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Humanities for All Quick Grants Awarded for Humanities Projects Throughout the State

(Oakland, CA) – California Humanities is proud to announce that sixteen public humanities grantees will receive a total of \$75,380 in funding through the Humanities for All Quick Grant program during the spring 2021 round. This cycle’s awards reflect a broader geographic diversity with grantees hailing from Lake County in the Far North, Santa Maria on the Central Coast, and the Mojave Desert.

The grants of up to \$5,000 support small-scale locally initiated public humanities projects and enable organizations to share untold stories and histories. In San Fernando, the Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians’ pursues greater community understanding about the First Peoples of the land. “Contradictions - Bringing the Past Forward” is the first project to explore the cultural relevance and interpretation of the history and stories of African American homesteaders in the Mojave Desert circa 1910. In San Francisco, the voices of currently and formerly undocumented poets is highlighted in a curated program by Small Press Traffic’s Spring 2022 Curatorial Fellow, Javier O. Huerta

“As a whole, this cohort reflects an array of community-centered humanities projects that speak to the rich histories and contemporary circumstances of people across our state,” remarked California Humanities President & CEO Julie Fry.

The California Humanities’ Quick Grant program is a branch of the [Humanities for All](#) grant line. The grants supply funding for small-scale local public humanities activities that take place within a year.

Projects Awarded Spring 2021

California Humanities designated two specific funding focus areas for Humanities for All Quick Grants: Youth Voices (denoted by “‡”) and Arts & Humanities (denoted by “+”).

Cultivating Việt Mỹ Youth Identity‡ International Children Assistance Network Inc., Milpitas Project Director: Amanda Doan

This project will engage Vietnamese American (VA) high school and college students in the San Jose area to share their stories in videos, images, and written passages revolving around Vietnamese American (Việt Mỹ) identity. “Cultivating Việt Mỹ Youth Identity” aims to encompass all forms of VA identity, including multiracial, LGBTQIA+, and ethnic minorities.

This project aims to acknowledge and amplify the under-represented perspectives of VA youth and their journey in navigating home, belonging, and individuality in the United States. “Cultivating Viet Mỹ Youth Identity” will also include a community forum featuring guest speakers and participatory story-sharing testimonials that will be open to the public. Public programming will begin in November of 2021.

Sounds of Liberation: Discovering Wisdom and History in African American Music+

EcoArts of Lake County dba Middletown Art Center, Middletown

Project Director: Clovice Lewis

“Sounds of Liberation: Discovering Wisdom and History in African American Music” will feature taped and live performances, community conversations, and interviews that reveal the stories of African American musicians as they explore how their art responds to systemic racism, how they ended up in rural Lake County, and how they use their music as a storytelling device. In the light shed by Black Lives Matter, these music-based storytelling conversations will aim to strengthen this predominantly white county’s capacity for interracial support for all while strengthening the network of Black musicians who now live in this underserved and scattered low-income community. Programming will run from summer 2021 through early 2022.

Watsonville is in the Heart: A Public History Initiative

Regents of the University of California, Santa Cruz

Project Director: Kathleen Gutierrez

“Watsonville is in the Heart: A Public History Initiative” is a community-led project that seeks to uplift the Filipino labor and migration narratives found in the city of Watsonville. This project will undertake historical documentation in partnership with community members working toward developing an archive and exhibit on the history of Filipino labor and migration in the city of Watsonville and the broader Pajaro Valley. “Watsonville is in the Heart” will host a series of “TalkStories” with local families, develop a website featuring a growing digital archive, and mount an exhibition presented at the Watsonville Public Library, culminating the end of the project year. Each aspect of the program will be publicly accessible and will feature participatory components that invite community members to take part in the act of history-making. Programming will run from September 2021 through April 2022.

Contradictions - Bringing the Past Forward+

Fulcrum Arts, Pasadena

Project Director: Barbara Gothard

“Contradictions - Bringing the Past Forward” is a research-based multimedia Arts + Humanities project that will be the first project to explore the cultural relevance and interpretation of the history and stories of African American homesteaders in the Mojave Desert circa 1910. The project is explored through a framework of change and continuity, diversity, cause and effect, interconnectedness, community, identity, and belonging in the context of social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental factors prevalent in the early 20th century in the United States. “Contradictions” will include artist talks, community discussions hosted by public/nonprofit organizations, websites, and social media. A visual arts exhibition with a catalogue and a book will explore themes of hope, disillusionment, and strong family bonds based on homesteader descendants and archival research interviews. Programming will begin in spring 2021 through winter 2021.

