



Memorandum

TO: ARTS COMMISSION

FROM: Kerry Adams Hapner

SUBJECT: 2018 CORNERSTONE OF THE
ARTS AWARDS

DATE: June 4, 2018

Approved

Date

June 11, 2018

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Arts Commission approve the selections for the 2018 Cornerstone of the Arts Award, Creative Impact Award, and Business Support for the Arts Award.

BACKGROUND

Inaugurated in September 2013, through a partnership between the City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs and the Arts Commission, the Cornerstone of the Arts awards and event program was established.

The awards have been bestowed annually at the Cornerstone of the Arts Event, during which Cultural Affairs grantees are also honored for their collective contributions. The event has been held October in the early evening and the program includes the following categories:

- **Cornerstone of the Arts Award;**
- **Creative Impact Award; and**
- **Business Support for the Arts Award**

Nominated by the community members and Arts Commission, honorees are selected according to the following eligibility and criteria for each award category:

- **Cornerstone of the Arts Award** - an individual(s) or creative entrepreneur who has provided enduring and effective leadership and/or support that has led the betterment of the San Jose's arts community and thus improved the quality of life for our citizens.

- a. Eligibility
 - i. An individual or individuals (not an organization)
 - ii. Working in any sector (nonprofit, public or private)
 - iii. Past honorees are ineligible
 - b. Criteria
 - i. Significance
 - ii. Innovation
 - iii. Inclusiveness
 - iv. Timing of Recognition
- **Creative Impact Award** - An individual(s) or creative entrepreneur from either a nonprofit or business sector who has led a cultural or artistic project or special event that has made a significant impact on the community.
 - a. Eligibility
 - i. An individual or partnership of individuals (nonprofit or business sector)
 - ii. Must have produced a special cultural or artistic project or event that has significantly impacted the San Jose community
 - iii. Special cultural or artistic project or event does not have to be reoccurring.
 - iv. Past honorees are ineligible
 - a. Criteria
 - i. Significance of Project
 - ii. Community Impact
 - iii. Innovation
- **Business Support for the Arts Award** - A business that has made a significant impact in strengthening the vibrancy of San Jose through its leadership and support for the arts. It is envisioned that the selected honoree is a business that support the arts philanthropically or through sponsorship.
 - a. Eligibility:
 - i. Businesses that have established strong partnerships with the arts community in San Jose

- ii. Demonstrated support of the arts in the form of financial, in-kind, promotional, or other types of support
- iii. Nonprofit organizations are ineligible to be nominated
- iv. Past honorees are ineligible

b. Criteria

- i. Significance of Support
- ii. Community Impact
- iii. Duration of Support
- iv. Collaboration

2018 marks the sixth year of the Cornerstone Award. Previous recipients include the late Irene Dalis, founder of Opera San Jose, former Mayor Susan Hammer, founders of the Castellano Foundation Carmen and Al Castellano, founders of San Jose Taiko Roy and PJ Hirabayashi, and founder and former Artistic Director of Teatro Visión Elisa Marina Alvarado.

The 2018 awards will be presented at the Cornerstone of the Arts event at the Hammer Theatre on October 12, 2018. FY 2018-2019 City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs' grantees will also be recognized for their contributions to San Jose's cultural life.

ANALYSIS

Applicants were asked to complete an online application by the deadline of May 11, 2018. (Cornerstone of the Arts Nomination Guidelines can be viewed [here](#)).

The 2018 Cornerstone of the Arts committee was comprised of the past honoree and Arts Commissioners.

