



Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County

SUPPORTING ALL THE ARTS

Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County 1025 Escobar Street, 4th Floor, Martinez, CA 94553
(925) 646-2278 staff@ac5.cccounty.us www.ac5.org

Dear Measure X Community Advisory Board,

The Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County is grateful for this opportunity!

We're very proud of our signature programs that offer services to all Contra Costa County residents including *ABOUTFACE*, *Poetry Out Loud*, *Arts and Culture Prospectus*, *Youth Advisor*, *Art Passages*, *Arts Cafe*, *Arts Recognition Awards*, and *Arts Directory & Calendar*.

We stand at a pivotal moment with a \$31,000 average annual grant match budget. In order to be competitive in grant applications and stabilize community services, a secure funding source follows best practices of all Bay Area counties and throughout California.

The time is now to build an arts foundation and legacy for future generations based on equity. Transformational proposed programs include a *District Public Art Program*, *Community Art Fund*, *Youth Advisor* in each District, *Artist-in-Residency in the School* pilot program, *Arts Connection*, and *Build Structures* initiative.

In this packet, please read the heartfelt community letters and review important data along with learning more about our signature programs and new program ideas.

We're requesting a below average ask to be extraordinary!

Let's uplift and support Contra Costa County's incredible creative talent!

With your support, we can do this!

Sincerely,

Jenny Balisle
Managing Director
Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County

Presenters

County:

1. Ben Miyaji: Chair, Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County
2. Jenny Balisle: Managing Director, Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County

Community:

1. Marva Reed: Richmond artist and *Art of the African Diaspora* Curator
2. Dedan Ji Jaja: *ABOUTFACE* Veteran artist
3. Silvia Ledezma: Vice Chair, Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County and *2018 Marsh Creek Detention Facility Art Project*
4. *Local Arts and Cultural Organizations Grantee* RYSE: Sheila McKinney (Richmond Youth Poet Laureate & RYSE member), CieraJevae Gordon (former Richmond Poet Laureate and RYSE's Media, Arts, & Culture Manager), and Tara Malik (RYSE Media, Arts, & Culture Director)
5. Keertana Srekkumar: youth artist, advocate, student, San Ramon Youth Art Committee President/Founder
6. Tony Tamayo: artist, advocate, *Poetry Out Loud* and *ABOUTFACE* Technical Assistant
7. Naina Shastri: Founder/Artistic Director at Ushanjali School of Dance, and San Ramon Social Justice Collective
8. Donté Clark: poet and *Poetry Out Loud* Coordinator

Community Letters

Martha C. Schraer, ABOUTFACE Veteran
John D. Archimede, ABOUTFACE Veteran
Jock Eggers, ABOUTFACE participant
Carolyn Considine, Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County Youth Advisor
Richmond Art Center, José R. Rivera Executive Director and Amy Spencer Exhibitions Director
Richmond Museum of History & Culture, Melinda McCrary, Museum Executive Director
Patrick Martin, Teaching, Learning and Leading Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator, West Contra Costa Unified School District
Elaine Cortez Schroth, CEO and President, Visit Concord
Anna Smith, Executive Director, The Quinan Street Project
Katie Pool, The Quinan Street Project Advisory Board member
Leah McKibbin, The Quinan Street Project Advisory Board member
Catherine Hensiek, President, Concord Art Association
Michele Seville, former Arts & Culture Manager, City of Richmond
Victoria Bianco, ABOUTFACE Teaching Artist and Coordinator
Chair At-Large 2 Commissioner Ben Miyaji
Senior Commissioner District 4 Elizabeth Wood
District 2 Commissioner Beverly Kumar
At-Large 3 Commissioner Joan D'Onofrio
Linda Kalin, Richmond resident and artist
Jordan Fridie, Contra Costa County youth artist
Jose Arandia, Bay Area podcast host, artist, and performer
Brennan DeFrisco, poet, Poetry Out Loud Student Coach and Assistant Coordinator
Flo Wiley, Chair, Richmond Arts and Culture Commission and Operations Manager, Snap Judgment



Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County

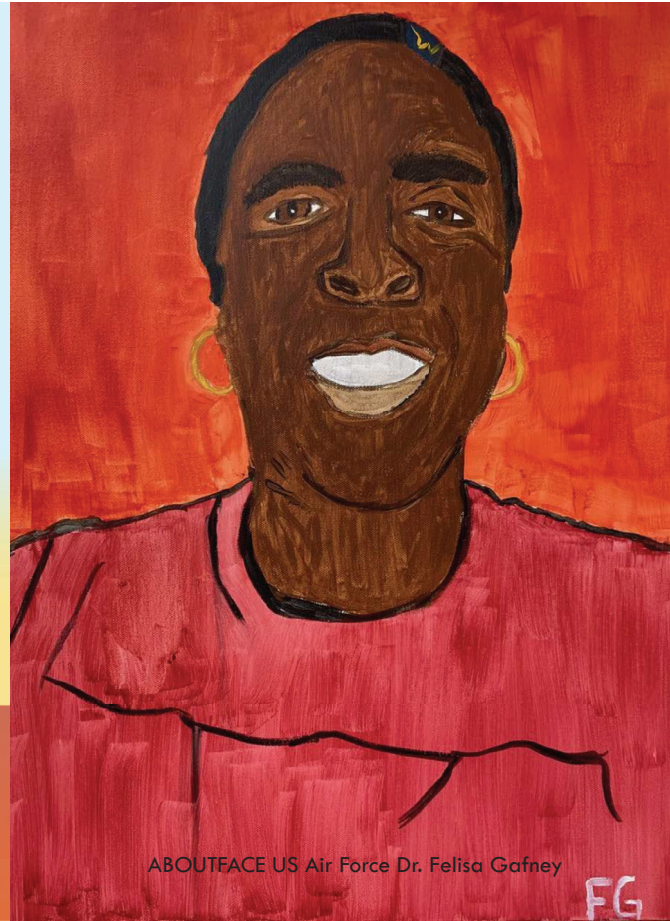
SUPPORTING ALL THE ARTS

Mission

The Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County is dedicated to advancing the arts in a way that promotes communication, education, appreciation and collaboration throughout Contra Costa County so that we may grow creatively as a community that preserves and celebrates our diverse cultural expression.

MEASURE X
INTRODUCTION

WWW.AC5.ORG



ABOUTFACE US Air Force Dr. Felisa Gafney

Land Acknowledgement

The Arts and Culture Commission would like to take a moment to acknowledge the land and indigenous peoples of Contra Costa County.

We collectively acknowledge that Contra Costa County resides on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of indigenous people. Contra Costa County resides on land that was cared for and called home by the Bay Miwok and Ohlone people, who shared their oral traditions in the Utian / Penutian language.

Local tribes from our county include, but are not limited to, the Saclan, Tatcan, Chupchan, Julpun, Volvon, Souyen, and other native peoples from time immemorial.

This land holds great historical, spiritual, and personal significance to its past, present, and future stewards, the native nations and peoples of this region. We honor and continue their tradition of cultural and artistic expression in Contra Costa County through our engagement with the arts today.

10 seats:

- 5 from each Supervisorial Districts
- 4 At-Large
- 1 Alternate

WWW.AC5.ORG

Ben Miyaji
Commission Chair: At-Large-2

Ardent supporter and patron of the arts. He is the current chair of the Palo Alto Public Art Commission and has served on that commission for 8 years.



Silvia Ledezma
Commission Vice-Chair: District 1

An international artist, photographer, and activist who was born in San Francisco, California, lived and traveled throughout Mexico.



Elizabeth Wood
Senior Commissioner: District 4

Retired from Chevron Corporation after 30+ years and returned as a part-time contract employee working on several marketing projects.



Joan D'Onofrio
At-Large 3

Founder of the Michelangelo D'Onofrio Arts Foundation, and currently employed by H&R Block.



Y'Anad Burrell
At-Large-1

Founder/CEO of Glass House Communications (GHC), a boutique public relations agency, with a practice area in working with art and culture organizations throughout the Bay Area.



Beverly Kumar
District 2

Served as an Art Commissioner for the Town of Danville. With a background in the performing arts, education and degree in communication, Beverly is an advocate for arts education and champion of young artists.



Lanita Mims
At-Large-4

Small business owner specializing in music and entertainment.



Grant Taylor
District 3

Singer, songwriter, producer, vocal coach, and actor.





County services we provide:

- **Youth Advisor** is a one-year term in which they perform a Commission-approved service project during their respective term.
- **Arts Passages** exhibitions at the County Administration Building.
- **Arts Recognition Awards** highlights individuals and organizations.
- **Arts Café** is a series of art workshops, lectures, discussions, and exhibitions.
- **Arts Directory** and **Calendar** for Contra Costa County artists or arts organizations.

