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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Milwaukee Arts Board accepting public nominations for Artists of the Year, Friends of the Arts awards

Members of the public can submit nominations [online](#) through April 1, 2026

MILWAUKEE – The City of Milwaukee Arts Board (MAB) is accepting nominations from the public for the Mildred L. Harpole Artists of the Year award and the Friends of the Arts award. Recipients of these awards represent excellence and exceptional service in Milwaukee's arts community.

In seeking nominations for the Artist of the Year and Friends of the Arts award the Milwaukee Arts Board is looking for nominees whose work aligns with the Milwaukee Code of Ordinance which states that the arts board shall:

- a. Promote the development, support and enjoyment of the arts in this city.
- b. Promote cultural diversity in the artistic life of this city.
- c. Promote the formation and growth of artistic projects or programs that are responsive to the needs, cultural history and experiences of all city residents and of the city's artistic community.

Nominations must be submitted online [\[click here\]](#) by 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, April 1, 2026.

Mildred L. Harpole Artists of the Year Award: The Artists of the Year award was inaugurated in 1995 by former Alderman and MAB Chair Wayne Frank. The Artists of the Year Award was eventually renamed in 2020 to honor the late, beloved MAB member Mildred L. Harpole.

Nominees must be City of Milwaukee residents who have been working as an artist in the City of Milwaukee over the last 24 months. They may be an individual artist, or a band, or a collective, and must not be a current member of the Milwaukee Arts Board or a [previous recipient of this award](#). Self-nominations are allowed and an artist can be

nominated posthumously. This award is open to a variety of disciplines, including Arts Education, Culinary Arts, Dance, Design, Film & Media Arts, Folk & Traditional Arts, Literary Arts, Museums, Music, Musical Theater, Opera, Presenting & Multidisciplinary Works, Theater and Visual Arts. Each recipient receives a \$1,500 cash award.

Friends of the Arts Award: Established in 2012, the Friends of the Arts Award is given to individuals who, often behind the scenes, have distinguished themselves through exceptional service to Milwaukee's arts community.

Nominees for Friends of the Arts do not have to be City of Milwaukee residents, but must demonstrate exemplary support of Milwaukee's arts community through at least one of the following requirements:

- Mentoring or teaching creatives and/or youth in Milwaukee
- Supporting arts locally through philanthropy and/or advocacy
- Building community around the arts in Milwaukee

Nominees can include individuals, organizations, and/or businesses. They may not be a current Milwaukee Arts Board member or a [previous recipient of this award](#). Self-nominations are not allowed for this category, however, a nomination can be made posthumously.

More information about the Milwaukee Arts Board is available at milwaukee.gov/MAB.