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**ARTS COUNCIL GRANTS \$40,199 to 29 recipients
to support arts and culture projects throughout Santa Cruz County**

SANTA CRUZ, CA — July 26, 2018 Arts Council Santa Cruz County announces 29 Summer Grants totaling \$40,199 will be awarded this month to individuals and organizations across Santa Cruz County.

Santa Cruz has the 5th highest density of artists per capita in the nation and for 39 years Arts Council Santa Cruz County's grants program has been an integral part of keeping Santa Cruz's creative culture thriving. The Arts Council brings funding in from a variety of federal and local sources, including private foundations and government agencies, and then distributes more than \$200,000 annually throughout the community, benefiting local students, arts educators, artists, at-risk youth, underserved populations, and the Santa Cruz community at large.

Targeted bilingual outreach and support throughout this grant cycle resulted in an applicant pool which was much more diverse than in previous cycles: 25 of the 29 projects funded either serve or are lead by artists/communities that are traditionally underrepresented in arts funding in terms of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, disability status, and geography. For example, 12 grantees are from Watsonville, 17 grantees are people of color, 11 are under the age of 35, and 6 identify as LGBTQ.

"We seek to achieve equity in our grantmaking through increasing opportunity and addressing barriers for those most underrepresented in arts funding. We believe that cultural equity and diversity in the arts not only builds strong communities, but is central to our work in igniting vibrancy and connection throughout Santa Cruz County," says Hannah Garcia, Grants Program Manager.

A few projects from first-time grantees we're excited about:

- White Hawk Indian Council's "Xilonen," ceremony of tender corn, is a full two-day aztec dance and rites of passage ceremony for young women that dates back thousands of years before the Spanish invasion.



- “Finding Marla”, is a collaboration between Paloma Medina, Jessica Kendall-Bar and Diversity Center youth to write, illustrate, and publish a children’s book that re-imagines the story of Finding Nemo through a queer ecological lens.
- Sahar El Khatib’s Drumskull Drums event at the MAH will promote and celebrate West African drum and dance and the art of drum-making.

To see the full list of 2018 grantees, click [here](#).

The Grants Program is committed to supporting artistically excellent work, increasing the success of artists and arts organizations, expanding equitable access to the arts, engaging new audiences, and increasing social impact through the arts. The Fall/Winter cycle opens August 3, with an application deadline of September 14. Interested artists and organizations can visit artscouncilsc.org/grants to learn more about our guidelines, orientations in Santa Cruz and Watsonville, and application details.

About Arts Council Santa Cruz County

The Arts Council generates creativity, vibrancy, and connection in Santa Cruz County. For 39 years, we have been the bedrock of our creative community, supporting individual and collective artistic expression and building bridges and bonds between people throughout our county. We know that art changes lives. In Santa Cruz the arts are also an economic driver (\$32 million of economic activity annually), contribute to civic pride, and are one of the most powerful vehicles for bringing people together, creating community dialogues, and strengthening relationships.

Through grants to artists and arts organizations, arts education programs that serve more than 17,000 youth across Santa Cruz County, and community initiatives such as Open Studios and Ebb & Flow, we help Santa Cruz County thrive. Learn more at artscouncilsc.org.

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