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For Immediate Release

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CALIFORNIA HUMANITIES AWARDS \$175,000 TO 11 NEW HUMANITIES FOR ALL PROJECT GRANTS

Locally-Initiated Projects Include Exhibitions, Workshops, Performances, Films, Festivals, Discussions and Oral Histories

(Oakland, CA) — After a highly competitive process, **California Humanities** is pleased to announce **\$175,000 in awards to 11 new projects** through the 2019 Humanities for All Project Grant program.

The eleven **Humanities for All Project Grants**, totaling \$175,000, include a range of locally-initiated public humanities projects, from an award to Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indian youth and elders to create knowledge and insights about the cultural, social, and environmental future of the Salton Sea, to a play exploring the role and experience of Black women as a part of the infamous Peoples Temple cult and Jonestown tragedy against the historical backdrop of the 1970s. Each project adds a new layer to a rich picture of California's culture, people and history.

Humanities for All is a grant program that supports locally-initiated public humanities projects that respond to the needs and interests of people in California, encourage greater public participation in humanities programming, particularly by new and/or underserved audiences, and promotes understanding and empathy among all the state's peoples in order to cultivate a thriving democracy. Project Grants range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 and are awarded twice a year for larger public humanities projects of up to two-years' duration. The grant program, launched in 2017, has supported 53 projects so far with a total of \$875,000 in funds.

"Our prestigious Humanities for All Project Grant program drew a very competitive and diverse set of applicants this spring" said **Julie Fry, President & CEO of California Humanities**. "I am so pleased that we're able to support these 11 projects, which will present high-quality public humanities events in a range of regions, communities, and issues across the state."

SPRING 2019 HUMANITIES FOR ALL PROJECT GRANT AWARDS

*Note: Starting in 2018, in addition to continuing consideration of all eligible project applications on any topic, using any mode or format and reaching any public audience, California Humanities designated the specific funding focus area of Youth Focus for Humanities for All Project Grant Awards, denoted by *.*

AfroLatinidad in Los Angeles

LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes Foundation, Los Angeles, CA

Project Director: Mariah Berlanga-Shevchuk

Grant Amount: \$20,000

A quarter of US Latinos identify as “Afro-Latino”, “Afro-Caribbean,” or “of African descent with roots in Latin America,” yet understanding and representation of Afrolatinidad remains marginal. This exhibition, scheduled to run between February and July 2020, supplemented with a scholarly catalog and a rich array of public programs, will provide a space for members of Los Angeles’ Afro-Latinx community as well as the broader public to explore and learn about the experiences of this group. Through photographs, art, music, oral histories, and material objects such as restaurant menus, musical instruments, clothing, sports memorabilia, and personal keepsakes, the exhibition will showcase the contributions and rich history of a community that remains conspicuously absent from national discourse.

Cultivating Seeds of Community/*Cultivando Semillas de Comunidad*

Cal Poly Pomona Foundation, Inc., Pomona, CA

Project Directors: Teresa Lloro-Bidart, PhD and Jeff Roy, PhD

Grant Amount: \$20,000

Building on contemporary community knowledge shared by local culture bearers about indigenous and urban foodways, health, and wellbeing, this project will complement current food justice initiatives in the Pomona Valley through a traveling narrative documentary series and photo exhibition, a cultural festival, and weekly interpretive programming at the Pomona Valley Certified Farmers Market, a 37-year-old community space. A cultural festival in May 2020 will launch the oral history documentary series and photo exhibition titled *Cultivating Seeds of Community* or *Cultivando Semillas de Comunidad*, to reflect the rich Mexican-American history of the city. In the fall of that year, the exhibition will travel to the dA Center for the Arts, Café con Libros, and California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. The project will strengthen connections between the community and campus by involving students and faculty from the Department of Liberal Studies at Cal Poly Pomona in the development of an arts and humanities program dedicated to the documentation, dissemination, and creation of local cultural knowledge.

