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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Visual Arts Center of New Jersey to Receive \$20,000 Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

Summit, NJ (May 11, 2018)— National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Chairman Jane Chu has approved more than \$80 million in grants as part of the NEA's second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2018. Included in this announcement is an Art Works grant of \$20,000 to the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey for the exhibition *Kevin Sampson: Black and Blue*. The Art Works category is the NEA's largest funding category and supports projects that focus on the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts, and/or the strengthening of communities through the arts.

"The variety and quality of these projects speaks to the wealth of creativity and diversity in our country," said NEA Chairman Jane Chu. "Through the work of organizations such as the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey in Summit, NEA funding invests in local communities, helping people celebrate the arts wherever they are."

"We're thrilled to receive this grant from the National Endowment for the Arts," said Melanie Cohn, Executive Director of the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey. "This NEA grant enables the Art Center to present a remarkable body of work by Kevin Sampson for the public to view and experience. We value the support of the NEA, as it allows the Art Center to continue its mission to foster stronger communities by empowering people to see, make, and learn about art."

Kevin Blythe Sampson is a sculptor, painter, and muralist recognized for tackling difficult issues through socially-engaged artwork. During his 2017 artist residency at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Mr. Sampson created a series of porcelain sculptures responding to the Black and Blue Lives Matter movements. He addressed these complicated issues from his perspective as an African American as well as a retired police officer, understanding both sides of the debate. This exhibition will be on view at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey from September 28, 2018, to January 27, 2019.

For more information on projects included in the NEA grant announcement, visit arts.gov/news.

About the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey

For 85 years, the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey has been exclusively dedicated to viewing, making, and learning about contemporary art. Recognized as a leading non-profit arts organization, the Art Center's renowned Studio School, acclaimed exhibitions, and educational outreach initiatives serve thousands of youth, families, seniors, and people with special needs every year.

The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey is located at 68 Elm Street in Summit, New Jersey. Adult and children's group tours are available throughout the year. Gallery Hours: Monday–Wednesday and Friday, 10 AM–5 PM; Thursday, 10 AM–8 PM; and Saturday–Sunday, 11 AM–4 PM. Please call 908.273.9121 to confirm holiday hours.

Support

Major support for the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey is provided in part by the Walter V. & Judith L. Shipley Family Foundation, the Wilf Family Foundations, and Art Center members and donors.



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