



# City of Culver City

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## Staff Report

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**CAC - Consideration of (1) a Recommendation from the Ad Hoc 2019 Performing Arts Grant Program Subcommittee and (2) a Recommendation to the City Council Related to the 2019 Performing Arts Grant Program Awards.**

**Meeting Date:** November 20, 2018

**Contact Person/Dept:** Susan Obrow - Cultural Affairs/Administrative Services

**Phone Number:** (310) 253-6628

**Fiscal Impact:** Yes ☒ No ☐ **General Fund:** Yes ☐ No ☒

**Public Hearing:** ☐ **Action Item:** ☒ **Attachments:** Yes ☒ No ☐

**Public Notification:** (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - Cultural Affairs Commission (11/15/18); Sony Pictures Entertainment (11/09/18), 2019 Performing Arts Grants Program Applicants (11/09/18)

**Department Approval:** Serena Wright-Black, Assistant City Manager (11/15/18)

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Ad Hoc 2019 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program Subcommittee (Subcommittee) recommends that the Cultural Affairs Commission (CAC): (1) consider the recommendation of the Subcommittee; and, (2) make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the 2019 Performing Arts Grant Program awards.

### **BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION**

Culver City's Performing Arts Grant Program (Program) was established in 1994 and 2019 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the program. The Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) stipulates that no more than 25% of the money deposited into the Cultural Trust Fund in the prior fiscal year be allocated for performing arts in the subsequent year. \$207,500 has been allocated in Fiscal Year 2018/2019 and \$15,000 has been received from a contribution made by Sony Pictures Entertainment in 2018 (for a total of \$222,500 available for the 2019 Program). The Subcommittee approached grant funding with a long view recognizing that there may not be many future years with such high allocations for the

Cultural Trust Fund. They considered it prudent to reserve some funding for future years. Also, they acknowledged the responsibility to use the full amount of \$15,000 from Sony Pictures Entertainment as requested. Subsequently, the Subcommittee proposed allocating approximately \$175,000 for the 2019 grant program.

Staff issued the 2019 notice of funding availability to the public during the week of July 19, 2018. The guidelines and application included the following statement on cultural equity:

“The City of Culver City is dedicated to achieving cultural equity through the Performing Arts Grant Program. Cultural equity embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people - including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion - are represented in the development of arts policy; the support of artists; the nurturing of accessible, thriving venues for expression; and the fair distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources.”

Also, the application stated that grants were projected to be up to \$20,000 per organization, and grant requests should be for less than 50% of the applicant's projected proposal costs. The application was posted on the City's website, and notices were distributed electronically to Culver City-based performing arts organizations, current grantees, and through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission's Los Angeles Culture Net arts forum. A current list of possible performance venues in Culver City was also posted on the City's web site.

On August 9, 2018 staff held a workshop at Veterans Memorial Building during which the grant guidelines, the application, the electronic submittal process, and possible performance venues were reviewed in detail. The application deadline was September 7, 2018.

On October 15, 2018, music applications were reviewed by a Peer Review Panel and on October 19, 2018, theatre and dance applications were reviewed by a separate Peer Review Panel. Ten distinguished panelists were joined by Cultural Affairs Ad Hoc 2019 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program Subcommittee members Tania Fleischer and Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin. The Subcommittee attended the panel meetings as observers and as an additional resource for questions.

The 2019 Performing Arts Grant Music Peer Review Panel Members included:

1. Suzanna Guzman, Opera Singer and Educator/Los Angeles Opera and The Industry
2. Sherrill Bennett Herring, Associate Director/The Da Camera Society
3. Josephine Liu Moerschel, Executive and Artistic Director/Elemental Music
4. Bryan Pezzone, Pianist
5. Catherine Rotunno, Manager, Global Corporate Social Responsibility/Sony Pictures Entertainment

The 2019 Performing Arts Grant Theatre and Dance Peer Review Panel Members included:

1. Martha Demson, Artistic Director/Open Fist Theatre
2. Napoleon Gladney, Dancer and Choreographer; Audience Development Coordinator/Musco Center for the Arts
3. Natalie Marrero, Executive Director/Viver Brasil
4. Catherine Rotunno, Manager, Global Corporate Social Responsibility/Sony Pictures Entertainment
5. Carolina San Juan, Arts Education Director/East West Players
6. Shay Wafer, Managing Director/WACO (Where Art Can Occur) Theater Center

Twenty eight complete applications were submitted electronically via the City website. An email was then sent to the panelists, prior to the review panel meeting, with a link to a digital folder that contained all of the grant applications. The panelists were also provided a sample score sheet. The following four scoring criteria were identified in the application:

