

ATTACHMENT 2

2017 PERFORMING ARTS GRANT PROGRAM SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY PEER REVIEW PANEL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION'S 2017 AD HOC CULVER CITY PERFORMING ARTS GRANT PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE

The following is an overview of the twenty-three applicants (ranked from highest to lowest) with summary comments:

The Jazz Bakery Performance Space

Proposed Project:	Jazz performance featuring Gordon Goodwin's Little Phat Band
Performance Venue:	Kirk Douglas Theatre
Proposed Date:	June 9, 2017
Panel Score:	100
Grant Request \$5,000	Recommended Award: \$5,000

Comments: The panel responded favorably to the project proposal and members acknowledged the work of Executive Director Jeff Gauthier. Panelists commented on the longevity of the institution and how the Jazz Bakery has built an audience in Culver City. It was noted that the organization has a diverse funding base for this project. Panelists commended the Jazz Bakery's commitment to Culver City Unified School District's (CCUSD) Academy of Visual and Performing Arts (AVPA) students. They recommended that the organization start coordinating with AVPA as soon as possible and consider including more students in its plan. The subcommittee suggested that the performance be used as a fundraiser for the organization.

National Association of Composers - USA

Proposed Project:	Chamber music performance featuring the Price Duo and the Lyris Quartet
Performance Venue:	Culver City Council Chambers
Proposed Dates:	April 15, 2017
Panel Score: 100	
Grant Request \$1,700	Recommended Award \$1,700

Comments: The panel felt that this was a strong centennial themed project featuring respected musicians. Members of the panel were familiar with the Lyris

Quartet and one panel member described the quartet as electrifying. Panelists found the budget realistic as it was described. They commented on the intimacy of the Council Chambers. Further, they predicted the performance would be popular and that the audience size might be limited by this venue.

Society for the Activation of Social Space through Art and Sound

Proposed Project:	Performance of a new, commissioned work by sound artists Akio Suzuki & Aki Onda
Performance Venue:	Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook
Proposed Dates:	October 2017
Panel Score:	100
Grant Request \$5,000	Recommended Award \$5,000

Comments: SASSAS was lauded for its commitment to presenting unique performances at the Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook. Panelists noted that the organization was discerning about its artist selections and that it often commissions new work from national sound artists. Panel members observed that they have a niche following from across the region and that the Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook complements the programming well. They felt that their performances contribute to making Culver City a destination for art. Panel members remarked on the good press they have received, their realistic budget, and their outreach efforts. The Subcommittee recommended that SASSAS provide more video samples from Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook performances in the future application.

Symphonic Jazz Orchestra

Proposed Project:	Public jazz performance of "The Family Jazz Hour"
Performance Venue:	Rotunda Room - Veterans Memorial Building
Proposed Dates:	Jan. 21 & Mar. 11, 2017
Panel Score:	100
Grant Request \$3,100	Recommended Award \$3,100

Comments: The Culver City-based organization is a first time applicant to the City's grant program. Panelists expressed admiration for its excellent CCUSD elementary school programs which blend performance and educating. Some observed that the proposed performances would attract local families since SJO has reached so many students. The video sample was effective and prompted panel members to remark on the high quality of the instruction and the narration. Others commented on the good outreach efforts, ability to promote large concerts with prominent jazz musicians, and the solid funding for this proposal.

Culver City Symphony Orchestra

Proposed Project:	A varied program of symphonic music including works written in 1917 or from films made in Culver City.		
Performance Venue:	Kirk Douglas Theatre		
Proposed Dates:	June 11, 2017		
Panel Score:	99.4		
Grant Request	\$6,500	Recommended Award	\$5,000

Comments: The orchestra is planning to present a concert featuring a Centennial theme. Panel members expressed confidence that the program would be popular, especially with free tickets offered to children ages 6-12 years old. There was praise for the artistic quality of the orchestra. It was noted that the orchestra size would be reduced, as it has been in past years, since the Kirk Douglas Theatre is not as large as Veterans Memorial Auditorium. Panelists stated that the organization seems healthy, has varied funding from Los Angeles County for summer programming, and that they pay the musicians. The subcommittee advised that the orchestra submit video instead of audio so that panels can observe the musicians as they play. Subcommittee members acknowledged union restrictions and encouraged the orchestra to seek a solution since video samples would be beneficial for other grant seeking efforts.

