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## ● PRESS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Jerome Foundation's Minnesota Media Arts Program panel met on June 29 and 30, 2005, to review 63 applications (55 from individuals who had not been previously funded by this program, and eight from previous recipients). The panelists were filmmaker Chris Larson; John Mhiripiri of Anthology Film Archives in New York City; and Sheryl Mousley, Curator of Film and Video at the Walker Art Center.

The following are brief comments regarding the media projects of each of the above artists:

**VENUS DEMARS** received support for *Take My Shoulder*, an experimental documentary incorporating animation about life today as a transgendered person. DeMars, a transgendered musician, performance artist and filmmaker, sees this as an historic period in which transgendered persons are defining themselves and their rights. *Take My Shoulder* is a personal view of this changing tide.

A grant was awarded to **JOANNA KOHLER** for *Uppercut Boxing Gym*, a documentary based on a North East Minneapolis gym that is giving birth to something historic. Eight women are boxing their way onto the timeline of women's sports and stretching the boundaries of feminism and violence. The first all female amateur boxing team is preparing for the August 2005 Golden Gloves International Competition in St. Louis, Missouri. This film will chronicle their lives as they train and compete.

**TERESA KONECHNE** was awarded a grant in support of *fertile ground: rural women, the diaspora and our changing landscapes*, an experimental personal narrative nonfiction video about Konechne's internal/external journey home to capture the lives of South Dakota rural women, and those who have left. Konechne seeks to tell the history of the place, the relationship of its women to the prairie, and the increasingly hostile economics that render farm life all but extinct.

**ALBERT MILGROM** received a grant for *The Red Barn Project*, a documentary that juxtaposes student activist protests against the incursion of a fast-food chain on the University of Minnesota campus called The Red Barn with the macrocosmic anti-Vietnam war protests in the Spring of 1970. The film also aspires to see how attitudes of some participants have changed over time.

Support was awarded to **HISHAM MUHIEDDINE BIZRI** for *Al-Qahera (Cairo)*, a narrative feature that records a single day in the lives of two men in contemporary Cairo, Ahmad and Daoud. Ahmad is a Muslim poet who leaves his lodgings after a confrontation with a fellow countryman and an American smuggler of antiquities. Daoud is a middle-aged Copt (Egyptian Christian) who is forced to leave his house after he learns that his wife plans to bring a man

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into their bed later that day. Daoud and Ahmad wander the streets of Cairo aimlessly. They are a father and son in search of one another. The film chronicles their nightmarish journey in a city that no longer recognizes its own inhabitants. Like the Phoenician Odysseus, they undergo many trials and tribulations before they make a final decision to leave together to another country.

**MARA V. PELECIS** received a grant in support of *Souvenirs*, a feature documentary exploring the suicide of the filmmaker's father, and the lives of other veterans. The work seeks to understand the emotional and spiritual impact of wars on those who fight them.

**JASON WADE** was awarded a grant in support of *STABBER*, an experimental film about an institutionalized man who has been sheltered from society his whole life. He is accidentally left behind when the institution closes and goes on an incredibly violent and surreal journey that takes him from the country to the city, into the forest and ends at the precipice of a large cliff where he hurls himself into the abyss.

Support was awarded to **JAKE YUZNA** for *Am I Normal?*, an unconventional love story about a gay man and transgendered man (born as a woman, but through surgery and hormone treatment transitions into a man) who sleep with each other and discover they are each other's "first time" with a member of the opposite sex. Yuzna's goal is to build understanding of contemporary fringe culture by creating emotionally compelling and complex characters.

**JILA NIKPAY** received a grant in support of *Rhythm of Tides*, the third in a trilogy of short films that address issues of dislocation, loss and memory. The trilogy is a personal response to the current conditions in Nikpay's country of Iran, and part of a larger body of work of both film and photography. *Rhythm of Tides* will be a cinematic essay, halfway between narrative and metaphor. Nikpay will combine evocative visual imagery, sound-design, and minimal voice-over into a dense poetic film.

For more information, please contact Robert Byrd at the Jerome Foundation, 651.224.9431 or 800.995.3766. Visit the Jerome Foundation web site at [www.jeromefdn.org](http://www.jeromefdn.org).

*The Jerome Foundation, created by filmmaker and philanthropist Jerome Hill (1905-1972), makes grants to support the creation and production of new artistic works by emerging artists in Minnesota and New York City, and contributes to the professional advancement of those artists.*

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