1. Artistic and/or cultural excellence of proposed project (45 points)
2. Outreach and engagement with the Culver City community (20 points)
3. Realistic project budget and funding base (20 points)
4. Overall merit and contribution to cultural equity (15 points)

The members of each Peer Review Panel and the Subcommittee convened on October 15, 2018 and October 19, 2018 in City Hall. Staff opened each review panel discussion by providing a brief overview of the grant program's history, guideline changes, and discussion of the four review criteria listed above. After the overview, each application was reviewed, with its corresponding artistic samples, in alphabetical order. Staff provided updated information, then panelists took turns in leading the discussion about the applications. Each panelist had the opportunity to ask questions and then offer comments to the group. This was followed by panelists providing scores in each of the four categories, resulting in an average score for each criteria and a total score for that applicant. Only the peer panelists provided scores during the peer review session.

Once the review of the individual applications was completed, the score for the 28 applicants were tallied by staff, which resulted in a ranking of the applications from highest to lowest. The Peer Review Panel adjusted scores but did not make recommendations for funding allocations.

On October 26, 2018, the Cultural Affairs Ad Hoc 2019 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program Subcommittee convened and reviewed the total scores and the requested grant amounts for all 28 applications. Since 2019 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the program, the Subcommittee proposed awarding funding for as many distinctive and diverse performances as possible. The Subcommittee recommended that those applicants with total scores between 95 and 100 should receive 80% of their requested funding, applicants with total scores between 94 and 80 should receive 70% of their

requested funding and applicants with scores between 60 and 79 should receive 60% of their requested funding. The Subcommittee did not recommend funding for applicants with scores below 60 points.

Further, the Subcommittee recommended that Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra be provided additional consideration in an effort to demonstrate support for its bilingual (English and Spanish) production of *Peter and The Wolf* at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. The Subcommittee also determined that the Museum of Jurassic Technology's proposal was predominantly to support a film series that included live narration and musical accompaniment rather than a series of stand-alone music concerts. The Subcommittee did not recommend funding for this proposal; however they did recommend that the museum consider applying to the City of Culver City's Special Events Grant Program

The Subcommittee supported a plan for staff to review the application process with the organizations which were not recommended for awards this year. This review would better prepare the organizations for the next application process.

The total amount recommended for all grant awards is \$175,196. A chart, noting the amounts requested and the recommendations for awards, is included as Attachment 1.

As always, staff will work closely with the grant recipients on the promotional plans for their performances and provide them with a performance survey as well. Staff will engage the graphic designer responsible for the logo celebrating the City's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Art in Public Places Program, to design a logo for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program. Marketing options are provided below.

Logo Availability:

City of Culver City Special 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo  
Sony Pictures Entertainment

City Website Promotion:

Home Page  
Performing Arts Pages  
Community Calendar (self-service)

Social Media:

Facebook  
Twitter  
Instagram  
Nextdoor

Public, Educational, and Governmental Access Channel Promotion:

Spectrum Subscribers  
Frontier FiOS Subscribers  
AT&T U-verse Subscribers

Email Blasts:

City of Culver City  
Sony Pictures Entertainment (for employees)

Public Announcements:

Announcements at City Council and Cultural Affairs Commission Meetings

A brief summary of the 28 applications (ranked from highest to lowest) is attached (Attachment 2). The City Council will consider the Commission's recommendation for grant awards on Monday, December 10, 2018.

**FISCAL ANALYSIS:**

The Subcommittee recommends a total amount of \$175,195 to be allocated for the 2019 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program. The total amount available for the 2019 Program awards is \$222,500. The funding includes monies from the Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Art in Public Places Program (Cultural Trust Fund - 41322400.619800 PZ614) budget in the amount of \$207,500, as allocated pursuant to the CCMC, and \$15,000 from the 2018 contribution from Sony Pictures Entertainment (42080000.619800.PZ614).

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. 18-11-20\_ATT\_Overview of 2019 PAG Request Amounts
2. 18-11-20\_ATT\_PAG Summary of Recommendations

The completed Performing Arts Grant applications are available in the City Clerk's office during regular City Hall business hours.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION(S):**

That the Cultural Affairs Commission:

1. Consistent with the recommendation from the Ad Hoc 2019 Culver City Performing Arts Grant Program Subcommittee, recommend to the City Council that 2019 Performing Arts Grant Program awards be allocated as outlined in the staff report.

**OR**

2. Recommend to the City Council that 2019 Performing Arts Grant awards be allocated as amended.