



## California Humanities Awards 14 Humanities for All Quick Grant Projects to Support Community & Storytelling

*Projects supported through Humanities for All Quick Grants*

### For Immediate Release

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**May 20, 2024—(Oakland, CA)**—California Humanities is proud to announce that 14 new public humanities grantees will receive \$67,120 in funding through the [Humanities for All Quick Grant](#) program. Their projects and public programming, from interactive exhibits, symposiums, writing workshops, and readings, will provide rich humanities-centered learning experiences for Californians up and down the state.



Spring 2024 grantee Grand Performances will present a three-night poetry series, *LA Stories: A Mosaic*

*of Cultures*. Pictured: Rocky Dawuni at KCRW presents AfroFunke at Grand Performances, July 2024.  
Photo credit: Farah Sosa.

Many of the awarded projects in this grant cycle weave together storytelling in a variety of contexts to help audiences connect with the state's diverse cultures. For example, *Acorn Stories* will be a free, family-friendly program using storytelling, hands-on demonstrations of Indigenous acorn-related cultural practices, an interpretive exhibit of Wintun history, and a facilitated community conversation with Native Californian practitioners to elaborate on the natural and cultural significance of the oak and acorn.



Other projects, such as *Making Space*, *Taking Space* out of San Diego, will present a public reading and writing workshops in collaboration with the San Diego Writers Ink's AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islanders) Writing Workshops. *Making Space*, *Taking Space*, will support emerging and established AAPI writers explore their processes, themes, and challenges as writers and present their work. This program demonstrates the crucial role the humanities play in nurturing new narratives that speak to California's richness and complexity.

"We are honored to continue our organization's role of fostering creative and diverse humanities projects through the Humanities for All Quick Grants program," said California Humanities President and CEO Rick Noguchi. "The projects we are supporting in this cohort provide new avenues for understanding and engaging with California histories and stories and their impact on our daily lives."



(left) Spring 2024 grantee project *The Art and Ethos of California Native Plants* will offer Inland North County San Diego families lectures spanning regional ethnobotany and Native peoples' cultural context. Photo credit: Rose Ramirez; (right) Spring 2024 grantee, San Joaquin Valley Book Festival, host a discussion titled "Tapestry of Family and Place" on May 4, 2024, featuring Mark Arax, Mas Masumoto, and Aris Janigian. Photo credit: Joseph Rios.

The [Humanities for All Quick Grant](#) program is a competitive application that provides up to \$5,000 to support small-scale locally initiated public humanities projects. See the complete description of awarded projects below.

### **Projects Awarded Spring 2024**

*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 a specific funding focus areas for Humanities for All Quick Grants: Arts & Humanities (denoted by "+").*

## **Red Dress Day Event**

### **Tribal Trust Foundation Inc, Santa Barbara**

Daughters of Mother Earth

Project Director: Annette Mendoza-McCoy

Together with local Indigenous organizers, leaders, allies, and dedicated volunteers, this program will contribute to nationwide and statewide efforts to increase the awareness, education, and enhance supports for MMIWG2S (Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit), through an Indigenous-focused Red Dress Day Informational event. This event will include a discussion panel informing the public of the complexities of this issue and inform the implementation needs for the California Feather Alert that will be woven together with Indigenous cultural traditions such as traditional singers and storytellers. Programming was implemented spring 2024.

## **Art and Storytelling in Cambodia Town+**

### **United Cambodian Community, Long Beach**

Project Director: Sayon Syprasoeuth

Long Beach is home to the largest Cambodian population in the world except for Cambodia herself, and many community members have suffered trauma caused by the Cambodian genocide of the 1970s. In recognition that many elders who are the custodians of these narratives, will be gone before long. This project will record and transcribe the stories of community members, conduct art workshops to illustrate stories, and offer at least one presentation/celebration evening for sharing, to be held at a local public library. This program will print and distribute the stories and illustrations to participants and donate copies to local libraries as well. Videography of the event will be donated to local libraries and shared online in social media. Programming will run May through November, 2024.

