

OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS (OCA) REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2022

Selected activities organized by goals in *Cultural Connection: San Jose's Cultural Plan*

The Arts Commission meetings will continue to convene through teleconferencing from remote locations.

Support Diverse Cultural Spaces & Places Throughout the Community

City-owned cultural facilities have fully reopened, including museums and theaters.

Integrate High Impact Public Art & Urban Design throughout the Community

The City of San José Public Art Program inspires community through artworks and exhibitions. We expand community participation opportunities and impact the economic and visual dynamics of the city. Our priorities are guided by the goals and values of project partners and the community. Through active engagement between artists and project stakeholders, we celebrate diversity, innovative spirit, rich history, present and envisioned future. The program facilitates projects that are recognized nationally and internationally for innovative programming. For the most recent update on current and on-going public art projects, please visit:

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=89857&t=637999118066918392>

Strengthen the Cultural Community's Infrastructure

Cultural Funding Portfolio - Investments in Art, Creativity, and Culture

Grantee Survey – A survey was sent out to all OCA grantees on September 27th to gather feedback and comments on proposed revisions to the FY 23-24 Grant Guidelines for the Operating (OpG), Festival, Parade, and Celebration (FPC), and take pART Grant Programs. The survey closed on October 9, 2022. Forty-five responses were submitted.

Grantee Convening – The OCA held a community meeting on Thursday, October 6th via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was to present and receive input from grantees on the proposed revisions to OCA's FY 23-24 Grant Guidelines for the OpG, FPC, and take pART Grant Programs. Comments and feedback from grantees will help staff with finalizing the FY23-24 grant guidelines which will be presented to the Arts Commission for review and approval at their November meeting.

Support Residents' Active, Personal Participation in Arts and Culture

Creative Ambassadors – The deadline to submit an application for the 2023 Creative Ambassadors was on October 10, 2022, and 30 artists applied. The role of the Creative Ambassador is to champion the power of creative expression and engage members of the public in finding their own creative voice. The Creative Ambassadors' will seek to recognize, celebrate, and promote diverse creative experiences citywide. A review panel selected four ambassadors to serve one-year terms in 2023. These recommendations will be presented to

the Commission at its November meeting. Each of the ambassadors will receive a stipend of \$9,500 to produce a creative project that engages the public in creative expression. The ambassadors will also be expected to promote the importance of creative expression by utilizing social media, participating in interviews, and publishing articles as relevant.

WeCreate408 – In October 2022, during National Arts and Humanities month, San Joséans joined a month-long creative challenge, #WeCreate408, to build public awareness and support for the arts. Every day in October, a "creativity challenge prompt" was sent through email, social media, and online in English, Vietnamese, and Spanish. Prompts were designed to inspire people to create independently and attend #WeCreate408 events around San José. The #WeCreate408 campaign themes prompt and development included participation from forty partners and highlighted cultural organizations and events throughout San José. Creative responses can be viewed by visiting the "Wall of Creativity" featured on the WeCreate408.org site.

The campaign launch event on October 8 was themed "Show n' Shine," a #WeCreate408 creative showcase led by San José Creative Ambassador Ricardo Cortez, also known as Tijuana Rick. The event featured young artists, lowriders, and other creative ambassadors and artists from Local Color San José.

Special features for this year's #WeCreate408 campaign included an Instagram and Facebook filter, special giveaways, and prizes: San José-themed shoe charms, tickets to sports and cultural events, and signed artwork. In addition, weekly themes presented throughout the month, such as "Let it Ride," prompted participants to share how they creatively "get around" the city and featured a specially decorated VTA Light Rail car inviting riders to cruise with an artistic flair.

Destination Events in San Jose

October brought the cultural spirit of Halloween and Día de los Muertos to light with events such as Día San José, Día de los Muertos Run/Walk, Hallo-Wellness, Qmunity Night Circus, and Halloween in Japantown. The 11th Annual Día San José Festival returned to Plaza de Cesar Chavez on October 15th, and is a celebration of Mexican tradition, which focuses on gatherings of family and friends to pray for and remember those who have passed away. Similarly, the Día de los Muertos Run/Walk organized by Gardner Health Services is a fundraising event and health initiative that brings together patients, family, and the community-at-large in celebration of life. Participants are encouraged to dress in their favorite Día de los Muertos inspired run workout wear and face make-up.

GYMGUYZ Silicon Valley invited the community to their inaugural Hallo-wellness Festival, which focused on community health awareness and youth obesity awareness by way of diet and exercise. The event was open to the public and costume-themed for Halloween, while providing exercise stations and health vendor booths.

The Qmunity Night Circus, organized by Project More Foundation, returned to the Qmunity District in Downtown San José. The event was a free Halloween party for the LGBTQ+ community along Post Street, between S. 1st Street and S. Market Street, including Lightston

Alley. Every year, this event encourages the community to visit and patronize local businesses along Post Street and the surrounding downtown area while celebrating Halloween.

The Halloween festivities ended with Halloween in Japantown, a safety-conscious trick-or-treating event that many businesses participate in. For over a decade, this event has grown in popularity, causing the sidewalks to be impacted. To support more participation and activation, this event closes Jackson Street and 5th Street to allow for more fun while keeping the community safe. San José Taiko participates in the fun by providing performances throughout the festivities.

October events also included the annual San José Firefighter Charity Stickball Tournament, the Little Italy San Jose Street Festival, the Culture Night Market, the Levitt Fall Concert Series, and San José Sharks Street Rallies. Last but not least, the highly attended United Airlines San José Rock n Roll Half Marathon, 10K, 5K, and Kids Run activated Downtown San José the weekend of October 8th and 9th with a Health & Fitness Expo hosted at the San José McEnery Convention Center. Meanwhile, the Downtown Farmers' Market prepares for their final market of the year in the SoFA District. Its last day of operation is on Wednesday, November 16th from 3:00pm – 7:00pm. The end of October also saw a pivot to our downtown Holiday events as Christmas in the Park and Aloha Downtown Skates began their load in at Plaza de Cesar Chavez and Circle of Palms.

The OCA Special Events Team guides event organizers through an extensive permitting process and facilitates the coordination among multiple city departments, county and state agencies. Beyond facilitating the permit process, the Special Events team leads outreach and engagement with local businesses, communities, council district offices, and stakeholders to mitigate community concerns and impacts. The team supports event organizers through each step of the process, coordinating meetings, conducting site inspections and being onsite on the day of the scheduled event. The OCA Special Events team is proud to be the support and center point of communication for each event's organization.

For a full list of upcoming events overseen by the Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs' Special Events team, please visit [SanJoseCulture.org](https://www.sanjoseculture.org).