The Actors' Gang

Proposed Project:	Free Shakespeare in the Park, new adaptation of <i>Macbeth</i> .		
Performance Venue:	Media Park		
Proposed Dates:	Saturdays and Sundays August 2017		
Panel Score:	99		
Grant Request	\$5,000	Recommended Award	\$5,000

Comments: The Actors' Gang is planning its own family-friendly, Centennial themed version of *Macbeth* for summer 2017. Panelists familiar with the free productions remarked on how enjoyable and accessible they are and that they always have Culver City references laced throughout the plays. The company is known for its high artistic excellence and effective outreach to the local community. Panel members commented that The Actors' Gang is an important part of the community with a larger budget, and stronger alternative funding, than many other local performing arts organizations.

Vox Femina Los Angeles

Proposed Project: Choral Concert
Performance Venue: Culver City Presbyterian Church
Proposed Date: April 23, 2017
Panel Score: 98
Grant Request \$6,000 **Recommended Award** \$5,000

Comments: Members of the panel found the artistic quality of this Culver City-based choral group to be stellar and commented on its diverse performing ensemble. There was an observation that the group is home-grown and unique; moreover, that it is not part of a larger ensemble. Panelists were moved by the video sample and remarked on how multi-generational the company is. It was noted that the group has expanded its local audience in recent years and improved its publicity efforts.

We Tell Stories

Proposed Project: Seven free, 45-minute performances for family audiences presented in conjunction with the library's summer reading program.
Performance Venue: Culver City Julian Dixon Library
Proposed Dates: June 21, and 28, July 5, 12, 29, 26 & August 2, 2017
Panel Score: 97
Grant Request \$4,500 **Recommended Award** \$4,500

Comments: We Tell Stories has had a long association with the summer reading program at the Culver City Julian Dixon Library. Panelists felt that the video was effective in representing the work of the company. Members of the panel remarked on how high energy these free performances are, how well attended they are, and how much fun the children have. There were comments on how the performances were never stale even if a play is repeated. We Tell Stories was also acknowledged for its enthusiastic work in the CCUSD elementary schools.

Donna Sternberg & Dancers (Dancesence, Inc.)

Proposed Project: *Life Stories* is a multi-generational dance performance based on stories of Culver City senior citizens
Performance Venue: Garden Room - Veterans Memorial Building
Proposed Dates: November 4, 2017 (TBC)
Panel Score: 91
Grant Request \$5,000 **Recommended Award** \$5,000

Comments: Panelists observed that Donna Sternberg has presented site-specific work in various venues in Culver City. They also complimented her on the topics that she chooses for the dance performances. While panelists differed on whether or not they responded to the dance styles of Donna Sternberg & Dancers, they agreed that this Centennial themed project had value and that the performance would find an appreciative audience. The panel found the video samples, especially the one featuring multi-generational dancers, particularly beneficial for the evaluation. Discussion ensued regarding the sensitivity required to conduct these voluntary interviews with Culver City Senior Citizens Association members and supported the idea of a post-production panel discussion to engage the audience.

Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival

Proposed Project:	Theatre performance of diverse solo performers.
Performance Venue:	Ivy Substation
Proposed Dates:	June 24, 2017
Panel Score:	91
Grant Request \$3,000	Recommended Award \$3,000

Comments: The proposal from this longtime grant recipient included workshops as well as a performance. Staff advised the applicant, panel and subcommittee that the grant program funds performances but not workshops. The applicant accepted that adjustment and the panel focused its review on the proposed performance. Panelists praised the work of this well-regarded organization and commented on its longevity, the importance of the work, the group's ability to meet attendance goals for the Culver City performances, and its diverse funding sources. Members of the Subcommittee recommended that Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival include more information about the selection process for the "Best of the Fest" performance in subsequent applications.

Culver City Chamber Orchestra

Proposed Project:	Orchestra concert of music from composers between 1917–2017, commemorating the Culver City Centennial
Performance Venue:	Kirk Douglas Theatre
Proposed Date:	June 10, 2017
Panel Score:	90
Grant Request \$5,000	Recommended Award \$5,000

Comments: The panel supported the orchestra's proposal to perform at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. Panelists were impressed with the high quality of the artistic documentation and they noted the number of talented musicians that the orchestra had presented over the years. They observed that the small organization was

healthy and encouraged the group to stretch more artistically. Panel members agreed that the Centennial theme for the proposal was vague and encouraged them to focus on the specifics or consider alternate programming.

Culver City Public Theatre, Inc.

Proposed Project:	Free summer theatre performances for children and adults including an original Children's Popcorn Theatre play and an adaptation of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> titled <i>Romeo and Juliet in Screenland</i> .
Performance Venue:	Dr. Paul Carlson Memorial Park
Proposed Date:	Saturdays and Sundays, July 17-August 20, 2017
Panel Score:	87
Grant Request \$5,000	Recommended Award \$4,500

Comments: Panelists expressed interest in this longstanding community theatre's proposal which includes an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* with a Centennial theme. There was a recommendation that the group strive to achieve artistic consistency as it grows. Members of the panel praised the group for offering free performances in the park, for its family-friendly programming and for broadening its outreach through social media.

Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre (Collage Dance Theatre)

Proposed Project:	<i>FISHEYES</i> , a multi-disciplinary project integrating dance, visual arts, science and technology to explore issues of drought and water conservation.
Performance Venue:	Veterans Memorial Park
Proposed Dates:	TBD 2017
Panel Score:	85
Grant Request \$5,000	Recommended Award \$4,500

Comments: The panel considered this multi-faceted proposal. Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre collaborated with architect Alex ward to design and build a 15-foot steel fish that could reside as interactive public art in parks and facilities across the Los Angeles area. While The Fish is in residence, the company's teaching artists have led workshops for the public. The group's proposal for Culver City includes the workshops, a performance presented by professional dancers and a post-performance panel focused on the issues of drought and conservation in our area. Staff advised the applicant, panel and subcommittee that the grant program funds performances but not workshops. The discussion regarding the possible location for The Fish is ongoing. Panelists commented on how respected the dance company is and they were intrigued by the proposal for the performance and panel discussion. However, they found the outreach plan for the Culver City community

vague and couldn't discern whether the Culver City partners would be promoting the performance. The subcommittee supported Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre's efforts to work with multi-disciplinary artists and encouraged further partnerships to attract new audiences.

Kairos Dance Company

Proposed Project:	A dance and multimedia production addressing the issues relating to mental illness in the community
Performance Venue:	Ivy Substation
Proposed Dates:	June 29, 2017
Panel Score:	83
Grant Request \$5,000	Recommended Award \$3,500

Comments: Panelists appreciated the artistic quality demonstrated in the video sample. They responded to the emotion within the dance rather than to the dance technique. Members of the panel speculated that dance might be a particularly successful method of communicating mental health issues; however, it was difficult for them to discern if this specific performance was effectively addressing the subject matter. Further, they urged the company to prepare a promotional campaign that would attract the general public and they recommended adding a panel discussion prior to the performance. The company was encouraged to contact local mental health organizations as soon as possible to ensure their participation and to start building the audience.

Benita Bike's DanceArt Company

Proposed Project:	Free interactive performance that both introduces dance to newcomers and challenges experienced dance viewers.
Performance Venue:	Culver City Senior Center
Proposed Dates:	June 4, 2017
Panel Score:	81
Grant Request \$2,000	Recommended Award \$1,800

Comments: Panelists commented on the fine artistic quality of the company and its traditional approach to modern dance. Also, there was a recommendation for the company to further mature the work being developed. Panel members suggested that the company promote the performance to the AVPA dance students and other local dance students. The dance concert is proposed for the Culver City Senior Center on a Sunday during its regular program hours. Panel members felt that this dance company is adept at promoting performances in Culver City and that the community recognizes that the facility is often the site for public events. However, there was some concern regarding the date since it is just prior to the last week of school. Both the panel and the subcommittee noted that

the budget seemed high for a performance in the Senior Center especially if only approximately 100 people are served.

Allegro Music Foundation – Westside Youth Orchestra

Proposed Project:	Free community youth orchestra performances
Performance Venue:	Park Century School
Proposed Dates:	Mar. 18, Jun 3, Nov, 18 - 2017
Panel Score:	79
Grant Request \$4,000	Recommended Award \$3,000

Comments: The founder of the organization was recognized for building this youth orchestra which presents free concerts at Park Century School. The orchestra creates an opportunity for children to have music lessons and perform in concert. Panelists surmised that the orchestra included professional musicians at the concerts to enhance the performance quality. The panel was supportive of the orchestra and the proposal but they could not determine if the orchestra included students from Culver City or if there was an audience base in this community. Overall, they found it valuable to offer local families more opportunities to enjoy free orchestra concerts. The panel urged the group to use their available funding to promote the concerts to the community. Further, the subcommittee recommended that they concentrate some promotional efforts in the area around Park Century School.

Critical Mass Dance Company

Proposed Project:	Dance performance of <i>Arco Iris: The Rainbow Bridge</i> , a new work of Blacklight Dance Theater
Performance Venue:	Brasil Cultural Center
Proposed Dates:	Feb 25, 2017
Panel Score:	78
Grant Request \$5,000	Recommended Award \$3,750

Comments: Panel members commented on the artistic quality of the dancing in the work sample and did not find it to be unusual; however, they were interested in the proposal for the black light performances. Panelists questioned the location of the new Brasil Cultural Center since it might be too small for the production. They recommended that the dance company thoroughly review the technical needs for that space and also sign a written agreement for the rental. The panel found it difficult to determine more about the proposal since the estimate for the audience size and the ticket price were absent from the application.

