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**** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ****

Nine Area Artists Receive CMAB/McKnight Individual Artist Awards

Nine CMAB/McKnight Individual Artist Award (IAA) recipients were announced this week.

Artists are invited to apply for this award once each year in February. A panel of six arts professionals reviewed and scored each application individually. Applications with the highest average score were recommended to the CMAB Directors for awards. At their March 9, 2017 board meeting, the CMAB Directors accepted the review panel's recommendations.

The \$5,000 Established Artist Award is designed for an artist with a history of exhibition, performances, publications, or other notable contributions to their local arts community through personal creative output.

Established Artists Award recipient:

Samuel Johnson, Visual Arts/Ceramics – Stearns County

The \$3,000 Emerging Artist Awards recognize and encourage outstanding artists in various stages of their careers. Typically seven artists receive this award annually. This year, there was a three-way tie resulting in eight awards.

Emerging Artist Award recipients:

Eve (and Gary) Wallinga, Visual Arts/Painting – Stearns County

Amy Coppersmith, Visual Arts/Photography – Wright County

Richard Chandler, Music/Orchestral – Stearns County

Susan Dean, Visual Arts/Mosaics – Stearns County

John George, Visual Arts/Painting – Stearns County

Adam Hammer, Music/Guitarist, Vocalist, Songwriter – Stearns County

Leanne Loy, Literary Arts/ Short Stories, Poetry – Stearns County

Christopher Zlatic, Visual Arts/Painting, Mixed Media – Stearns County

To view samples of the winning artists' work, visit the Central Minnesota Arts Board website at

www.centralmnartsboard.org.

The 2017 Individual Artist Award Panel volunteered an average of 20 hours evaluating applications. Those volunteers included:

Kenneth Barry, CMAB Director, Blues Musician; Victorian photographer proficient in Digital imaging, Platinum/Palladium printing, Wet Plate Collodion process, Bromoil printing, and Cyanotype printing; BS of Science Mathematics and BS Computer Science, University of Wisconsin; Certified Nuclear Engineer, U.S. Navy; MBA Saint Mary's College of California.

Janice Courtney- CMAB Board Member, Visual Artist; arts advocate as a previous art educator and Arts Adviser/Assistant Director of the St. Cloud State University Program Board. Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts, University

of N. Texas; Master of Art, New Mexico State University; Master of Science, Multicultural Education w/Art Emphasis, St. Cloud State University.

Anne Meyer –Anne Meyer -Studied studio art at the U of MN Morris with a ceramics emphasis, two-year apprenticeship under Richard Bresnahan at the St John's Pottery in Collegeville, MN. Visual artist disciplined in pottery, sculpture, painting, drawing, and other media. Taught art in schools and community centers through private lessons and workshops in colleges for over 10 years. Currently renovating her family's dairy barn into community art space. Recently traveled to Japan for a one-month residency in the studio of Miki Oka and Toyokazu Ono.

Joyce Lyons- (AEA, SAG/AFTRA), an actress, singer and educator; graduate of Colorado Women's College in Vocal Performance, a member of the STMA Fine Arts Council since 2011 and a member the Buffalo Community Orchestra Advisory Board in 2014. Joyce teaches a performance master class yearly at Fort Lewis College in Durango as well in New York City. Joyce continues to perform with a main focus on jazz as vocalist for the West Metro Big Band.

Joan Eisenriech- Major in Studio Art from U of M Morris. Areas of concentration are printmaking and watercolor painting. Taught art in Heron Lake, MN from 1977-1979. Community Education and Recreation Director for Mankato Public Schools, retired 2012. Joan has previously served on review panels for the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council and the MN State Arts Board.

Sam Spizcka- FY14 CMAB/McKnight Established Artist Award Winner, a metal sculpture whose sculptures have been exhibited nationally – including at DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, the Rochester Art Center and Franconia Sculpture Park. Sam's work can be found in many public and private collections. Sam received a 2009 CMAB/McKnight Individual Artist Award and 2014 CMAB/McKnight Established Artist Award.

The Central Minnesota Arts Board supports collaborative and innovative arts opportunities through partnerships and financial investments in Benton, Sherburne, Stearns, and Wright counties as one of eleven Regional Arts Councils designated by the Minnesota State Arts Board. We work with community partners to increase access to the unique cultural assets of Minnesota.

For more information about the Central MN Arts Board, visit <http://www.centralmnartsboard.org> or call the office at 320-968-4290 or toll free at 1-866-345-7140.