Dear America: Telling the World We Lived+

Off Main: Ventura County Poetry Project, Ventura**Project Director: Marsha de la O**

“Dear America: Telling the World We Lived” will use poetry and storytelling as vehicles for seniors to preserve a defining moment in their lives, specifically linked to a historical time and place. The project will celebrate and valorize senior voices while illuminating socio-cultural conditions in the past. Performances are recorded and interwoven into videos for online viewing and sharing. Youth will collaborate with elders to work on pieces that elucidate their critical moments and share poems and insights. This collaboration and its subsequent presentation to in-person and online audiences will build community, create empathy, and preserve wisdom. Programming will run from May 2021 through January 2022.

Shared Landscapes: Mapping Teen Altadena‡**Altadena Library District, Altadena****Project Director: Isabelle Briggs**

The “Shared Landscapes” project is a teen-generated digital and print story map that will document the human geography young people create and inhabit in Altadena. In the first phase of the project, teens will use technology to create audio, visual, and written records of specific locations associated with meaningful experiences. In the second phase, a teen editorial board will create digital and print maps that plot the submitted locations and integrate the accompanying documentation. The public is invited to use the maps to explore a new emotional and memorial geography, a reminder that our inhabited landscapes share rich overlapping meanings. Programming will run from June 2021 through January 2022.

“The Mask You Live In” Screening & Talkback‡**Mid-Peninsula Community Media Center, Palo Alto****Project Director: Jesse Norfleet**

Midpen Media Center will present a screening of the film “The Mask You Live,” followed by a guided discussion. This project will explore the challenges boys and young men face as they struggle to stay true to themselves while negotiating America’s narrow definition of masculinity. How gender stereotypes interconnect with race, class, and circumstance are examined, creating a maze of identity issues boys and young men must navigate to become “real” men. This program will provide participants with the space to witness and experience a work of art and build meaning around it with others, hear new voices, absorb other points of view, and process the meaning of a challenging, provocative, exciting idea with others. Programming will begin in May 2021.

Women’s Stories from the Gathering Place**Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation, Long Beach****Project Director: Katie Lowe**

“Women’s Stories from the Gathering Place” is a four-part, interactive, virtual program series that celebrates the contributions of women at Rancho Los Alamitos. The series reflects a renewed commitment to honoring and sharing diverse voices and perspectives from Rancho Los Alamitos’ rich, 1,500-year history of continuous occupancy. Featured women will include Lydia Shinkle, the Rancho’s cook from 1920 to 1943; Cindi Alvitre, a Tongva educator/author who uses preserves and shares her native culture through storytelling; Florence Bixby, the matriarch who used her influence to educate and empower women; and Katharine, Elizabeth, and Deborah Bixby, Florence’s daughters, who grew up as cowgirls. Programming will begin in June 2021.

Undocumented Poets: In Writing & Performance+

Center for New Music, San Francisco

Project Director: Syd Staiti

“Undocumented Poets: In Writing & Performance,” curated by Small Press Traffic’s Spring 2022 Curatorial Fellow, Javier O. Huerta, is a performance and conversation series that will highlight the voices of currently and formerly undocumented poets. Presenting a range of styles—narrative, interdisciplinary, spoken word, and performance—this project will feature poets from the different diaspora who engage uniquely with immigration status and documentation in their work. Each event will conclude with an in-depth discussion and Q&A moderated by Huerta. A bilingual print publication will be produced that anthologizes the presenters’ work, including selected transcripts from the discussion periods. Programming will begin in spring 2022.

The Old Spanish Trail in the Mojave

Amargosa Land Trust, Shoshone

Project Director: William Neill

“The Old Spanish Trail in the Mojave” will consist of a short video that follows the Old Spanish Trail as it enters California through the Mojave Desert. This project will explore the Old Spanish Trail and its impact on the development of California, and the Native American population of California, with a special focus on how historical landscapes change over time. This video will be available in English and Spanish. It is accompanied by panel discussions and a field trip hosted by the Amargosa Conservancy, the Oregon-California Trails Association, and the Old Spanish Trail Association. This collaboration allows for a unique look at this historical trail and its environmental impact on the lands it crosses. Programming will begin in fall 2021.