- **Elisa Marina Alvarado**, *founder and former Artistic Director of Teatro Visión and past honoree*
- **Richard James**, *San Jose Arts Commission Chair*
- **Ramona Snyder**, *San Jose Arts Commission Vice Chair*

The Committee convened on June 4, 2018 to review the 25 nominations. All of the nominations identified leaders that has made a significant impact on San Jose's cultural landscape. Each nomination was carefully reviewed against each award's eligibility and criteria. After significant discussion, the committee is recommending the following as award recipients:

- **Randall and Cathleen King**, *Cornerstone of the Arts Award*

- *Sophie Holding the World Together* mural by artist EL MAC commissioned and made possible through the San José Museum of Art, Empire 7 Studios, and the Children's Discovery Museum, *Creative Impact Award*
- **Eastridge Center**, *Business Support for the Arts Award*

Cornerstone of the Arts Honoree (selected excerpt from nomination)

When the San Jose Stage Company formed in 1983, Downtown San Jose was a much different place than today's pulsating metropolis, especially along S. 1st St. The San Jose Stage Company helped establish the nightlife scene in South of First Area (SOFA) that was on the verge of a true renaissance. Founder Randall King and Executive Director Cathleen King have piloted the company through over three decades of creative and community distinction, providing trailblazing leadership, determination, and strength to the establishment of what is now the thriving SOFA arts district.

The Kings pioneered SOFA, once a rundown industrial quarter, as the South Bay's most vibrant Arts district. First appearing in a tiny loft space above the old Eulipia Café in 1983, the nascent group later moved up and down South 1st, pursuing every opportunity to continue reinventing the South Bay theater scene. The San Jose Stage Company fully settled down in residence at S. 1st St. and Williams St. and has since proudly staked out this prominent SOFA corner for over 25 years. SOFA has subsequently thrived and is now home to several established and emerging arts companies, festivals, and gathering places. With residential development booming in the area, SOFA promises a dynamic future for the City of San Jose, thanks in part to the vision and courage of Randall and Cathleen King.

In 1991 The San Jose Stage Company partnered with the City of San Jose Redevelopment Agency to convert a former Goodyear Tire Center into a nationally recognized artistic powerhouse. From this modest investment San Jose has reaped the benefit of the Stage's ability to annually attract more than 30,000 patrons to downtown and to employ more than 150 local artists. The farthest seat in the theater is no more than 15 feet from the three quarter thrust stage, connecting actor and audience in a profoundly visceral bond. With physical confines tight, the company has had to rely on every shred of inventiveness, innovation and "magic" available to keep stimulating, diversifying, and growing its audience.

Now at 35 years young, The San Jose Stage Company is fully realized as a vital force in the region's economic and creative landscape. As an economic engine, The San Jose Stage Company opens its doors to draw theater patrons downtown over 100 occasions per year. As a strong community partner, The San Jose Stage Company has been the creative home for more than 500

performance groups including Cinequest, San Jose Jazz and Notre Dame High School - working together to engage, provoke, and inspire current and future theatre participants and arts advocates. Stage Company's innovative and collaborative spirit is embedded in the company's mission statement:

Through powerful, provocative, and profound theatre, San Jose Stage Company (The Stage) seeks to expand community, forge creative partnerships, and challenge individuals in order to illuminate the human condition.

The San Jose Stage Company has historically engaged the diverse Bay Area arts community. Recent co-produced works in tandem with some of the region's most prominent multicultural arts companies confirm The San Jose Stage Company is at the forefront of inclusive, collaborative creativity making rich contributions to the City's multicultural community. Here are a few prominent examples:

- 1) *“Valley of the Heart”* - Randall and Cathleen King championed the production of Luis Valdez and Teatro Campesino's epic multi-generational family drama that exposed the forgotten history of our *“Valley of the Heart's Delight”*: local Japanese and Mexican immigrants struggles to survive the harsh social conditions of WWII. *“Valley of the Heart”* was honored as Best Production 2016 by the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle;
- 2) *“The Memory Stick”*- Pursuing, shaping, and coordinating from inspiration through execution, the Stage presented this WORLD PREMIERE, international co-sponsored coproduction by San Jose Stage Company and Dublin City Arts Office. Written by Donal O'Kelly the Dublin/San Jose collaboration is a suspenseful examination of the 1916 Easter Rising – a harrowing time travel tale of three Army grunts experiencing mystical Native American and Irish history tinged with magic, politics and realism;
- 3) *“We are Proud to Present”* - Produced in association with the African-American Shakespeare Company. Jackie Sibblies Drury's Obie-Winning play about the Herero of Namibia, formerly known as Southwest Africa between the years 1884-1915. In the rehearsal room, a performance piece on a little-known episode of early 20th century African genocide takes a jolting turn when the actors — three black and three white — tap into personal resentments and ingrained prejudices. Tensions mount, unleashing a spiral of conflict as actors unravel strands of history and realize the past is ever-present.
- 4) Collaboration with SJSU Dept of Film & Theatre - San Jose Stage Company is partnering with San Jose State University's Department of Film & Theatre to combine

educational instruction with professional execution beginning with staged reading of two new plays at the Hammer Theatre Center, melding SJSU student actors with working professionals.