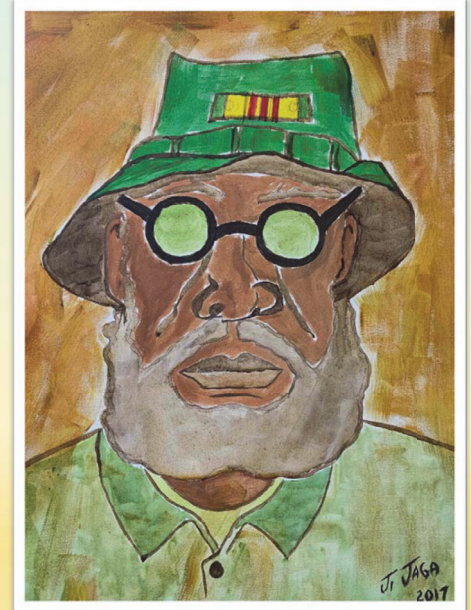
2019 Arts Recognition Awards
 ABOUTFACE exhibit, County Administration Building (ABOUTFACE VIA Assistant Coordinator Jeffrey Geronimo)
 Youth Advisor Carolyn Considine, *Justice Mural*, Campolindo High School



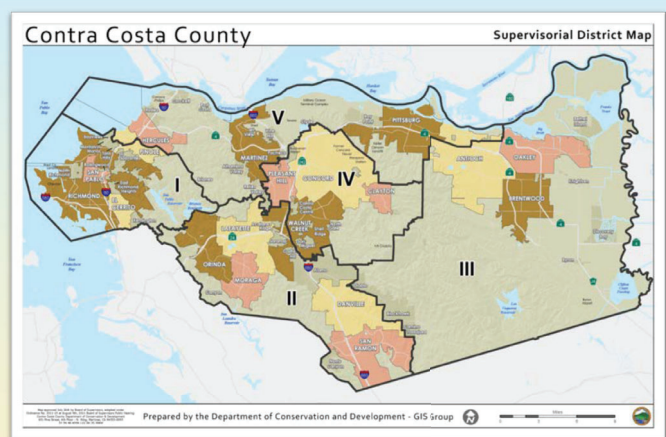


California Arts Council services:

- **ABOUTFACE** is a free self-portrait painting classes for Contra Costa County Veterans.
- **Poetry Out Loud** is a national recitation contest for high school students.
- **Local Arts and Cultural Organizations Grant (LACOG)** was a one-time grant.



2021 Poetry Out Loud 1st Place Winner Jermain Gitana
 2020-21 LACOG Grant
 ABOUTFACE Marines Veteran Dedan Ji Jaga



Upcoming:

- **Artist Power Convenings** is a one-time grant we are assisting YBCA facilitate. The grants prioritize Black and African American; American Indian or Alaska Native; Latinx; Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; Asian; disabled and LGBTQIA+ artists in Contra Costa County.
- **Arts and Culture Prospectus of Contra Costa County** is a series of Fall workshops in which we'll be identifying cultural stakeholders to define public art projects in each District. Project funded by a rebudget of a one-time allocation for Fiscal Year 21-22.

PREVENTION

Artists are second responders.

Art is free expression to address social issues.



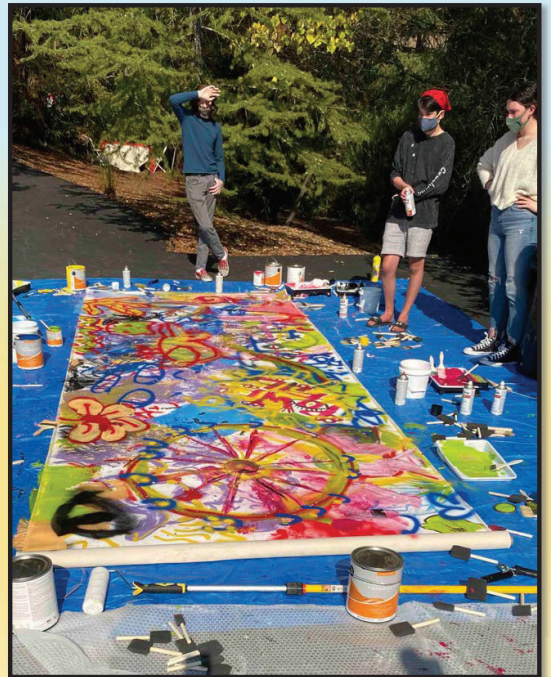
ABOUTFACE Veteran May 2021 Zoom workshop
Robin D. López, *Richmond Speaks*, photograph, www.robindlopez.com

PREVENTION

**Art addresses collective grief.
Art uplifts all communities.**

2018 Marsh Creek Detention Facility
Art Project with the Office of the
Sheriff in Contra Costa County and
California Lawyers for the Arts
*Vice Chair Silvia Ledezma image

Youth Advisor Carolyn Considine's
Project We painting.
*Carolyn Considine image.



DATA

82%

of Americans believe
arts & culture are
important to local
businesses and the
economy

87%

of Americans believe arts
& culture are important
to quality of life

DATA



Local vs. Nonlocal Arts Audience Spending

Local Audience Spending // **\$23.44**



Nonlocal Audience Spending // **\$47.57**



Average Per Person Per Event

Audience Expenditures: \$31.47



The average audience expenditure **does not** include cost of admission.

DATA

95% of local arts agencies use the arts to address community development issues
(e.g., youth, economic, diversity)



95% ADDRESS COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

@BeAnArtsHero

**91% OF
AMERICANS
BELIEVE THAT
THE ARTS ARE
VITAL TO
PROVIDING A
WELL-ROUNDED
EDUCATION.**



DATA

@BeAnArtsHero

DID YOU KNOW?

**MUSIC TRAINING
INCREASES
TODDLER IQ**

IN EARLY CHILDHOOD, THE ARTS
HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO IMPROVE IQ
AND SPATIAL COGNITION IN 3-5
YEAR OLDS.



@BeAnArtsHero

DID YOU KNOW?


**STUDENTS WHO
TAKE FOUR YEARS
OF ARTS AND
MUSIC CLASSES
SCORE AN
AVERAGE OF OVER
150 POINTS HIGHER
ON THE SAT.**



@BeAnArtsHero

DID YOU KNOW?

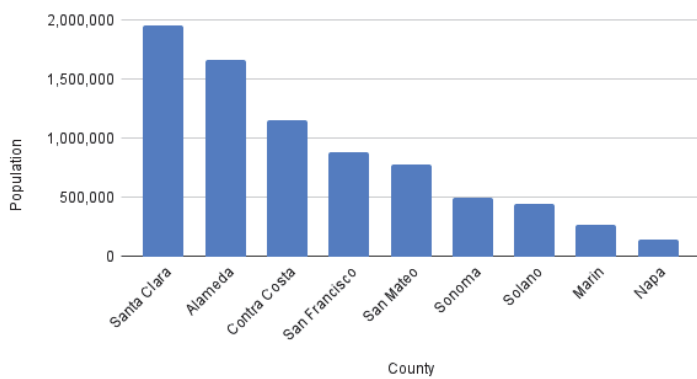
**LOW-INCOME
STUDENTS
ENGAGED IN THE
ARTS ARE MORE
THAN **TWICE AS**
LIKELY TO
**GRADUATE
COLLEGE****



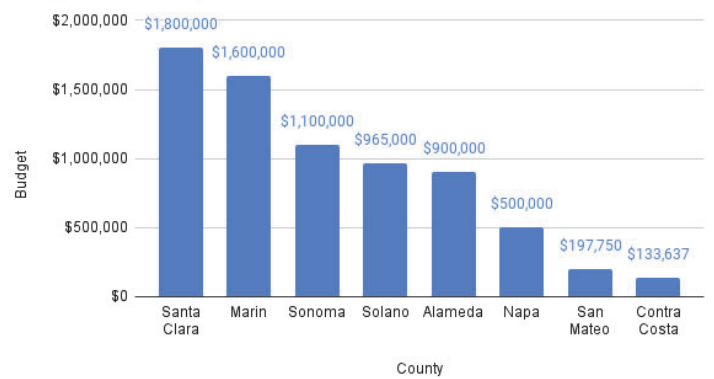
Budget Context: How do we rank?

DATA

Population vs. County



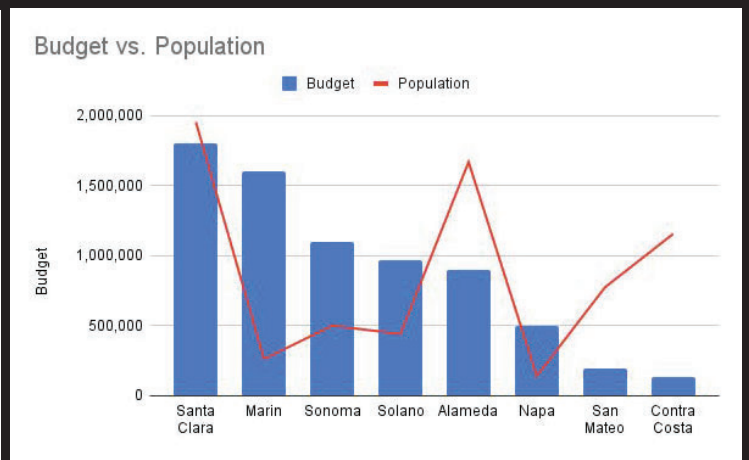
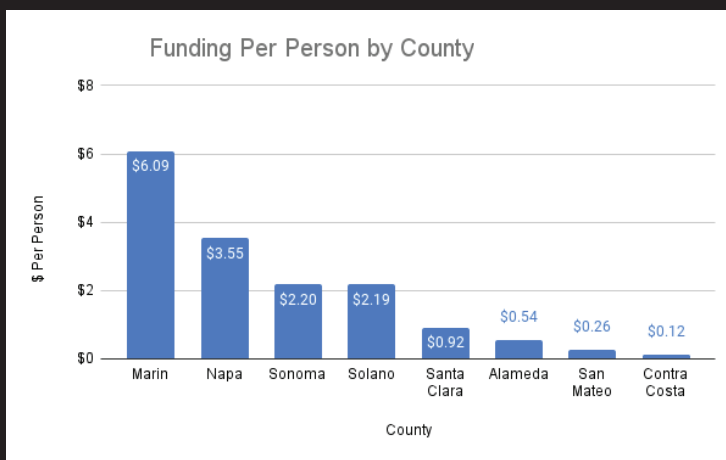
Budget vs. County



Contra Costa County: 3rd highest population and lowest budget

Budget Context: How do we rank?

