

ATTACHMENT 2

2019 PERFORMING ARTS GRANT PROGRAM SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY PEER REVIEW PANEL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION'S 2019 AD HOC CULVER CITY PERFORMING ARTS GRANT PROGRAM SUBCOMMITTEE

The following is an overview of the 28 applicants (ranked from highest to lowest scores) with summary comments:

Grand Performances

Proposed Project: *Explore Los Angeles with GP* – Free Community Concert

Performance Venue: Brasil Brasil Cultural Center

Proposed Date: March 2019 and August 2019

Total Score: 100

Grant Request: \$13,750

Recommended Award: \$11,000

Comments:

Series of four free music performances and participatory workshops featuring Native American singers Ulali and South African guitarist Derek Gripper. The panel was eager to welcome this first-time applicant to Culver City. Panelists expressed admiration for its established community-based history and proposed partnerships with cultural centers, libraries and senior centers. The artistic sample was considered excellent. Panelists felt that would be a superior opportunity for Culver City audiences to engage with these unique, multi-cultural artists. The panel commented on the good outreach efforts and the solid funding for this proposal.

Symphonic Jazz Orchestra

Proposed Project: Family Jazz Hour – Free Concert

Performance Venue: Farragut Elementary School

Proposed Dates: May 9, 2019

Total Score: 100

Grant Request: \$1,370

Recommended Award: \$1,096

Comments:

This free family jazz concert will be presented at a local elementary school and will be open to the public. The event will provide the young audience members with an opportunity to hear professionals from the orchestra perform and to learn more about jazz. Panelists expressed admiration for the organization's excellent CCUSD programs which blend performance and education. Some observed that the performance would attract local families since SJO has reached so many students

already. The video sample was particularly effective and prompted panel members to remark on the high quality of the artists and the audience engagement. Panelists recommended that SJO expand the program and focus on reaching a wider general audience as well as students and families.

Vox Femina Los Angeles

Proposed Project: *A Taste of Season 22 – A Choral Concert*

Performance Venue: Culver City Presbyterian Church

Proposed Date: April 28, 2019

Total Score: 100

Grant Request: \$11,312

Recommended Award: \$9,050

Comments:

This choral concert would feature repertoire from the 22nd season as well as a premiere work from acclaimed transgender composer Mari Esabel Valverde. The Voicestra Choir from Culver City Middle School would be the special guests. Members of the panel found the artistic quality of this Culver City-based women's choral group to be exceptional and commented on its diverse and enthusiastic performing ensemble. The panel observed that the group is relatable and engaging, with a strong history of community outreach and an emphasis on accessibility. It was noted that the group has expanded its school-based engagement and utilizes paid advertising to good effect.

Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre

Proposed Project: EBB AND FLOW Festival

Performance Venue: Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook

Proposed Dates: February 9 & 10, 2019

Total Score: 95.8

Grant Request: \$20,000

Recommended Award: \$16,000

Comments:

Ebb & Flow is a free two-day contemporary dance festival focusing on themes of health and wellness and culminating in a sunset performance. Students and community performers would also be invited to participate. Panelists commented on how respected this dance company is and its long history of successful site-specific performances. Panel members admired that this proposal includes engagement with local students as participants as well as audience members. Some observed the diversity of the Board and staff, inclusion of audience demographics in the application, and partnerships with non-arts organizations, such as hospitals and prisons.

Jazz Bakery Performance Space

Proposed Project: Bill Holman Big Band concert

Performance Venue: Kirk Douglas Theatre

Proposed Date: July 13, 2019

Total Score: 95.8

Grant Request: \$5,000

Recommended Award: \$4,000

Comments:

The proposal is for a jazz performance featuring the Bill Holman Big Band. A workshop for Culver City High School Academy of Visual and Performing Arts students will take place before the performance. The review panel responded favorably to the project proposal, its realistic budget and Ruth Price's artistic programming. Panelists commented on the diversity of the featured artists and performers, strong Board involvement and the marketing accomplishments in attracting Culver City residents. Panelists commended the Jazz Bakery's commitment to Culver City Unified School District students.

