

# PRESS RELEASE

Jan 14, 2021

**CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT - Embargoed until 1/14/21**

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## ANNOUNCING THE CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL ADMINISTRATORS OF COLOR FELLOWS AND HOST ORGANIZATIONS

SAN JOSE, CA – This January, the School of Arts & Culture at MHP (SOAC) will be leading a \$1 million statewide workforce development initiative with the goal of supporting an inclusive workforce. The [California Arts Council Administrators of Color Fellowship](#), or “CAC ACF” for short, is doing its part to increase representation in the arts administration field, which is a microcosm of the overall sector’s lack of equity and access to positions of influence.

Following a competitive application process in the summer of 2020, SOAC convened a panel of experienced arts administrators and culture bearers to select this year’s cohort, reflecting the breadth of expertise from arts leaders of color statewide. The 2021 cohort includes 10 individual Fellows paired with mentoring Host Organizations based in their respective regions.

<b>Bay Area (Oakland / Richmond)</b> Fellow: Sarah Guerra (Oakland) Host: Richmond Art Center (Richmond)	<b>Bay Area (San Francisco)</b> Fellow: Javier Stell-Frésquez (San Francisco) Host: World Arts West (San Francisco)
<b>Bay Area (San Jose)</b> Fellow: Betty Nguyễn (San Jose) Host: Red Ladder Theatre Company (San Jose)	<b>Central Coast</b> Fellow: Eric Mora (Salinas) Host: Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History (Santa Cruz)
<b>Central Valley</b> Fellow: Theodor Davis (Stockton) Host: Artes Américas: The Mexican Arts Center (Fresno)	<b>Greater Los Angeles</b> Fellow: Jade Puga (Los Angeles) Host: Avenue 50 Studio, Inc. (Los Angeles)
<b>Greater Northern Region (Capital)</b> Fellow: Beatrice Thomas (Vallejo) Host: Latino Center of Art and Culture (Sacramento)	<b>Greater Northern Region (Upstate)</b> Fellow: Nanette Kelley (McKinleyville) Host: Ink People Center for the Arts (Eureka)

Inland Empire	San Diego Area
Fellow: Khalil Bleux (Murrieta) Host: Riverside Art Museum (Riverside)	Fellow: Luisa Martínez (Tijuana/Chula Vista) Host: San Diego Museum of Us (San Diego)

Fellows will receive a \$50,000 stipend and access to a number of resources, including professional development opportunities and a collaborative learning community. The fellowship offers Host Organizations \$35,000 to mentor their Fellows and assist with administrative costs.

[Click here to learn more, including Fellow bios and Host Organization details.](#)

## ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL ADMINISTRATORS OF COLOR FELLOWSHIP

The [California Arts Council Administrators of Color Fellowship](#) is administered by the School of Arts & Culture at MHP, and is in partnership with the California Arts Council and SVCCreates. The arduous, but necessary goal of CAC ACF is to uplift an inclusive workforce and to support the vibrancy of organizations that create and preserve the cultural identities of all California communities. The pilot program is made possible by a grant from The James Irvine Foundation and one-time increased state arts funding.

“California is the most diverse state in the country, and it is essential for the leadership at our arts and culture organizations to reflect our communities,” said California Arts Council Chair Larry Baza. “The urgency for arts organizations to invest more in our artists and arts leaders of color is greater than ever, and the Administrators of Color Fellowship program provides institutional access and resources to bolster these extraordinary Fellows in their future leadership roles. This program represents our Council’s values by fostering a sense of belonging as we support California’s cultural workers.”

The Arts Council designated SOAC, a cultural institution in East San Jose, as the statewide Administering Organization at a public meeting in September 2019, following a competitive application process. SOAC, with support from the California Arts Council and SVCCreates, managed the call for Fellows and Host Organizations, facilitated the peer-review panel process, and developed the programming.

SOAC will offer valuable engagement opportunities for Fellows, including monthly virtual professional development sessions and immersive co-learning programming reflecting the concerns of the communities where Fellows and Host Organizations are based.

“This \$1 million workforce development initiative is years in the making, and carries even more weight as our creative sector grapples with unprecedented challenges,” said Jonathan Borca, Director of Strategic Partnerships at SOAC, and Program Director for CAC ACF. “Personally, this work gives me energy. As we see our communities uprising and demand racial equity, I wake up daily hoping to do justice to this inspiring network of change agents.”

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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The School of Arts and Culture at the Mexican Heritage Plaza is a vibrant, cultural institution in East San Jose that seeks to catalyze creativity and empower community. For the past 10 years, the SOAC has been pioneering an approach to build authentic diversity and inclusion in Silicon Valley's arts and culture sector. Learn more at <https://www.schoolofartsandculture.org>.