The San Jose Stage Company has earned a well-deserved reputation for artistic excellence through imaginative and edgy theatrical experiences that spark ideas and spur dialogue with the audience. Over the course of its lifetime, The San Jose Stage Company has mounted 165 productions, including 14 world premieres and 47 new works. The San Jose Stage Company is currently in position to secure control of its future, soon mounting a capital campaign to purchase the theater's home at 490 S 1st St.

The 2018 Cornerstone of the Arts Committee is pleased to recommend Randall and Cathleen King as the recipients of the 2018 Cornerstone of the Arts Award.

Creative Impact Honoree (selected excerpt from nomination)

Renowned muralist EL MAC (Miles MacGregor) was commissioned by the San José Museum of Art in collaboration with The Propeller Group, Empire Seven Studios, and Children's Discovery Museum for a new work on the wall facing Discovery Meadow in Downtown San José. The mural, *Sophie Holding the World Together*, is a portrait of seven-year-old Sophie Cruz, who has become a face of the American immigration reform movement.

Sophie Holding the World Together is the ninth iteration of The Propeller Group's ongoing project *Viet Nam: The World Tour*. Through murals, performances, and events, the internationally acclaimed art collective creates opportunities for connections across borders. The project was conceived as a national "unbranding" campaign, to rethink how media influences ideas about nationality, and to envision more borderless ways of living. Previous iterations of the project have been presented in Saigon, Kabul, Singapore, Brisbane, Los Angeles, Paris, Lyon, and Amsterdam.

With San José being the 3rd most diverse city in the U.S. with a large immigrant population from around the world, it is only fitting that *Mural of Hope: Sophie Holding the World Together*, be a permanent addition to San José's public art and cultural scene.

Given these tumultuous times with attacks on immigrant communities locally, regionally and nationally, *Mural of Hope: Sophie Holding the World Together* is a symbol of resolve and hope for all communities -- a coming together across borders to fight for a shared future for all.

The San José Museum of Art, Empire Seven Studios, and the Children’s Discovery Museum sponsored a community celebration of the new public mural, *Sophie Holding the World Together* by EL MAC in collaboration with The Propeller Group, at Discovery Meadow on Saturday, March 24, 2018. The festivities were held from 2-4 PM. The mural celebration featured live music by MaKru, family-friendly activities, SJMA’s new Art Portal, and appearances by the artists and the subject of the mural, nine-year-old activist Sophie Cruz. The event was free and open to the public.

In addition to having Sophie Cruz and EL MAC in attendance at the celebration, special guests speaking at the event included Susan Sayre Batton, Oshman Executive Director of SJMA; muralist El Mac; Kerry Adams Hapner, Director of San Jose’s Office of Cultural Affairs; Marilee Jennings, Executive Director of the Children’s Discovery Museum; Juan Carlos Araujo, Director and Art Consultant at Empire Severn Studios; Tuan Andrew Nguyen of the artists’ collective The Propeller Group, and a representative from the Consulado General de México en San José.

Mural of Hope: Sophie Holding the World Together was produced at Discovery Meadow in District 3, Downtown San José.

Sophie Cruz

Sophie Cruz, born in Los Angeles, CA to undocumented immigrants from Oaxaca, Mexico, first made headlines in 2015 when she crossed a police barrier during Pope Francis’s visit to Washington DC. Upon meeting the Pope, Sophie handed the pontiff a letter asking him to help all immigrant children, writing: “*My friends and I love each other without caring about the color of our skin.*” Last year she gave a moving speech at the [Women’s March on Washington](#).

