

Community Investments FY23-24 Dream Keeper Initiative (DKI)



Artists Grant Program Overview

Dream Keeper Initiative (DKI) Grant Program Overview

The Dream Keeper Initiative is a new, citywide effort to reinvest \$60 million annually from law enforcement into San Francisco's Black and African American communities. This initiative is part of Mayor London N. Breed's roadmap for reforming public safety and addressing structural inequities in San Francisco.

Purpose:

- To increase the number of cultural spaces designed and curated by Black people.
- To Increase the number of Black artists and producers contributing to the art culture in San Francisco.
- To invest in the stabilization and growth of Black artists, producers, creatives, and organizations serving the Black communities in San Francisco.

Panel Composition

A four-person review panel convened on October 10-11, 2023, to rank the artists applications according to the stated review criteria in the published [FY2023-2024 Dream Keeper Initiative guidelines](#).

The panelists brought a range of expertise in dance, music, performing and visual arts, stage management, education, and nonprofit arts leadership and administration. They demonstrated broad knowledge of the San Francisco arts and culture ecosystem. All panelists identified as African American.

FY23-24 DKI Artists Funding Recommendations

36 artist grant applications were received requesting a total of \$1,800,000.

The panelists reviewed 33 DKI artist applications according to the stated review criteria. DKI Funding recommendations include 16 applicants for a total of \$850,000. During eligibility check, 3 applicants were deemed ineligible due to their status as employees of the City and County of San Francisco.

Recommended projects span a range of artistic disciplines including comedy, creative writing, fashion, film, healing arts, music, portraiture, and theater. A couple are second and third iterations of previously successful projects such as Afatasi the Artist's third annual futurism fashion experience at the Bayview Opera House. Almost half of the recommended projects are by artists who would be first time San Francisco Arts Commission grantees.

Applicants that did not score well were unable to clearly articulate either their history engaging with San Francisco's Black/African community or share a clear vision of goals and desired outcomes or provide a list of collaborators and work

samples demonstrating experience and strong relationships with a focus on the Black and African American communities or provide a detailed assessment plan.

Attachments

Attachments to this memo include the list of DKI applicants recommended for funding with project descriptions and panelist biographies.

Community Investments
 FY23-24 Dream Keeper Initiative



Artist Grant Funding Recommendation

Applicant Grant Amount	Average Score	Project Description
Afatasi the Artist \$50,000	87.25	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the third annual futurism fashion experience at The Bayview Opera House. This event culturally affirms members of San Francisco’s only shrinking demographic creating a space for joy, promoting unity, and inspires future dreaming. This experience is a part of the annual Black History Month programming and includes a futurism fashion show, an art exhibition, and a panel discussion.
Christopher Burch \$50,000	85.75	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support a series of free in-person and virtual workshops with a focus on Black creatives ages 18-64, designed to teach vital skill sets needed to forge a successful career as a working creative; such as pitching a project proposal, creating a contract, approaching a gallery and understanding how to make a living wage for oneself.
Dianthe Spencer Fiscal Sponsor San Francisco International Arts Festival \$50,000	98.5	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the Lift Every Voice Talent Showcase. This project will consist of a series of four rehearsals/workshops and four concerts held at the Buriel Clay Theatre in the African American Arts & Culture Complex (AAACC). The focus will be the live performance of Black music rooted in traditions such as gospel, blues, jazz, and other derived forms. All events will be free and open to the public.
Jonathan Bingham \$50,000	92.75	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the development of an Afrofuturism-themed immersive headphone opera based on Marvel’s BLACK PANTHER, which Jonathan Bingham has been commissioned to compose, to be presented at the SF Ferry Building in Embarcadero.

Kevin Dublin \$50,000	91.25	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the production of a hybrid critical and personal essay, reading and interview series, and a short-form literary documentary all titled: "To Be a Black Poet in San Francisco."
Lumukanda Abdul-Kenyatta \$50,000 Fiscal Sponsor Bayview Hunters Point Multipurpose Senior Services, Inc.	87.5	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the artist Lumukanda Abdul-Kenyatta and his Speakeasy Storytellers organization. The project's short-term vision is to present "Strictly Harlem," a multimedia production written and performed by the artist about the colorful characters and gripping circumstances of his upbringing in 1950-'70s Harlem. The piece will be part of the artist's "Speakeasy Storyteller Series." The project's vision is to allow up to 60 community members to learn and perform the art of storytelling.
Marcella Elizabeth Sanchez \$50,000	88.5	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the Be Seen Project: The Genius and Gaze of Black Creatives, a portrait project documenting Black Creatives, centering LGBT+ people, and gathering stories of their work, life, and experiences in the Bay Area. Each Black creative receives 15 free professional portraits, will be invited to a networking event and their stories will be shared on social media and in a final public showcase.
Maria A. Judice \$50,000	83.75	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support a 40-seat (physical/virtual) microcinema. The microcinema will center on global Black films and support films from radical independent and avant-garde filmmakers from around the world. The space will support media literacy and critical thinking. It will also have a wrap-around education component for screenwriting, acting, and critical cinema writing. An ultimate goal is a place for communities to engage with cinema with a focus on Black and POC communities.
Mark A. Harris \$50,000	94.25	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the development and production of a powerful film, set in San Francisco, which portrays the harrowing ordeal of a Black artist and activist who narrowly escapes a fatal encounter with plainclothes police officers as he exits his Mission District art studio late at night. This story is inspired by the real-life incident I personally endured on the night of June 14th, 2020.
Marvellus Lucas Fiscal Sponsor New Community Leadership	84.75	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support a series of five comedy show events with the theme "Healing through Laughter." I believe in attacking mental health issues through comedy. Laughter is, indeed, the best medicine. I will host five comedy shows to help showcase local comedians. At each show, I will share community resources to help support people in need of

