

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Mikalia Bradberry

Bradberry.mikalia@macphail.org

**MCKNIGHT MUSICIAN FELLOWSHIP GRANTS FOUR OF MINNESOTA'S TOP MUSICIANS WITH
\$25,000 AWARDS**

MINNEAPOLIS – June 21, 2024 – MacPhail Center for Music proudly announces the four recipients of the 2024 McKnight Fellowship for Musicians: Andrew Brady, Mike Kota, Paul Metzger, and Jaz Steele.

The process for the recipients began in January, with 84 solo musician applications consisting of recording samples, artist statements, and resumes. Nine finalists were chosen by a four-member panel of experienced and well-respected music professionals. The four previously mentioned recipients were selected to receive the \$25,000 McKnight Fellowship for Musicians at the finals on Friday, June 7, 2024.

MacPhail Center for Music administered the McKnight Fellowship for Musicians, a component of the McKnight Artist & Culture Bearer Fellowships, for the 28th year. Founded on the belief that Minnesota thrives when its artists and culture bearers thrive, the McKnight Foundation's arts and culture program is one of the oldest and largest of its kind in the country. Support for individual working Minnesota artists and culture bearers has been a cornerstone of the program since it began in 1982. The McKnight Artist & Culture Bearer Fellowships Program provides annual, unrestricted cash awards to outstanding mid-career Minnesota artists in 15 different creative disciplines. Program partner organizations administer the fellowships and structure them to respond to the unique challenges of different disciplines. Currently, the foundation contributes about \$2.8 million per year to its statewide fellowships. For more information, visit mcknight.org/artistfellowships.

2024 McKnight Musician Fellows

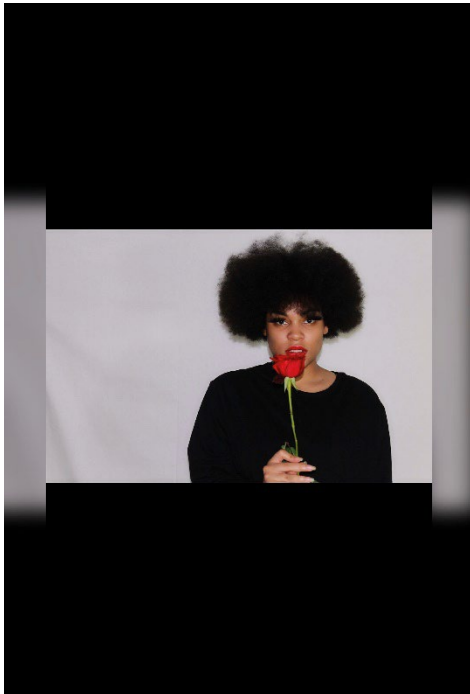


Andrew Brady, Bassoon – Classical, Minneapolis

Native Tennessean Andrew Brady joined The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra as Principal Bassoon in the 2022.23 season. Brady came to Minnesota from the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, having served there as Principal Bassoon since 2016.

As soloist, Andrew demonstrates a commanding grasp of varying repertoire while bringing out the humanity in the music and connecting with listeners. Most recently, he premiered the orchestral version of “My Young Friend”, a piece which he commissioned from Stefan L. Smith based on poetry written by his grandmother, Elvena Bowers. Brady also returned to the ASO in December to perform “The Five Sacred Trees” by John Williams, itself also a work inspired by poetry.

An enthusiastic educator, Andrew loves sharing in the growth of young musicians. He currently works with the orchestras of GTCYS, and in the summer with students at festivals such as the Aspen Music Festival, National Youth Orchestra USA, National Orchestral Institute, Brevard Music Center, as well as others. Brady strives to help create a musical landscape where people feel free to be their most authentic selves and share their stories for the enrichment of all.



Jaz Steele, Voice - RnB/Soul/Gospel/Hip-hop, Minneapolis

Jaz Steele is a musical artist/songwriter from North Minneapolis, MN. Jaz has traveled throughout the United States singing and pursuing her dreams and toured Europe with her mother, Jevetta Steele, performing in Gospel in Colonus. Jaz Steele graduated from Norfolk State University with a degree in Business. She isn't just a hip-hop artist, she sings R&B, Soul, Gospel, Pop, a little bit of Jazz, raps and more. She also had the pleasure to open for Jacquees and Megan Thee Stallion at NSU. She wants her music to make people pop, lock and drop it and to steal the hearts of the crowd; and eventually the world.

Currently she has 4 projects out called “BAKU”, “Marinara Shawty”, “My Side of the Story” and her newest album “Good Grief”! She is currently working on her next Project called “Pandora’s Box”.

Social Media: Instagram: @JazXSteele; Facebook: Jaz Steele; TikTok: JazXSteele; Twitter: Jaz Steele



Paul Metzger, Modified Banjo – Improvisation, Saint Paul

"The banjo and guitar extrapolations of Paul Metzger reveal the true meaning of virtuosity. His banjo and guitar contain multitudes. Suspended between past and future, honoring the tradition while hijacking it, listening for its voice while reveling in its inarticulacies; this is how the thing sings. And the song, in the obsessive extensions of Metzger's instruments, truly has no ending." - The Wire, David Keenan.

Website: Paulmetzger.net



Mike Kota, Voice, Guitar, Piano, Producer - Indie / Singer-Songwriter, Minneapolis

Mike Kota is a twenty-six-year-old singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist from Minneapolis. Her thoughtful lyrics and soulful melodies bring about introspection and empowerment. Kota's distinctive voice appears as the silver-lining of hope in a haunting storm of sound and feeling. Aided by her rock-influenced guitar, Mike's songs shed a healing light on dark vulnerabilities in a raw and powerful performance.

2024 McKnight Musician Finalists -

In addition, five solo artists were named finalists and will receive \$1,000: Tonia Hughes Kendrick of Minneapolis (voice – Contemporary Gospel), Kip Jones of Minneapolis (violin & sundry – Driven by the Metacrisis), JS Ondara of Minneapolis (vocals, guitar, percussion – Folk Rock), Liv Redpath of Edina (voice – Classical), J.E. Sunde of Minneapolis (voice, guitar, bass, keyboards, singer-songwriter – Indie-Folk).

About the McKnight Foundation The McKnight Foundation, a Minnesota-based family foundation, advances a more just, creative, and abundant future where people and planet thrive. Established in 1953, the McKnight Foundation is deeply committed to advancing climate solutions in the Midwest; building an equitable and inclusive Minnesota; and supporting the arts and culture in Minnesota, neuroscience, and global food systems.

About MacPhail Center for Music

MacPhail Center for Music is the nation's largest center for music learning and performance and one of Minnesota's top ten arts organizations. Since 1907, MacPhail Center for Music has been providing meaningful opportunities for people and is committed to transforming lives and strengthening communities through music learning experiences that inspire. Each year, MacPhail offers programming to 15,000 students of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities, at locations in Minneapolis, White Bear Lake, Chanhassen, Apple Valley, Austin, and Madeline Island, WI., as well as 103 community partnerships across the Twin Cities. An industry leader in online music education, MacPhail's Live Online and Online School Partnerships programs have reached students for the past ten years. MacPhail has a 115-year history of excellence, promoting life-long learning and building long-term relationships between students and teachers. For more information, visit macphail.org.

###