

2011 GOVERNOR'S AWARDS WINNER BIOGRAPHIES

ARTS ADMINISTRATION

Art J. Falco

President and CEO

PlayhouseSquare

For the past 19 years, Art J. Falco has served as president and CEO of Cleveland's PlayhouseSquare. Though he has been with the organization since 1985, it has been within the past two decades that he has shown his aptitude for leadership, collaboration and creativity. While much of the country has struggled through difficult economic times, Falco has used his visionary ideas to allow PlayhouseSquare to consistently grow, serving an average of 1 million people annually, and transforming Cleveland's theater district into one of the largest performing arts centers outside of New York, all while maintaining a balanced budget for 22 consecutive years.

Under the direction of Falco, the Cleveland theater district has seen an active revitalization. Through projects such as the Palace Theater renovation, the construction of the Wyndham Hotel, development of the Idea Center, and most recently a groundbreaking reconfiguration of the Allen Theater—which combines performance art and education in one state-of-the-art complex—the performing arts in Cleveland have had the capacity to meet the dynamic needs of the community.

Falco's accomplishments serve as evidence of his many talents, but those who are lucky enough to work with him can speak to another aspect of his personality. To his staff, Falco is known as a man of great character. By acting as a humble and honest leader, he has managed not only to inspire and motivate his team, but also to forge partnerships with other nonprofit and cultural institutions, allowing them to succeed together in ways they could not have independently. Referred to as "one of Playhouse Square's greatest assets," Falco's efforts and innovativeness have allowed him to achieve great success in advancing the arts in Ohio.

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ARTS EDUCATION

Michael K. Lippert

Elementary Program Director
The Muse Machine

Michael K. Lippert is an actor and educator who is using his talents to transform Ohio's education system one classroom at a time. His program, which is quickly becoming a national model, helped transform The Muse Machine's struggling elementary program into a hugely successful residency-based program. In this program, Lippert uses his irrepressible energy and love of theater to foster an environment where students are truly put first and even the driest subjects explode with life.

Educated at Bowling Green State University, Lippert has spent his entire career focusing on professional growth and development. In addition to being a founding member of The Human Race Theater Company in Dayton, Ohio, he also has worked as an arts integration consultant for the Association for the Advancement of Arts Education, and participated in the Kennedy Center Seminar, "Artists as Educators: Planning Effective Workshops for Teachers." In his current position as the elementary program director at The Muse Machine, an organization "dedicated to changing the lives of young people through the arts," Lippert has created arts-integrated curriculum for more than 1,000 primary and secondary classrooms throughout Ohio and Kentucky.

However, it is Lippert's ingenuity and tireless efforts that truly set him apart from others in his field. During a time when the arts are marginalized and academic testing is stressed, Lippert encourages his students to take "healthy risks" in order to uncover and explore their creative spirit, while simultaneously addressing actual curriculum and content standards. Through musical and lyrical composition, as well as set design and construction, subjects such as math, science, language arts and social studies are taught in ways that are both effective and enduring. These innovative techniques allow Lippert's programs not only to have an immediate impact on students and teachers in a classroom, but also to create a positive ripple effect across the whole community.

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ARTS PATRON

Mary T. Wolfe

The impact Mary Wolfe has had on the arts in Ohio is profound. A Toledo resident, Wolfe's influence has stretched across the state and her efforts are almost too numerous to list. As an advocate, supporter, leader and shaper of arts policy, Wolfe is truly a catalyst for changing the face of the arts community in Ohio and beyond. One of her most recent contributions is the Wolfe Center for the Arts at Bowling Green State University. The center, which is scheduled for completion in December 2011, will house collaborative initiatives in the theater and visual arts, as well as music and dance. The programs and technologies featured at the center will provide a new facet to the university's long-standing record of excellence in the arts, and can be credited to Wolfe and her husband directly.

Wolfe played a significant role in the creation of a new gallery at the Toledo Art Museum. The gallery, which will be known as the Frederic and Mary Wolfe Gallery, will house the institution's modern and contemporary collections. Wolfe also serves the Toledo Art Museum as a founding member of the Apollo Society, an organization that commits each year to purchasing and donating pieces of art to the museum. Wolfe also has been a generous supporter of the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, tirelessly serving on the board, co-chairing the highly successful Symphony 2000 fundraising campaign and personally aiding the organization during a time of financial crisis. Additionally, Wolfe acted as co-chair for a project that installed a large-scale mural at the Valentine Theater in Toledo.

Wolfe is also committed to furthering the success of individual artists. An artist herself, Wolfe's position as a teacher at Bowling Green State University allowed her the opportunity to meet and help students on an individual level, as well as create a scholarship that supports students in many areas of the arts. Through her roles as a volunteer and board member for other organizations, such as the Arts Commission of Greater Toledo, the University of Toledo, the Maumee Valley County Day School, the National Committee for the Whitney Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Ohio Arts Council, Wolfe has created a tremendous artistic legacy and has become a leading voice for arts support across the entire state.

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BUSINESS SUPPORT OF THE ARTS

Freund, Freeze & Arnold

The law offices of Freund, Freeze & Arnold (FF&A) have truly rewritten the model for corporate arts patronage in Ohio. FF&A goes beyond traditional business support of the arts in order to strengthen the bond between nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and their constituents. With this goal in mind, FF&A has hosted receptions with celebrity chefs, authors and entertainers at local arts venues, as well as underwritten local performances for the Victoria Theater Corporation, in order to increase awareness and enthusiasm for the arts in the firm's regions.

FF&A understands the importance of collaboration, and this collaborative spirit has led the firm to partner with local organizations to both show and create support for the arts. For instance, the firm worked with Culture Works to create The Arts Card, an innovative program that allows patrons to purchase a gift certificate that can be used at various visual and performing arts organizations around Dayton. FF&A also has had tremendous success partnering with the Westcott House. With the help of FF&A, Ohio's only Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie Style home celebrated its 100th year with a multimedia Centennial Tribute attended by hundreds of people.

FF&A is the leading sponsor of WDPR/WDPG in Dayton, and members of the firm are in active roles on more than 50 organizational boards across the state, including ThinkTV, Culture Works, Dayton Ballet, Dayton Visual Arts Center, The Muse Machine and The Dayton Art Institute, which relies on the help of FF&A to publish its Member Magazine. The support of the arts demonstrated by FF&A clearly goes far beyond the financial. In addition to combating the decline in public arts funding, the firm also donates its time by showing board and committee support and—most importantly—a passion for the local arts.

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Lancaster Festival

Inaugurated in 1985, the Lancaster Festival is a multifaceted, 10-day event that transforms the historic city of Lancaster, Ohio, with musical performances and family activities while getting local businesses, museums and residents involved. With the help of nearly 800 volunteers and the support of corporate and individual donors, service contributors and program advertisers, the annual festival supports the local economy as well as the local arts. By bringing in guest artists and featuring popular musicians, the Lancaster Festival is an exciting community event that increases public awareness and appreciation for the arts.

Every year, one of the event's major attractions is the Festival Orchestra. This group, conducted by Gary Sheldon, recently beat out 50 other orchestras representing 26 states to be named the first-ever recipient of the American Prize for Orchestral Performance (professional orchestra division), a prestigious award that recognizes and rewards the best performances by orchestras in the United States. The orchestra's director also received the American Prize for Conducting. In recognition of the festival's great success, it received one of just 13 grants awarded by the PNC Arts Alive program. The grant will allow the festival, in collaboration with BalletMet, to present Hungarian composer David Kiraly's music during a performance of "Pinocchio" at the 2011 festival.

Through a strong alliance with local organizations, the Lancaster Festival boasts the ability to provide most of its events to the public at no cost. This approach allows the festival to reach an even larger audience by bringing the arts to people where they live and work. By doing this, the Lancaster Festival has created a positive community environment with arts and culture as the cornerstone.

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INDIVIDUAL ARTIST

James Friedman

Ohio native James Friedman is known as one of the most sophisticated, talented and uncompromising photographic artists working in the United States. He became fascinated with photography at just five years old and has been photographing ever since, enjoying a wide-ranging career as a teacher, curator, picture editor and as a fine art, portrait, architectural, commercial and personal documentary photographer.

Friedman received a BFA with distinction in photography from The Ohio State University, an MA in photography from San Francisco State University, and was one of five students accepted into an experimental graduate program in photography at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Since then, he has created series after series of influential, compelling photographs, including "Self-Portrait with Jewish Nose Wandering in a Gentile World" and "12 Nazi Concentration Camps," an exhibition that traveled across the U.S. and Canada for 10 years and was written about extensively.

For his amazing work, Friedman was selected from 800 international applicants to receive one of the most prestigious photography awards, an Aaron Siskind Foundation Individual Photographers' Fellowship. He also has received seven Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Awards and two Greater Columbus Arts Council Fellowships. His work has appeared in numerous books and has been discussed in the *Boston Globe*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *The New York Times*.

In addition to his work as an individual artist, Friedman also has played a role in educating many of today's most promising photographers. He previously served as an assistant professor in the department of photography and cinema at The Ohio State University, and the former chair of that department says Friedman's teaching style "was a life-changing experience for many young artists and an inspiration for his colleagues." Today, he independently offers workshops, classes and mentoring opportunities. In 2008, he was nominated for the prestigious Excellence in Photographic Teaching Award, which recognizes outstanding international teachers of photography.

In the summer of 2012, a major retrospective of his work will take place in several locations throughout Ohio, including exhibitions at the Urban Arts Space in downtown Columbus and at the Richard M. Ross Art Museum at Ohio Wesleyan University.

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IRMA LAZARUS

Dr. Wayne P. Lawson

Since the 1970s, Wayne P. Lawson has been a pivotal figure in arts leadership across the state of Ohio. For nearly 30 years, Lawson served as the fourth executive director of the Ohio Arts Council. Following his retirement in 2006, he has continued his fervent support for the arts by serving as a professor of public policy and arts administration at The Ohio State University, advising the Greater Columbus Arts Council on strategic initiatives, and volunteering on a number of arts and cultural boards.

Lawson is a trustee of the Columbus Museum of Art; vice-chair of the Alliance of Artists Communities in Providence, Rhode Island; a trustee of the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts; and vice president of the board of Thurber House, a literary center in Columbus, Ohio. He has been on many program panels for the National Endowment for the Arts, served a three-year term as chairman of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and completed three terms as chairman of Arts Midwest.

Lawson, who was born in Cleveland, received a BA in Romance languages, an MA in European literature and earned his doctorate in theatre and comparative literature from The Ohio State University. His tenure as director of the OAC lasted from 1978 to 2006. During that time, the OAC became one of the foremost state arts agencies in the nation in terms of funding, long-range planning and evaluation, support for individual artists and innovative services to constituents in all arts disciplines.

This isn't the first time Lawson has been recognized for his lifelong dedication to the arts. He received the Gary Young Award for outstanding leadership in arts administration from the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and was honored by the Association of American Cultures for leadership and commitment to the development of cultural diversity in the arts. In 2009, he was recognized by the Chilean National Council for Culture and the Arts for his professional commitment to cultural collaborations between Ohio and Chile, a segment of the International Program that he founded at the OAC. In September 2010, Lawson produced the exhibition that represented the United States for the centennial anniversary of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes. *100 Years of American Art* was supported by the U.S. Embassy in Chile.