



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For more information, contact Amy Schmidt, ND Council on the Arts, 701-328-7594

**North Dakota Council on the Arts Announces
Individual Artist Fellowship recipient**

The North Dakota Council on the Arts (NDCA) has awarded an artist fellowship in the amount of \$3,500. The Individual Artist Fellowship recipient in Traditional Arts, Dance, and Theatre is Liselotte Erdrich of Wahpeton. Erdrich was recommended by a review whose selection was approved by the NDCA's Board of Directors.

Liselotte Erdrich is a lifelong learner with 30 years of arts experience focused on community health and education. She is employed by Native service populations in ND, SD and MN. Erdrich has developed programs, artist residencies, partnerships, publications, exhibitions, and initiatives in cross-curricular innovation and civic and academic achievement. She has a strong sense of history and place, conveyed in literary and visual arts involving community, youth, and elders.

This fellowship will afford her time to produce 12 birchbark art teaching scrolls and related public education and arts engagement activities including three or more teaching workshops in different areas of the state. Liselotte will collaborate with other arts and education entities such as Red Door Art Gallery, Plains Art Museum, Turtle Mountain Community Schools, Circle of Nations Wahpeton Indian School (tentatively), and NDCA's *Art for Life Program*. These collaborations will reach underserved North Dakota citizens of all ages, including elders residing in institutional and assisted living facilities in Wahpeton, ND.. She aims to eventually write and illustrate a picture book using birchbark pictography to create greater understanding of North Dakota history, culture and landscape context. Birchbark pictography is categorized as a rare, endangered art form which has been almost lost in her tribal community and elsewhere. Although historically associated with culturally sensitive ceremonial songs of the Midewewin or Grand Medicine Society, birchbark pictography is and was used for other purposes such as mapping directions, messaging ("Indian letters") and utilitarian items (baskets, containers, canoes, utensils, decoratives and housing). It is also a means of depicting historical events, mythology or contemporary interpretations of issues relevant to life and cultural vitality today.

The Individual Artist Fellowship program recognizes practicing artists residing in North Dakota with a monetary fellowship award. This program is designed to support professional artists with outstanding talent and ability to improve their artistic skills and enhance their career opportunities. Fellowships for Visual and Media artists will be awarded in 2018.

For more information on NDCA's grant programs please visit <http://www.nd.gov/arts/grants> or call 701-328-7590.

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The North Dakota Council on the Arts is the state agency responsible for the support and development of the arts throughout North Dakota, and is funded by the state legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts.