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## **THE FOX THEATRE INSTITUTE NAMES HOLLY THEATRE COMMUNITY CENTER IN DAHLONEGA RECIPIENT OF 2018-19 GRANT**

*FTI Historic Structures Studies or Planning Grant Fund to provide \$6,600 in matching funds to the historic theater to plan major interior improvements that will enhance production values and the comfort and enjoyment for the Holly audiences.*

**DAHLONEGA DECEMBER 17, 2018** – The **Fox Theatre Institute** (FTI), a division of Atlanta’s Fox Theatre, Inc., has awarded Holly Theatre Community Center, Inc., a 2018-2019 Historic Structures Planning Grant for \$6,600 in matching funds to plan major interior improvements that will enhance production values and the comfort and enjoyment for the Holly audiences.

FTI offers programming, consulting and grant funding assistance to historic theaters and structures throughout Georgia. Overall, the FTI program has committed over \$480,000 in three funding categories, completing a record-breaking year of giving.

“With the Fox Theatre Institute’s planning grant of \$6,600 and matching funds raised from our supporters, we will be able to design a major two-year project to be carried out in 2019-2021 that will add significantly to entertainment values provided to our community, and will guarantee increased enjoyment of our beloved historic theater by our patrons in the future,” said Ivana Pelnar-Zaiko, Chairman of the Board of the Holly Theatre. “We are grateful for the funding opportunity that allows us to continue maintaining the legacy entrusted to us by the citizens of our city and region. After receiving FTI matching funds as well as other grants to help stabilize the exterior of the historic structure in 2015, the Holly leadership turns its attention to urgent interior needs with this plan.”

Improvements focus on three distinct areas and include major items such as installing a new grid and a motorized fly system above the stage, replacement of aging air conditioning, and other technical and aesthetic items. The funds will enable the Holly to engage in thorough and professional planning of a complex set of issues, which require careful coordination with the full theatrical season. Planning will complete in May 2019 and actual work should commence in the fall of that year, given the availability of further funding.”

Mrs. Pelnar-Zaiko added: “We are truly beholden to and very proud of our fellow patrons and citizens for their support with their time, treasure, and love! They really care, and it has allowed our all-volunteer, community theatre to achieve a good outlook for long-term financial stability, and to match several prior outside grants to preserve our historic Holly for future generations. I am sure our friends will answer again when we reach out for help to match the current project costs in this exciting initiative we have dubbed ‘*New Stage Magic!*’”

As part of its ongoing commitment to Georgia's historic theaters, the Fox Theatre's newly expanded 2018-19 FTI grant program seeks to provide significant economic and cultural impact to local communities across the state. FTI is part of the Fox Theatre's overall strategic plan to further increase its impact and outreach.

"The Fox Theatre was preserved because a truly impressive group of local community members, with grit and enthusiasm, helped to preserve the historic value of the Fox Theatre," said Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Fox Theatre, Inc. Adina Erwin. "The Fox Theatre Institute was formed ten years ago to help aid other historic theatres across the state, partnering with local communities to make a real impact on these local communities. The Fox Theatre Institute knows that preservation of theatres can help revitalize downtowns, bring art and cultural significance to these regions and engage people to care for their local community."

The FTI program has committed more than \$1 million since launching in 2008. The Historic Preservation Grant is one of four grant funding categories through FTI – including Historic Structures Studies or Planning, Technical Assistance and Services, and Urgent/Emergency Grant – all of which allows up to \$500,000 of much needed statewide grant subsidy.

"We are so excited for this new grant cycle, as the Fox Theatre Institute is so honored to support these amazing historic cultural venues around the state," said Leigh Burns, director of the Fox Theatre Institute. "Our grant program's aim is to preserve and stabilize these historic theatres for future economic development. We cannot wait to see what these theatres do next and how they will continue to enrich and grow their economic wealth of their communities as well as impacting their surrounding communities as they grow their performing arts venues and reach bigger audiences."

FTI also consists of 'Fox in a Box,' a free interactive curriculum-based resource for area elementary schools; Georgia Presenters, an innovative statewide talent booking consortium; and Preservation Grants to encourage preservation of historic theatres with outside funding not readily available elsewhere.

For more information, please visit [www.FoxTheatreInstitute.org](http://www.FoxTheatreInstitute.org).

