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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Conference Website: [www.a2ru.org/events/2020-a2ru-annual-meeting](http://www.a2ru.org/events/2020-a2ru-annual-meeting)

**a2ru 8<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference "Land and Equity: The Art and Politics of Place," Online Oct. 15-30**

**University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of the Arts to host virtual conference**

**ANN ARBOR, Mich. and MADISON, Wis. — The Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru) will hold its 8<sup>th</sup> annual National Conference, "Land and Equity: The Art and Politics of Place," online beginning Thursday, Oct. 15; programming will run through Friday, Oct. 30. The conference is hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Division of the Arts. Registration is now open and the complete schedule can be viewed at [a2ru.org](http://a2ru.org).**

The a2ru National Conference is an opportunity for practitioners and researchers from across the higher education spectrum to share innovations and perspectives in the arts. The 2020 theme Land & Equity considers how our work as artistic, scientific and humanistic researchers and educators is defined by the land on which we find

ourselves, and asks who has access to that land and its resources? In turn, we will examine how our art, research and teaching impacts the places and spaces in which we live and work and discuss ways that we can use that work to advance more equitable access.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with the innovative team from the University of Wisconsin–Madison's Division of the Arts on our first virtual conference," says **a2ru Executive Director Maryrose Flanigan**. "When the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to change our plans from an in-person conference in Madison to an online experience, our Wisconsin colleagues took up the challenge with a tremendous spirit of collaboration. In this tumultuous year, the pandemic and the renewed calls for racial justice give new urgency and relevance to our conference theme of Land & Equity. We look forward to processing this historic moment with our colleagues in October."

"We at UW–Madison are delighted to host the 8th annual a2ru conference and especially to proffer the theme of 'Land and Equity,' which creates space for important and urgently-needed conversations about art, land, equity, and social justice," says Division of the Arts Interim Director Susan Zaeske. "As always, it has been a pleasure working with the a2ru team and I am glad we can advance the objective of arts integration across all disciplines of knowledge by featuring a major NSF leader along with a number of other exciting speakers."

Keynote speakers for the conference include: **Dr. Fleming Crim, Chief Operating Officer of the National Science Foundation** on Friday, Oct. 16; **Adrienne Keene, Assistant Professor of American Studies and Ethnic Studies, Brown University** on Friday, Oct. 23; **Michele Byrd-McPhee, Executive Director and Founder of Ladies of Hip-Hop Festival** on Monday, Oct. 26; and **Emmanuel Pratt, Executive Director of the Sweetwater Foundation** on Friday, Oct. 30. All keynotes will take place at 3 p.m. Eastern Time/2 p.m. Central Time. Additional information about the keynote speakers and their talks can be found at [a2ru.org](https://a2ru.org).

Registration for the 2020 a2ru National Conference features special pricing to reflect the virtual format; attendees can register for an unlimited conference pass or choose to register for individual sessions or keynotes. For individuals from an [a2ru partner institution](#), an unlimited conference pass is \$125; an individual keynote registration is \$20 and an individual session registration is \$15. For individuals not affiliated with an a2ru partner institution, an unlimited conference pass is \$175, an individual keynote registration is \$25 and an individual session registration is \$20. Discounted group rates

are available for university classes wishing to attend a conference session; please email [a2ru-events@umich.edu](mailto:a2ru-events@umich.edu) for details.

[Sponsorship opportunities](#) for the a2ru 2020 National Conference are available. Sponsorship of an activity or game, or advertising in our online or physical program will get your name and logo in front of some of the most influential decision makers in higher education and beyond. Help us support arts-integrated research, practice and teaching and to bolster equitable access to the a2ru annual gathering. Please contact Emilie Schada at the Division of the Arts at [eschada@wisc.edu](mailto:eschada@wisc.edu) for details.

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## **About a2ru**

[a2ru](#) (The Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities) housed at the University of Michigan, is a partnership of over 35 institutions committed to ensuring the greatest possible institutional support for the full spectrum of arts and arts-integrative research, curricula, programs and creative practice for the benefit of all students and faculty at research universities and the communities they serve.

## **About the University of Wisconsin–Madison**

A proud a2ru partner institution, the [University of Wisconsin–Madison](#) is a Big Ten Research 1 land grant institution that has worldwide impact while remaining inextricably rooted in the state it serves. One of the oldest and deepest traditions of the university is The Wisconsin Idea, the principle that its research and teaching should better the lives of people not only in the classroom but also throughout the state and the world. The University of Wisconsin–Madison is dedicated to intentionally and publicly acknowledging that it occupies ancestral Ho-Chunk land, called Teejop since time immemorial, which the Ho-Chunk were forced to cede in 1832.

## **About the Division of the Arts at University of Wisconsin–Madison**

The [Division of the Arts](#) supports and extends the impact of UW–Madison academic arts programs by harnessing the power and potential of artistic explorations and expressions for the benefit of the university, the State of Wisconsin and the world. We believe that dancers, designers, dramatists, artists, architects, musicians, creative

writers and other scholars and students who engage in artistic expression are essential to solving complex problems and advancing society. We advance the arts as a vital platform to inquire about the world, illuminate and address injustices, challenge points of view and celebrate all aspects of humanity and the world around us. Animated by these beliefs, the Division of the Arts engages students and the wider community in creative arts, design and performance experiences; supports research in the arts for faculty, staff, graduate students and undergraduate students; and illuminates UW–Madison arts achievements, curricula, programs and events through a robust multiplatform communication campaign.

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