## **Black Punk Resonance+**

### **Alameda Free Library, Alameda**

Project Director: Vaile Fujikawa

The Alameda Free Library will present, *Black Punk Resonance*, on June 29 2024, for an electrifying celebration of Black Music Month. Programming will include a special musical guest, who will highlight the influential role of Black punks in shaping the genre. Set against the backdrop of the East Bay, a pivotal hub in the punk music scene, this event pays homage to the rebellious spirit of punk while honoring the diverse voices that have enriched its legacy. Don't miss this unforgettable evening of music, culture, and community.

**Give Us The Word: Queer Yesterday, Today, and Forever+**  
**Intersection for the Arts, San Francisco / Queer Rebel Productions**

Project Director: KB Boyce

In partnership with the GLBT Historical Society, Queer Rebel Productions will present *Give Us the Word*, a literary arts project focused on Queer and Trans BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) poetry, spoken word, and storytelling in October 2024. The theme of “Queer Yesterday, Today, and Forever,” will pay homage to Queer ancestors. It will provide a platform for audiences and participants to connect with often overlooked histories of San Francisco’s GLBT community. The event will include: a writing workshop for invited participants who will write about an object in the GLBTHS museum; a public reading by participants followed by a panel discussion.

**The San Joaquin Valley Book Fest**  
**Fresno Arts Council, Fresno**

Project Director: Danielle Shapazian

The San Joaquin Valley Book Fest is a one-day celebration of books and authors from Central California that will take place on Saturday, May 4, 2024, from 9 am to 4:30 pm on the grounds of the historic Fig Garden Swim and Racquet Club in Fresno, California. Readings of children’s literature, poetry, fiction, and non-fiction will be offered throughout the day, along with interactive question and answer sessions. A pop-up outdoor bookstore will sell the traditionally and self-published works of local authors. The event is free of charge and open to all.

**Acorn Stories+**  
**International House Davis, Davis**

Project Director: Anuj Vaidya

In November of 2024, International House Davis and the YoloSol Collective will host *Acorn Stories*, a public humanities program featuring Native Californian cultural practitioner Diana Almendariz and guests. Diana will elaborate on the natural and cultural significance of the oak and acorn as important food sources and practices of nourishment and reciprocal giving. This free, family-friendly program will include storytelling, hands-on demonstrations of acorn-related cultural practices, an interpretive exhibit of Wintun history, and a facilitated community conversation with Native Californian practitioners. The program will engage the local community in becoming better neighbors and ecological stewards of this shared homeland.

**Parents Take the Lead—Creating Engaging Storytimes**  
**Flights of Fantasy Media Company, Sunland**

Project Director: Lorrie Oshatz

Flights of Fantasy Media Company will partner with the Pasadena Public Library to present *Parents Take the Lead*, which will include five seminars at library sites between summer 2024 and spring of 2025. The interactive workshops will share leading literacy and educational research and highlight the importance of reading aloud to children and the essential role parents play in a child's social and academic development. Instruction on how to create engaging storytimes and conduct meaningful conversations will help parents understand how reading aloud cultivates empathy and encourages children to form opinions and interpret information while creating a special bond between parent and child.

**Culinary Bridges—A Multiracial Solidarity and Storytelling Project+**  
**Just Cities Institute, Berkeley**

Project Director: Maurice Wilkins

Just Cities aims to celebrate Oakland's culinary history with *Culinary Bridges*, in spring 2024, uniting the community through the power of food and storytelling. The event will bring together local chefs representing Black, Latinx, Southeast Asian, and Indigenous cultures, alongside Bay Area photographers and videographers, to weave a tapestry of multiracial solidarity. Attendees (including a coalition partners and broader community members) will delve into the rich narratives behind each dish, sparking conversations that bridge communities. The feast and its stories will be captured, creating digital storytelling to fuel ongoing engagement and inspire collective action and unity.

