



NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR ARTS & HEALTH IN THE MILITARY

2017 National Summit: *Reintegration & Resilience*

And the **R&R FESTIVAL OF PERFORMING ARTS**

FACT SHEET

In February 2017, Americans for the Arts (AFTA), Art2Action, Inc. and the University of South Florida (USF) Office of Military Partnerships and College of the Arts will co-host the **National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military (NIAHM) 4th National Summit: Reintegration and Resilience**. For the first time in the history of NIAHM's National Summit convenings, the 2017 gathering will include a festival of original performance works by, for, about and with veterans, organized and curated by Art2Action. Titled the **R&R Arts Festival: From Recovery to Regeneration**, this ground-breaking event will help to place veterans' stories—and the work of artists engaged in creation with them—at the center of an extraordinary cross-sector convening, designed to bring more than 200 military, veteran, and civilian practitioners, researchers and policy makers together to share knowledge, learn new skills and help inform a nationwide vision for increasing access to the arts and creative arts therapies for all of America's military service members, Veterans, their families and caregivers. Additional partners include The Carpetbag Theatre and New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA).

EVENTS, DATES AND SCHEDULE

R&R Festival: From Recovery to Regeneration

- **Thursday, February 2 – Sunday, February 5, 2017. Performances 7:30pm.** *All events are open to the public, tickets required.*

Pre-Summit Tours and Special Seminars

- **Thursday, February 2, 2017 – 9:00 am-4:30 pm.** *Open to Summit participants. Advance registration required.*

National Summit

- **Friday, February 3, 2017 – 9:00 am-4:30 pm.** *Open to military service members, Veterans, caregivers, artists, creative arts therapists, healthcare professionals, administrators, scholars and researchers, public and private sector leaders, family members and supporters. By invitation only.*

Professional Development Workshops: Practitioners Exchange

- **Saturday, February 4 – Sunday, February 5, 2017 – 9:00 am-4:30 pm.** *Open to National Summit and additional participants depending upon space availability. Advance registration required.*

LOCATIONS

University of South Florida, Tampa and additional locations:

- PRE-CONFERENCE TOURS – VA facilities in the Tampa Bay area
- FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES – USF Theatre 1 & School of Music Concert Hall
- NATIONAL SUMMIT – USF Patel Center for Global Solutions & Gibbons Alumni Center Traditions Hall
- WORKSHOPS – USF School of Theatre & Dance
- RECEPTIONS & SPECIAL EVENTS – USF Marshall Center
- VETERANS COMMUNITY OPEN MIC – Tre Amici @ The Bunker, Ybor City, Tampa

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

R&R Festival performances and events are open to the public. Tickets will be available through the USF College of the Arts box office. Workshops will be by registration only, with limited availability. Stay tuned for ticket & registration information, or sign-up for Art2Action's mailing list at www.art2action.org. To request more details on the R&R Festival, or for information on how to become a local co-sponsor, please contact Andrea Assaf, Art2Action Artistic Director: art2action@earthlink.net

The National Summit is an invitation-only event, offered free to participants. Participants are responsible for their own transportation and lodging. The event brings together a cross-sector group of practitioners, researchers and leaders from the military, Veteran, public and private sectors, civilian non-profit arts, health and social sectors, as well as interested individuals, advocates and administrators who support greater access to the arts and creative arts therapies for the military and Veteran populations. Space is limited and first come/first served; not all requests can be honored, and participants may be placed on a waiting list. To request an invitation, email Marete Wester, Americans for the Arts Senior Policy Director: mwester@artsusa.org

ABOUT THE 2017 NATIONAL SUMMIT AND WORKSHOP PROGRAMS

Background

Since its inception, the National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military has endeavored to convene conversations among artists, arts professionals, creative arts therapists, caregivers, researchers and policy makers across the country. To date, more than 800 military/veteran and civilian stakeholders have been engaged in the Summit and Roundtable conversations. The findings and recommendations collected in these conversations were summarized in the seminal report, the [Arts, Health, and Well-Being Across the Military Continuum - White Paper and Framing a National Plan for Action](#), published by Americans for the Arts in 2013.

Yet, we have not yet had an opportunity to bring these groups together in a way that centers on and deeply investigates the impact of artistic practice for patients and caregivers, artists and therapists; we rarely get to see full productions of the artistic work, experience the processes that professional artists bring, or hear directly from veterans about their experiences in co-creation. This project aims to address these challenges in a cross-sector exchange, by bringing artists, creative arts therapists, and healthcare professionals into conversation on arts practices aiding in recovery, reintegration, resilience and regeneration. By providing information, training and networking across the complex array of current and potential providers and supporters, we hope to ensure quality arts practices and services are in place for communities across the United States, to help our servicemen and women, veterans and their families deal with the key physical and psychological health issues that emerge, and forge a life path to health and well-being through the arts.

ABOUT THE R&R FESTIVAL: FROM RECOVERY TO REGENERATION

Performances by, for, about & with Veterans

This unique festival will showcase a spectrum of practices and ways of creating new performance work that is rooted in the real-life experiences of military service members and Veterans. It will include theatre, music and dance works about veterans created by professional companies; by veterans who are now professional artists; and co-created with Veterans from the community, in partnership with professional artists.

The festival will feature one evening-length work, as well as shorter works and excerpts, that illuminate the issues and challenges present in Veteran recovery and reintegration. These performances will provide an important opportunity for National Summit attendees, as well as audiences from the Tampa Bay area, to see full productions and showcases, to experience creative processes facilitated by leading national artists, and to hear directly from Veterans about their personal experiences in co-creation.

