



NEW/NOW

The Houston Artist Commissioning Project

Submissions due by midnight on May 12, 2023

Premiere Performances: January 19 & 20, 2024 | Cullen Theater, Wortham Center

Frequently Asked Questions

When will awards be announced?

Three or four awardees will be announced publicly at the start of the 23/24 season.

How are commission awardees identified?

Applications to the commissioning project are evaluated by a panel of judges including local artists who were selected as winners in the previous commissioning cohort and members of Performing Arts Houston staff & Board of Directors. All applications will receive feedback from the judging panel. Judges will evaluate work using a rubric that considers genre diversity, artistic merit, and the demonstration of the capacity of each applicant to realize a live presentation.

Is there a focus or theme for this commissioning project?

Performing Arts Houston welcomes project proposals in all performing arts disciplines and across genres or content areas. We are intentionally non-prescriptive regarding content for proposed work. Submissions will be considered based on their alignment with our values of Excellence, Artistic Expression, Equity & Inclusion, Community, Exploration, and Celebration (as outlined in our Strategic Plan).

Houston is the most culturally diverse city in the nation. In celebrating artists' voices here at home, we promote more connected and thriving communities. Performing Arts Houston believes Black artists, Indigenous artists, artists of color, artists in the LGBTQ+ community, artists with disabilities, and woman artists must be centered through this project. To that end, we strongly encourage applications from artists with these identities or members of other marginalized communities.

What is included in the award amount?

Each awardee will receive \$6,000 award to support the creation of a new, 20-25 minute work. The \$6,000 fee is accompanied by full presentation in the Cullen Theater, inclusive of technical costs, stage manager, and lighting design, a publicity photo shoot, and marketing materials and support to include this new work as part of Performing Arts Houston's 2023-2024 season.

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Projects with more than five artists on stage will receive an additional \$500 performance fee per person, up to a maximum of \$3,000.

Awardees will receive professional photography and videography of their premiere performances, to be used at their discretion, accompanied by a credit to Performing Arts Houston.

Each commissioning cohort will receive dedicated space on our website and YouTube channel to recognize their participation in the project, in perpetuity. Awardees will have future opportunities to collaborate with Performing Arts Houston on extended programs and receive counsel from staff on general arts administrative concerns.

How does the commission work?

Commission awardees will create an original 20-25 minute work, to premiere in the Cullen Theater, on January 19 & 20, 2024. In addition to the premiere, awardees will participate in:

- One pre-performance virtual conversation with Performing Arts Houston staff
- One post-performance panel discussion from the stage of the Cullen Theater
- One Education program through Performing Arts Houston involvement in local schools and community organizations.

Student-friendly performances may also be selected to participate in an open rehearsal for local area students, during the day on Friday, January 19, 2024.

Important Note: Performing Arts Houston does not have rehearsal space to offer at this time (we wish we did!)

What is expected of commission awardees?

Awardees will be expected to set aside time to complete a walk-through of the theater six months in advance of the premiere. Clear deadlines to submit production information will be provided by Performing Arts Houston, in addition to logistical details and a technical schedule of events that all participants of the performance must attend, to ensure the highest quality production. Performing Arts Houston has limited flexibility in the space and awardees may not reschedule technical tours or rehearsal times.

Awardees will be expected to attend a number of in-person cohort meetings, including but not limited to the following:

- August: Opening meeting & walkthrough of Cullen Theater
- November: Mid-way gathering and group check-in
- January: Post-performance Cast Party
- February: Closing Debrief Session

Awardees will be asked to participate in a teaser video to promote the premiere performance—this may include being available to shoot rehearsal footage or interview segments leading up to the performance.

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Can an artist be awarded a commission two years in a row?

Artists who were awarded commissions in the prior two years will not be eligible to receive a commission in the subsequent seasons. After two years out of the awardee cycle, previous winners can submit applications again.