**LA Stories: A Mosaic of Cultures+**  
**Grand Performances, Los Angeles**

Project Director: Stewart Irel

Grand Performances' three-night poetry series, *LA Stories: A Mosaic of Cultures*, highlights the stories that make-up Los Angeles via its cultures, neighborhoods, and experiences. It uplifts intersections that exist within communities (LGBTQIA2S+, Latino, Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, Indigenous peoples) and is an interactive way to learn about LA as a "place and people" from some of the best poets who identify as part of these communities. The themed nights—Poetry of Pride, Latino Voices, Black Voices—will respectively take place on June 28, July 26, and August 16, 2024 from 6-9 pm at California Plaza in Downtown Los Angeles.



**Making Space, Taking Space+**  
**San Diego Writers Ink, San Diego**  
Project Director: Thelma de Castro

*Making Space, Taking Space* is a public reading of work from San Diego Writers Ink's AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islanders) Writing Workshop, led by playwright Thelma Virata de Castro. Culturally and historically, AAPI writers have been silenced, whether from collectivism to governmental exclusion and incarceration. No more. The reading, featuring multiple genres and perspectives, will take place at the Point Loma/Hervey Library on May 26, 2024. A panel discussion with the writers and workshop facilitator regarding their processes, themes, and challenges will follow the reading. Community organizations, historical museums/societies, and literary non-profits will staff tables and provide resources for future research and writing.

**Riverside Women Creating Change**  
**Inlandia Institute, Riverside**  
Project Director: Cati Porter

Humanity is steeped in story, and there are times when story galvanizes a community to action. Where there is action, there are activists, yet despite the majority of activists being women-identifying, historically, [women's contributions](#) have been minimized or dismissed, despite sweeping cultural change. Inlandia's Riverside Women Creating Change project gathers the collective wisdom of women-identifying activists in the Inland Empire, in a variety of formats—public-facing website including timeline and other resources, deposit in scholarly archives, and as an affordable publication, for public benefit. Programming will begin June 2024.

**Mural Activism: Esteban Villa's Emergence of the Chicano Social Struggle in a Bi-Cultural Society+**  
**Washington Neighborhood Center, Sacramento**  
Project Director: Jocelin Hernandez

The Washington Neighborhood Center (WNC) in Sacramento will present a half-day symposium on Saturday, September 28, 2024 related to its historic mural, "Emergence of the Chicano Social Struggle in a Bi-Cultural Society" painted by artist Esteban Villa in 1970. The symposium will explore the historic significance and artistic impact of the oldest mural painted by a co-founder of the Royal Chicano Air Force, Sacramento's seminal collective active during the Chicano Movement's first two decades. The funds will support honoraria for speakers, including scholars, artists, and educators; production of a video presentation; and event promotion.

## **The Art and Ethos of California Native Plants Escondido Arts Partnership, Escondido**

Project Director: Chrisanne Moats

Critically interpreting culture and humanity through exploration and acquisition of skills is central to this October-November 2024 five-week capsule class program hosted by Escondido Arts Partnership and Chumash descendant, California Native basketweaver, cultural historian, educator Rose Ramirez. Five one-day weekend classes offered to Inland North County San Diego general public, specifically families, includes lectures spanning regional ethnobotany and Native peoples' cultural context; SAGING THE WORLD documentary viewing and discussion with hands-on botanical exploration; local native habitat field trip for plant identification, plein air drawing, painting, collaging and photography; California Native basketry workshop; repopulating public space with native species and art.

## **Salmon Ceremony Oral Histories: An Interactive Exhibit+ Humboldt Area Peoples Archive, Bayside**

Project Director: Nicole Riggs

The Humboldt Area Peoples Archive (HAPA) will collaborate with the Bear River Band, Mattole Salmon Group, photographer Ai Iwani, and Humboldt County Visitors Bureau to develop an interactive exhibit. The project includes recording oral histories, designing listening stations, displaying photographs and quotes, and creating online resources. These efforts aim to preserve cultural heritage, engage the community, and promote sustainability. By delving into local environmental and cultural history, the exhibit seeks to inspire intercultural collaboration and sustainable practices to address current climate challenges. Programming will begin in September 2024.

[California Humanities](#), a statewide 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](http://calhum.org), or like and follow on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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Spring 2024 grantee project *Art + Storytelling in Cambodia Town* at Long Beach's Cambodia Town Parade & Festival in 2024. Image courtesy of United Cambodian Community.