The Wende Museum

Proposed Project: *Music at The Wende*

Performance Venue: The Wende Museum

Proposed Dates: February 1, March 1, April 5, May 4, 2019

Total Score: 95.6

Grant Request: \$20,000

Recommended Award: \$16,000

Comments:

The grant request is for a series of four free concerts featuring established Los Angeles-based musicians presenting classical, new music and jazz. Panelists expressed a lack of clarity about the content of the proposed program, particularly since it is a new effort. Some panelists admired the concept and the site-specific nature of the musical program and its connection to the museum collection and special exhibitions. Panelists expressed some concern regarding the limited funding base and encouraged the organization to diversify further. Overall, the panel found that the organization's offering of low-stimulus programs is unique and admirable in terms of equity and inclusion, and that live-streaming the events is a worthwhile outreach strategy.

Center Theatre Group of Los Angeles

Proposed Project: *Block Party*

Performance Venue: Kirk Douglas Theatre

Proposed Dates: March 7 to April 28, 2019

Total Score: 95.5

Grant Request: \$20,000

Recommended Award: \$16,000

Comments:

Block Party will remount three recently-produced plays by theatre companies in the Los Angeles region to provide diverse, high-quality theatergoing experiences for Culver City audiences and the wider region. Center Theatre Group's consistent artistic excellence and sincere efforts to increase diversity was lauded by the panel. The theatre company was praised for developing the "block party" idea to foster cultural equity and nurture smaller theatre companies. Panelists supported the project and offered observations on how the Culver City Performing Arts Grant could best serve the Culver City community. The panel recommended using the City funding to increase marketing and outreach specifically for Culver City residents and to consider longer runs of each show within the series.

SASSAS

Proposed Project: *.sound* – A Free Concert

Performance Venue: Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook

Proposed Dates: Spring 2019

Total Score: 95.2

Grant Request: \$13,253

Recommended Award: \$10,602

Comments:

This grant request is for an experimental music performance by Society for the Activation of Social Space (SASSAS), celebrating the 20th anniversary of the *.sound* series with a free six-hour concert featuring over 50 artists. The inventiveness and experimentation by the Society for the Activation of Social Space were admired by panel members. Panelists were attracted to the project, particularly the specific and comprehensive cultural equity efforts described in the proposal including offering free admission and engaging general Overlook visitors. The budget seemed reasonable for the project. Panel appreciated the first-rate company website that featured videos of past performances.

Santa Monica Chorus

Proposed Project: *City of Stars – Celebrating 70 Years in Song*

Performance Venue: Kirk Douglas Theatre

Proposed Dates: July 14, 2019

Total Score: 92.6

Grant Request: \$6,535

Recommended Award: \$4,575

Comments:

This choral concert would feature barbershop-style a cappella music and special guest appearances. This first-time applicant, with a home base in Culver City, was admired by the panelists for a charming and populist repertoire that is enjoyable for a general audience. Panelists observed that senior citizens are well-represented onstage, that the application included a realistic budget, and that this anniversary celebration is likely to attract a full house of engaged audience members.

CRE Outreach's Theatre by the Blind

Proposed Project: A new play with music by Rex & Friends

Performance Venue: Kirk Douglas Theatre

Proposed Dates: July 8 - 10, 2019

Total Score: 92.0

Grant Request: \$18,000

Recommended Award: \$12,600

Comments:

The organization would produce an original collaborative project created by, and starring, members of Theatre by the Blind with music by Rex & Friends. The panelists commented on how disabled youth, teens and adults are empowered to develop an original play. They commented that this organization works genuinely within the disability community, and supports an important and unique population of artists. Panel members observed that they are leaders in their commitment to cultural equity and the video sample demonstrated a high artistic quality. Panelists recommend partnerships with the Culver City Disability Advisory committee, the Senior Center, and CCUSD.