DATA



Funding Average Per Person: \$1.04 Contra Costa County: \$.12
Contra Costa County: largest services gap and 0 employees

DATA

California State-Local Partners Snapshot Survey:

Average budget size: **\$519,449**

Average Number of Employees:

Full-time – **2.94**

Part-time – **2.93**

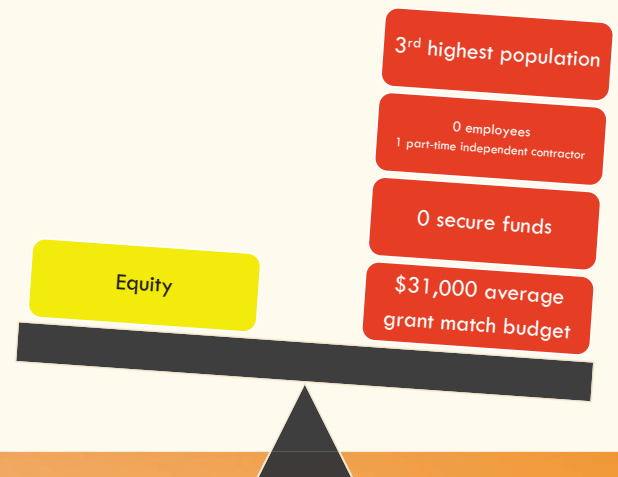
Contractors – **6.92**

*The Arts Commission was established in 1994.

No CCC arts demographic data due to limited budget.

Contra Costa County

Data



TRENDS

California Arts Council

1. No longer sole funding source.
2. Support Commissions with basic secure funding.
3. Look to invest in partnerships.
4. Discontinuing ABOUTFACE grant program.
5. CAC grant funds can't be used for grant matches.
6. Arts Commission budget has close to zero leverage.

Equity

1. Investment reflects values.
2. \$31,000 CCC grant match is inadequate.
3. CCC has a huge diverse artistic population.
4. Disproportionately impacts every community.
5. LACOG grantee feedback:
"The lack of CCC arts investment has created a disconnect between artists, art organizations, and residents."



TRANSFORMATIONAL

District Public Art Program:

Every Bay Area County has a public art program! Let's build Contra Costa County's first public art program!

Community Art Fund:

Up to 5 community art projects a year!

AIRS (Artist-in-Residency in the School):

Pilot program where teaching artists in CCC schools work with students to create an art project.



Marva Reed www.instagram.com/marvaric

What bold experiments, big ideas, and innovative approaches to meet key needs?

District Public Art Program

Community Art Fund

AIRS
(Artist-in-Residency in the School) pilot program

TRANSFORMATIONAL



Arts Connection:

Connect artists and art organizations for quarterly meetings for advocacy, opportunities, and data collection.

Youth Advisor in each District:

Expands equity and opportunity to youth in each District!

Build Structures:

Community creates policy for new and signature programs based on equity. All other Bay Area Counties have Arts and Culture in their General Plans!

Keertana Sreekumar www.sryouthartcommittee.org



NUMBERS MATTER!

\$1.04

average
arts funding
per person

$\$1.04 \times$
1,155,879
CCC residents
\$1,205,601

Bay Area
Counties

CCC ask:
\$625,000

\$.54 per resident



**Arts and Culture Commission
of Contra Costa County**

SUPPORTING ALL THE ARTS

\$625,000 INVESTMENT

Support Team: \$305,000

Managing Director
Program Coordinator
Communication and Marketing

Build Structures: \$45,000

Facilitator works with CCC residents to create policy for District Public Art Programs, Community Projects Fund, and Signature Programs based on equity!

Signature Programs: \$100,000

Arts and Culture Prospectus of Contra Costa County
ABOUTFACE
Poetry Out Loud
Youth Advisor
Jump StArts CAC grant
Art Recognition Awards
Art Passages

District Public Art Program: \$100,000

(\$20,000 each District)

New Programs: \$50,000

Youth Advisor (each District)
AIRS (Artist-in-Residency in the Schools) pilot program
Arts Connection (CCC artists/art organizations quarterly meetings for advocacy, opportunities, and data collection)

Community Art Fund: \$25,000 up to 5 projects a year!

TOP PRIORITY: SECURE STAFF TO DELIVER SERVICES!

*Let's build an arts foundation in CCC!
It will take time
and dedicated staff to do so!*



ABOUTFACE Veteran Workshop 2018

5 REASONS \$625,000

1. Arts is an equity & economic investment.
2. A stable funding source secures programs.
3. Follows best practices of regional County partners: average per person \$1.04 and our ask \$.54
4. Acknowledges community needs through new programs.
5. Art speaks to the human experience and uplifts all communities!



We can do this together!



**Arts and Culture Commission
of Contra Costa County**

SUPPORTING ALL THE ARTS

WWW.AC5.ORG



***Thank You
MXCAB!***

July 21, 2021

The Measure X Community Advisory Board

Dear Board Members and Neighbors:

I am a 3rd-generation Navy veteran and a past participant in the ABOUTFACE art program. I am writing to support funding for the Arts in Contra Costa County.

The Vietnam War ended six months before I enlisted and the majority of Americans now are too young – or too old – to remember it clearly. But the Americans who saw the horrors of that war will always remember it.

Other veterans -- those who served in peacetime doing lonely, dangerous jobs in lonely, dangerous places -- remember their struggles too. As do the Gold Star parents who watched their child leave for a more recent war, then return in a flag-draped casket.

These veterans and family members, and others, joined the ABOUTFACE art program to share and heal from their service to our nation. They were welcomed in solidarity by fellow veterans who also remember, understand, and care.

Some of these veterans have spent decades serving other veterans and their families. Another teaches art to our county's children. Others are raising the grandchild their fallen veteran left behind. Another enriches his community with his music. And one raises money for the county's homeless population – many of whom are also veterans. All of them served their nation and are now serving Contra Costa County. All of them are integral to the fabric of their neighborhoods.

Can Contra Costa find two cents per resident to continue this program for them? Can we find the funds to help new veterans seeking healing through art and community? Can we let our veterans know that we, too, remember their sacrifice? I hope we can.

Veterans are not, of course, the only people to suffer trauma or to benefit from community arts programs. For just fifty-four cents per resident, the benefits enjoyed by ABOUTFACE students in years past can enrich the lives of young Contra Costans in their formative years and the lives of all who live within our borders.

I respectfully urge you to support our veterans and our community by funding the arts in Contra Costa. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully Yours,
Martha C. Schraer
3241 Golden Rain Road, #1
Walnut Creek, CA 94595

DATE: JULY 20, 2021

TO: THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD
FROM: JOHN D. ARCHIMEDE
U.S. ARMY RETIRED

RE: MEASURE X

DEAR COMMUNITY ADVISEY BOARD MEMBERS,

MY NAME IS JOHN D. ARCHIMEDE AND I AM A RETIRED VETERAN ON A FIXED INCOME.
I SERVED IN THE U.S. ARMY IN GERMANY AND RECEIVED AN HONORABLE DISCHARGE.

I AM WRITING YOU THIS LETTER TO LET YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE WITH
THE ABOUT FACE ART PROGRAM.

THIS PROGRAM WAS INSTRUCTED VERY PROFESSIONALLY FROM THE WONDERUL INSTRUCTORS.
I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED THE TIME SPENT PAINTING AND CREATING NEW IDEAS WITH THE
INSTRUCTOR'S HELP.

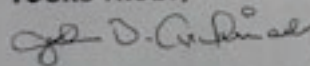
THIS PROGRAM KEPT ME ALIVE AND VIGOROUSLY CREATING PAINTINGS TO HELP KEEP MY SANITY.
THE TIME I SPENT WITH THE INSTRUCTORS HELPED ME PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY.

I DON'T KNOW HOW I COULD HAVE SURVIVED WITHOUT THIS PROGRAM BECAUSE OF THE IDLE HOURS
I SPEND LIVING ALONE.

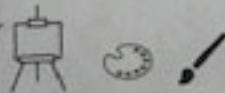
PLEASE KEEP THE ABOUT FACE PROGRAM IN TACT AND I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO ENJOYING
NEW VENTURES WITH THIS WONDERFUL PROGRAM.

I AM WRITING THIS LETTER IN ALL CAPS BECAUSE THAT IS HOW IMPORTANT THIS PROGRAM IS TO ME.

YOURS TRULY,



JOHN D. ARCHIMEDE



July 21, 2021

The Measure X Community Advisory Board

Dear Board Members and Neighbors:

I am a decades-long taxpayer in our county as well as a citizen participant, with my veteran wife, in the ABOUTFACE art program. I am writing to support funding for the Arts in Contra Costa County.

We citizens are responsible for sending our men and women to war knowing all the time that "War is Hell." We also know that the trauma to our nation's veterans is not just physical, but is psychological as well.

