



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 27, 2017

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CATCO and the Arts Council Announce 2016 Playwright Fellowship Recipient

Reading of *Hello Brother* by local playwright Eric Fruth set for June 25, 2017

CATCO, in partnership with the Greater Columbus Arts Council (Arts Council), announced today Columbus playwright Eric Fruth is the recipient of the 2016 Playwrights Fellowship program for his work, *Hello Brother*.

Fruth receives a \$5,000 fellowship and a reading of his play, which will be presented Sunday, June 25, 2017, 6 p.m., at the Studio Three Theatre, Vern Riffe Center, 77 S. High St. Admission is free. CATCO Associate Producing Director and Playwright Fellowship Coordinator Joe Bishara will direct the production.

Fruth, the owner of Columbus Running Company, earned his B.A. in English Writing from DePauw University and his M.A. in English from Indiana State University. His writing has appeared in *Running Times* and *Competitor* magazines.

Hello Brother is a story about three characters in small town Ohio, all trapped in their own desperate situations, who come to rely on one another to rise above their divisions and band together. The play takes place at a diner named after a Louis Armstrong song, harkening back to an America that was just as divided along those same lines so many generations ago. There is no happy ending, but there is hope.

Submissions for this year's fellowship explored a wide range of topics and included dramas, as well as comedies, Bishara said. "CATCO looks forward to working with Eric and local actors to perform a reading of his play in June."

"The Greater Columbus Arts Council's Individual Artist Fellowship program was established in 1986 to recognize outstanding local artists, and since that time we've continued to grow our program by engaging partners to increase the numbers and types of fellowships we offer," said Tom Katzenmeyer, President of the Arts Council. "We are delighted to work with CATCO and Eric Fruth to bring *Hello Brother* to the stage."

Selection criteria for the fellowship included originality, likelihood of future productions, clarity of voice and general interest in the subject matter. Interested artists were asked to submit a cover letter and the following:

- Breakdown of characters with brief descriptions
- Up to 10 pages of sample dialogue
- Brief synopsis (one or two paragraphs) of the play to be considered

- Cover page that provided the playwright's name, address and contact information. (Plays were considered without the playwright's information attached to ensure impartial selection.)

About CATCO

CATCO is central Ohio's professional Equity theatre company, providing quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatre organization has adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org. Together, CATCO and CATCO is Kids provide quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatres have adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development.

CATCO's 32nd season is sponsored by support from The Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the theatre with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans, and supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

CATCO also appreciates the support of the Barbara B. Coons, Nina B. Pohlman, and Martha G. Staub Funds of The Columbus Foundation, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973. Other supporters include The Shubert Foundation Inc. and Nationwide Insurance Foundation.

CATCO's season sponsor is L Brands; the season partner is the Columbus Metropolitan Library. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org.

About the Greater Columbus Arts Council

Through vision and leadership, advocacy and collaboration, the Greater Columbus Arts Council supports art and advances the culture of the region. A catalyst for excellence and innovation, the Arts Council funds exemplary artists and arts organizations and provides programs, events and services of public value that educate and engage all audiences in our community. The Arts Council thanks the City of Columbus and the Ohio Arts Council for their continued support.

CATCO Mission Statement

Theatre is a shared experience that illuminates the mysteries of our humanity. Its magic has the power to transform us whether on stage, in the classroom or in our diverse communities. CATCO creates theatre that delights, challenges, and transports.

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