

HEArts



RMHF

Richmond Memorial Health Foundation

Fostering an equitable and
healthy Richmond Region

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VCU

Deborah Randolph

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Arts Research Institute at VCUarts

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RMHF Trustee, Visiting Artists Taskforce

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RMHF Trustee, Visiting Artists Taskforce

And to all of the **wonderful artists featured on these pages**, we say
“Thank you! From the bottom of our HEArts!”



Few people have a clear understanding or vision of equity. It is a difficult concept to define, and harder still to explain in terms of what it means to have equity in our communities. The word “health” generates an immediate mental image – perhaps a doctor with a stethoscope or a family growing a vegetable garden. But public perception of equity is a blank canvas.

To fill that canvas, RMHF invited eight local artists and artist collectives to create works of art that communicate the concept of equity and its significance to residents of the Richmond region. Each of the eight received awards ranging from \$1,500 to \$10,000 to support their individual projects. In addition to working on their pieces, the artists also gathered for periodic discussions to share their insights and experiences.

The goal of the RMHF HEArts initiative is to inspire and motivate change that embraces equity by tapping into the many forms of creative expression that are alive and thriving in the Richmond region. Our HEArts artists have illustrated how social, economic and structural conditions contribute to poor health outcomes — and also can change them.

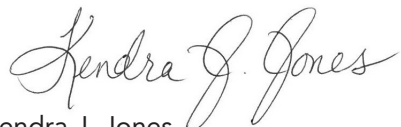
RMHF asked each HEArts participant artist to consider the following questions as they designed and completed their projects:

- What is equity?
- What is the role of the arts in understanding equity and health?
- What does an equitable and healthy region look like?
- How can artistic expression engage the voices of those affected by inequity?
- How can creative expression cultivate empathy and understanding toward those who experience health inequities?

On the following pages, you’ll see samples of the works they’ve created and the ways in which their visions help create a richer and deeper understanding of the interplay between health and equity in our Richmond community. We hope the work and creativity of the artists featured inform, inspire, and give hope.



Mark D. Constantine
President & CEO



Kendra J. Jones
Director for Arts & Equity and Accountant

HANNAH AYERS & LANCE WARREN, FIELD STUDIO



Richmond Health Equity: Video Portraits

Documentary filmmakers Hannah Ayers and Lance Warren produced a series of five video portraits aiming to reveal obstacles to health equity in Richmond through human-centered stories. The videos are designed to serve as introductions to five women and men at different points in life, who live in different neighborhoods, and who have distinct health needs. Getting a glimpse of the challenges they've faced and the opportunities they've carved out, we gain an intimate perspective of what health equity—and inequity—means in Richmond. The women and men featured in these stories are Willnette Cunningham, Aubrey Gholson, Martha Santacoloma, Tom Wallace, and Elaine Williams.

LAUREN DESIMONE



Local Natives



“Local Natives” stimulates multi-generational community conversations via large-scale photographic projections on building exteriors of places where food is grown in neighborhoods where there is little or no access to healthy food, namely Richmond’s East End and Northside near the Brookland Park Boulevard corridor. The projections, in areas considered “food deserts” by the USDA, challenge passersby to imagine if there was better access to healthy food. Lauren and community stakeholders used photography to document where healthy food is grown and to tell the stories of community members coming together to nurture their land, themselves, and each other.

FREE EGUNFEMI, ASHLEY HAWKINS, KELLEY LIBBY



*Healthy +
Wealthy +
Wise*

"HEALTHY + WEALTHY + WISE" empowered and mobilized young people to collect timeless wisdom from community elders about positive health choices. The artists then displayed these living histories via a series of interactive street art installations, enhanced with open-access audio interviews, that beautify the urban landscape of Richmond's Northside neighborhood.

BARRY WILDER O'KEEFE



Open Inbox

This project expands on an ongoing series with the creation of hand-carved wooden sculptures for two Richmond neighborhoods. The sculptures function both as reverent monuments to neighborhood history and identity, and as functional community message boards and meeting points. Shallow covered boxes, enclosed by intricate carvings and decorative patterns, reference the history and architecture of each neighborhood. Invitations distributed to neighbors surrounding each installation announced the sculpture and invited them to use it to connect, communicate and construct shared identity.

KEVIN ORLOSKY & ART ON WHEELS

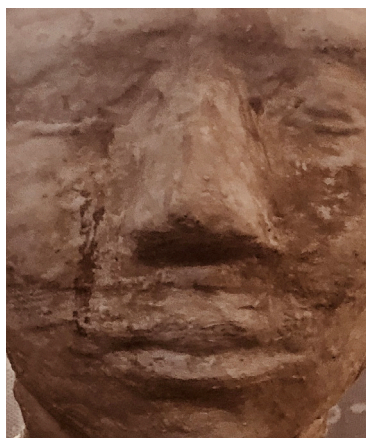


With These Hands...

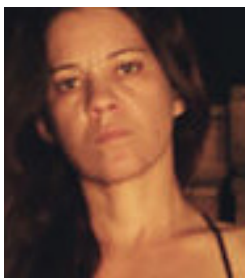


If the eyes are windows to the soul, then our hands are time capsules to our past. They tell the stories of our lives, show the results of our labor, and reflect both hardships and privileges. "With These Hands..." seeks to illustrate both the similarities and differences of people in our community who live in close proximity, but have very different average life expectancies. Kevin Orlosky and Art on Wheels created 16 sculptures of the cast hands of Richmonders across the socioeconomic spectrum. Each is presented with information about the age, neighborhood, and occupation of the subject, and seeks to answer questions about similarities and differences across life in Richmond.

EVA ROCHA



Silent Chorus

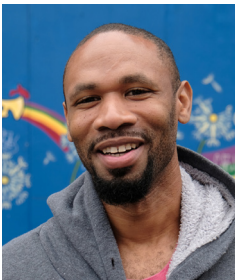


Silent Chorus, an installation created during the ReCast project proposed by Eva Rocha, was developed from an initial interaction with women victims of human trafficking and other situations of forced migration, and investigated the extension and relationship of the many issues affecting women — from trivial unperceptive daily discrimination to femicide. The torsos used in the installation were cast from volunteer women that lent their faces to the faceless, voiceless chorus affected by many tragedies. Rocha investigates how the body stands for physical archives of traumatic experiences on the individual and collective level and proposes healing through witness, knowledge, empathy and collective action.

MAURICE HAMILTON GLASS



The Unity Street Project



This mural in Jackson Ward is a collaboration between the artist and the Girls for Change Program, a non-profit organization whose mission is to support and inspire black girls and other girls of color to visualize their bright futures and potential through discovery, development, social change, and innovation in their communities. This public work of art represents important voices in the Richmond community that might otherwise be lost to history and rapidly changing demographics.

ALFONSO PÉREZ ACOSTA



"SERÉ" *(I Will Be)*



"SERÉ" is a community of individual portraits of Latino Immigrants living in Richmond, showing them in a way that they wish to be in their most desired future. Every portrait includes text that shares the subject's name, place of birth, present occupation and highlighted future occupation or situation. To reflect the idea of equity as a differentiated way of attention or support, the size of each portrait is determined by the level of necessity that each subject will face to achieve that future; the more difficult the challenge, the bigger the portrait.

If you have additional
questions about RMHF's
HEArts Visiting Artists
Program, visit
healthequityarts.org or
contact Kendra Jones at
kjones@rmhfoundation.org
or (804) 554-1611.

