



The Kenan Institute for the Arts Launches ‘Creative Catalyst’ Initiative to Amplify Support of Artists, Creative Enterprises and Communities

*Accessible to all artists across all disciplines,
the initiative expands and enhances the Institute’s national footprint*

October 23, 2019 (Winston-Salem, NC) – The Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA) has launched *Creative Catalyst*, a five-year initiative designed to equip artists with the skills, resources and networks to drive innovation and lead successful and sustainable careers. The Initiative is also geared to support the growth of Winston-Salem and UNCSA as a creative innovation hub. *Creative Catalyst* expands the Institute’s programs with three new components including an annual summit, fellowship and a pioneering professional development program that is accessible to artists across the country, marking a major milestone in the growth of the Institute’s impact.

As a privately funded service institute of the University of North Carolina, the Kenan Institute for the Arts focuses resources on research and action: cultivating leaders and leading-edge ideas, prototyping sustainable practices and sharing its learning with the public. Since its founding in 1993, the Institute has worked at the intersection of the arts, higher education, and community engagement to support artists with grants, fellowships, and professional development opportunities that help accelerate social, economic and community development in Winston-Salem and beyond. *Creative Catalyst* enhances and expands the Institute’s reach with renewed focus on areas that serve a broad definition of “artist” – from zine-makers and musicians to chefs and designers – regardless of their academic history or geographic location.

Reflecting the Kenan Institute’s commitment to dismantling systemic inequity in the arts, the *Creative Catalyst Certificate* has been designed as an online curriculum to increase access for all artists of diverse disciplines and backgrounds. For the first time, with the *Creative Catalyst Certificate*, artists are offered a robust professional development program designed specifically to enhance their practice, through a viable, low-cost alternative to a graduate or business school education.

Led by **Corey Madden**, an award-winning theater professional with over 30 years of creative leadership experience and an alumna of UNCSA, the Institute advances new methods in practice-based training designed to cultivate artist-leaders and support the establishment of new creative businesses. The Institute also champions the integration of creative practices in industries outside the arts sector, especially in science, healthcare and technology.

“The Kenan Institute fervently believes that artists have the power to generate visionary ideas that catalyze positive changes in communities across the country,” said Madden. “Through *Creative Catalyst*, we look forward to expanding our impact by reaching working artists around the country regardless of where they live, their training or their artistic discipline, thereby diversifying leadership in the arts and influencing the national arts ecology.”

Training Arts Leaders: *Creative Catalyst Certificate, Fellowships and Artivate Summit*

“The depth of training and support that the Kenan Institute for the Arts will now offer is exceptional,” said **Nigel Redden, General Director of Spoleto Festival USA**, a founding partner in the Institute’s Creative Catalyst Fellowship program. “As a result of the program’s inaugural season, Spoleto was able work with Creative Catalyst Fellow Latesha Smith acting as a liaison between the Festival and the community at large, forging creative and invaluable partnerships both in Charleston and abroad. By initiating unique and large-scale projects that connect our programs with outside organizations, the Creative Catalyst Fellow has expanded Spoleto’s reach and impact tenfold.”

Certificate Program

Unique in its inclusive approach and methodology, the certificate program complements artistic practice with 21st century skills-building that can transform the ways artists approach creative challenges and help them translate their artistic skills to work in other fields. The 30-week curriculum, taught by Kenan Institute leadership, UNCSA faculty and practicing artists, is divided in three equal modules that build on one another, focusing on artists as leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs. In addition to the coursework, students in the certificate program receive support and mentorship from Kenan Institute staff, fellow classmates and the broader communities of the Institute and UNCSA.

Fellowships

As a complement to the certificate program, artists are eligible to apply to participate in the *Creative Catalyst Fellowship* program which places fellows in paid, six-month residencies in leading cultural institutions around the country. Highly competitive, the Fellowship is the only program of its kind that combines practical on-site job training with an online certificate program and peer networking opportunities. The *Creative Catalyst Certificate* and Fellowship program was launched in Fall 2019 with an inaugural cohort of 12 fellows placed in the nation’s leading institutions including Lincoln Center Education, The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Spoleto Festival USA. In 2020, plans are to place up to 25 Creative Catalyst Fellows in partnering Southeastern organizations. The Kenan Institute is actively recruiting fellowship partners in the Southeast to help support, recruit and place emerging Southeastern artist leaders in regional organizations and communities. New fellowship partners to date are the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation to provide support for three fellowships in craft, performing arts, and visual arts; South Arts in Atlanta, GA; and Mixxer in Winston-Salem, NC.

Artivate

To further enhance the certificate and fellowship programs, the Institute established *Artivate* in 2019, as an annual summit in Winston-Salem that brings together artists, entrepreneurs, and innovators from across the country to share knowledge, build and expand networks, and strengthen creative communities through keynotes and conversations, hands-on workshops, opportunities for community engagement and networking.

Catalyzing Creative Community Building

“For the past 25 years, the Kenan Institute has been a beacon in the Southeast for championing the role of artists and the arts in community life. That resonates deeply with our mission and work,” said **Randy Eddy, President and CEO of The Arts Council of Winston-Salem & Forsyth County**. “The Institute’s

support has helped The Arts Council reach broad and diverse communities in Greater Winston-Salem, bringing about positive and impactful change through arts-based innovation and collaboration.”

In addition to direct training, the Kenan Institute provides local and UNCSA artists access to space, networking, mentoring and material support. The Institute also engages local communities, from the UNCSA student population to the surrounding neighborhoods in Winston-Salem, with the goal to engage artists and communities in addressing issues such as equity, diversity and inclusion, urban and economic development, and civic engagement.

In addition to the Creative Catalyst Initiative, the Kenan Institute provides resources under three programmatic themes--Creative Campus, Creative Community and Creative Leaders-- which support the following strategic goals:

- Empower leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators in the arts
- Enhance the creative community through innovative programming
- Engage creatives to improve the human condition through the arts

More information on all of these programs is available at <https://www.uncsa.edu/kenan/creative-catalyst-programs>

About the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts

The Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts is a catalyst that supports the creative development of artists, organizations, and communities. Working on initiatives that contribute to the national arts ecosystem, the Institute fosters engagement between the university, its neighbors, and other communities locally and across the Southeast. The Kenan Institute is expanding its impact through the Creative Catalyst Initiative, a groundbreaking five-year plan to identify and prepare the next generation of artist leaders and position UNCSA as an innovative hub for creative economy in North Carolina and the Southeast. For more information, visit www.uncsa.edu/kenan

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