



For Immediate Release

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BEND CULTURAL TOURISM COMMISSION

Announces 2017 Grant Awards

The Bend Cultural Tourism Commission is pleased to announce ten grant awards for Bend activities at its May 23, 2017 meeting, awarding a total of \$197,289. The funds will help organizations leverage marketing resources to attract more cultural tourists during the shoulder seasons and winter months – a time of year when the city’s tourism industry is down, yet the vibrant cultural activities central to Bend’s character are still going strong.

Many of these events will be recognized by Bend residents, and these organizations have identified strategies that will attract people into Bend during the winter months when tourism is down, ready to enjoy the great shops, dining and cultural activities along with skiing!

New to the Fund this year, Lay It Out Events is increasing its marketing for the popular Fire Pit/ Fire Sculpture Competition at Oregon WinterFest. 2018 will be the sixth year of this one-of-a-kind event, combining both a functional competition—the fire pits—and a sculptural element—fire sculptures. Also new is TEDxBend, expanding its very own locally-organized event featuring a dozen talks, demonstrations, and performances to a larger visitor base for 2018.

“Visit Bend is tremendously proud of Bend’s thriving arts and culture scene, and it’s been wonderful to watch it become such a valuable part of our city’s economy,” explained Visit Bend CEO Kevney Dugan. “We’re excited to be part of a program that’s helping to balance out the seasonality curve of the tourism industry, and we’re thrilled that visitors are enjoying Bend’s vibrant arts scene as much as locals do.”

The Commission included two Catalyst grant awards, supporting cultural initiatives in the development phase. One of these is a collaboration led by Stage Right Productions to develop a website that will be a single source for all theatre-related events in Central Oregon.

Following is the complete list of grants awarded:

BendFilm, Inc., \$37,133 Since 2003, BendFilm's goals are three-fold: to showcase the best of independent cinema during the annual fall festival, to nurture the filmmaking talent of local students, and to promote arts and cultural tourism throughout Central Oregon. On October 12-15, 2017, BendFilm will host its 14th consecutive film festival—the cultural tourism activity we are proposing. The festival showcases approximately 100 independent narrative, documentary, short, animated, northwest-produced, and student films.

High Desert Museum, \$37,109. Presenting the traveling exhibit, Dinosaurs Take Flight: The Art of Archaeopteryx, brings to life the Archaeopteryx a unique creature that links dinosaurs and birds and has been critical to our understanding of the origin of flight. The High Desert Museum will be the first to bring this popular exhibit to the western half of the United States. Dinosaurs Take Flight will be on display at the Museum for six months beginning in October 2017.

Lay It Out Events, \$11,889. The sixth year of the Fire Pit/ Fire Sculpture Competition at Oregon WinterFest (OWF). This one of a kind event, combining both a functional competition—the fire pits—and a sculptural element—fire sculptures. More than 20 artists come from throughout the Pacific Northwest, bringing their custom-designed and built pieces which are displayed and lit for the 2 1/2 days of OWF, providing not only a spectacular sculptural display, but also intimate areas for attendees to gather and interact, around fire.

ScaleHouse, \$25,333. BEND DESIGN CONFERENCE 2017, Presented by ScaleHouse.

BEND DESIGN CONFERENCE will kick-off its third year on Thursday, October 26 at the Tower Theatre with six to eight speakers; followed by Mash-Ups for presenters and conference attendees to interact through hands-on creative opportunities at local like-minded businesses; and on Friday, October 27, at the Oxford Hotel and other downtown locations, where attendees can deepen their understanding of design through a variety of interactive workshops, films, and conversations facilitated by industry leaders.

Sunriver Music Festival \$10,550. The Sunriver Music Festival is teaming up with the Tower Theatre to present the Second Annual Piano Showcase on March 16-17, 2018 at the Tower Theatre in downtown Bend. The showcase will feature acclaimed pianists Jill Timmons, Judith Cohen, Randy Porter, and Arthur Migliazza performing on two Steinway grand pianos over two days of performances, masterclasses, workshops, recitals, and panel discussions.

TEDxBend \$11,550. Sparked by the celebrated TED conferences worldwide, TEDxBend is our very own locally-organized event featuring a dozen talks, demonstrations, and performances under 18 minutes each. Each spring, local, national, and international speakers and performers, inspire and engage more than 2,500 people at Bend Senior High School and countless more from around the world via live stream.

Tower Theatre Foundation \$22,950. The Tower Theatre Foundation will hold the third annual "Bend A Cappella Festival" February 9-11, 2018. The purpose is to bring together performers, educators, and enthusiasts to enjoy, learn about, and showcase vocal music. Events include: A Sing Off for school and community based groups, a concert headlined by the renowned House Jacks, master classes, and pop up performances around town. Three years in the planning, the 2018 Festival events will all also include the participation and leadership of Deke Sharon, widely recognized as The Father of Contemporary A Cappella. This will be a special reuniting of Deke with the House Jacks, who he founded in 1991 and left in 2015.

World Muse/Muse Conference \$19,375. Muse Conference connects attendees from near and far with locally and internationally recognized artists, activists, & social change leaders to celebrate International Women's Day and kickoff Women's History Month. This sixth annual event is scheduled for March 1-4, 2018 in Bend, Oregon.

CATALYST GRANTS

High Desert Museum \$17,400. The High Desert Museum's multi-day art festival will feature visual artists' depictions of the American West, increasing access to cultural activities in Central Oregon and increasing Bend's draw as an arts and cultural destination. This juried festival will enable both nationally-renowned and rising artists to showcase their talent and reflect the growing diversity of artists. More than a passive display of art, this festival will be an interactive event. It will foster creativity, encourage artistic exploration, and build meaningful connections. They will provide a space for artists to network with each other and directly engage with and build their audiences. In addition, they will spotlight the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of artistic fields, presenting a platform for artwork that innovatively crosses mediums or for art to be displayed in non-traditional sectors, such as fashion or design.

Stage Right Productions/2nd Street Theater \$4,000. Stage Right Productions will develop a website that will be a single source for all theatre-related events in Central Oregon. It includes: a central calendar of all events, reviews of shows, audition notices, places to stay, eat, packages, advertising opportunities, and it is presented in a modern website format which is enhanced to allow both tourists and locals to see and purchase tickets for shows on any given day/time. It will include shows from all local production companies and venues. The focus is on theatre, so it will be easy to navigate. Bend has an increasingly vibrant theater scene, with offerings for all types of audiences. There are currently ten active theatre companies (seven in Bend) producing quality plays and musicals in our area. This follows a model that has been very successful in larger metros like Portland and Boston.

ABOUT THE BEND CULTURAL TOURISM FUND: The purpose of the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund is to enhance the local economy through the promotion and cultivation of Bend's cultural tourism programs. The awarded grant funds will be used to: help attract cultural tourists during the shoulder seasons and winter months, when cultural tourism organizations are most active; diversify Bend's tourism offerings; and build on efforts to establish Bend as a premier year-round cultural tourism destination.

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