EL MAC (Miles MacGregor)

EL MAC is an internationally renowned artist born and based in Los Angeles. He began painting both smaller indoor works as well as public murals and graffiti in the mid '90s, and since that time has developed his unique visual aesthetic and rendering style which utilizes repeating contour patterns. His work draws on influences from classical European art, social realism, symbolism and devotional art, as well as the Chicano and Mexican culture he grew up around. He is best known for his meticulous paintings and large-scale murals exploring feminine beauty and honoring ordinary, overlooked, or marginalized people. He has been commissioned to paint all over the world, for museums, universities and other cultural institutions, including the Groeninge Museum (Belgium), San José Museum of Art (California), Northeastern University (Boston), University of California (San Diego), QAGoMA (Brisbane), Fondazione PRADA (Italy), and the Mexican secretariat of Foreign Affairs, as well as murals in Belgium, Cambodia, Cuba, Denmark, England, Germany, Ireland, Morocco, Puerto Rico, Singapore, South Korea,

Spain, Sweden, and Viet Nam. For over 20 years he has aimed "to uplift and inspire through careful, perfectionist renderings of both the sublime and the humble".

San José Museum of Art

The San José Museum of Art reflects the diverse cultures and innovative spirit of Silicon Valley. Through its exhibitions, programs, scholarship, and collections, SJMA connects the present and the past, the art of the West Coast and the world. The Museum fosters awareness of artists' broad contributions to society and engages audiences with the art of our time and the vitality of the creative process.

The Propeller Group

The Propeller Group, an artist collective based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and Los Angeles, use forms of popular media and visual culture, addressing questions about historical memory, cultural rituals, war, and global commerce from a perspective that challenges the West as the privileged vantage point. Their ambitious projects are frequently anchored in Vietnam's history, yet extend to address global phenomena, from street culture to international commerce to traditions shared across cultures. In multifaceted projects, The Propeller Group blurs the lines between modes of cultural production and embraces the formats of branding campaigns, television commercials, Hollywood movies, and music videos to explore the complex ideologies that drive global commerce, war, and cultural and historical memory.

Empire Seven Studios

Established in 2008, Empire Seven Studios, an urban contemporary art gallery located in San José, California, has been advocating for local/global artists by creating opportunities and providing a place to elevate and highlight emerging talents on a grand scale.

Jennifer Ahn, Curator/Gallery Manager went to San José State University and received her BFA in Photography with a Minor in Design. Juan Carlos Araujo, Director/Art Consultant, a self-taught painter, grew up doing graffiti. Both coming from two different art backgrounds has given Empire Seven Studios a passionate inclusive approach to the art that they showcase and curate within the current and contemporary times. Empire Seven Studios has enhanced the San José art scene by bringing life to the city through murals, innovative pop-up shows, and gallery exhibits. Empire Seven Studios has evolved as a meeting place for artists of different disciplines to engage and connect with the public.

Children's Discovery Museum of San José

Children's Discovery Museum of San José's mission is to inspire creativity, curiosity, and lifelong learning. Children's Discovery Museum strives to be a community anchor that helps build awareness and understanding among people of diverse ages, backgrounds, ethnicities,

genders, sexual orientations, socioeconomic situations, religions, abilities and family configurations. Children's Discovery Museum believes that our community wants the best for its children, and it is Children's Discovery Museum's goal to create opportunities for today's children to become tomorrow's visionaries.

The 2018 Cornerstone of the Arts Committee is pleased to recommend Sophie Holding the World Together mural by artist EL MAC commissioned and made possible through the San José Museum of Art, Empire 7 Studios, and the Children's Discovery Museum as the recipient of the 2018 Creative Impact Award.

Business Support for the Arts Honoree (selected excerpt from nomination)

Eastridge Center opened in 1971 and has long-served as a cultural hub for the diverse San Jose community. Numerous artworks have lived in Center Court, including the metal sculpture by artist Stephanie Scuris that now resides downtown San Jose near the Hotel De Anza. For decades, Eastridge has been a gathering place for cultural activity; most recently, cultural events include the Tet Festival, Bayanihan Festival, Moon Festival, a multicultural tree lighting ceremony, and Eastridge Art Wednesdays featuring groups like mariachi and polynesian dance. Pacific Retail Capital Partners purchased Eastridge Center in 2016 and has launched a series of changes and investments to increase support within the arts community.