FOREST⇌FIRE

Arts Council of Nevada County, Grass Valley, CA

Project Director: Michael Llewellyn

Grant Amount: \$20,000

Debuting in October, 2020 at the Truckee-Donner Recreation Center, FOREST⇌FIRE is a traveling interpretive exhibit and companion civic and educational engagement platforms, *Fire Circle* and *Forest Home*, that will help transform viewers’ cultural understanding about the Sierra Nevada forest, its relationship with fire, and their stewardship role within that relationship. Flowing thematically through past, present and future, the exhibit will include multi-lingual (English, Spanish, Washoe) didactic material and works of art in various mediums, including painting, textile, beadwork, narrative film, sculpture, scent, and photography, to tell the story of how indigenous people, using low intensity fire, created and maintained the West’s pre-European, old growth forest for thousands of years, why our forests are currently in ecological collapse, and what can be done immediately to prevent further losses. An accompanying series of panel discussions led by scientists, artists, and Native culture bearers will be presented over the course of the four-month exhibition, along with special programs for local children.

From Killing Fields to Sanctuary: Voices of Oakland's Cambodian Refugees

ARTogether, Oakland, CA

Project Director: Leva Zand

Grant Amount: \$20,000

This multimedia oral history project will use recorded testimonies, photography, documentary film, and community dialogue to tell the story of Cambodian refugees as part of California's cultural fabric, juxtaposing past historical atrocities with the refugee experience of today, including difficulties caused by recent shifts in US immigration policy. The project team will interview and photograph survivors of the Cambodian genocide of 1975–79 now living in the Bay Area. Recordings and images will be made available on an interactive website and incorporated into a short documentary film. A series of events in 2020 and 2021, including three public forums featuring discussion panels and film screenings, will engage and educate the public about the Cambodian refugee experience, as well as explore issues common and endemic to all refugees and immigrants.

In the Movement

Asian Improv aRts, San Francisco, CA

Project Director: Lenora Lee

Grant Amount: \$10,000

Inspired by the stories of formerly incarcerated individuals, Lenora Lee Dance (LLD) will develop *In the Movement*, a series of 12 site-specific immersive performances on Alcatraz Island, which will serve as a meditation on forgiveness, reconciliation, and redemption, and the power of individuals to transcend. Premiering April 29, 2021, the four-week run of performances will be augmented by public humanities programming that will enrich the audience experience: panel discussions, lecture/presentations, community dialogues, and a companion interpretive exhibit. The project will be supported by the contributions of advocates, scholars, and formerly incarcerated people, as well as locally and nationally recognized performing and visual artists and designers.

Migration, Environment, and the Search for Sanctuary*

The University Corporation, Northridge, CA

Project Directors: Lisa Sun Hee Park, PhD and Stevie Ruiz, PhD

Grant Amount: \$15,000

This public history project addresses two of the most urgent contemporary social issues — migration and the environment—through multiple activities as part of a unique, interdisciplinary project that is both international in its intellectual scope and community-based in its grounding in the lived experiences of immigrants in Southern California. In partnership with local environmental justice organizations, students and faculty at California State University, Northridge and UC Santa Barbara will explore how environmental factors have affected local migrants—both here and in their home countries. Oral histories and other research products will be shared through public programs and a community-created exhibit at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History that will coincide with the arrival of a traveling exhibit curated by the Humanities Action Lab (HAL), a coalition of universities and civic organizations in 21 cities around the globe, working to educate people about the little-understood linkage between human migration and environmental issues.

Position Vector Salton Sea*

Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, Thermal, CA

Project Director: Beverlyann Cedeno

Grant Amount: \$15,000

The Salton Sea and the surrounding Coachella Valley are the homeland of the Cahuilla since time immemorial, and the Tribe is inextricably linked to the future of this landscape. The project combines elements of social justice, cultural recognition, youth outreach, and human health to

address the Salton Sea crisis through the lens of Indigenous knowledge. Beginning in June 2019, a series of workshops to be conducted by the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians and the scholar/land artist Hans Baumann will engage youth and elders in order to strengthen and sustain Cahuilla folkways. Knowledge and insights generated through this process will inform a site-specific interpretive exhibit and related programs that express the Cahuilla community's relationship to this land—past, present, and future—and draw attention to the central role that Indigenous culture can take in addressing critical social and environmental issues.