The Actors' Gang

Proposed Project: Free Shakespeare-in-the-Park for Families

Performance Venue: Media Park

Proposed Dates: August 3-25, 2019 (Saturdays and Sundays)

Total Score: 91.8

Grant Request: \$10,000

Recommended Award: \$7,000

Comments:

This annual summer tradition will continue with a brand new family-friendly and irreverent adaptation of a Shakespeare Play. Panelists noted the high quality of this summer production in Media Park and how inventive the adaptations are. Some remarked on how the video sample was indicative of the show quality, but noted that video of the audience would be helpful. The application demonstrated a commitment to diversity and equity within the organization and staff. Panel comments included a recommendation to enhance the narrative in the application by including more information on the audience demographics and detailed budget notes.

Culver City Symphony Orchestra

Proposed Project: Program of Classical Music from the Americas

Performance Venue: Robert Frost Auditorium

Proposed Dates: April 6, 2019

Total Score: 91.4

Grant Request: \$20,000

Recommended Award: \$14,000

Comments:

The orchestra proposes a concert featuring a program of music from the Americas including works of Latin composers and Latin-influenced compositions. The organization was praised for its Board expertise and longevity as well as its relationships with community organizations and distribution of bilingual flyers. Music Director Frank Fetta's accomplishments and reputation were favorably noted, as well as the inclusion of multiple generations of artists. They found the financial notes reasonable and thought that the project budget was realistic. They observed that the orchestra has a mostly traditional outreach and publicity plan and recommend that they increase efforts to attract diverse audiences. Although the application required a video sample, the orchestra only provided an audio sample. This prevented the panel from easily determining the artistic quality and diversity of the group.

Kontrapunktus Neo-Baroque Orchestra

Proposed Project: Two classical concerts featuring Baroque Music

Performance Venue: Culver City Seventh-day Adventist Church

Proposed Date: April 6, 2019 and November 9, 2019

Total Score: 91.2

Grant Request: \$6,000

Recommended Award: \$4,200

Comments:

The proposal is for two concerts featuring the work of J.S. Bach and his three sons, as well as Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi. Both concerts would also include new Baroque music from Composer-in-Residence, Mark Moya. Panelist described this diverse group of musicians as young, ambitious and innovative. Their active social media presence is an effective outreach tool and the Board contributes to the revenue. Panelists recommended that they include additional budget details about payments to directors and artists and that the orchestra consider an interactive student program, rather than a passive experience.

Donna Sternberg & Dancers

Proposed Project: Site specific dance performance

Performance Venue: The Wende Museum

Proposed Date: Fall 2019

Total Score: 91.0

Grant Request: \$5,000

Recommended Award: \$3,500

Comments:

This premiere of a site-specific contemporary dance performance would be inspired by the upcoming exhibition at The Wende Museum of the Cold War. The panel praised the artistic sample provided by the company, which showcased cultural representation in the dance ensemble, and admired that the choreography responds directly to the location. They found the proposal engaging and well-written. Further, they observed that the collaboration with partners has been effective and the company has a successful history of site-specific performances.

Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra

Proposed Project: *Peter and the Wolf* – Concerts in English and Spanish

Performance Venue: Kirk Douglas Theatre

Proposed Date: July 21, 2019

Total Score: 84.4

Grant Request: \$17,675

Recommended Award: \$12,373

Comments:

The orchestra proposes to present two free concerts of Prokofiev's classic symphonic fairy tale *Peter and the Wolf* narrated in Spanish and English. Interactive stations will be displayed in the lobby. Panelists noted that this ambitious orchestra has a history of innovative community partnerships and effective school programs. The proposal demonstrated long-term educational engagement and commitment to cultural equity in the selection of bilingual concerts. The artistic sample was described as excellent. Panelists noted that the budget was missing important information regarding musician payments and other grant funding. Although the marketing plan to reach Spanish-speaking audiences was deemed vague by panelists, they were generally supportive of the concert concept. The panel provided a score of 77.4. Subsequently, Kaleidoscope provided more information on musician payments to staff. The Subcommittee convened after the panel days and commended the group for planning to pay musicians over the union rate for these concerts. More importantly, the Subcommittee was impressed with this proposal and the projected, positive impact these free concerts would have for Culver City families. Therefore, the Subcommittee recommended a higher score of 84.4 for the organization.