Veterans and family members, and others, join the ABOUTFACE art program to support, share and help each other heal from the consequences of their service and sacrifice to our nation. We come together seeking self-compassion and a better understanding of our experiences and memories.

Some veterans have spent decades serving our community as well as other veterans and their families. One teaches art to our county's children. Others are raising the grandchild their fallen veteran left behind. Another enriches his community with his music. And one raises money for the county's homeless population – many of whom are also veterans. All of them served their nation and are now serving Contra Costa County. All of them are integral to the fabric of their neighborhoods and of our county.

Can Contra Costa find two cents per resident to continue this program for them? Can we find the funds to help new veterans seeking healing through art and community? Can we let our veterans know that we, too, remember their sacrifice? We can! And we are all responsible for doing so!

Veterans are not, of course, the only people to benefit from community arts programs. For just fifty-four cents per resident, the benefits enjoyed by ABOUTFACE students in years past can enrich the lives of all Contra Costans, be they in their youth or adulthood. Art betters the lives of all who live within our county borders at a strikingly minimal cost .

I respectfully urge you to support our veterans and our community by funding the arts in Contra Costa. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully Yours,

Jock Eggers

3241 Golden Rain Road, #1

Walnut Creek, CA 94595

Carolyn Considine
AC5 Youth Advisor
July 21, 2021
Measure X Letter of Support

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Carolyn Considine, and I am the first-ever Youth Advisor to the Contra Costa County Arts and Culture Commission (AC5). After applying for a full-time board position in 2019, AC5 asked if I was interested in volunteering with them to lead important art-related efforts for the youth of our county. Thanks to the incredible efforts of Y'Anad Burrell, Jenny Balisle, and Beverly Kumar, a formal Youth Advisor position was later established, and I was then voted into this exciting new role. I am eternally grateful for this position because it enabled me to expand my overall knowledge of art while also becoming closer to our wonderful community.

I was immediately drawn to the written mission of AC5, specifically the section about how they “preserve, celebrate, and share the arts and culture of the many diverse ethnic groups who live in Contra Costa County.” I am amazed that AC5, through its impressive leadership and talented board members, has delivered on that vital mission in so many wonderful ways. From the youth perspective, I have worked closely with AC5 to launch a series of new art programs designed to reach a broader audience and help convey important messages tied to inclusion and social justice (please see attached page for a summary of this work). This work brought together youth from around the community both in-person and virtually, reached countless others through school partnerships, and was even featured in local newspapers and San Francisco evening news. Given there was NO budget for youth art, we needed to become innovative in our approach and rely on the kind donations of others. That said, there is no guarantee that people will graciously provide these donations to AC5 in the future.

I strongly encourage a more significant overall budget for AC5 that includes a line item for youth arts. There is no question that AC5 could enhance its overall strong footprint in our community if it received the necessary funding that other organizations of similar purposes receive. To date, there is not enough funding to continue the youth art that we collectively started over the last two years, let alone **EXPAND** the program to add more Youth Advisors. AC5 plays a critical role in our county and should be financed in a way that will allow it to continue providing work that is central to its mission. I know that new funding would make a massive difference to our commission, but more importantly, to the residents in our county.

I have included a summary of the youth programs that we successfully launched over the last two years, plus links to the summary of media coverage from these efforts. I appreciate your consideration and thank you so much for allowing me to share my perspective on this topic.

Best regards,
Carolyn Considine

AC5 Youth Program Summary (2020-2021)

Justice Mural Program: Opportunity for high school students in our country to create murals that represent their authentic views of social justice. These banners will be made at multiple schools across the county and then travel from school to school so that student voices can be shared on this topic. Our first school to launch the Justice Mural program was Campolindo (in June). It was highlighted in the Campolindo newspaper and the Vice Principal sent out a communication to the entire school about the program with this quote:

"Projects such as this are important because they elevate and empower student voices showing solidarity and support. Our work as a school is to ensure our actions support the message conveyed in this project. As a school community, we have come together to create change. The road is long and the journey is ongoing, but together we can accomplish greatness."

<http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1508/print/Justice-Murals-promote-social-justice-from-a-students-perspective.html>

Project We: A collaborative art effort with local youth artists right before the divisive 2020 Presidential election. This program was a way for AC5 to bring youth together--no matter their background--to collaborate and demonstrate that anything can be done by this generation when we utilize a "we not me" mentality. "Project We" was highlighted both in local print and KCBS nightly news (see link below)

<https://youtu.be/qjhewDfnTV4> and

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/3/folders/1UrFH4uUXue7V0l10IBGafRD2A0QBvBjM>

Virtual High School Art Gallery: When schools transitioned to distance learning in spring 2020, many art students no longer had a place to display their work as all art exhibitions were canceled. In response, we organized a virtual AC5 Arts Gallery that showcased work from over 100 high school students, spanning 27 different high schools in Contra Costa County.

<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/5701/Arts-Caf>

In-person art panel at Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery & Facebook Live Art Panels: Right before the start of Covid, AC5 planned and moderated an Arts Cafe Contra Costa County high school art panel to promote the work of youth art. During the middle of COVID, we turned this panel into a Facebook Live event that received over **2,100 views** and was reposted by the California Arts Council on their Facebook account. During the darker times of Covid, the discussion of art was hopeful to viewers in our community.

<https://www.facebook.com/artsculturecommission/photos/a.817040161794292/1495483937283241/> and <https://www.facebook.com/artsculturecommission/videos/3238109646273458>

Art of Resistance: We partnered with the county education director, who was curating a youth art exhibit in the county offices in Martinez. Utilizing the work from our Virtual High School Art Gallery, we jointly selected pieces of art that reflected this critical theme, worked with the artists for their approval, and facilitated the delivery of the art to be part of the Art of Resistance exhibition. These youth artists now have their work included as part of a physical exhibit!

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tv0hkfhNJqkEH67oTBY1QqSHhyAS2ekI?usp=sharing>

Measure X Community Advisory Board
Board of Supervisors, Contra Costa County

July 20, 2021

RE: Support for Measure X Proposal

To the Measure X Community Advisory Board,

We are writing this letter to express our wholehearted support for the Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa's request for funding from Measure X.

As a recent LACOG grantee we know firsthand how impactful support for the arts can be at a County level. In 2020, with a \$5,000 grant we were able to pay teaching artist fees and offer scholarships to low income Richmond-residents for 15 online classes and workshops. During the covid-19 pandemic online art classes provided inclusive spaces for folks with limited access to the arts to connect, create and feel centered together.

We are thrilled that the Arts Commission's Measure X proposal includes a Community Art Fund to continue supporting arts projects locally. The other initiatives in the Arts Commission's proposal are equally exciting; stellar public art, opportunities for leadership development in the arts, support for artists and organizations to connect and learn from each other. We say, "Yes!"

The arts in Contra Costa County have been underfunded for too long. Measure X offers an important opportunity to build groundwork for ensuring a vital presence for the arts in Contra Costa County.

Sincerely,



José R. Rivera
Executive Director



Amy Spencer
Exhibitions Director

About Richmond Art Center: Richmond Art Center has been sharing art and creating with community since 1936. Our programs encompass classes, exhibitions and events at our facility in downtown Richmond, as well as off-site activities that bring free, high-quality art making experiences to WCCUSD schools and community partners.



*Preserving the diverse heritage
of the Greater Richmond
Community*

Executive Board

Lynn Maack, President
John Ziesenhenn, Vice President
Karen Buchanan, Secretary
Vinay Pimplé, Treasurer

Board of Directors

Rich Chivers
Steve Gilford
Demnlus Johnson III
Rebecca Riley
Jeff Wright

Museum Executive Director

Melinda McCrary

Ship Operations Executive Committee

Kim Abbott, Chief

www.richmondmuseum.org
info@richmondmuseum.org
P.O. Box 1267, Richmond, CA 94802

> Visit the **Richmond Museum of
History and Culture**

400 Nevin Ave, Richmond, California
Tel: (510) 235-7387

> Visit the **SS Red Oak Victory**

1337 Canal Blvd., Richmond, California
Tel: (510) 237-2933

The Richmond Museum Association
is a 501(c)(3) organization
Tax ID 94-6095083

July 22, 2021

Dear Measure X Community Advisory Board,

The Richmond Museum of History and Culture supports the Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa's request for funding from Measure X!

The RMA was established as a history room in the basement of the City of Richmond's historic Carnegie Library. The building became a branch library in 1949 after World War II dramatically changed the demography of Richmond, and then a children's library in the 1960s. In the early 1980s, the Carnegie Library underwent an extensive renovation in order to convert the building into a space that was suitable for a local museum.

The Museum has celebrated a variety of accomplishments in recent years. The Know Your Community series of exhibits and programs has explored topics such as Richmond's Laotian community, the Black Panther Party, and the Jewish experience in Richmond. The Museum has made significant progress to renovate the permanent gallery including drawing up architectural plans and creating an interactive exhibit about the Ohlone language. Our most significant accomplishment, however, is restoring the Richmond Industrial City mural by Victor Arnautoff, the only piece by this artist in the East Bay. The mural was considered lost until the museum staff located it and raised \$50,000 for the treatment necessary to hang it in the permanent gallery.

The arts in Contra Costa County have been seriously underfunded for many years compared to our neighboring Counties. The time to support the arts is now!