The Rebellious Miss Breed

San Diego Public Library, San Diego, CA

Project Directors: Marc Chery and Monnee Tong

Grant Amount: \$20,000

A multifaceted quarter-long project in fall 2020 will celebrate and raise awareness about the life and legacy of San Diego librarian, Clara Breed, who fought against the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII, corresponded with and sent books to the incarcerated children, and was a leader in the international movement to ensure the right to read for children vulnerable to the effects of war. In collaboration with academic and cultural organizations, the library will organize scholarly presentations, author talks for children and adults, film screenings, exhibits and displays, online and media elements, dramatic performances, scholar-led book discussions, and programs that will explore connections between the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II and current debates related to the incarceration and separation of immigrant and refugee families. To promote dialogue and deepen understanding of history and contemporary issues, the library seeks to engage San Diego's culturally heterogeneous and multi-ethnic general populations, including Japanese Americans, veterans, other ethnic and religious minorities, and established and newer immigrant communities.

Toward Peace

Mission Inn Foundation, Riverside, CA

Project Director: Theresa Hanley

Grant Amount: \$15,000

Toward Peace is a multifaceted project that will unfold over a two year period (2020-2021), exploring the peace activism of Riverside businessman and civic leader Frank Miller, both before and after World War I, within the historical context provided by contemporary social movements advocating women's rights, international peace, and social and economic justice. The Mission Inn Museum will partner with three local organizations—the Riverside League of Women Voters, Riverside Public Library, and Glocally Connected, an emerging non-profit refugee service organization—to produce an interpretive exhibition at the historic Mission Inn museum, a one-day public conference featuring recognized national and local scholars, two film and discussion programs, peace-themed downtown walking tours, an interactive community art workshop traveling to local libraries, and a community forum/conversation that will explore contemporary local-to-global connections and promote awareness of Riverside's rich historical and cultural legacy.

We So Bay*

Youth Speaks, San Francisco, CA

Project Director: Brandon Santiago

Grant Amount: \$10,000

We So Bay is a performative storytelling project about creative place-keeping and the importance of retaining cultural integrity in Bay Area neighborhoods under duress, especially

those with historically marginalized communities. Drawing on their long-track record of work with disenfranchised and at-risk young people in the region, Youth Speaks will organize a series of workshops led by local culture bearers in five Oakland and San Francisco neighborhoods. Participating youth will work with scholars and artists to research and craft a linked series of five performances—one in each neighborhood—each reflecting the unique characteristics of that locale and the people who live there. The project has been designed to encourage audiences to travel from site to site, using public transportation. The presentations and accompanying public dialogues aim to deepen understanding of the connections between these communities and the issues they face.

“White Nights, Black Paradise” The Play: Exploring Black Women's Voices in Peoples Temple and Jonestown

Black Skeptics Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA

Project Director: Sikivu Hutchinson, PhD

Grant Amount: \$10,000

White Nights, Black Paradise is a historical stage play which traces the thirty-year history of the Peoples Temple, culminating in the November 1978 Jonestown, Guyana massacre, through the interlocking stories of African American women characters, against the historical backdrop of the Great Migration, the rise and fall of the civil rights movement, the women’s movement, and Black Power and LGBTQ movements. A series of performances in the Bay Area in 2020 and 2021 will be accompanied by public discussions, panel discussions, and film screenings organized in collaboration with local partners. The project aims to bring community members and cultural experts together to arrive at a fuller and deeper understanding of Jonestown as it pertains to the Black diasporic experience and intersections of gender, classism, gentrification, political agency, the role of women in the Black church, African American religious beliefs, and secularism.

ABOUT CALIFORNIA HUMANITIES

California Humanities, a nonprofit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, promotes the humanities – focused on ideas, conversation and learning – as relevant, meaningful ways to understand the human condition and connect people to each other in order to help strengthen California. California Humanities has provided grants and programs across the state since 1975. To learn more, visit calhum.org, or like and follow on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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