



**CLASSES ♦ MEMBERSHIPS ♦ EVENTS ♦ WORKSHOPS**

Insta @HigherFire\_SJ @JTownClay

HigherFireStudios.com ♦ Facebook.com/higherfire

# ...kissed by the kiln!



Insta @HigherFire\_SJ @JTownClay  
HigherFireStudios.com ♦ Facebook.com/higherfire



# Locations



Opened  
2010

## HF-DOWNTOWN

499 S. Market St.  
San Jose, CA 95113

South First Arts District



Opened  
2023!

## JTOWN CLAY

520 N. 7th St.  
San Jose, CA 95112

Japantown District

# What is Higher Fire?

- Pottery Teaching Studio
  - Wheel, Hand-Building, Sculpture
  - 18 Classes Per Week
    - Six-week Classes
    - One-Time Classes
- Team-Building Events
- Visiting Artist Workshops
- Studio Memberships
  - 500+ between two locations
- A 'happy place' to hang out & be creative



# Owner Bio

- Dan Dermer, founder
  - Age 55, bay area native
  - Downtown San Jose, 25 years
  - Making pottery since 1981
- Passions
  - Family, food, travel, music, teaching
  - Clay, glaze chemistry, kilns & firing
  - Son (Adam) attending Lincoln High, class of '25
- Career in tech '91-'04



# Mission

*“Creativity, the earthy aroma of clay, amazing glazes, and music playing the background – it’s heaven on earth here”*

- Teach it right
  - skills acquisition
  - better results sooner
- Provide community
- Offer best-in-class facilities
- Launch newbies into new hobby
  - “They don’t even know....”
- Friendly, professional, supportive staff
- Inspire all who visit with the tactile experience of clay



# History + Growth

a.k.a. the Pottery-Making Shall Not Be Stopped

## ■ 2010 Welcome - we're open!

- 10 pottery wheels; 1 kiln
- Owner responsibilities
  - Teach class, email & phone, web site, monthly newsletter
  - Clean studio, order + pickup supplies, load/unload kilns, mix glazes, recycle clay,
- Lucky timing / PAAC / CC's

## ■ 2013

- Installed 2<sup>nd</sup> large 40 cf gas kiln
- Added 10 more pottery wheels

## ■ 2016

- 7-8 regular classes per week
- New! One-time classes, Team-Building, Street fairs (4x year)
- 4 part-time employees + SJSU paid intern program
- Dedicated hand-building space; spray booth; photo booth

## ■ 2019

- 12 classes/week and 12 studio techs (staff)
- 350+ studio members
- Team-Building Event momentum
- Visiting Artist Workshops



# Expand?

- 2018-2019
- Need more space, parking
  - Waitlists
  - Full membership ranks
  - Wanting to say YES to all the demand
  - Business goals
    - Build team-building offerings
    - Add more
      - Beginner “Just Try It” classes
      - Intermediate workshop-style classes
      - Visiting artist workshops
- Two building solution



# Pandemic Times

- Shutdown
- Vouchers
- Essential Services?
  - Curbside pickup/drop-off
- Social Distancing
  - Masks, Cleaning Regimen
  - Temperature Checks
  - Appointment System
- Fun with Floorplans
- Zoom Happy Hour & Demo
  - Kissed by the Kiln
  - Cocktail of the week
- Glaze Development
- Website



Higher Fire Happy Hour / Dan demo of gravy boats



# Renovation

Another hobby for 2021-23



## So what's new?

HVAC, Roof, Skylights,  
Electrical, Plumbing, ADA  
Restrooms, Lighting,  
Cleanup Sinks, Gas  
Service, Flooring,  
Mezzanine, Parking Lot  
Landscaping, Drainage,  
Fencing, Painting, Signage



# Today

## ■ HF-Downtown

- Beginner Land!
  - Intro Classes
  - One-Time Classes
- Team-Building Events
- 150 Members & Growing

## ■ JTown Clay

- Member Disneyland!
- More of everything
  - glaze colors, firings (raku, soda, high fire + mid-range)
  - Larger workspaces, new equipment, bigger kilns
  - Intermediate level classes, visiting artist workshops
  - Coffee options: Nespresso, pour-over, Keurig-supreme
- Parking
- Kitchenette
- 360 Members
- Yard/Outdoor Areas
- Staff work-spaces upstairs



# Future

- Artist in residence program
- Spring & Fall Members' Show
- Regular “Alternative Firings” workshops
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Location? Do you have a building to donate?
- Senior living with clay!