As a Contra Costa County arts organization, we would welcome more support for individual artists to create new work, arts education for youth in K-12 grades and a grant program for arts organizations located within the county. Thank you so much for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Melinda McCrary
Executive Director
Richmond Museum of History & Culture



WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Visual and Performing Arts Department
6028 Ralston Ave. Richmond, CA 94805
510-307-4503



Kenneth Chris Hurst Ed.D, Superintendent
, Assoc. Superintendent, CAO

Gabriel Chilcott, Director
Patrick Martin, Coordinator

July 22, 2021

Dear County Supervisors,

I am writing in support of Measure X as a way to provide funding for the Arts in Contra Costa County.

Over the past 6 years, as the Coordinator for Visual and Performing Arts for the West Contra Costa Unified School District, I have often wrestled with the need for additional funding to keep our various programs viable. Prior to the appointment of Mrs. Hanna Ma as the STEAM/VAPA coordinator at the county office of education, I served as the County representative at the County Arts Leads Meetings in Sacramento for 3 years.

In our meetings we would hear of some incredible work being done in other counties through partnerships with their County Arts Foundations and through the California Arts Council. As a school district, these sources of funding were usually not applicable to us. I went to the Contra County Arts Commission to inquire about funding opportunities but as a commission, they were not able to provide grants or other means of funding. I found the representatives to be very supportive even though they were not able to provide monetary support.

Between the work being done in our County's school districts and the efforts of our community arts organizations, we have a vibrant system of arts education and performance/ presentation opportunities for our PreK-12 students but are often held back by the lack of a stable, coherent funding source.

In the hope that Measure X can provide such a source, I fully support its passage.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patrick Martin".

Patrick Martin

Coordinator
WCCUSD Visual and Performing Arts
pmartin@wccusd.net



July 22, 2021

Dear Contra Costa Measure X Advisory Board:

I am writing today in support of an arts foundation for Contra Costa County.

As the CEO & President of Visit Concord, the Tourism Improvement District Agency for the City of Concord, my team markets and promotes Concord's distinct cultural assets and amenities to visitors and residents alike. Additionally, the cities of Concord, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, along with the Tri-Valley cities of Danville, Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton recently formed a newly-branded tourism alliance designated as MtDiabloRegion.com in efforts to collectively market our amazing well-rounded destination with the [SFTravel](https://SFTravel.com) and [Visit California](https://VisitCalifornia.com) agencies on state, national and worldwide platforms.

In order to compete not only with other California cities and regions, but other states and destinations, the cultural experiences in Contra Costa County need funding to "shine". The request of \$.54 per resident would be a nominal ask to ensure the recovery and rebuilding of our Contra Costa County economy.

It is in the wake over our economic hardship that the COVID pandemic has brought, particularly to the hospitality, tourism and arts industries, a need now more than ever to find creative ways to revitalize our cities. I look forward to the positive outcome that will conclude as a result of embracing creative place-making as a crucial part of civic planning.

The proposed efforts of the Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa would be truly strategic and effective for our region. I am in full support of:

1. District Public Art Programs
2. Youth Advisor in each District
3. Arts Connection with quarterly key stakeholder meetings for advocacy, opportunities, and data collection
4. Community Art Fund to support up to 5 community art projects a year
5. AIRS (Artist-in-Residency in the School) pilot program with teachers and student artists
6. Create policy for equitable new and signature programs

Thank you for your consideration.



Warmly,

Elaine Schroth

Elaine Schroth

CEO & President



Anna Smith, Executive Director 656 Quinan Street, Pinole, CA 94564 anna@quinanstreet.org (510) 585-4942

The Quinan Street Project
656 Quinan Street
Pinole, CA 94801

Measure X Board

July 22, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Anna Smith, I use she/her pronouns, and I am both an artist and a lifelong resident of Contra Costa County.

As one of the lucky few who grew up with parents who valued the arts I was always given opportunities to express myself artistically; eventually settling on the performing arts as an actor, dancer, singer, and musician. Having access to arts education set me on the path toward my life's work as an arts education advocate and an activist for equitable schooling in my community.

My mother studied printmaking at California College of the Arts (formerly California College of Arts and Crafts) and obtained a teaching credential and English degree from Mills College. Her commitment to my education and her passion for the arts and the fair treatment of children in schools inspired me to found The Quinan Street Project; a nonprofit organization providing accessible arts education to public elementary schools in the West Contra Costa Unified School District.

The original intent of QSP was to help our schools with smaller budgets have access to arts education (since I knew it was not being widely provided), and that has largely been successful; we have served approximately 2,000 children annually (mostly in Title I schools) and have seen beautiful amounts of growth in our students as their confidence has grown and their voices become stronger. But over the last 10 years of running this organization I see something else: I see that principals are being asked to make incredibly hard choices regarding how they spend funds in their budget, and I am realizing that the issue stems from higher up than our principals or even our school board.

Knowing that we as a community are investing next to nothing in the arts is beyond devastating to me. Especially after a year of watching people turn to books, music, movies, television, virtual museum tours, and more during shelter-in-place. We know that the arts are vital, and yet we decide to deprioritize them at every opportunity. This cycle must be disrupted and I am committed to seeing that disruption through.

By funding the arts in Contra Costa County you are helping us enrich and support our county as we emerge from a global pandemic. The visual and performing arts are uniquely situated to provide social-emotional healing and the Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County is attempting to invest in that healing. Please do not let the future artists in our county down.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Anna Smith, M.Ed. (She/Her)
anna@quinanstreet.org
510-691-8089

/INTERSECTION
FOR THE ARTS

Randy Rollison, Executive Director

randy@theintersection.org

The Quinan Street Project
656 Quinan Street
Pinole, CA 94801

Measure X Board

July 21, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Katie Pool, and I have served since 2017 on the advisory board for The Quinan Street Project (QSP), a nonprofit organization providing arts education to public elementary schools in the West Contra Costa Unified School District. I am writing to express my support for the Measure X tax that would secure funding for the arts in Contra Costa County.

I have had the good fortune to take part in visual and performing arts throughout my life. Such outlets certainly supported my personal expression as an artist; perhaps even more importantly, they encouraged me to examine my emotions and engage with new ideas. Now, as a social worker, I see firsthand how my clients use writing, crafts, music, and countless other forms of artmaking to look after their routine mental health as well as cope with unthinkable challenges.

The arts remain a vital way for all of us to reflect on and participate in the world we live in. Indeed, in response to COVID-19 our communities looked to the arts—to books, media, streamed performances, and more—for comfort and connection. Whether we create it ourselves or find solace in the work of others, art is tantamount to socioemotional care, and we should be especially compelled to invest in this care as we emerge from the collective traumatic experience of a global pandemic.

QSP works hard to provide arts education in schools that operate with smaller budgets, but local organizations like ours cannot compensate for systemic service gaps and the lack of arts funding in Contra Costa County. This county has the third-largest population in the Bay Area and maintains the lowest arts budget. A stable source of funding would expand the county's current programs and establish a core staff to deliver services more equitably. By securing arts funding through the Measure X tax, you demonstrate your commitment to the creativity, curiosity, and emotional health of this community.

Thank you for reading.

Sincerely,

Katie Pool, LMSW, APHSW-C, OSW-C (She/Her)
209-743-9652

July 22nd, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to help underline the case that will be put forward around arts programs in Contra Costa County being drastically underfunded and how this needs to change.

I serve on the Advisory Board for The Quinan Street Project, an organization that provides theatre education to the West Contra Costa Unified School District and offers virtual and in person classes to students both afterschool and over the summer from our Pinole location. We are not unlike other non-profits where we rely so heavily on our donor bases, everyone from individuals to small local businesses to grants. Our story is also not unique on how we especially felt the crunch from this past year with balancing our budgets with lower donation numbers. Although, when the Contra Costa budget numbers came to our attention, it clicked into place why we have been feeling this pressure and lack of grant funding from organizations we'd been reaching out to. The fact that Contra Costa County has the third largest population in the Bay Area with the lowest budget is nothing short of shocking. When running the numbers, the average art funding per person is less than one dollar.

If this past year has taught us anything it is that we need to stay actively engaged with our communities, and one of the best ways for that are through thriving arts programs in and out of the classroom. Especially for young children as they are developing the skills on how to communicate, connect and express themselves creatively. This is the time to help give them the platform to encourage and build up their self-confidence. Even if students don't go into the performing arts in their adult lives, so

Leah McKibbin * 650.868.2974 * leah.mckibbin@gmail.com

many will point to theatre as a building block that helped develop public speaking skills, as well as tools to feel empathy and connection to others. Another deeply felt lesson from last year was how we need to actively listen to reach a greater and deeper understanding of one another.

So many arts organizations are at a very crucial tipping point in terms of burnout around funding, and some might not last into the next fiscal year. I truly hope you will hear the voices both speaking live on July 28th and submitting written statements that are begging for help.

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leah McKibbin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leah McKibbin

Advisory Board Member, The Quinan Street Project



July 22, 2021

Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County

Attn: Jenny Balisle, Managing Director

Dear Ms. Balisle,

Thank you for inviting Concord Art Association to comment on your proposal about Measure X funding for the arts in Contra Costa County.

As a small 501c3 non-profit with 107 members and an annual budget of around \$8000, we are limited in our outreach to underserved communities within our area of the county. On our small budget we manage to lead art camps for Monument Crisis Center, teach monthly art classes for students at Wren Elementary-a Title 1 school, and issue grants to teachers in the Mt. Diablo School District. This fall we are initiating a scholarship program for Art students at Diablo Valley College. In 2021, we raised all the funds for our second public art project in Concord, painting four traffic control boxes with murals that "Celebrate Concord." Together with the boxes from the project we initiated and managed in 2019, Concord now features 15 beautiful art installations in the form of various painted utility boxes.