We will feature artists who have demonstrated a multi-year commitment to this work, either because they are Veterans themselves, or have been significantly engaged in co-creation with veterans over time—theatre and dance artists who are leaders in their fields, in the overlapping sectors of community-based or socially engaged practice, art and civic dialogue, cultural development or diplomacy, or who exemplify first-voice representation. Performances include these and more:

- **Speed Killed My Cousin**, by Linda Parris-Bailey and The Carpetbag Theatre – An original play about an African American woman soldier who returns from Iraq and struggles with PTSD, Moral Injury, the issue of Military Sexual Trauma (MST), and her family's history with vehicular suicide. This exceptional work will open the festival, helping to ground the Summit dialogues in the complex intersections of race, gender, and multi-generational military service in families.
- **The War & Treaty** music ensemble, founded by Iraq war veteran & singer-songwriter Michael Trotter, Jr.
- Collaboration with the USF School of Music **Touch Concert**, featuring a new composition based on Veterans' stories
- **Healing Wars** by Liz Lerman, **Exit 12 Dance**, and more – The Saturday night Dance concert will feature experts and short works by nationally acclaimed artists, performed by a mixed-ability ensemble of professional dancers and veterans.
- **The Combat Hippies**, an all-veteran performance ensemble that promotes “Post-Traumatic Growth,” directed by professional artist Teo Castellanos, will be the featured guests at Art2Action's monthly **Veterans Community Open Mic**.

ABOUT THE PARTNERS



Americans for the Arts is the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education, dedicated to representing and serving local communities and to creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. With offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, it has a record of more than 55 years of service. Since 2011, Americans for the Arts has led the [National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military](#) (NIAHM), a collaborative effort that seeks to advance the policy, practice, and quality use of the arts and creativity as tools for health in the military; raise visibility, understanding, and support of arts and health in the military; and make the arts as tools for health available to active duty military, military families, and veterans. Among NIAHM's advisors, partners and collaborators include the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Defense Office of Warrior Care Policy, the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs, U.S. Veterans Health Administration, and NIH's National Center of Complementary & Integrative Health, in addition to national, state and local arts, humanities, and veterans service nonprofits; state and local cultural agencies; and universities around the country. www.artsacrossthemilitary.org



Art2Action, Inc. creates, develops, produces and presents original theatre, interdisciplinary performances, performative acts and progressive cultural organizing. We support women artists, artists of color, queer or trans-identified artists, and creative allies. We are dedicated to cultural equity and innovation, artistic quality and community value, performativity and impact. Whether developing new work, collaborating with community partners, touring or presenting, community-based process and meaningful engagement with diverse constituencies is central to all of our work. As a mission-driven, artist-led organization, we increase our capacity, reach and impact through multi-year partnerships with local partners, national networks, institutions of service and higher learning, organizations and activists. Since 2013, Art2Action has been a designated campus presenter at the University of South Florida, housed in the School of Theatre and Dance. As part of our on-going partnership with The Carpetbag Theatre, supporting veteran recovery and reintegration through the arts, Art2Action offers performing arts workshops for veterans at the Veterans Recovery Center (PRRC) of the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa, and across the country. For more information, visit: <https://art2action.org/veterans-in-tampa>



The Carpetbag Theatre, Inc. (CBT), founded in 1969 and chartered in 1970, is a professional, multigenerational ensemble company dedicated to the production of new works. Our mission is to give artistic voice to the issues and dreams of people who have been silenced by racism, classism, sexism, ageism, homophobia and other forms of oppression. CBT serves communities by returning their stories to them with honesty, dignity, and concern for the aesthetic of that particular community, helping culturally specific communities to re-define how they organize. The company works in partnership with other community artists, activists, cultural workers, storytellers, leaders and community members, creating original works through collaboration, based in storytelling and song. In conjunction with their original play, *Speed Killed My Cousin* by Executive/Artistic Director Linda Parris-Bailey, CBT is developing a model to "Speed the CAR: Creative Arts Reintegration" in partnership with Art2Action. www.carpetbagtheatre.org



New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) builds connections among artists, arts organizations, and funders, powering the arts to energize communities in New England, the nation, and the world. NEFA is a nonprofit that operates in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the New England state arts agencies, with additional funding from foundations, corporations, individuals and other government agencies. NEFA's work is accomplished through grantmaking, services, and initiatives which strengthen and advance the national arts infrastructure, continuing a 40 year history of pioneering partnerships and programs supporting the arts. NEFA has invested \$500,000 over the past five years in the creation and touring of new dance and theater pieces that reflect on the military experience and the current state of America at war. www.nefa.org



University of South Florida (USF)'s mission is to deliver competitive undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, to generate knowledge, foster intellectual development, and ensure student success in a global environment. The USF College of the Arts, led by Dean James Moy, includes the Schools of Architecture & Community Design, Art & Art History, Music, and Theatre & Dance – which together annually present more than 300 public performances, exhibitions, lectures, plays, shows, concerts, workshops and more, by students and faculty as well as by nationally and internationally recognized artists, scholars, and performers. USF Tampa is a veteran reintegration campus that has more than 1,500 veterans enrolled as students. The Office of Military Partnerships coordinates USF's ongoing work among the military, academic, and nonprofit communities in Tampa Bay, as well as with the Department of Defense, including the US Central Command, Special Operations Command, and MacDill Air Force Base. This office works with members of Congress, the State of Florida, and the Veterans Administration. It is also charged with assisting USF faculty and students via guest lectures, presentations and network connections, as well as community outreach and research opportunities. The Office of Military Partnerships is led by Lieutenant General Martin Steele, US Marine Corps (Ret), who serves as Executive Director, as well as Associate Vice President for Veterans Research under USF's Office of Research and Innovation, and co-chairs USF's Veterans Reintegration & Resilience Initiative. www.usf.edu

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