Los Angeles Doctors Symphony Orchestra

Proposed Project: An orchestra concert with opera music
Performance Venue: Veterans Memorial Building - Auditorium
Proposed Dates: November 19, 2017
Panel Score: 69
Grant Request \$5,000 **Recommended Award** \$3,750

Comments: The artistic documentation for this Culver City-based orchestra was well received by panelists. Some panel members observed that the group is a volunteer community orchestra that endeavors to perform work that is played less often. A recommendation was made to provide a work sample that demonstrates that effort rather than the Beethoven sample that was submitted. Discussion ensued regarding the orchestra's publicity plan and the panel urged the group engage in new and different outreach efforts to the Culver City community.

C. Eule Dance

Proposed Project: Contemporary dance program
Performance Venue: Ivy Substation
Proposed Dates: June 23, 2017
Panel Score: 64
Grant Request \$5,000 **Recommended Award** \$3,000

Comments: Although the panel provided a low score for this proposal, it did recommend funding to support this young company which recently relocated to Los Angeles. The panel reviewed the program which included one dance piece inspired by the water crisis and a Centennial themed dance piece celebrating the City's film history. Panelists held different opinions regarding the artistic documentation and the budgeting for the performance. The panel strongly recommended that the group strategize about the outreach efforts for the Culver City community and engage its board to assist in the effort.

Lineage Dance Company

Proposed Project: Three "flash mob" dance performances along the pedestrian plaza at Helms Walk
Performance Venue: Helms Bakery District, pedestrian plaza
Proposed Dates: April 2017
Panel Score: 60
Grant Request \$5,000 **Recommended Award** \$0

Panelists found the concept of flash mob dance performances interesting and felt that the Helms Bakery was a good venue choice since there is a built-in audience.

They expressed concern about how many audience members would actually be reached since the flash mobs would be unannounced. The panel reviewed the outreach plan and found it too limited to be effective. The panel also noted that the artistic quality was difficult to determine from the artistic documentation since one work sample was a slide show of still photos and the other was too dark to be evaluated properly. Lineage Dance Company was not recommended for funding.

Saturday Night Bath Concert Fund

Proposed Project:	Interactive concert with traditional and original blues music for teens
Performance Venue:	Culver City Teen Center
Proposed Dates:	January 2017
Panel Score:	58
Grant Request \$2,195	Recommended Award \$0

Panelists agreed that the format in the proposal would be best presented in a school setting. Staff advised the applicant, panel and subcommittee that the City's grant program funds performances but not workshops. Although these performances could provide an opportunity for students to explore music and musical instruments, the panel found it doubtful that the performance would draw a teen audience in Culver City. The panel had difficulty with the way that the application was written and felt that the original concept could not be recreated as a successful public event. Further, panelists remarked on the quality of the sample recording but felt that the lack of a video prevented the panel from properly evaluating the musicianship and student interaction. Saturday Night Bath Concert Fund was not recommended for funding. The panel recommended that the organization collaborate with CCUSD or the Culver City Teen Center to possibly create a regular afterschool program or workshop series.

Monarch Theatre Guild

Proposed Project:	Socially relevant musical theatre performance of <i>The Golden Fleece</i> .
Performance Venue:	Rotunda Room – Veterans Memorial Building
Proposed Dates:	March/April 2017
Panel Score:	48
Grant Request \$5,000	Recommended Award \$1,000

Comments: The panel applauded this small Culver City-based theatre company for producing new musicals. Panel members did not find the artistic quality of the work sample to be competitive with others and they were concerned that the performances might not be successful. The panel recommended that the company invest in new video recordings and strategic planning to grow the organization. The panel did not recommend Monarch Theatre Guild for funding. Subsequently, the

subcommittee altered the recommendation to provide the company with a \$1,000 award in an effort to demonstrate support. The subcommittee members felt that the company could benefit from the City's promotional opportunities and they encouraged the organization to continue building a local audience.

U-Care Foundation

Proposed Project:	Anti-bullying play set in Culver City
Performance Venue:	Ivy Substation
Proposed Dates:	July 1, 2017
Panel Score:	47
Grant Request \$6500	Recommended Award \$0.

The panel recognized that the project could be considered valuable youth programming but there was no indication that the company was already working with CCUSD on this original play about bullying. The panelists felt that the application was weak and that the tone was unprofessional. The budget was not prepared thoroughly and it was unclear whether the performers were students or actors in the video sample. The artistic documentation did not give the panel an adequate demonstration of the work. The panel did not feel that this performance would attract an audience and U-Care Foundation was not recommended for funding. The panel suggested that U-Care contact CCUSD in an effort to create programming within a school setting.