Dedicated volunteers bring our programs and projects to the community. Although we partner with other local non-profits such as the Concord Historical Society, Visit Concord, and Solo Opera, without paid staff our ability to lead community-wide events is limited. We must plan our activities based on the money we raise from memberships and donations, since both the County and City of Concord budget so little for art grants and programs.

For years, we have discussed holding a Central County Arts Festival to celebrate both visual and performing artists in our area. This is the kind of undertaking that requires dedicated staff and a budget bigger than what we can afford.

We dream of a day when public art that reflects the wonderful diversity of our community graces every major thoroughfare and public space in Concord. We would like to engage youth from local schools to create public art with our members. To initiate a project of that scope requires paid staff, not a small team of volunteers.

We agree with every one of your "Transformational" points and would be happy to express our support at the Measure X meeting.

Sincerely,

Catherine Hensiek
President, Concord Art Association

Michele Seville
2022 Thompson Lane
El Sobrante, CA 94803

July 13, 2021

To: Measure X Community Advisory Board

I would like to express my support for Measure X, which is expected to raise \$112M for Contra Costa County. The arts are an essential part to any community, which I have witnessed first-hand as former Arts & Culture Manager for the City of Richmond for fifteen years.

I am aware that Contra Costa County has no secure annual budget for the arts, and no permanent employee(s). Also, the funding per person in CCC is a mere \$0.12! For a county with hundreds of highly renowned artists and art non-profits, I think we can do better.

Funding the arts in CCC will be transformative. It will acknowledge the rich artistic resources we already have and will enhance our county's image. I witnessed a transformation in Richmond as the result of increased public art, which brightened the streets, reflected community history, and enabled visual expression for its artists. Public art daily impacts people's lives, and art grants support existing and emerging artists so that they can continue to produce.

CCC is already a leader in many ways. Why not the arts? We are way behind by comparison to other counties, and if we are to take our rightful place as a leader in the arts, we must invest in them! Such an investment will affect our sense of place, education, civic pride, tourism, and will create a more vital business environment.

AC5 recognizes stellar CCC artists and art non-profits every year. I, myself have received such recognition. Let's take the next step and fund Measure X so that our county can be recognized as one that honors the arts as a builder of business, community, and civic pride.

I strongly urge you to support Measure X!

Sincerely,

Michele Seville

Former Arts & Culture Manager, City of Richmond

July 22, 2021

Victoria Bianco, Teaching Artist
2288 Dalis Drive
Concord, CA 94520

Dear Measure X Community Advisory Board Members:

Did you know that throughout history art has been used to express thoughts and to reach deeper understandings of ideas and feelings? As Teaching Artist for the Veterans in Action, AboutFace Program since 2016, I have witnessed Veterans, that while engaged in the AboutFace Portrait Painting process, experience transformation. Here is one story.

Forty or so years ago, Tom, a Vietnam Army Veteran, captured through the lens of his camera, an enemy being shot between the eyes. He was close enough that when he slumped over Tom could touched him. It was his first experience with death, up close and personal. Tom was traumatized and couldn't let the experience go. This trauma sent him spiraling down, arresting his growth as a photographer for years and contributing to his PTSD. And so it was when he came to us. Through the processes and revelations that he experienced in several AboutFace painting workshops 2016 - 2018, he was able to pick up and enjoy his camera once again! By using his imagination he was able to aspire to something more.

Let me share a few other veterans reflections and comments after taking the workshop:

"I felt a sense of accomplishment after completing my self-portrait." US Army Veteran

"I felt like I was looking out a window. I felt like the image was looking back at me. I didn't feel blue at any time during the process." US Army Veteran

"I have always enjoyed looking at art. Now I am learning that I enjoy making art as well." 82nd Airborne Veteran 1966-1969

"I was critical, over my approach to this project, trying to integrate what I thought I looked like with how I envisioned my ideal self. In the end I liked what I saw." US Army Veteran

"I felt able to express myself as I blended my colors and reflected on my life." US Army Veteran

"Art has been a big part of my healing process. Watercolors is a medium that allows me to deal with trauma that I couldn't share verbally, in therapy." Marine Corps Veteran 1968-1972

"Drawing and sketching images expresses my creativity and talent with drawing. My drawings of people are very similar to their appearance. I draw quick and make details to resemble the images that I am sketching." US Navy Veteran

"This portrait makes me reflect on all these 83 years of life and where I am now. Whenever I draw and paint I feel good all over. Thank you God!" US Army Veteran

AboutFace: *Building Veterans - 'Self-understanding through Self-expression'* provides opportunities for veterans to participate in painting workshops that empowers them to play an active role in determining their wellness. Painting encourages self-expression, communication, socialization and facilitates cognitive retraining for veterans with traumatic brain injury.

Research suggests that engaging in the arts promotes wellness and alleviates pain. Art programs provide a sense of achievement and progress that diminishes emotional

stress, channels energies into acceptable forms of behavior and creates an outlet for expression of feelings.

Thanks to the California Arts Council, Veterans in Action Program and matching funds from within Contra Costa County, the program has helped participating Veterans in CCC overcome challenges, heal themselves, and develop more of their innate potential, However, CAC no longer has the Veterans In Action Program and there no funds for our About Face Program, no matching grants. This signature program's existence is in danger.

That is why I am asking you to allocate \$625,000 to secure the Arts Foundation for Contra Costa County. Measure X Funding of fifty-four cents per person would secure all of the arts programs in CCC and help to create new programs in the community. Creativity - art is and equity and economic investment.

Thank you for your time and considerations in this matter.

Sincerely,

Victoria Bianco

Teaching Artist and Program Coordinator for About Face 2020

July 21, 2021

Measure X Community Advisory Board

The Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County (AC5) request for funding from the Measure X committee will help build the infrastructure to provide a vibrant arts scene for the residents of Contra Costa County.

Contra Costa County (CCC) ranks last of the Bay Area counties in per capita spending for the arts at \$0.12. Let me repeat, LAST of the Bay Area counties in arts spending.

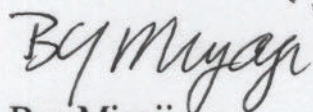
Measure X funding will allow AC5 to have full time staff and fund programs such as District Arts Programs, Youth Advisors in each district, a county-wide Public Art Program and Community Art Fund (up to 5 projects per year).

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown how the arts helped residents during the stay-at-home periods of isolation. The arts are more than television and the movies. During the pandemic people turned to literature (reading and writing), virtual museum visits, painting, sculpture, modeling and many other forms of art. Art was to educate and entertain children both in school and in home. Artists were designated as Second Responders by the California Legislature for their role during the pandemic.

A strong arts program will benefit the residents of CCC in many ways: mentally, physically and spiritually. An arts program will get residents involved in their community and provide economic stimulus to those communities to bolster Measure X funds and make a brighter future for Contra Costa County.

I urge Measure X Community Advisory Board to fund the AC5 request for funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Miyaji". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ben" and last name "Miyaji" clearly distinguishable.

Ben Miyaji

Chair, Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County

July 21, 2021

To: Measure X Community Advisory Board:

My name is Elizabeth Wood. I am a member of the Contra Costa County Arts & Culture Commission (AC5) and am the current President of Contra Costa Musical Theatre (CCMT).

I have been involved in the Performing Arts in Contra Costa, Alameda and Solano Counties for 50+ years as a Performer, Choreographer, Production Manager, Crew member, and a Member of the Board of Directors. I am also a former Advisory Council member for the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek and of the former Willows Theatre in Concord.

In the past Decade I've seen many new performing Arts Companies and, unfortunately, some long time Companies such as Diablo Light Opera Company, the aforementioned Willows Theatre, Diablo Actors Ensemble, Butterfield 8 (aka B8 Theatre Company) and CCMT temporarily or permanently suspend operation due to lack of support, rising costs to produce shows, inability to find reasonably priced venues and most recently, AB5 "The GIG" Law. The Productions these companies sponsored is where young performers honed their skills and earned about the various aspects of Life in the Theatre; not just as a performer, but as Directors, Choreographers, Designers and Builders, Production Managers and Business Managers. Before Covid hit, many local talent were performing on Broadway, performing in Touring companies, on Cruise ships and in Amusement parks all over the World. They all agree that if it had not been for the experiences they had with Local Non-Profit Performing Arts organizations, they would never have made it to where they are today.

Another Note: While attending DVC and Cal State East Bay, I studied Child Development and participated as a volunteer at a Headstart Program, at a program at Juvenile Hall for Delinquent Teen girls, and at a Play Therapy program for abused kids. In all cases the use of Art, Music and storytelling were tools the Teachers, Counselors and Therapists used to help, treat, and counsel these youngsters. I have always wondered how those kids might have fared without the dedicated teachers/Counselors/Therapists who knew how to use Art, Music and Poetry, etc. in their treatment.

Artists of all types are often asking for support from AC5, and it is disheartening to have to tell them we just don't have the budget to fund their request and we only have 1 part-time Contract employee to do all the work. What's even worse, is when they are able to secure monetary support from neighboring County Art Commissions who seem to have more available funds, and the staff to get things done.

