



Indy Arts Council announces \$300K fundraising goal reached at annual Start with Art celebration, and looks ahead to exciting fall arts season

Start with Art event photos [here](#) and recap video [here](#).

Indianapolis (September 4, 2025) – The [Indy Arts Council](#) has achieved its \$300K fundraising goal for their annual [Start with Art](#) event held August 21 at the Indiana Roof Ballroom. Since 1987, Start with Art has kicked off the fall arts season in Indianapolis and celebrated the artists and arts organizations whose creative talents shape our world-class city. Nearly 1,000 arts, business, and community leaders gathered to support the Indy Arts Council's vision of a creative life for all.

This year's sold-out event, which supports the work Indy Arts Council does to champion arts and culture, featured:

- **70** sponsors and table hosts
- **8** performances and activations featuring **20+** artists
- **\$15K+** raised to match the **\$15K** Efroymson Family Fund grant
- **\$300K** total funds raised
- **6** organizations/individuals recognized with an ARTI Award

"For 38 years, we've had this beautiful tradition in our city of artists, organizations and community partners coming together to celebrate the new season and reflect on the impact of arts and culture in our community," said Judith B. Thomas, Indy Arts Council president & CEO. "We are thrilled to report that we achieved this year's Start with Art revenue goal, which included exceeding our \$15K matching grant from the Efroymson Family Fund."

2025 ARTI Award winners

The ARTI Awards honor people and organizations who are advancing equity and innovation in Indianapolis arts and culture. The awards are presented each year at Start with Art by Indy Arts Council with generous support from the [Central Indiana Community Foundation](#) (CICF).

Jessica Dunn a.k.a. [Sesseka](#), an Indianapolis-based artist specializing in animation and illusion, was chosen to create this year's ARTI awards. The video she created for the award, titled *Silent Symphony*, showcases Indiana's biodiversity through the season.

The 2025 winners include:

- Cultural Entrepreneur: [Indy Dance Council](#)
- Neighborhood Impact: [Mike Graves](#) of [BRIDGE Collective](#) and [The Murphy Arts Center](#)

- Artist / Activist: [Danicia Monét Malone](#) of Rokh
- Corporate Leadership: [Herbert Simon Family Foundation](#)
- Community Partnerships: [IF Theatre](#) and [Flanner House](#) | [Flanner Fringe Lab](#)
- Christel DeHaan Lifetime Achievement: [Iris Rosa](#)

Start with Art 2025 Sponsors

Start with Art is made possible through the support of the event's presenting sponsor of 20+ years, [Schahet Hotels](#), alongside numerous civic, corporate, nonprofit, and community leaders and organizations. Additional returning lead sponsors include matching grant sponsor [Efroymson Family Fund](#), and ARTI Award sponsor [CICF](#).

The Indy Arts Council would like to thank and recognize all of this year's Start with Art Sponsors:

- **Presenting Sponsor:** Schahet Hotels
- **Matching Grant Sponsor:** Efroymson Family Fund
- **ARTI Award Sponsor:** Central Indiana Community Foundation (CICF)
- **Gold Sponsors:** Christel DeHaan; First Merchants Bank; Indianapolis Airport Authority; Pacers Sports & Entertainment; The National Bank of Indianapolis
- **Silver Sponsors:** AES Indiana; Butler Arts & Events Center; Indianapolis Colts; Glick Philanthropies; Gregory & Appel; Herbert Simon Family Foundation; Herron School of Art + Design; Indianapolis Motor Speedway; J.P. Morgan Private Bank; Newfields; Schmidt Associates; Women on a Mission
- **Bronze Sponsors:** 16 Tech; American Structurepoint, Anders CPAs + Advisors; Birge Family Foundation; Borshoff; Brenda Horn; Buckingham Foundation; Children's Museum of Indianapolis; Citizens Energy Group; CSO; Deep End Talent Strategies; Eli Lilly and Company; Flashpoint Leadership Consulting; Hale Family Foundation; Hendricks Commercial Properties; Ice Miller; Indiana Sports Corp; Indianapolis Urban League; IndyStar; International Art Project; JD Sports | Finish Line; Lacy Foundation; Lilly Endowment Inc.; The Mind Trust; Mirror Indy; Music for All; Pile CPAs; PNC Bank; Ritz Charles; Shiel Sexton; STUDIOAXIS; Taft; TAG Consulting; Visit Indy; Wallington Asset Management, LLC; Women's Fund of Central Indiana

About Indy Arts Council

[Indy Arts Council](#) is central Indiana's leading arts advocacy and services agency. Their mission is to champion arts and culture. Indy Arts Council believes every resident should experience arts and culture in a way that nourishes and inspires them. This vision of a creative life for all is central to the work they do to support artists, arts organizations, and the community.

For more information and to start exploring, visit www.indyarts.org.

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