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### **About Fox Theatre Institute**

The Fox Theatre Institute (FTI) is a dynamic outreach program offering historic preservation expertise, consultation and education to performing arts venues in Georgia and the region. Created by Atlanta's Fox Theatre, an iconic attraction widely applauded for being a catalyst for positive change in the community, FTI pays it forward, helping other cultural institutions renew, reinvigorate and restore artistic vitality in their backyards and beyond. Keeping environmental and economic impact top of mind, FTI offers the financial assistance, restoration support and operations mentoring needed to leverage scarce resources and stimulate local economies. Not only that, but it keeps the artistic pulse of beloved communities beating for decades to come. FTI was recently featured on NPR's Marketplace for its substantial impact on historical theatre

restoration and community building throughout Georgia and the Southeast. For more information, visit [foxtheatreinstitute.org](http://foxtheatreinstitute.org) and please stay connected on [Facebook](#).

### **About the Fox Theatre**

The Fox Theatre is one of Atlanta's premier venues for live entertainment and declared a "Top Stop of the Decade" by Venues Today Magazine. Listed as #1 non-residency venue worldwide for the decade by Billboard Magazine, the Fox most recently won 2017's "Theatre of the Year" by the International Entertainment Buyers Association. Other notable achievements include Rolling Stone Magazine's "The Best Big Rooms in America" as part of their "Venues That Rock" series (2013), nominated for Theatre of the Year by Billboard and Pollstar Magazines, and awarded the 2011 Outstanding Historic Theatre of the Year award by the League of Historic American Theatres. For the past decade, the Fox Theatre has consistently ranked in the top three non-residency theatres in North America for gross ticket sales by industry trade magazines, Pollstar, Billboard and Venues Today. The Fox Theatre has the #1 social media presence for any theatre or performing arts center in North America (2,000-5,000 seats), and for any Georgia venue according to the "Social Media Power 100" compiled by Venues Today Magazine. With 4,665 seat theatre, the Fox hosts 250 performances a year, from rock concerts to Broadway, ballets, comedy and movies, attracting 500,000 visitors per year. In addition, the Fox hosts wedding receptions, trade shows, corporate meetings and association functions in its fabulous ballrooms, lounge and outdoor terrace. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts organization, the Fox Theatre stands today as a fiercely protected landmark and a nationally acclaimed theater and is celebrating its 88<sup>th</sup> year. The Fox Theatre proudly acknowledges its partners for their generous support: Coca-Cola, Lexus, Georgian Terrace Hotel, Georgia Natural Gas, Atlanta Beverage- Budweiser, Regions, Grady Health Systems, and Whole Foods Market. Tickets for all events are available at the Fox Theatre Ticket Office, online at [www.FoxTheatre.org](http://www.FoxTheatre.org), or toll free at 855-285-8499. For group sales information contact the Fox Theatre at (404) 881-2000, or visit The Fox Theatre website at [www.foxtheatre.org](http://www.foxtheatre.org). Please stay connected with the Fox Theatre on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

### **About the Holly Theatre Community Center**

The Holly Theatre celebrated seventy years of operations and 25 years as community theatre in the fall of 2018. *The mission of the Holly Theatre Community Center, a private not-for-profit Georgia corporation, is to preserve, restore, and develop the historic Holly Theater to be a family-participatory performing arts center that provides quality enrichment, entertainment and education for adults and children of the communities of Dahlonega, Lumpkin County, and the North Georgia region.* Continuous operation in its early years and neglect of the 1948 movie house during the 70s and 80s had taken a toll on the building. In the 1990s, citizens of Lumpkin County came together in a remarkable communal effort to save the theater and restore the historic building. Re-dedicated in 1993, The Holly Theatre Community Center, Inc., helped to anchor a town renaissance as a major tourist destination in the state. In 2002, the Holly theater was entered on the National Register of Historic Places. In the last 6 years, many additional renovations and capital improvements have been completed, thanks to substantial private donations and several grants: replacing the 20-year-old roof and all canvas awnings, restoring the marble façade, repointing the three brick walls, and restoring and retrofitting the marquee with energy-saving lights. Technical systems such as lighting and sound were

also substantially modernized. The new project will improve stage safety and bring production settings up to the standards and requirements of future shows—the 'New Stage Magic!' [www.hollytheater.com](http://www.hollytheater.com)