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“THE PEOPLE PROJECT 2022” ANNOUNCES CAST, PUBLIC ART COLLAB DATES
Community invited to October 22 performance

GETTYSBURG, PA (September 7, 2022) – The Adams County Arts Council (ACAC) announces and warmly invites the public to attend The People Project 2022, an October 22 arts event that combines musical performances and art exhibits by dozens of Adams County artists along with a cast of seven storytellers, plus a mosaic-like stained-glass public art collaboration—all focused on the theme, “My Place at the Table.”

“Exciting doesn’t begin to describe the feeling of the community coming together in this spectacular celebration of the arts,” said Lisa Cadigan, founder of The People Project, and ACAC Executive Director. “The arts have the power to connect, uplift, transform and inspire our Adams County community—and this theme speaks to the importance of a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere, which is absolutely vital to a community’s health and well-being.”

Funding for The People Project 2022 has been provided by PA Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities as part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, and the Robert C. Hoffman Charitable Endowment Trust.

October’s performance date caps a nearly year-long process that began with community visioning sessions, a community-wide survey in which the theme “My Place at the Table” received the most votes, outreach inviting artists of all ages and backgrounds to apply, curating and coaching participants to prepare their works, as well as a public art collaboration led by stained glass artist Christian Parker.

“Every component of The People Project is designed to be multi-faceted—to showcase a rich diversity of the arts, and to reach and enrich a diverse Adams County audience,” said Cadigan.

Performance Info:

The People Project 2022 is set for a 7 p.m. performance on Saturday, October 22 at Mela Kitchen’s Core Theater, housed in the restaurant’s reimagined, former movie theater space. Art exhibits will be open for public viewing that entire weekend, Friday, October 21 through Sunday, October 23 during the restaurant’s hours. Mela Kitchen is located at 1865 Gettysburg Village Drive, at The Outlet Shoppes at Gettysburg. Admission to both the performance and visual arts show is free and open to the public.

Public Art Collaboration:

Stained-glass artist Christian Parker, 48, of Arendtsville, launched public participation in a large-scale public art project during August's National Night Out events held at Giant, Gettysburg. Parker designed the artwork, titled "One Piece at a Time," in a quilt or mosaic-like pattern, to feature the combined efforts of more than 100 Adams Countians' handiwork when assembled. Its final home, in the ACAC's front windows, will put it on public display upon completion.

"I think especially in this time period, it's inherently necessary that the arts are part of our community because they provide emotional expression, as well as physical and verbal output," said Parker, who teaches ACAC stained glass workshops. "The arts lend themselves to creating a sense of community through collaboration."

The public is invited to lend a hand with the project by cutting, grinding, washing or foiling stained glass pieces—all materials and instruction provided—on the following dates:

- Monday, September 19, 5-6 p.m., Adams County Arts Council, 125 S. Washington St.
- Thursday, September 29, 4:30-5:30 p.m., Adams County Arts Council, 125 S. Washington St.
- Saturday, October 15, 12-3 p.m., Art Oasis performance space on Lincoln Square

Introducing the Cast of Storytellers:

Mike Allwein, 69, Gettysburg, is preparing a written and spoken essay about Christmas cookies. "This time of baking becomes for me a time for deeper reflections, and my place at the table of living," Allwein describes. "I thought I was simply baking cookies—but I realize it may have been God winking at me and reminding me there is always 'more' to whatever it is we might be doing at a given time."

Christine Campbell, 57, with siblings Patrick, 55, and Stephen, 65, who own and operate the Keystone Inn, Gettysburg's first Black-owned bed and breakfast, **along with innkeeper Leah Bell**. The ensemble is preparing a written and spoken essay about "how our family values stories told around the kitchen table" and "how we came to be in Gettysburg, standing on the shoulders of our ancestors," Christine describes.

Carlie Corson, 16, Biglerville, is preparing a written and spoken essay that's "an exploration of how people grapple with finding where they fit, in the face of struggles, big and small," she describes. "As a teenager, the idea of any person trying to find a place where they fit is very near to my heart. Whether it be in reference to a literal table or just one's role in society, I think many people are uncertain of where they belong. We are all a little lost, and this theme provides an ideal opportunity to connect on this common difficulty."

Susan Beaver Hood, 54, Gettysburg, is basing her written and spoken essay on Psalm 23 "because I want to honor God and the person who was most influential in my life, my grandmother, Rev. Eliza Mae Myers. Her birthday was October 23, 1904, and since this event is near her birthday, all the more perfect," explains Hood.

Rukhsana Rahman, 67, Gettysburg, is sharing a written and spoken essay "as an immigrant, regarding foods in general, and Thanksgiving, more specifically," she describes. "I believe in the power of storytelling and shared experiences as a means of peace, unity and compassionate understanding of each other."

Brittinay Smith, 23, Gettysburg, is also preparing a written and spoken essay based upon the theme, “My Place at the Table.”

Kathy Tyson, 46, Biglerville, will be sharing a written and spoken essay based upon letters she and her family members wrote to her mother, upon a sudden and terminal cancer diagnosis. Those family letters were once shared across Tyson’s actual family table.

Introducing Performers and Artists:

- **Bermudian Springs High School’s AP Art students, led by teacher Kim Robinson**, are preparing visual art projects.
- **Potter Jen Cole** is creating bowls, to be displayed on the stage, set as a table, to tie into the theme, “My Place at the Table.”
- Adams County students studying voice and piano under instructors **Carrie Conklin**, music director for the Gettysburg Community Theatre as well as a private voice and piano teacher; and **Matt Carlson**, Bermudian Springs High School teacher and Artistic Director for the Gettysburg Children’s Choir, will offer musical selections.
- Grammy-nominated singer/songwriter **Ray Owen** will share two original songs colored by his experiences in Adams County.

Background:

“My Place at the Table” was one of five themes spawned by community visioning sessions held in February. Those conversations inspired ACAC staff to develop the theme’s overview:

My Place at the Table: Gathering around a dinner table can inspire conversations. And some of us have had more time to gather over family meals during the past two pandemic years. Can you imagine the stories we could share about our family meals? But this theme can also speak to inclusion and diversity—i.e., having a place at the table in terms of a business, a board, a voice.

The People Project is a performance and visual arts project originally created in 2017 by local theatre artist and Adams County Arts Council (ACAC) Executive Director Lisa Cadigan. Established as a live storytelling event, the goal of The People Project is to provide a creative community outlet for people to share their experiences on a theme by expressing themselves through first-person, narrative storytelling (the focus has broadened to include stories, plus art, music, etc.), to hone performers’ skills by providing guidance and coaching, to foster empathy, and to uplift and inspire the community by sharing these creations through a live and/or video performance experience.

For more information, see adamsarts.org, or the ACAC’s social media—Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

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Community Collab: ACAC Stained Glass Instructor Chris Parker kicked off The People Project’s public art collaboration at Giant’s National Night Out in August. The public is invited to contribute to the artwork—all instruction and materials will be provided—on Saturday, October 15 from 12 to 3 p.m. at the Art Oasis on Lincoln Square. The People Project 2022 logo is also attached for media use—thank you!