

OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS (OCA) REPORT FOR JANUARY 2023

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. Team San Jose has reported an increase in theater occupancy rates.

The Community and Economic Recovery Task Force recommended several arts-related recovery strategies to the City Council, including removing cost barriers for small and mid-sized art organization access to venues. The Council appropriated \$100,000 to implement this recommendation. OCA staff will be working with City-owned theater operators to develop criteria and a process to provide a partial or full subsidy for venue costs.

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>

XO is the most recently installed public art work at the San Jose International Airport. A dedication is planned for early March.

Strengthen the Cultural Community's Infrastructure

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

Investments in Art, Creativity and Culture includes three large grant programs: Operating Grants (provides partial support to San Jose arts organizations with professional staff and year-round programming); Festival, Parade and Celebration Grants (provides partial support for community events held in San Jose and organized by nonprofit organizations); and take pART (provides partial support for publicly-accessible San Jose arts activities by San Jose organizations). FY 2023-2024 Guidelines for the three grant programs were released in December 2022 and are available on the [OCA website](#).

- **Festival, Parade and Celebration Grants (FPC)** support community festivals, parades and celebrations by non-profit organizations.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Wednesday January 25, 2023, 5:00 PM PST.

- **Operating Grants (OpG)** support professionally-managed San Jose arts and culture non-profit organizations that operate year-round programs.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Wednesday February 2, 2023, 5:00 PM PST.
- **Take pART Grants** support publicly-accessible arts activities, projects and programs. Fundraising events and school-based projects are not eligible.
DEADLINE TO APPLY: Monday February 6, 2023, 5:00 PM PST.

All applications must be submitted via Webgrants at <https://grants.sanjoseca.gov/>.

One of the responsibilities of a San Jose Arts Commissioner is to serve on one of OCA's grant program review panels:

- Operating Grant (OpG)
- Festival, Parade, and Celebration Grant (FPC)
- take pART Grant

If you are a new Arts Commissioner, it is encouraged to observe one of these grant panels which will provide a greater understanding of the review process for our cultural grants programs. For more info, contact Ron P. Muriera, Arts Industry Support Director.

Enhance Support for Creative Entrepreneurs and the Commercial Creative Sector

After a hiatus during the pandemic, the OCA is please to announce that it is relaunching its Creative Industries Incentive Fund grants, a grant program aimed to support arts-based commercial small businesses. The grant program is in the process of being freshened and will be announce shortly in partnership with the Center for Cultural Innovation.

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. Four 2023 Creative Ambassadors were approved by the Arts 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, 2022 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.

Destination Events in San Jose

November and December were full of holiday celebrations, including some Downtown San Jose staples like the Veteran's Day Parade, Silicon Valley Turkey Trot, Christmas in the Park, Winter Wonderland, and the Santa Run. This year, Downtown visitors traded in their ice skates for some roller skates as Aloha Downtown Skate was introduced to Circle of Palms as part of this year's holiday festivities. In addition, the Menorah, another holiday staple, found a new home in Downtown as it lit up Parque de los Pobladores.

2022 was also a big year for soccer fans, as the FIFA World Cup took place November 20 – December 18. The San Jose Earthquakes activated San Pedro Square and closed St. John to vehicles to host viewing parties on November 25 - 27. Thousands of fans gathered indoors and outdoors to watch their teams compete in the World Cup, some as early as 5 AM.

November also included other favorites like the annual Run, Turkey, Run: Leftovers, produced by the Bret Harte Booster Club and the last of 2022's Downtown Farmer's Market by the San Jose Downtown Association. 2022 was a popular year for vendor markets as we saw more Culture Night Market events and a new monthly vendor market series called, "World's Worst Expo" taking place outdoors at Eastridge Mall. A lot of shopping opportunities for families and heartfelt moments as Culture Night Market partnered with a couple of organizations to include toy drives at their events in December.

Sonic Runway also participated in the holiday festivities as OCA presented "*Sonic Runway: Experiments in Sound*" featuring Vivace Youth Chorus singing holiday carols on December 22nd. The special events team looks forward to the future events at *Sonic Runway* that will transform City Hall Plaza into a destination for community to experience visual magic through the combination of lights and sound. OCA's *Sonic Runway: Experiments in Sound* will present musicians in partnership with 1 Culture on February 4th and performance artists/cellist Cellista aka former Arts Commissioner Freya Seeburger.

As the downtown holiday events come to an end this January, the holidays continue with the celebration of the Lunar New Year TET Festival at two different locations this year on January 20-22 and January 27-28.

All the fun of the holiday events also brought many opportunities for our special events team to showcase their event expertise and support the activation of a safe and vibrant San Jose. The team did what they do best and worked closely with the event organizers, community and business stakeholders, DOT traffic management, San Jose PD and Fire, and other

teams to help address concerns and impacts including traffic control, unpermitted vendors, and overall safety of the visitors to ensure a safe and enjoyable holiday tradition in San Jose.

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.

As anticipated, the annual city services report showed how busy this past fiscal year's event season has been. In FY 21-22, the OCA events team permitted 109 events, totaling 394 event days with a total attendance of over 1.8M. Events continue to thrive in San José through the OCA Special Events' teamwork with new and returning event organizers.

For a full list of upcoming events overseen by the Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs' Special Events team, please visit SanJoseCulture.org.

Office of Cultural Affairs Updates

The OCA is delighted to announce the hiring of Cynthia Cao to the position of Art Coordinator, a new position that will manage public art projects.

The OCA is also delighted to announce that the new D3 Councilmember Omar Torres will serve as the City Council liaison to the Arts Commission.