Please support Arts & Culture in Contra Costa County by funding the programs we need, staffing the Commission to achieve the highest return on investment and recognizing the benefits of providing Art, Music, Theater and Culture available to all County residents in the most diverse and inclusive programs as possible.

Respectfully yours,
Elizabeth M. Wood
1286 La Vista Ave
Concord, CA 94521
Lizmwood.ac5@gmail.com

Dear Measure X Advisory Board,

While I still may be able to sing the paint of the walls, I now use my voice to lift others up and amplify their voices. As a Arts and Culture Commissioner in District 2, I have a background in the performing arts, education, and a degree in communication with a foundation of social justice. I have a heart for service and civic engagement. Like many of you, I'm a dedicated volunteer. Securing funds from Measure X to invest in the people for access and experiences in arts and culture would give the Arts and Culture Commission a sustainable foundation to solidify the programs the commission currently supports-- and the hope needed to grow for the future.

I am advocating that funds be secured and earmarked to invest in programs that are already interwoven into the fabric of the commission that currently need funding:

- YOUTH ADVISOR. A Contra Costa County first! I'm proud to be the champion for this position and have created the framework for this role. Our current Youth Advisor spent \$600 out of her own pocket for the creation of Social Justice Murals that high school students collaborated on. Please fund this program so our youth can not only create a project like this for our county, but so, in the name of equity, we can expand this program to every district.
- ABOUT FACE. Offered to Veterans in Contra Costa County. A series of FREE self-portrait painting classes. The grant for this program just ended and there are no funds for it.
- POETRY OUTLOUD. A national recitation contest open to high school students.
- ARTS RECOGNITION AWARDS. An event that recognizes those who have made a significant artistic or philanthropic contribution to Contra Costa's Arts and Culture every other year.
- ARTS PASSAGES. Exhibitions showcase artists, arts organizations throughout the county.
- STAFF. We currently have one part time staff member. In order to grow in services, please compensate people for full time.
- Ensuring representation through the lens of equity in geographic, racial and ethnic tapestry that mirrors the County's diversity including by not only those at risk, vulnerable populations, people of color, foster, homeless, intergenerational, LGBTQ+, Public School, Home School, incarcerated, etc.
- Building Partnerships through the Arts Directory

Thank you for your consideration,

Beverly Kumar

Arts and Culture Commissioner of Contra Costa County
Beverly@BeverlyKumar.com

Measure X Community Advisory Board,

Our Commissioners' recognize that it is our mission to advance the arts in a way that promotes communication, education, appreciation, and collaboration to citizens throughout Contra Costa County. Presently we do this through our annual awards programs, recognition events, public art activities, specific educational programs, and the establishment of a youth advisor position. But exactly who are the citizens who comprise our community? Who and how many diverse ethnic groups live amongst us? Clearly we lack much-needed statistics. To resolve this issue, and to increase communication and understanding between all citizens through art, we must and are pursuing such much-needed research.

Art is not only a vital element in the quality of life for all of the citizens of our county, it is the goal of this Commission to preserve, celebrate, and share the arts with the many diverse ethnic groups who reside throughout the county. To accomplish this, it is imperative that we learn who and what comprise the ethnicity of such groups. We intend to do this by researching, developing, and producing, a Cultural Prospectus that, I am happy to report, we are currently in the process of preparing. When completed, we will present the findings to the Board of Supervisors, and, hopefully, we will have developed a clear path to our Commission's arts and cultural programs making Contra Costa County a vibrant and inspiring place to live.

In essence, it is everyone's duty to forge strong partnerships between the arts community and its various constituencies. As the late opera singer and a director of the New York City Opera Company, Beverly Sills, said: "Art is the signature of civilization." And, indeed, it is. Actually, Art is everywhere. From the performing arts, literature, and the visual and digital arts our Commission is dedicated to defining our culture and reflecting the state of the arts in our community.

At Large 3 Commissioner Joan D'Onofrio

I am in support of Measure X because of the invaluable benefits that art and culture have contributed to my community, and my life.

Whether it was an advanced class in high school or sketching during middle school lunch, art has and always will hold a special place in my mind and my heart. By supporting the measure, you are directly contributing to key services that will impact our youth and help them lead a path for success.

To many, art and culture are taken for granted and often misconstrued as being unimportant. I believe that is far from the truth and that given the necessary support, art educators and organizations will provide students across the county with valuable skills needed to succeed in the modern world.

Engaging with the arts develops critical thinking on the spot, patience, delayed gratification, innovation, technical prowess, visual communication skills, and much more.

By supporting the measure, you are contributing to the betterment of our youth and community for generations.

Jordan Fridle

Greetings,

How can this be? In a county the size of Contra Costa there is almost no public/financial support for the Arts. The false romantic narrative of the "starving artist" must die. The reality is that artists and art programs need capital to survive and function.

Financing thru Measure X would contribute to development of much needed arts programs and create structures within Contra Costa to be built and expanded on into the future. Equity policies would be incorporated from the ground up to include all ages and ethnicities, elevating our county to one of the most progressive rather than remaining at our bottom-of-the-barrel level.

Nourish your community with the soul food of art!

Linda Kalin
Richmond resident and artist

Jose Arandia

9 Donegal Ct
Pinole CA 94564
(510)691-2106
Jdarandia@yahoo.com

July 22, 2021

To the County Board members and leaders,

I am writing this letter in support of Measure X for Contra Costa County. As a community leader and an artist and performer, I see the value in highlighting this issue and see it as my duty to help future generations. The arts are an essential part of life and possibly the best form of expression and communication, most importantly for younger people. In Contra Costa County we are the third largest population in the Bay Area currently with \$0.12 per person that is funded to our arts programs, while San Francisco is \$1.04 per person. We have a large amount of artists in the county which I have a relation to a vast majority of them, to which I am still meeting new artists of every art form. A lot of them have been self taught and some have left the arts entirely because unfortunately the arts aren't taken as seriously as they should be and if there's anything I hope we took away from the pandemic is that the arts are an essential part of the human experience, please take this into consideration while making your decision. Thank you

Sincerely,

Jose D Arandia

601 La Gonda Way

Danville, CA 94526

(925) 984-4031

bdepppoetry@gmail.com

Re: Letter of Support for Measure X in Contra Costa County

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Brennan DeFrisco and I'm writing in support of Measure X to enrich and expand our county's engagement with the arts. I've been facilitating literary arts programming in Contra Costa for the past six years as a teaching artist, performance coach and program coordinator in the Poetry Out Loud program, as well as the county coordinator for California Poets in the Schools. I've shared words, poems, and space with various communities within our county, including K-12 public schools across the districts, alternative and secondary schools, incarcerated youth centers, libraries, bookstores, and countless culminating school events to celebrate our students' work and artistic achievement. I'm honored to have the opportunity to provide engagement with the arts to our youth and believe they need and deserve more opportunities to do so in our community.

Through the Poetry Out Loud and Cal Poets programs, I've watched students hone their public speaking and performance skills, which provides invaluable communication skills they will use for the rest of their lives. I've watched students use critical thinking, imagination, empathy, and creative understanding to discuss, discover, and unpack the subjective mysteries of poetry. These skills are in incredibly high demand in the modern job market and set them up for success in their future careers. I've watched students write and speak honestly about their feelings, their values, their truth, their understanding of the world. I've watched students become more confident, emotionally intelligent, and active in their own healing and mental health. Poetry, and art in general, provides an invaluable space for community, creativity, and collective well-being.

Art is not a luxury or an elective, but a critical part of every student's cultural and socioemotional education. In the heavy, difficult times we are living in and living through, arts programming is needed now, more than ever, to uplift our community's voices, give them more opportunities to express themselves through art, and provide more space for our youth and community members to heal, to learn, to speak, and to be heard. I dream of a community where access to the arts is available to everyone. Measure X is a much-needed step toward making that dream a reality for Contra Costa.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brennan DeFrisco

July 23, 2021

Measure X Community Board
c/o Jenny Balisle, Managing Director
Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County
1025 Escobar Street, 4th Floor
Martinez, CA 94553
Via email: staff@ac5.cccounty.us

Dear Ms. Balisle:

At our meeting last night, the Richmond Arts & Culture Commission unanimously voted to allow me to submit this letter of support for the Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa's request for secure funding for Measure X.

The City of Richmond has a rich arts and cultural tradition that contributes to its unique identity. Richmond seeks to continue to build this image as a regional center for arts and culture by working in collaboration with Contra Costa County and other cities within the region. Richmond non-profit institutions and individuals provide significant benefits that provide high quality programs and services to our residents and visitors alike.

As we seek further regional alliances, we are very much aware that, compared to neighboring Counties, the arts in Contra Costa County have been seriously underfunded for decades. The time to change that is now, and Measure X provides the opportunity to make that change.

As a Contra Costa County arts organization, we'll welcome the opportunity to seek support through the Arts Connection, AIRS (Artist-in-Residency in the School) pilot program and the Community Art Fund for Richmond-based organizations and artists.

Therefore, we support the Measure X Community Advisory Board recommendation for secure financial support of the arts in Contra Costa County through Measure X.

Respectfully submitted,
Florene Wiley, Chair
Richmond Arts & Culture Commission
Richmond CA
flo@flowiley.com
(510) 588-9255

Text & Resources

1. Introduction:

Mission: The Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County is dedicated to advancing the arts in a way that promotes communication, education, appreciation and collaboration throughout Contra Costa County so that we may grow creatively as a community that preserves and celebrates our diverse cultural expression.

