

# **Mississippi Arts Commission – Folk Art Apprenticeship Program Fiscal Year 2013 Program Guidelines**

Next application deadline: Thursday, March 1, 2012

Applications must be submitted through eGRANT, postal mail, or delivered by hand to MAC's office by the due date. Faxed or emailed applications will not be accepted.

Please submit Folk Art Apprenticeship applications no earlier than 30 days prior to the March 1 deadline. Applications received prior to this date will be returned.

## **Overview**

The Folk Art Apprenticeship program helps to assure the survival, development and continued evolution of community-based traditional art forms found throughout Mississippi. The program allows master traditional artists to pass along their unique skills on to promising novice artists that work in their art form. The master artist works with the apprentice on a one-on-one basis to teach specific aspects of the tradition.

There are many types of traditional artists who can benefit from this program. Some examples of artists who have received Apprenticeship grants in the past include boat builders, quilters, old-time fiddlers, traditional potters, basketmakers, and blues guitarists. The program is focused on supporting forms of creative expression that have been an important part of community life for many years and that are passed on informally rather than being taught through formal classes. Please consult with the Heritage Program Director (contact information below) to see if your art form qualifies for this program.

The Apprenticeship grant award is \$2,000. No cash match is required. The master artist and apprentice work together to determine the budget for their project. The majority of the grant funds (80% or greater - \$1,600) should be set aside for the master artist's teaching fee. The remaining amount can be used to purchase supplies (only expendable items, not permanent equipment) and for mileage incurred by the apprentice (this should be estimated using the current state mileage reimbursement rate).

## **Who May Apply**

The master artist and his or her potential apprentice must apply together. The master artist should be recognized within his or her community as an accomplished artist within a community-based traditional art form. He or she should be active in the art form, either performing or creating new work on a regular basis. The master artist should have developed his or her skills through an informal, traditional manner rather than through formal courses.

The apprentice should not be a beginning artist. Since the apprenticeship will take place over a short period of time, the apprentice should have enough experience in the art form to benefit from the intensive, one-on-one training. For example, an apprentice blues guitarist should be able to play well enough to work on more advanced techniques during the apprenticeship.

Preference will be given to master artists and apprentices who are members of the same community or cultural group. One of the desired outcomes of the program is to support the continuation of traditional art forms within the communities where they originated. Therefore, it is important that both the master artist and the apprentice have a deep understanding of and commitment to the culture that their art form reflects.

## **Review Criteria**

A panel of experts in various traditional art forms reviews the Apprenticeship applications. Applicants should address the following criteria in their application:

- The master artist's demonstrated mastery of their artform and the connection of their work to local traditional culture of prior art work (the work's connection to tradition applies to both master artist and apprentice) (40 points)
- Evidence that the master artist's work demonstrates creativity within a community-based tradition (40 points)
- Evidence that the apprentice has sufficient skill to benefit from working with the master artist (20 points)

MAC gives funding priority to first-time applicants to the program that represent an underserved tradition.

## **How to Apply**

The master artist and apprentice must apply together to the Apprenticeship program. Please submit one original and one copy of the following items in the order listed:

- Folk Art Apprenticeship Application
- Folk Arts Apprenticeship Description Forms completed by both the master artist and the apprentice. Please provide as much information as you can about yourself and the proposed apprenticeship.
- One copy of work samples from both the master artist and the apprentice. The accepted formats are listed below.
- A description of the work samples, including title (if applicable), date of the performance or when the work was completed, and any other information necessary for describing them.

***Foodways Applicants*** - In addition to the items listed above, please include:

- A short narrative (up to one page in length) that explains the history and importance of the food(s) the Master Artist makes within their cultural or regional community.

- Three to five letters of support for the Master Artist. These should be written by members of their community who have a good understanding of the Artist's skills, such as representatives from local social organizations or cultural groups. The letters should verify the artist's skills and knowledge, give details about the context in which the Artist's food tradition occurs, and explain the role of the applicant in helping to continue a particular foodways tradition.
- Two to three letters of support for the Apprentice. These should be written by members of their community who have a good understanding of the Apprentice's skills, such as representatives from local social organizations or cultural groups. The letters should speak to the Apprentice's skills and knowledge and their potential for later working as a practitioner of the foodways tradition being focused on in the project.
- Copies of newspaper or magazine clippings featuring the Master Artist that detail their contributions to their specific foodways tradition. If available, please also include any clippings that feature the Apprentice.

Please do not staple or bind your application materials.

## Work Sample Formats

- **Performance-based Artists:** Applicants such as traditional musicians or dancers should submit one copy of an audio or video recording demonstrating their performance ability. Acceptable formats include CD, DVD, or VHS videotape. The recording must have been made within the last three years. Please submit the best quality recording of your work you have available. Musicians should include multiple songs on their sample, each demonstrating different aspects of their playing ability (for example, a fiddler would want to include a faster breakdown tune as well as a waltz to show the range of his/her playing). Recordings should be appropriately labeled with the applicant's name and description of the performance (including song titles and type of song).
- **Visual Artists:** Applicants such as quilters or potters should submit one set of digital images that feature six different samples of work (up to three views of the same work are permissible) completed within the last three years. The images should be saved in JPEG format at 72dpi, with no image wider than 1600 pixels. They should be saved on a CD-R disc with each image numbered to correspond with the work sample listing. Only the required images should be included on the CD-R. They should not be saved as part of a presentation program file (like PowerPoint). The work must have been completed within the last three years. Please submit the best quality images that you have available.
- **Foodways Artists:** Foodways applicants should submit one copy of a DVD or VHS videotape recording at least ten minutes in length that demonstrates their artist quality and the traditionality of their foodways practice. The recording should show the master artist (depending on length of process) preparing for or creating a dish they plan to teach the apprentice. As part of this demonstration, the Master Artist should include comments on the cultural importance of particular ingredients, techniques or elements of the recipe. The Master Artist should also speak to how/where they learned to prepare the respective dish. The recording must have been made within the last three years. Label the disc or tape with the applicant's name and description of the foodways tradition (ie: canning, biscuit making, pig roasting, pecan pies, etc).

Foodways apprentices must also submit one copy of a DVD or VHS videotape recording at least ten minutes in length. The recording should show the apprentice (depending on length of process) preparing for or creating a traditional dish which has inspired them to learn more about regional or ethnic cooking. The apprentice should speak to how/where they learned to prepare the respective dish, and why it has inspired them to further their knowledge of traditional foodways.

### **Return of Work Samples**

Applicants who would like their work samples returned by mail must provide a self-addressed mailer with sufficient postage affixed to it. Work samples may also be picked up between July 1st and August 30th at MAC's office during regular business hours. Please make arrangements with the Heritage Program Director before visiting the office. All work samples will be discarded after August 30th if no instructions are given for their return.

### **Dates to Remember**

**March 1, 2012** – Folk Art Apprenticeship application deadline

**April 2012** – Review of applications by the grant panel (the specific panel date will be available by mid-March. Applicants are allowed to attend panels.)

**June 2012** – MAC Board meets and makes final funding decisions on all applications

**July 2, 2012** – Applicants are notified whether their application was funded or not. No information on the grants will be available from MAC prior to this date.

For more information on the program, contact Mary Margaret Miller, Mississippi Heritage Program Director, at (601) 359-6034 or [mmiller@arts.state.ms.us](mailto:mmiller@arts.state.ms.us).