499 S. Market St, San Jose  
408-295-5765

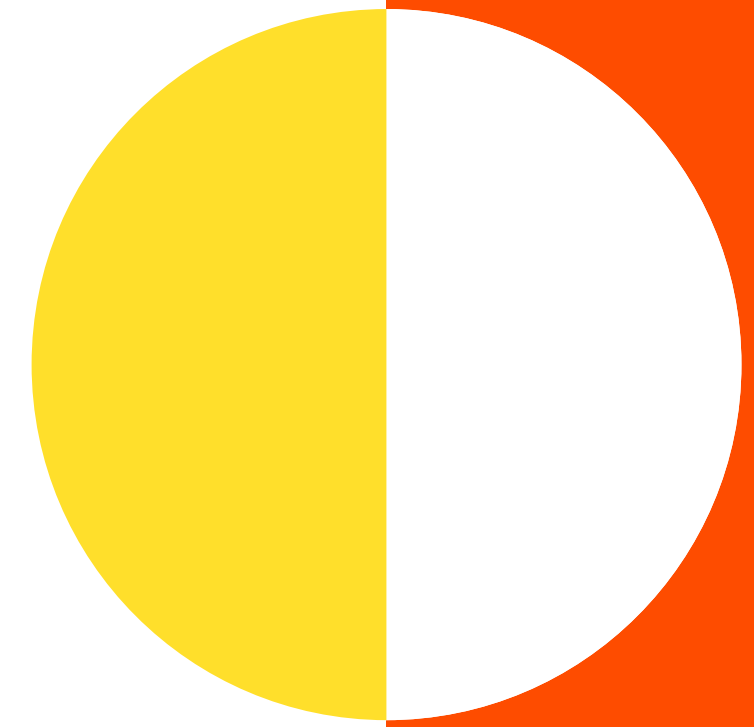


520 N. 7th St, San Jose  
408-320-2660





SAN JOSÉ  
CREATIVE  
ECONOMY  
FUND

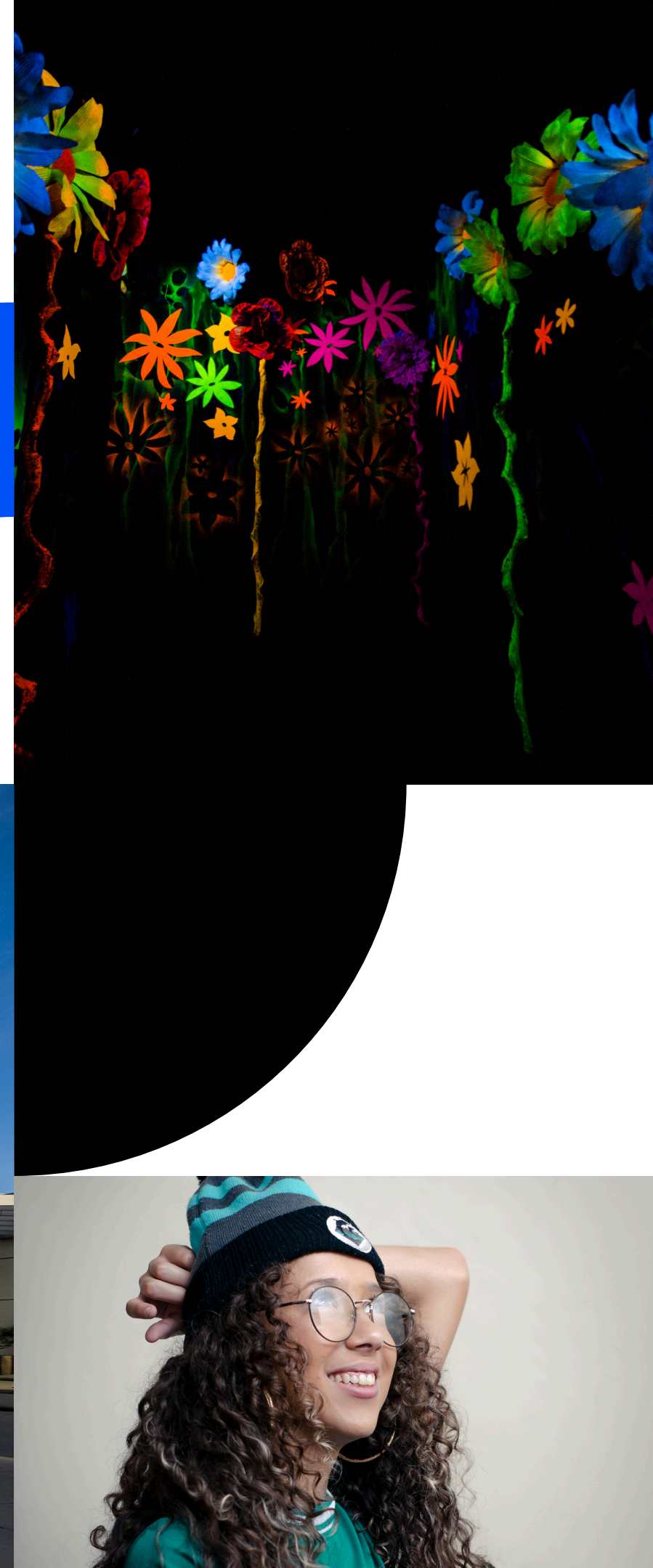


16 SEPTEMBER 2024



# CEF GOALS

- Enhance San José's creative economy.
- Bolster the growth and financial resilience of small arts, cultural, and creative-based businesses in San José.
- Provide financial support to artists and creative entrepreneurs (across all disciplines in both the non-commercial and commercial arenas).