Telling Our Story: The People of Northern Los Angeles County

Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, San Fernando

Project Director: Pamela Villasenor

“Telling Our Story,” organized by the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians’ (FTBMI), seeks to promote greater community understanding about the First Peoples of the land. The FTBMI will co-host multiple community discussions within the FTBMI and local community partners to build bridges with other audiences. The project centers narrative change and uses a framework from the upcoming book release about the FTBMI. The book is the first of its kind, a collaboration with local university professors that offers a glimpse into rarely accessed historical records and a socio-political analysis of the Tribe. Programming will run from summer 2021 through winter 2022.

Somos Esenciales: Elevating Farmworker Stories[‡]

Cultural and Creative Arts Center of the Santa Maria Valley, Santa Maria

Project Director: Alex Espinoza-Kulick

The “Somos Esenciales” campaign is a local effort created to uplift the voices, stories, and narratives of farmworkers in Santa Maria. This project will amplify the stories of Latinx migrant farmworkers on California’s Central Coast in their own words. Led by youth artists collaborating with professional filmmakers, “Somos Esenciales” will create and share a guide for how to use video to tell compelling advocacy stories, as well as host screenings of the short film for local schools and community agencies. “Somos Esenciales” seeks to inspire the next generation of artists, leaders, and culture bearers to tell the stories of those who have not been heard. Programming will run from May 2021 through April 2022.

Firelighting: Wilder than Wild Film Screening and Panel Discussion+

Filmmakers Collaborative Inc, San Francisco

Project Director: Kevin White

Filmmakers Collaborative will organize three community screening events in wildfire-prone counties in Northern California. Their award-winning film, “Wilder than Wild: Fire, Forests, and the Future,” will be screened, followed by a panel discussion featuring diverse approaches to living with wildfire. “Firelighting” will explore topics such as cultural fire, an important example of traditional ecological knowledge where California Indians use fire as a tool for managing natural resources. Programming will be presented in Humboldt, Siskiyou, and Trinity counties—which have significant tribal populations, offering a unique opportunity for multiple stakeholders within these communities to find common ground in their approach to understanding and addressing wildfire. Programming will begin in fall 2021.

**Hearts and Minds a Program of GAPA Theatre+
GAPA Fund, San Francisco**

Project Director: Cesar Cadabes

“Hearts and Minds” will consist of a compendium of social/political/cultural (educational) community sessions, writing workshops, and a public reading of new works-in-progress that will feature facilitated conversations between program participants and audience members. “Hearts and Minds” will explore a diversity of topical sessions ranging from anti-racism work, COVID-19, and HIV pandemic correlations, to political extremism in Asian communities paired with creative writing workshops to construct a body of work that will share ideas and stimulate community conversations. Programming will run from June 2021 through February 2022.

**Monterey County Community Journal Project‡
Western Flyer Foundation, Signal Hill**

Project Director: Emily Gottlieb

Through a series of classes, workshops, and curricula, youth will create Community Journals containing observations and cultural reflection through art and writing. Participating youth will work with humanities scholars and arts professionals in a series of classes and workshops on sketching and writing creative nonfiction. They will observe their local environments: natural and built, human, animal, and plant. These journals will serve as records of youths’ perceptions of their communities and will be presented in a public event. Using humanities approaches, this project aligns with the Western Flyer Foundation mission “To stir curiosity by connecting art and science in the spirit of John Steinbeck and Ed Ricketts and their journey on the Western Flyer.” Programming will run from May 2021 through April 2022.

**No Word for “Art” +
Museum of Northern California Art, Chico**

Project Director: Sara Smallhouse

“No Word for ‘Art’” is a multi-media art exhibition held at the Museum of Northern California Art (monca) that will feature the work of Hmong American artists. The objective of “No Word for ‘Art’” is to promote the visibility of artists from this marginalized ethnic group, highlight their complex identities through their art, and bridge generational gaps with Hmong elders. The exhibition programs include an opening event, an artist discussion panel, community art-making night, and cultural activities. This exhibit will highlight Hmong American artists’ talents and provide a unique educational opportunity for visitors of all kinds. Programming will run from July through September 2021.

To learn more about the Humanities for All grant programs, [click here](#). Applications for the next round of Humanities for All Quick Grants are due June 14, 2021.

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 us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).