NACUSA-LA

Proposed Project: Los Angeles Symphonic Winds

Performance Venue: Veterans Memorial Auditorium

Proposed Date: July 6, 2019

Total Score: 83.0

Grant Request: \$5,000

Recommended Award: \$3,500

Comments:

The Los Angeles Chapter of the National Association of Composers, USA, proposes a presentation of the community ensemble, Los Angeles Symphonic Winds, directed by Stephen Piazza and featuring music by living local composers. Panel members were supportive of presenting the Los Angeles Symphonic Winds. The panel praised the longevity and resiliency of this organization, but also noted a lack of administrative stability and consistency. The proposal was lacking several elements including programmatic details, cultural equity outreach and a detailed promotional plan. Panelists recommended increasing educational engagement - perhaps an in-school residency or a master class. The accomplishments of Board members were positively noted as well as a lean and realistic budget proposal.

Brockus Project Dance Company

Proposed Project: *Permutations of the Unknown Dust*

Performance Venue: Ivy Substation

Proposed Dates: July 5 – 6, 2019

Total Score: 74.8

Grant Request: \$12,000

Recommended Award: \$7,200

Comments:

This premiere of *Permutations of the Unknown Dust*, a contemporary modern jazz dance performance, would explore earth and environmental issues. The panel admired the history and reputation of this company and observed diversity of age and gender in the artistic samples. Also, they were not certain about their sources of secured grants and matching funds. Some panelists praised the quality of the dancing in the artistic samples and the strong student outreach. Other panelists expressed concern whether the ticket prices are affordable for this community and whether the promotion and outreach efforts described are strong enough to attract audiences.

Los Angeles Doctors Symphony Orchestra

Proposed Project: Two Concert Performances

Performance Venue: Veterans Memorial Auditorium

Proposed Dates: March 10, 2019 and June 9, 2019

Total Score: 72.6

Grant Request: \$8,500

Recommended Award: \$5,100

Comments:

Two orchestra concerts are proposed featuring popular and lesser-known works from Dvorak, Strauss, Rossini, Beethoven, and others. The partnerships with schools, the low-priced and free admission, and the outreach to younger musicians were all praised by the panelists. Simultaneously panel members questioned whether the orchestra is providing “support for important medical causes” as described in their mission. The minimal marketing and outreach plan and the lack of attendance at prior events was unfavorably noted and the panel encouraged the orchestra to make stronger connections to the medical community, if that community is still engaged by the organization, and generally broaden its outreach.

Culver City Public Theatre

Proposed Project: 22nd Anniversary season of free outdoor family theatre and two indoor shows for adults

Performance Venue: Carlson Park & Veterans Memorial Auditorium

Proposed Dates: July 13 to August 4, 2019 (Saturdays and Sundays)
plus indoor dates in February and May 2019 to be determined

Total Score: 72.3

Grant Request: \$7,500

Recommended Award: \$4,500

Comments:

This Culver City group proposed to present free outdoor family theatre performance of *Marian, or The True Tale of Robin Hood* by Adam Szymkowicz and two additional indoor productions for adults: *Abigail's Party* by Mike Leigh and *The Pillowman* by Martin McDonagh. The panel praised the Culver City Public Theatre's history of inclusive community theatre, its clever choice of a bingo fundraiser, and its increased use of social media outreach. Panelists felt they are likely to succeed in attracting family audiences to the outdoor performances and suggested that they consider casting from within the Culver City community. Panel members questioned the budget accuracy for additional performances, the incomplete venue costs, and expressed that this company's small staff would require organizational support in order to successfully expand to include indoor productions. The panel recommended that they seek mentorship for building their contributor base, their Board membership, and improving the accuracy of Data Arts reporting.

Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival

Proposed Project: Diverse solo performers

Performance Venue: Ivy Substation

Proposed Dates: June 29, 2019

Total Score: 71.2

Grant Request: \$4,000

Recommended Award: \$2,400

Comments:

This organizational annually presents a festival of solo performances and the encore performance, featuring some of the performers, has occurred at the Ivy Substation. The panel noted that these diverse solo performers represent different ethnicities, voices, ages and disciplines. The company's unique women-first mission was commended and described as important and worthwhile. The application text would benefit from review and revision and some panelists recommended specificity regarding current programs rather than historical references. The budget was deemed adequate for the proposed programs. Although individual artists are initiating their own promotion, the organization was encouraged to include a stronger global marketing plan.

Los Angeles Choreographers and Dancers

Proposed Project: *Tap Dance Widows Club*

Performance Venue: Culver City Senior Center

Proposed Dates: March 10, 2019

Total Score: 65.5

Grant Request: \$5,000

Recommended Award: \$3,000

Comments:

The dance company proposed *Tap Dance Widows Club*, a multimedia production featuring several dance forms. Panelists noted that the application's budget is primarily payments for dancers and appears to be lacking in marketing the performance. The artistic sample was difficult to judge due to the short clips and editing. The panel requested sustained dance sequences. The panelists wondered if this was a new work and whether it would be adapted to the location. The topic of the proposed performance - grief and loss - was praised for its contribution to cultural equity and its impact on the community.

Benita Bike's DanceArt

Proposed Project: *Explore Dance – Concerts*

Performance Venue: Culver City Senior Center & Ivy Substation

Proposed Dates: May 19, 2019 & June 29 - 30, 2019

Total Score: 61.0

Grant Request \$7,500

Recommended Award: \$4,500

Comments:

These contemporary dance performances include interaction and conversation with the audience before and after the dances. The artistic samples were praised as was the budget detail. Also, panelists commended the educational aspects of this dance presentation. The panel commented that while continuation of these performances at the Senior Center is worthwhile and has a built-in audience, the proposal was not persuasive in regards to the performances at the Ivy Substation. Panelists noted that the marketing plan included mostly traditional publicity techniques and could benefit from more social media to attract a general audience.

Culver City Chamber Orchestra

Proposed Project: Orchestra concert

Performance Venue: Culver Palms United Methodist Church

Proposed Dates: March 3, 2019

Total Score: 60.0

Grant Request: \$5,000

Recommended Award: \$3,000

Comments:

The orchestra, whose Conductor is Arlette Cardenes, proposes a concert featuring 8-10 professional classical musicians and student soloists from Culver City. Panel members praised the artistic samples, the list of professional soloists, and the longevity of the Culver City-based group. However, the majority of panelists expressed concern about the lack of detail in the proposal, the deficiency of narrative regarding cultural equity - considering its diverse artistic roster - and the unclear and incorrect budget pages. Panelists recommended expansion of the Board membership, deeper participation with the Culver City Unified School District and further description of the specific musical program being proposed.

Allegro Music Foundation/Westside Youth Orchestra

Proposed Project: Youth orchestra concert featuring classical music and film scores

Performance Venue: Ivy Substation

Proposed Dates: March 23, 2019

Total Score: 59.8

Grant Request: \$3,413

Recommended Award: \$0

Comments:

The organization proposed a performance of music, featuring well-known film scores as well as familiar pieces by Vivaldi, Bach and Tchaikovsky, performed by a youth orchestra. Panel members valued that this group provides opportunities for young musicians to interact with professional mentors. It was noted that the organization charges tuition to the students, with scholarships available, and pays the professional musicians who serve as mentors. The panelists struggled with the application, which included errors on the income budget page. Tuition revenue was included as income for the production and the City's grant award was excluded. While the panel was supportive of the organization's commitment to young musicians, panelists did not provide high scores for the artistic excellence of this project. Cultural Affairs staff will continue to provide guidance to the organization regarding grant application requirements.