Link: www.contracosta.ca.gov/5281/Mission-Statement

2. Land Acknowledgment:

The Arts and Culture Commission would like to take a moment to acknowledge the land and indigenous peoples of Contra Costa County.

We collectively acknowledge that Contra Costa County resides on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of indigenous people. Contra Costa County resides on land that was cared for and called home by the Bay Miwok and Ohlone people, who shared their oral traditions in the Utian / Penutian language.

Local tribes from our county include, but are not limited to, the Saclan, Tatcan, Chupchan, Julpun, Volvon, Souyen, and other native peoples from time immemorial.

This land holds great historical, spiritual, and personal significance to its past, present, and future stewards, the native nations and peoples of this region. We honor and continue their tradition of cultural and artistic expression in Contra Costa County through our engagement with the arts today.

3-4: Commissioners:

Vice-Chair: District 1: Silvia Ledezma

Senior Commissioner: District 4: Elizabeth Wood

Commissioners:

District 2: Beverly Kumar

District 3: Grant Taylor

District 5: PENDING

At-Large-1: Y'Anad Burrell

At-Large-3: Joan D'Onofrio

At-Large-4: Lanita Mims

Alternate: PENDING

Links:

<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/4973/Commissioners>

<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/6408/Boards-and-Commissions-Database>

5-6: Signature programs:

County services we provide:

- a. Youth Advisor is a one-year term in which they perform a Commission-approved service project during their respective term.
- b. Arts Passages exhibitions at the County Administration Building.
- c. Arts Recognition Awards highlights individuals and organizations.
- d. Arts Café is a series of art workshops, lectures, discussions, and exhibitions.
- e. Arts Directory and Calendar for Contra Costa County artists or arts organizations.
- f. ABOUTFACE is a free self-portrait painting classes for Contra Costa County Veterans.
- g. Poetry Out Loud is a national recitation contest for high school students.
- h. Local Arts and Cultural Organizations Grant (LACOG) was a one-time grant.

Link: www.ac5.org

7: Upcoming:

Artist Power Convenings is a one-time grant we are assisting YBCA facilitate. The grants prioritize Black and African American; American Indian or Alaska Native; Latinx; Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; Asian; disabled and LGBTQIA+ artists in Contra Costa County.

Link: www.ybca.org

Arts and Culture Prospectus of Contra Costa County is a series of Fall workshops in which we'll be identifying cultural stakeholders to define public art projects in each District. Project funded by a rebudget of a one-time allocation for Fiscal Year 21-22.

Link: <https://youtu.be/N2TADmDFQU>

8-9: Prevention:

- a. Artists are second responders.
- b. Art is free expression to address social issues.

- c. Art addresses collective grief.
- d. Art uplifts all communities.

Links:

www.ac5.org
www.robindlopez.com
www.calawyersforthearts.org/arts-in-corrections.html
www.meaningfulteens.org/
www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue1419/High-school-students-collaboration-demonstrates-power-of-art-better-together.html

10: Data:

82% of Americans believe arts & culture are important to local businesses and the economy.
 87% of Americans believe arts & culture are important to quality of life.

Links:

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-5/learn/national-findings>
<https://www.bea.gov/news/2021/arts-and-cultural-production-satellite-account-us-and-states>

11: Data:

Local vs. Nonlocal Arts Audience Spending
 Local Audience Spending // \$23.44
 Nonlocal Audience Spending // \$47.57

Link:

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-5/learn/national-findings>

12. Data:

95% of local arts agencies use the arts to address community development issues (e.g., youth, economic, diversity)
 91% of Americans believe that the arts are vital to providing well-rounded education.

Links:

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-5/learn/national-findings>
<https://www.instagram.com/beanartshero/>

13. Data:

Music training increases toddler IQ. In early childhood, the arts have been shown to improve IQ and spatial cognition in 3-5 year olds.
 Students who take four years of arts and music classes score an average of over 150 points higher on the SAT.
 Low-income students engaged in the arts are more than twice as likely to graduate college

Link: <https://www.instagram.com/beanartshero/>

14-15. Data:

Contra Costa County: 3rd highest population and lowest budget.
 Funding average per person: \$1.04 Contra Costa County: \$.12
 Contra Costa County: largest services gap and 0 employees

Links:

<https://transparentcalifornia.com/>
www.ac5.org
<https://www.artscouncilnapavalley.org>
<https://www.westaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/ACNV-FINAL-Position-Announcement-9-20-18.pdf>
<https://www.marincultural.org/>
<https://www.marincounty.org/depts/cu/contact-us>
<https://www.solanocountyartscouncil.com/>
<https://www.zoominfo.com/c/solano-county-arts-council/346740852>
<https://www.creativesonoma.org/>
<https://cmo.smcgov.org/arts-commission>
<https://cmo.smcgov.org/contact-san-mateo-county-arts-grants-progra>
<https://www.sfartscommission.org/>
<https://www.acgov.org/arts/html/home.html>
<https://www.svcreates.org/>

16. Data:

California State-Local Partners Snapshot Survey:

Average budget size: **\$519,449**

Average Number of Employees:

Full-time – **2.94**

Part-time – **2.93**

Contractors – **6.92**

*The Arts Commission was established in 1994.

No CCC arts demographic data due to limited budget.

Contra Costa County Summary:

3rd highest population

0 employees and 1 part-time independent contractor

0 secure funds

\$31,000 average grant budget match

Link: https://arts.ca.gov/grant_program/state-local-partnership/

17. Trends

California Arts Council

1. No longer sole funding source.
2. Support Commissions with basic secure funding.
3. Look to invest in partnerships.
4. Discontinuing ABOUTFACE grant program.
5. CAC grant funds can't be used for grant matches.
6. Arts Commission budget has close to zero leverage.

Equity

1. Investment reflects values.
2. \$31,000 CCC grant match is inadequate.
3. CCC has a huge diverse artistic population.
4. Disproportionately impacts every community.
5. LACOG grantee feedback:
"The lack of CCC arts investment has created a disconnect between artists, art organizations, and residents."

Links:

<https://arts.ca.gov/>

<https://arts.ca.gov/about/>

<https://arts.ca.gov/programs/>

18. Transformational:

What bold experiments, big ideas, and innovative approaches to meet key needs?

1. District Public Art Program: Every Bay Area County has a public art program! Let's build Contra Costa County's first public art program!
2. Community Art Fund: Up to 5 community art projects a year
3. AIRS (Artist-in-Residency in the School) pilot program: Pilot program where teaching artists in CCC schools work with students to create an art project.

Links:

https://www.acgov.org/arts/html/public_art.html

<https://www.sfartscommission.org/our-role-impact/programs/public-art>

<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/scc/gov/CountyPolicies/Board-Policy-7.18-Public-Art.pdf>

<https://www.marinarts.org/>

<https://cmo.smcgov.org/office-community-affairs-public-art>

<https://www.creativesonoma.org/public-art/>

<https://www.solanocounty.com/depts/genserv/scpac/default.asp>

<https://www.sfartscommission.org/content/artist-residence-program>

<https://www.sfartsed.org/programs/artists-in-residence/>

19. Transformational:

What bold experiments, big ideas, and innovative approaches to meet key needs?

1. Arts Connection: Connect artists and art organizations for quarterly meetings for advocacy, opportunities, and data collection.
2. Youth Advisor in each District: Expands equity and opportunity to youth in each District!
3. Build Structures: Community creates policy for new and signature programs based on equity. All other Bay Area Counties have Arts and Culture in their General Plans!

Links:

www.sryouthartcommittee.org

<https://www.sfartscommission.org/information-for/artists/resources/artist-directory>

<https://eastbayopenstudios.com/artist-directory/>

<https://www.oaklandartmurmur.org/all-listings/>

<https://www.artspan.com/artist-directory-az/A>

20. Numbers Matter:

Bay Area Counties:

\$1.04 average arts funding per person

\$1.04 x 1,155,879 Contra Costa County residents= \$1,205,601

Contra Costa County ask \$625,000 \$.54 per resident

21. \$625,000 Investment

TOP PRIORITY: SECURE STAFF TO DELIVER SERVICES!

Let's build an arts foundation in CCC! It will take time and dedicated staff to do so!

a. Support Team: \$305,000

Managing Director

Program Coordinator

Communication and Marketing

b. Build Structures: \$45,000

Facilitator works with CCC residents to create policy for District Public Art Programs, Community Projects Fund, and Signature Programs based on equity!

c. Signature Programs: \$100,000

Arts and Culture Prospectus of Contra Costa County, ABOUTFACE, Poetry Out Loud, Youth Advisor, Jump StArts CAC grant, Art Recognition Awards, and Art Passages

d. District Public Art Program: \$100,000 (\$20,000 each District)

e. New Programs: \$50,000

Youth Advisor (each District)

AIRS (Artist-in-Residency in the Schools) pilot program

Arts Connection (CCC artists/art organizations quarterly meetings for advocacy, opportunities, and data collection)

f. Community Art Fund: \$25,000 up to 5 projects a year!

22. 5 Reasons \$625,000:

1. Arts is an equity & economic investment.
2. A stable funding source secures programs.
3. Follows best practices of regional County partners:
average per person \$1.04 and our ask \$.54
4. Acknowledges community needs through new programs.
5. Art speaks to the human experience and uplifts all communities!

We can do this together!

23. Thank you MCAB!

**Additional information available per request.*