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## Arts & Business Council empowers artists with *Creative Exchange*

*The new, one-day conference offered 16 breakout sessions, two keynotes, three performances, complimentary headshots and one-on-one consultations with industry experts*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (October 31, 2019) — The Arts & Business Council of Greater Nashville held its first-ever *Creative Exchange* on October 25 at Studio 615 in East Nashville. The conference was borne out of feedback from artists and creatives who identified a need for spaces and places to convene and share resources, build networks, and learn new strategies to navigate the increasingly complex arts and business landscape in Nashville and nationwide. Local artists, arts administrators, creative entrepreneurs, and other business professionals attended the inaugural event along with a host of speakers, panelists, and business advisors.

“There is no substitute for face-to-face conversations and networking in this field,” said ABC Executive Director Jill McMillan Palm, who welcomed attendees during the opening breakfast reception, sponsored by Bongo Java and Sagemont Real Estate. “We are excited to see so many of you here, investing in yourselves, investing in your community, and investing in Nashville’s creative future. We expect *Creative Exchange* to become a staple in the community for years to come.”

Rashad Rayford, a.k.a. Rashad thaPoet, an award-winning actor, artist, speaker, and author of the book *Elevate Your Vibe: Ten Ways to Grow You*, delivered an inspiring opening keynote address. Rayford is a graduate of the Arts & Business Council’s *Periscope: Artist Entrepreneur Training* and was most recently named The Moth’s Nashville GrandSLAM Story Champion. He was introduced by Trent Yates, co-founder of Sagemont Real Estate and Arts & Business Council board member. Local musician KYNDLE also performed an original song as part of the opening breakfast.

Following the opening keynote, the morning was charged with activity as conference attendees enjoyed eight breakout sessions covering topics related to arts leadership, creative entrepreneurship, marketing & branding, and music business. Snapshot Interactive was also on hand to offer complimentary headshots for attendees during the “Headshot Happy Hours.”

After the morning sessions ended, attendees reconvened for a performance by Haviland Whiting, the 2018 Nashville Poet Laureate and current Poet Ambassador for the Southeast, before enjoying lunch provided by Hattie B’s and D’Andrews Bakery & Cafe. The lunchtime keynote panel, presented by DesignWorks Collective, discussed the creative community’s role in helping Nashville solve its most pressing issues like affordable housing, juvenile justice, transit, and more. Panelists included Sheila Calloway, Judge, Juvenile Court of Metropolitan Nashville & Davidson County; Manuel Delgado, Owner & Luthier, Delgado Guitars; Steve Hinkley, CEO, Adventure Science Center; Nancy VanReece, Metro Council, District 8. Audra Ladd, Manager, Creative Economy/Small Business, Mayor’s Office of Community & Economic Development, moderated the lively discussion punctuated by snaps and cheers from the audience.

In the afternoon, the conference offered an additional eight breakout sessions and the opportunity for one-on-one consultations with industry experts during “Ask the Experts,” an event powered by the Nashville Entrepreneur Center. Breakouts explored topics like “Using Data to Make Strategic Decisions,” “Podcast Marketing,” “Understanding Your Unique Value and Pricing Accordingly,” and “Do You *Really* Want to Start a



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Nonprofit?” Expert advisors met with conference attendees to discuss their questions on arts-related legal issues, insurance, HR, strategy, and personal & professional development.

The day ended with closing remarks by McMillan Palm and a stunning dance performance by students from Moves & Grooves, Inc., a local nonprofit that uses the arts as a platform to engage youth in self-exploration while providing opportunities for leadership, education, and service. In a surprise announcement, one conference attendee was awarded a \$100 gift card from Arts & Business Council partner Southwest Airlines. Additional support for Creative Exchange was provided by the Tennessee Arts Commission, Metro Arts: Nashville’s Office of Arts & Culture, Circa Design, Manuel Zeitlin Architects, MPYER Marketing, Relatory Marketing, and Studio 615.

“Investing in artists is central to our long-term vision of a community where artists are valued as critical assets to be engaged, supported, and empowered,” said McMillan Palm. “A strong sector of artists and creative businesses will enhance the overall social and economic profile of Greater Nashville, and we believe that having a large population of engaged, capable artists will lead to a more just and equitable society overall.”

Looking ahead, Creative Exchange will become an annual conference and an integral part of the Arts & Business Council’s educational programs. Planning is already underway for fall 2020.

Anyone interested in learning more about Creative Exchange should visit [abcnashville.org/creative-exchange](http://abcnashville.org/creative-exchange) or contact the Arts & Business Council at [info@abcnashville.org](mailto:info@abcnashville.org) or 615-460-8274.

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### **About Creative Exchange**

*Creative Exchange* brings together artists, arts administrators, creative entrepreneurs, and business professionals to build community across genres; inspire thought-provoking dialogue; and provide high-quality, practical tools to galvanize the creative economy. Through inspiring keynote presentations, collaborative panel discussions, and informative breakout sessions, *Creative Exchange* addresses common challenges in the creative industries and sparks innovation to tackle those challenges head-on. *For more information, visit [www.abcnashville.org/creative-exchange](http://www.abcnashville.org/creative-exchange)*

### **About the Arts & Business Council**

The Arts & Business Council of Greater Nashville leverages and unites the unique resources of the arts and business communities to create a thriving, sustainable creative culture in Nashville.

We accomplish this through five main programs: Volunteer Lawyers & Professionals for the Arts, Periscope: Artist Entrepreneur Training, Fiscal Sponsorship, Education for the Creative Community, and Arts Board Matching, among many other resources and opportunities. *For more information, visit [www.abcnashville.org](http://www.abcnashville.org)*