three iconic Black-led ballet companies noted for presenting decades of superior works. Ballethnic's superior training has allowed local students to obtain college scholarships or to pursue careers as professional dancers and/or arts organization leaders.



Historic Rural Churches of Georgia

Statewide

Historic Rural Churches of Georgia (HRCGA) was founded in 2012 by Sonny Seals and George Hart with a mission to research, document and ultimately preserve historic rural churches across the state. HRCGA is a volunteer organization with a network of volunteer photographers who document the churches. Volunteer researchers verify the history of the churches from many sources. The

organization's website showcases approximately 400 historic, rural churches that have been researched, documented, and are available to the public. "Historic Rural Churches of Georgia", with a Foreword by President Jimmy Carter, is an award-winning book in its fourth printing. HRCGA has an ongoing collaboration with Pitts Theology Library and Emory University, who recently announced the formation of an Historic Rural Church archive at the library.



Otis Redding FoundationBibb County

Created in 2007, The Otis Redding Foundation fulfills its mission to empower, enrich, and motivate all young people through programs involving music and arts education. Since its inception, multiple programs have been

created to better address the needs of children of various age ranges and skill levels. The Foundation currently offers lessons, therapy, camps, museum tours, and more, almost exclusively to disadvantaged young people. Students graduating from programs like Camp Dream and Otis Music Camp have achieved accomplishments ranging from record deals and music industry internships to medical school and doctorate program acceptance. In March 2023, Karla Redding-Andrews, the Vice President and Executive Director of the Otis Redding Foundation, was the face of "Georgia Trend's" "Female Change Agents" issue. She has also been acknowledged as one of the "Georgia 500" several years in a row. With the construction of the Otis Redding Center for the Arts beginning in 2023, the Foundation will be able to serve and instill hope in even more young people.

2023 AWARDS ARTIST



Mark A. Nelson

Mark A. Nelson is a contemporary artist focusing on figurative and representational paintings and sculptures. There are many elements at play in Mark's work with a style that combines classical, abstract, folk, outlander, and high art sensibilities. There is an industrial quality of design with the presentation of his works, painting on aluminum and steel panels on deep stretchers. His sculptures are influenced by ancient Greek and Roman sculptural fragments and frescos.

Mark graduated from the University of Delaware and Walter F. George School of Law, Mercer University. Prior to retiring to Lake Sinclair with his wife Jean, Mark was a lawyer and multifamily lender in Atlanta. Mark's work can be found in private and corporate collections throughout the Southeast.