Eastridge Center is supporting the arts through numerous recent projects and new programs to positively impact the San Jose arts community. The Eastridge Mural Program, bi-weekly Open Space event, and Eastridge Art initiatives, including Art Wednesdays and monthly featured artists, are all new platforms serving and celebrating the arts community from this Eastside cultural hub.

The Eastridge Mural Program added 20,000 square feet of exterior murals to the Eastside neighborhood, establishing the center as the largest facade of mural space on a shopping center in the country. The Mural Program spotlighted California artists - including Lila Gemellos and Aaron de la Cruz - and impacted the community with an infusion of color, creativity, and local pride. After an open call for artists, four massive murals were added to the property in spring 2017. Since the completion of these pieces, they have become the backdrops to "do it yourself" music videos from shuffling to Bollywood, low-rider photo shoots, and innumerable social media photos of San Jose families and locals. This outstanding investment in the arts launched what is becoming a continually-growing and evolving event series under the Eastridge Art umbrella, including Open Space, Art Wednesdays, and monthly featured artists.

Open Space is a twice-monthly open mic night open to everyone and every art form. Each week, local musicians, spoken-word artists, dancers, poets, filmmakers, and comedians gather to share, collaborate, and perform. Local poet, Lorenz Dumuk, hosts the event and schedules a featured artist each week. Everyone is welcome. Participants abide by a collective policy of hate-free narratives and being an encouraging audience for all performers. The impact of this event has been access for community members of all ages and crafts to share their work and find fellowship with neighbors and fellow artists. Other Eastridge signature events and monthly programs – like Grand Opening Weekend, Yappy Hour pet events, Tree Lighting, and Make Music Day – are opportunities for Open Space artists to perform for larger audiences, increasing the impact of the artists' work and increasing awareness about access to this free, all-ages, community platform.

Eastridge Art Wednesdays is a weekly performance in Eastridge Center Court and a solution to local groups seeking to grow their membership, promote an upcoming performance and/or secure a monthly, recurring practice and performance locations. Performing groups can use Center Court, Community Rooms, and equipment at no costs and are supported with a fully-customizable marketing plan that reaches nearly 100,000 people in the South Bay. To extend this reach to more artists and groups doing fun and important work, the monthly featured artist program spotlights story through digital content and a stipend for on-site engagement; this new program features local artists of all disciplines with a Q&A blog and video feature, photographs, and a stipend to host activity(s) of their selection, such as classes, workshops, readings, and/or performances, and invite the San Jose community to join them.

In addition, the Taste for the Space in May 2017 spotlighted and supported local culinary arts with a competition crowning a winning recipient of \$50,000 in start-up funds and 6-months of free rent. 2017 kicked off with big, exciting projects for Eastridge Center and the lineup of art programs and partnerships with community leaders continues to grow.

Eastridge will continue to partner with San Jose arts leaders to bring diverse platforms, resources, and audience opportunities to a community eager for art. With all of the Eastridge Center initiatives demonstrate leadership in the arts community and a commitment to positively impacting the audience and makers of San Jose. Through visual art additions, free performances, workshops, and omnichannel marketing, Eastridge is building a platform for the San Jose voice and making community access to the arts, as both audience and maker, a core value of it's business.

The 2018 Cornerstone of the Arts Committee is pleased to recommend Eastridge Center as the recipient of the 2018 Business Support for the Arts Award.

ARTS COMMISSION

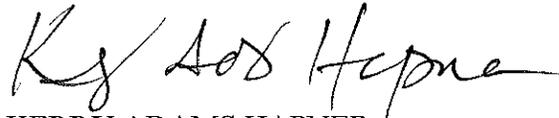
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PUBLIC OUTREACH

The nomination guidelines were posted on the City's website and dispersed through the Office of Cultural Affairs' distribution lists. Announcements of the nomination guidelines were also made through social media.



KERRY ADAMS HAPNER

Director of Cultural Affairs
