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LANGSTON COLLIN WILKINS TO LEAD CENTER FOR WASHINGTON CULTURAL TRADITIONS

SEATTLE –The [Center for Washington Cultural Traditions](#) (CWCT) has chosen Langston Collin Wilkins as its new director. Launched in 2018, the CWCT seeks to document and preserve the diverse traditional cultures of Washington State through research and programming. The Center is a collaboration between Humanities Washington and the Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA).

Wilkins joins the CWCT after work as the traditional arts specialist for the Tennessee Arts Commission and a program officer for Humanities Tennessee, where he led a Latino and new immigrant folklife fieldwork initiative, managed folklife grants, and directed writing workshops for youth. Wilkins received his PhD in Folklore & Ethnomusicology from Indiana University in 2016. He also holds a Masters degree in African American and African Diasporic Studies from Indiana University and a Bachelors of Arts in English from the University of Texas at Austin.

“From Native American basketry to Indian Classical dance to cowboy poetry, Washington is home to a wide variety of incredible cultural traditions,” said Wilkins. “I’ve long desired the opportunity to work with a folklife landscape so beautifully complex. I’m honored to lead the CWCT’s efforts in preserving and presenting the diverse stories of this great state.”

Wilkins will lead the CWCT during a key time in its history. It was officially launched in March of 2018 after a year of community conversations and fieldwork, and its first programs are currently being implemented: a [Cultural Traditions Survey of the Yakima Valley](#) involving months of research, a podcast, and community events; and a [Heritage Arts Apprenticeship](#) program. Further, the Center just received a \$40,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to continue its Cultural Traditions Survey, this time in the [Twin Harbors](#) region of the state encompassing lower Grays Harbor County and Pacific County.

In April, Wilkins will be delivering a talk at the Library of Congress based on his previous research titled, "[Street Folk: Hip Hop, Car Culture, and Black Life in Houston, Texas.](#)"

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR WASHINGTON CULTURAL TRADITIONS

Though not a physical center, the CWCT is a statewide source for research and learning about Washington's rich, diverse cultural heritage. The CWCT is housed at the state's nonprofit humanities council, Humanities Washington, and presented in partnership with ArtsWA.

ABOUT HUMANITIES WASHINGTON

Humanities Washington sparks conversation and critical thinking using story as a catalyst, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across our state. For more about Humanities Washington, visit humanities.org.

ABOUT ARTSWA

The Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA) advances and supports arts and culture in Washington State through leadership, funding, and resources that build participation and access to the arts. For more about ArtsWA visit arts.wa.gov.

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