Foundation, Inc. \$50,000		suicide prevention, harm reduction, job opportunities, senior care, and further opportunities.
Nekia Wright \$50,000	91.25	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the production of 4 AFROlistic Wellness public events. Including: 2 AFROlistic wellness workshops & screenings of Black Healing from Zimbabwe to the Bay Documentary Film Presentations in Spring of 2024 and 2 AFROlistic song and dance presentations followed by guided AFROneural Beats Meditations during Black History Month 2025.
Reza John Harris \$50,000	91.5	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the second annual "History of the Bay Day Party" in July 2024 at The Midway in San Francisco. This event is a celebration of Bay Area hip-hop history that includes rap music, DJing, graffiti art, and dance. The event features live performances and painting, discussion panels, an art gallery, historical exhibits, a car show, and local business vendors.
Rodney Jackson \$50,000	85.25	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support the development and world premiere of "The Day the Sky Turned Orange" a new musical. Dream Keeper Initiative funds will support my fee as the lead artist and Director and publicity and production costs. The project's development, rehearsals & auditions, will be held at Black community venues such as the African American Art and Culture Complex, Bayview Opera House and Zaccho Dance Studio. The production's world premiere will take place at San Francisco's Brava Theater Center in June 2025.
Tajuana Kebo Drew \$50,000	86.25	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support an intensive workshop series with a focus on LBTQIA+ Black filmmakers that will train them in culturally-humble grant writing, budgeting, and financial indicators, in order to build solidarity economies for film that prioritize mobilization of multiple culturally specific resources. This project will increase the number, stabilization, and growth of LBTQIA+ Black filmmakers contributing to art and culture, and serving Black communities in San Francisco.
Thomas R Simpson \$50,000	92	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support a performance/workshop series entitled: "STOP! SHOW! CONTROL!: The Art Of Surviving A Police Stop." The goal is to educate young Black men and youth on what to do during a police stop whether in a vehicle or on the street. Through role playing, the project will

		demonstrate three primary steps to take before, during and after the encounter to keep it from turning violent.
Yung Lott \$50,000	86.75	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support a local youth music project. As an accomplished musician myself SFAC funds will afford me the opportunity to recruit 10-15 youth from the community and to work with them as we cut an album of 10-13 songs, start to finish, in a professional recording studio. This will be the first time an artist has engaged in a project like this with the Hunters Point community.



**FY24 Dream Keeper Initiative (DKI) Organizations
Panelist Biographies**

Darryl Chappell (he/him/his)

For the past five years I have run a public charity whose mission is to empower Afrodescendant artists to achieve their highest potential. There are over 150 artists within the Darryl Chappell Foundation community. I personally work with artists through all four of our programs and through our community of mentors.

Chris Moore (he/him/his)

Chris Moore is a primarily a self taught painter and musician based in Oakland/SF since 2007. He grew up drawing and art has always been a part of his life. Chris is an active member of the the bay area music and arts scene. Playing music and working at places like Rickshaw Stop, 924 Gilman, Bottom of the Hill, Ivy Room. Chris received his BA in Cultural Anthropology and Business with a minor in sociology from Duke University where he also played football. He was born in Alabama, raised in Minnesota, and has lived on both the east and west coasts but considers Oakland home.

Bis-Millah Muhammad (she/her/hers)

I am a native of California, a professional performing artist, dancer, choreographer, actor, drummer, and educator. I started dancing at age 5 and became a professional dancer by 14 when I attended Berkeley High School under the instruction of Zak and Naomi Diouf. Since then, I have been traveling, studying, performing and teaching West African dance with renowned companies such as Diamano Coura West African Dance Company, Nimely Pan African Dance Company, Oriki Theatre, African Music &

Dance Ensemble, Friday Jumbo Afro Beat Band, Pope Flynn's Highlife Band, and various other artists within the U.S. and West Africa.

Kimberly Scott (she/her/hers)

Kimberly Scott's career started with the Diamano Coura West African Dance Company as a professional dancer in 2008. She began stage managing student shows, teaching traditional West African movement technique and choreography to Berkeley High School students in 2008 and became resident Stage Manager for the Company in 2012. Presently, Kimi runs Alkimi (alchemy) Stage Management, founded in 2013. Alkimi SM embraces the full bodied integrity of production and space with a sunny disposition. She also has experience in dramaturgy, lighting design, program management and FOH Management. Alkimi has managed projects with Diamano Coura, Berkeley High School, Berkeley Rep, 42nd Moon, Oakland Theater Project, A.C.T., Contra Costa Civic Theatre, Oriki Theater, Presidio Theater, Cheza Nami Foundation and World Arts West over the past 15 years.