Luminario Ballet of Los Angeles

Proposed Project: *TOSH* – Multidisciplinary Dance Concert

Performance Venue: Robert Frost Auditorium

Proposed Dates: July 2019

Total Score: 58.7

Grant Request: \$20,000

Recommended Award: \$0

Comments:

The dance company proposed a multi-disciplinary dance, music, and theatrical production about the life, music, and social justice work of Reggae legend Peter Tosh of The Wailers. Certain panelists applauded the artists involved in this proposed performance and said that its combination of dance and aerial artistry could be a worthwhile audience experience. However, other panelists felt that the application needed improvement in terms of clarity, connection to the local community, and the securing of funding. Panelists also expressed concern about cultural assumptions regarding Reggae, Culver City, and related marketing ideas, quality of performances in the artistic sample, and ticket sales goals. Cultural Affairs staff will continue to provide guidance to the organization regarding grant application requirements.

The Artists' Platform

Proposed Project: *The Friendship Concert IV*

Performance Venue: Robert Frost Auditorium

Proposed Dates: March 30, 2019

Total Score: 45.7

Grant Request: \$10,000

Recommended Award: \$0

Comments:

Dancers and musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds would perform *The Friendship Concert IV*, curated by Juli Kim and featuring themes of tolerance, diversity and love. The panelists praised the artistic samples, the diversity and cultural equity demonstrated, and the mission of utilizing arts to bridge cultural divide. Panelists found that the organization was not able to clearly describe the project nor to complete the required elements of the proposal. The panel observed that key elements were missing including a full description of outreach and connections within Culver City, focus on the featured artists, descriptions of the curation process, and a careful review of the proposal text for accuracy and missing elements. Cultural Affairs staff will continue to provide guidance to the organization regarding grant application requirements.

Monarch Theatre Guild

Proposed Project: *The Vanishing Point*, A New Musical

Performance Venue: Veterans Memorial Building

Proposed Dates: Spring/Summer 2019

Total Score: 43.0

Grant Request: \$4,000

Recommended Award: \$0

Comments:

The theatre company proposed the premiere of a new rock musical called *The Vanishing Point*, based on the contemporary art and gallery scene in Los Angeles. The panel felt that the application narrative was missing many elements, did not include some of the requested information and failed to answer some of the grant questions. Panelists recommended that engaging a professional grant writer would be beneficial. Panelists noted that the project description was exclusively the plot of the show, there was a lack of sustainable, diversified funding demonstrated, the budget was unclear and incomplete - the income and expenses did not match - and the venue information was confusing. Panelists expressed concern over the administrative capability of the organization, the minimal marketing and outreach plan, the quality of the artistic sample, and they questioned how the public would be served by this musical. The Cultural Affairs staff was asked to offer additional guidance to the organization regarding the performing arts grant application and other general guidelines for non-profit theatre organizations.

Museum of Jurassic Technology

Proposed Project: Film series with live narration and music accompaniment

Performance Venue: Sony Backstage Theatre

Proposed Dates: July, August and September 2019

Total Score: 0

Grant Request: \$20,000

Recommended Award: \$0

Comments:

A summer series of film screenings was proposed featuring live narration and musical accompaniment including original compositions and arrangements from artists around the world. The panelists commented that the artistic samples were high quality but were confusing as well. Further, the description of marketing and promotion was not focused on the local community. The panel provided a score of 77.8 for this proposal. Subsequently, the Subcommittee met and determined that the application was primarily for a film series and not a performing arts series which would disqualify it for this grant program. Members of the Subcommittee recommended that they pursue the City's Special Events Grant Program and Cultural Affairs staff will guide them on this alternate funding opportunity.