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Friday, July 8, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPNR ANNOUNCES 2022 NEA NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWS

Commissioner Jean Pierre L Oriol is pleased to announce that our own VI cultural ambassador Dr. Stanley Jacobs has been awarded the 2022 National Endowment of the Arts National Heritage Fellows. Dr. Jacobs is the second Virgin islander that has been awarded this esteemed honor, Mr. Sylvester McIntosh was awarded the honor in 1987.

The National Endowment for the Arts is continuing its long history of honoring America's rich, artistic heritage with today's announcement of the 2022 NEA National Heritage Fellowship recipients. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the program, our nation's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts. A film celebrating the 2022 class of artists and tradition bearers will premiere in the fall on [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov).

"In their artistic practices, the NEA National Heritage Fellows tell their own stories on their own terms. They pass their skills and knowledge to others through mentorship and teaching," said National Endowment for the Arts Chair Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD. "These honorees are not only sustaining the cultural history of their art form and of their community, they are also enriching our nation as a whole."

Each fellowship includes a \$25,000 award and all of the recipients will be featured in a film that will premiere in November 2022 on [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov). Through the film, viewers will have the opportunity to visit the homes and communities where the fellows live and work, providing a connection to the distinct art forms and traditions these artist's practice. Stay tuned for more information about the film this fall.

The 2022 NEA National Heritage Fellows are:

- [Michael Cleveland](#), Bluegrass Fiddler from Charlestown, Indiana

Grammy award-winning fiddler Michael Cleveland has inspired audiences with his talent and improvisational skills within the bluegrass tradition. In addition to touring with his band, Flamekeeper, he has played with a legendary list of bluegrass greats.

- [**Eva Enciñas**](#), Flamenco Artist from Albuquerque, New Mexico

Born into a family of flamenco dancers and artists, Eva Enciñas carries out the tradition through her teaching and performing, and through the National Institute of Flamenco which she founded in 1982, and where she continues to direct artistic programming.
- [**Excelsior Band**](#), Brass Band Musicians from Mobile, Alabama

The Excelsior Band is a Black brass marching band that has, for generations, embodied the culture of the city of Mobile and its beloved Mardi Gras celebration. It dates back to 1883 and membership in the band is considered the highest achievement among Mobile area musicians.
- [**Stanley Jacobs**](#), Quelbe Flutist and Bandleader from St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands

Playing the official music of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Jacobs and his band carry on the traditional sounds of *quelbe* by performing for the community and teaching the young people of St. Croix their music, dance, and cultural heritage.
- [**The Legendary Ingramettes**](#), Gospel Musicians from Richmond, Virginia

“Mama” Maggie Ingram taught her five children to perform alongside her and formed the Legendary Ingramettes. They have connected with audiences through gospel music for more than six decades and are known as Richmond’s “First Family of Gospel.”
- [**Francis “Palani” Sinenci**](#), Hawaiian Hale Builder from Hana, Hawai‘i

Dedicated to revitalizing the traditional Hawaiian art form of building thatched houses called *hale*, Sinenci leads the construction of countless new architectural structures and is training the next generation of practitioners to carry on the practice.
- [**Tsering Wangmo Satho**](#), Tibetan Opera Singer and Dancer from Richmond, California

Inspired by the singing and dancing of her elders, Tsering Wangmo Satho co-founded Chaksam-pa, a Tibetan dance and opera company committed to sharing and preserving Tibet’s artistic traditions.
- [**C. Brian Williams**](#), Step Artist and Producer from Washington, District of Columbia

Founder of Step Afrika!, the first professional company dedicated to the percussive dance form called stepping, Williams preserves and promotes the art of stepping through performances and educational experiences to tens of thousands of students each year.

- [Shaka Zulu](#), Black Masking Craftsman, Stilt Dancer, and Musician from New Orleans, Louisiana

A master of New Orleans Black Masking, drumming, and stilt dancing, Shaka Zulu passes down the traditions as a teacher and culture bearer whose talents are celebrated nationally and internationally.

- [TahNibaa Naataanii](#), Navajo/Diné Textile Artist and Weaver from Shiprock, New Mexico

Inspired by her grandmother's wool and carding tool, Naataanii's curiosity to learn to weave inspired a life-long love for the art. Naataanii is also recognized as a gifted and prolific mentor and teacher of holistic Diné weaving practice—from farming sheep to harvesting and dyeing wool, and through the complex techniques of developing and weaving textiles on a loom.

Naataanii is the 2022 recipient of the Bess Lomax Hawes National Heritage Fellowship, presented in recognition of an individual who has made a significant contribution to the preservation and awareness of cultural heritage.

About the National Heritage Fellowships

The National Heritage Fellowships are the nation's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts. Including the 2022 class, the Arts Endowment has awarded 467 National Heritage Fellowships since 1982, recognizing artists working in more than 200 distinct art forms, including Hill Country Blues musician and songwriter Cedric Burnside, Chicana altarista Ofelia Esparza, Tlingit Ceremonial regalia maker Anna Brown Ehlers, leatherworker James F. Jackson, oud player and composer Rahim AlHaj, and quilting community advocate Carolyn Mazloomi. More information about the National Heritage Fellows is available on the Arts Endowment's [website](#).

Fellowship recipients are nominated by the public, often by members of their own communities, and then judged by a panel of experts in the folk and traditional arts. The panel's recommendations are reviewed by the National Council on the Arts, which sends its recommendations to the Arts Endowment chair, who makes the final decision. Visit the National Endowment for the Arts [website](#) for more information and to submit a nomination.