# REVIEW CRITERIA



- Contribute to San José's cultural vibrancy;
- Show evidence or “signs of readiness” for project launch or implementation;
- Grow and achieve greater financial resilience and
- Demonstrate an economic impact (e.g., attracting visitors, generating sales tax, creating jobs) in the City of San José.



# OVERVIEW

## **\$40,000 AVAILABLE FUNDS**

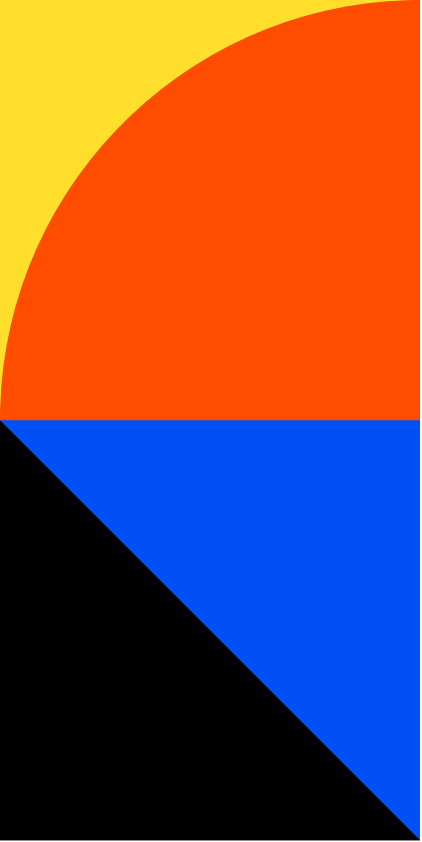
Applicants could request up to \$8,000. Awards ranged from \$4,000 - \$8000.

## **24 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Twenty-four applications qualified for review.

## **CENTER FOR CULTURAL INNOVATION**

This award is in partnership and administered by the 501c3 Nonprofit Center for Cultural Innovation.



# REVIEW PANEL



Omar Rodriguez

Eastside Mag. founder & CEO  
of Kooltura Marketing

Demone Carter

Creative Catalyst

Laura Poppiti

Deputy Director, CCI





# AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS

Lauren Baines

RECOMMENDED AWARD: \$7,500

Proposed Project: **Convergence Arts Center** is seeking support for space improvements that will create more opportunities for artistic presentations within the studio, enhance visibility along The Alameda, and draw greater attention to the artists showcasing their work through the Center.

Casita de las Artes LLC

RECOMMENDED AWARD: \$6,100

Proposed Project: Casita de las Artes seeks support for three educational community fandangos showcasing the traditional Mexican styles of Son Huasteco, Son Jarocho, and Son Mariachero. A fandango is a vibrant celebration that brings people together to improvise music and dance in a communal setting.

Thomas Aguilar

RECOMMENDED AWARD: \$6,000

Proposed Project: To support three events through producer, **Universal Grammer**, including partial costs for videography, photography, marketing, and production. Universal Grammar is actively contributing to the revitalization of San José by hosting regular DJ events and curated performances at various downtown venues.





# AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS

## DoViet LLC

**RECOMMENDED AWARD: \$5,625**

Proposed Project: To support DoViet's "From the South" project, showcasing Vietnamese folklore through ceramics leading up to SJMade Fest and handmade marketplaces in 2025. The project aims to enrich San Jose's culture by introducing Vietnamese heritage through collaboration between artists and their fathers. The fund will support people in recognizing the DoViet company, arts and crafts from Vietnamese people, and opening a showroom at SJ's local restaurant

## Art Builds Community LLC

**RECOMMENDED AWARD: \$6,000**

Proposed Project: Arts Build Community seeks support for relocating to a larger office space within the MACLA building, where exhibits can be mounted and workshops can be hosted. The current office occupies two small rooms totaling less than 300 square feet, and the organization plans to move into a more spacious area with higher ceilings, exceeding 1,000 square feet. This new space requires painting, cleaning, improved lighting, and additional furniture.





# AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS

## Artesanías Morelia

**RECOMMENDED AWARD: \$3,575**

Proposed Project: Artesanías Morelia seeks support to hire a consultant for marketing and website maintenance to strengthen their business. Additionally, they plan to create a mural outside the store that promotes cultural heritage. They are also launching a new line of clothing, focusing on Mariachi attire, Quinceañera dresses, and traditional Mexican wedding dresses.

## Elba Raquel

**RECOMMENDED AWARD: \$5,200**

Proposed Project: Elba Raquel seeks support for expanding her art business through the development of an updated website and the creation of promotional materials for outreach and artist representation, including postcards, newsletters, magazines, business cards, and pamphlets.



# Thank you!

For questions, requests and anything else we can help you with, please email us at [arts.program@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:arts.program@sanjoseca.gov)

