

Program Overview

Artistic Legacy Grant (ALG) Grant Program Overview

The Artistic Legacy Grant (ALG) acknowledges the impact of an artist who has been living and practicing their craft in San Francisco for the last 25 years or more. This grant category aims to uplift and celebrate an artist who has contributed to San Francisco's diverse arts and culture ecosystem.

Starting with the FY 2023 - 2024 grant cycle, ALG is an individual artist grant category. Applicants do not need to be associated with an arts organization to be eligible.

Through their artistic practice, the applicant artist is a vital member of their respective community(ies), has a history of deeply engaging with one or more of the historically underrepresented communities prioritized in the 1993 Cultural Equity Endowment Legislation, has a history of working to educate the broader community on the importance of their culture and/or artistic genre, and seeks to preserve their artistic legacy.

Panel Composition

One panel of five members convened on January 18, 2024, to rank the ALG applications according to the stated review criteria in the published ALG 2023-2024 guidelines.

The panelists brought a range of expertise as practicing artists, in arts administration, business development and administration, choral music, community-based programming, curation, dance, editing, education, early childhood education, graphic design, journalism, organizational development, poetry, and non-profit executive leadership. They identify as African American, Egyptian-American, Indian, Latina, and Japanese American.

FY24-25 ALG Funding Recommendations

9 grant applications were received requesting a total of \$652,000.

The panelists reviewed 9 ALG applications according to the stated review criteria. ALG Funding recommendations include 1 applicant for a total of \$75,000.

Successful proposals clearly articulated how their professional and life experience has helped them express the experiences of one or more of the communities identified in the [Cultural Equity Endowment legislation](#). Strong proposals reflected a deep and evolving artistic practice spanning at least 25 years or more in San Francisco and work samples were vibrant. Narrative responses were compelling and demonstrated that the proposed project will further the artist's vision, preserve the artist's artistic legacy, and ensure the artist's longevity and lasting change on the community(ies) engaged.

Funding requests include a range of individual artists that engage San Francisco's diverse audiences and communities, including these communities: African American, American Indian, Asian American, Asian and Pacific Islander, Chinese American, Brazilian, Indigenous, Iranian-American and Iranian immigrants, Latinx, LGBTQIA+, Middle Eastern, Muslim, multiracial, people with disabilities, and women.

The artists span a range of artistic disciplines including capoeira, choral music, choreography, contemporary performance art, dance, indigenous cultural practices and arts, literary books, music, opera, performance art, poetry, spoken word,

translation, theater, and writing.

The applicants that did not score well were unable to clearly articulate how professional and life experience has helped them express the experiences of one or more of the communities identified in the [Cultural Equity Endowment legislation](#), did not clearly articulate how the proposed project will preserve and support the artist's legacy and continued change on the community(ies) with whom the artist engages, and did not clearly describe the artist's leadership and how they have contributed to the vitality of San Francisco's arts ecosystem. Or their artistic practice and major accomplishments were unclear.

Attachments

Attachments to this memo include the ALG applicant recommended for funding with the project description and panelist biographies.

Applicant Grant Amount	Project Description
Rhodessa Jones \$75,000	San Francisco Arts Commission funds will be used to support San Francisco-based artist/activist Rhodessa Jones to create a cataloged archive of 50 years of her performances and theatrical works. This cataloged archive will organize and preserve Rhodessa’s artistic legacy and be the foundation for a new phase of her artistic career as a solo artist. This work will culminate in a 2-day public retrospective of her career, titled the Rhodessa Festival.



FY25 Artistic Legacy Grant (ALG) Panelist Biographies

Randall Kikukawa (He/him/his) joined the GAPA Men's Chorus as music director in January 1991. Originally from Wisconsin, he grew up in Hawaii where he sang with the Honolulu Symphony Chorus. While working on his A.B. at Harvard, he sang with the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum and toured with them through Europe and the East Coast. In the Bay Area, he has sung with the UC-Berkeley Collegium Musicum, the Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco, and St. Patrick's Church choir. He is a founding member of the Golden Gate Men's Chorus and its chamber ensemble, Counterpoint, and is currently CFO of the Board of Directors.

Michelle Mansour (She/hers/her) is an artist, educator, and curator as well as the Executive Director (ED) of Root Division (RD), a visual arts non-profit in San Francisco. Her work at RD spans 20 years including piloting the Youth Education Program (2003). In her time as ED (2007), she has stewarded several strategic plans, facilitated two relocations from displacement (2014-15), and led the organization's capital campaign (\$1.25M) and building renovations (\$900K). As an artist, her work has been shown at the de Young Museum, Bedford Gallery, SFMOMA Artists Gallery, and Berkeley Art Center and is in collections including Nordstroms, Kaiser Permanente, and Hilton Hotels. She received her MFA at SFAI, and a Post- Baccalaureate in Arts Education from School of the Art Institute of Chicago and received an Honorary Fellowship from Djerassi Resident Artists Program. She has participated in lectures/panels with the SF Arts Commission, Grants for the Arts, CCA, and USF among others.

Ayodele Nzinga-Damu (She/hers/her) is Founder of Lower Bottom Playaz, Inc, founded in 1999 and currently in its 24th season, Founder of Black Arts Movement Business District Community Development Corporation (BAMBD CDC) to animate the Black Arts District in Oakland, CA, and producer/founder of BAMDFEST International, a 31-day arts festival in Oakland. Nzinga-Damu is Poet Laureate of Oakland, author of three poetry collections, a contributor to numerous anthologies, guest editor for multiple magazines, a journalist associated with Oakland Voices and the regular column -- BlacArted.

Jamaica Itule Simmons (She/hers/her): is a fine artist, graphic designer, early childhood educator, dancer, and executive director of CubaCaribe, a non-profit arts organization. She received her B.A. in 1999 with a double major in Art and Hispanic Studies from Lewis and Clark College and an M.F.A. in Graphic Design at The Academy of Art University in San Francisco. In addition to her work in visual arts she has studied Cuban dance intensively in Cuba and with local teachers including Danis "la mora" Perez, Susana Arenas Pedroso, Royland Lobato, José Barroso, Ramon Ramos Alayo, Yismari Tellez Ramos and José Rojas. She has performed with Alayo Dance Company, Ire Ile, Oyu Oro, and Raices Cubanas. She was also a founding member of and dancer with Las Que Son Son. She taught preschool at Monteverde School for 16 years and co-founded CubaCaribe in 2003.

Vinay Patel (He/him/his): has over a decade as an arts administrator and has been a critical factor in the growth of Asian Improv aRts' as an arts advocate (as a co-founder and a coordinator of the California Asian American and Pacific Islander Arts Network), producer (from local to international concerts, festivals, tours, recordings) and organizational development consultant as well. Patel has been the Executive Director of Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center since 2009.