

Contact:

Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA)
Kim Doty, Director of Communications
kdoty@vcca.com
www.vcca.com



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Writer Nicholas Boggs Named 2022 Recipient of VCCA's Newly Endowed Steven Petrow LGBTQ+ Fellowship for his Biography-in-Progress of James Baldwin

(Amherst, Va.) —The Virginia Center for the Creative Arts is pleased to announce that Nicholas Boggs has been awarded the 2022 Steven Petrow LGBTQ+ Fellowship to attend a writing residency at VCCA's Mt. San Angelo location this month.

A returning VCCA Fellow, Boggs has attended previous residencies at Mt. San Angelo in the foothills of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains as well as at Le Moulin à Nef, VCCA's artist residency program in Auvillar, France. "I am delighted to return to VCCA as a Petrow Fellow this July," said Boggs.

During his upcoming writing residency at VCCA, Boggs will be at work on a biography of James Baldwin, under contract at Farrar, Straus and Giroux. He will arrive at Mt. San Angelo straight from Europe after conducting the last of his research for the book in Istanbul, where Baldwin spent much of the 1960s. "I hope to use the time at the residency as a springboard for the book's completion later this year," said Boggs. "Thank you so much to VCCA and to Mr. Petrow for this essential support!"

Steven Petrow added, "Congratulations to Nicholas, and to all who applied. At times like this, we must lift LGBTQ+ voices in concert with those of other communities."

Boggs has also received support from a Leon Levy Center for Biography Fellowship, an NEH Long-Term Fellowship at the NYPL, as well as a Visiting Fellowship at the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library. In 2018, Boggs co-edited a new edition of Baldwin's collaboration with French painter Yoran Cazac, *Little Man, Little Man: A Story of Childhood* (Duke University Press). In the Fall of 2022, he will be the inaugural Walter O. Evans Fellow at the Beinecke Library at Yale.

Steven Petrow LGBTQ+ Fellowship

Award-winning journalist and book author Steven Petrow established the Steven Petrow LGBTQ+ Fellowship in 2016 to expand opportunities for artists who self-identify as LGBTQ+. "We had more than 60 candidates apply this year, which shows that the messaging about VCCA being a diverse and inclusive space is getting great traction," said Petrow.

Petrow sponsored the fellowship from 2017 to 2021. In that time, the fellowship was awarded to three writers — Cris Beam (2017), Lydia Conklin (2018), and Carter Sickels (2021) — and one visual artist — Daniel Handal (2019).

In 2021, Petrow endowed the Steven Petrow LGBTQ+ Fellowship fund, ensuring that VCCA can offer the Steven Petrow LGBTQ+ Fellowship in perpetuity. The endowed fellowship is open to writers of any genre who self-identify as LGBTQ+. It provides a two-week residency at Mt. San Angelo, which includes a private bedroom, a separate private studio, and three meals a day in a community of cross-disciplinary artists.

Petrow is well known for his *Washington Post* and *New York Times* essays on aging, health, and civility. He's the author of multiple books, including most recently the bestselling *Stupid Things I Won't Do When I Get Old* (Citadel, 2021). His TED Talk, "3 Ways to Practice Civility," has been viewed nearly two million times and translated into 16 languages. Petrow's next book, *Joy to You and Me*, will be published by Penguin Random House in 2024. Much of his work over the past decade has taken place at VCCA; he is grateful for the time, space, and magic at Mt. San Angelo and currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors.

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VCCA is among the nation's largest artist residency programs, serving more than 400 writers, visual artists, and composers each year at two locations: Mt. San Angelo in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Amherst, Virginia, and Le Moulin à Nef, in Auvillar, France. Since 1971, VCCA has provided time and space for national and international writers, visual artists, and composers of talent and promise to bring forth their finest works, because the arts are vital, diversity is a strength, and creativity is essential.

For more information visit vcca.com/steven-petrow-lgbtq-fellowship and vcca.com.



Left: Nicholas Boggs; Photo credit: Jonathan Blanc/NYPL
Right: Steven Petrow



VCCA's Studio Barn complex at Mt. San Angelo houses more than 20 studios for writers, visual artists, and composers; Photo credit: Paige Critcher