

2007 - 2008 Arts & Communities: Innovative Partnerships Exploration Grant Recipients and Project Summaries

Applicant: *3rd I South Asian Independent Film Festival*
Community Partner(s): *Asian/Pacific Islander Wellness Center*
Exploration Grant **Award: \$10,000** **Project Budget: \$15,000**

3rd I South Asian International Film Festival and the Asian/Pacific Islander Wellness Center will plan a film project that both explores South Asian sexuality and educates the South Asian community about AIDS and HIV. They anticipate that the planning project will result in a plan for the production of a docu-drama film that will first be presented to the public at the November 2009 South Asian International Film Festival and later used in a variety of community-based educational settings.

During the planning process, the staff of 3rd I and API Wellness will conduct research on other national arts and health programs serving API communities. API Wellness staff will interview South Asians who currently receive AIDS/HIV+ services from a variety of health providers. They will also facilitate discussions with South Asian community members around sexuality in which 3rd I members will participate. By the end of planning, the partners will have identified the thematic scope of the film, identified a community-based filmmaker and written out the production schedule for the film.

The proposed project's target audience is San Francisco's South Asian community, comprising of people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Tibet. The City's 10,000 South Asian residents are one of its fastest growing immigrant communities and a majority are first generation immigrants.

Applicant: *Asian Improv aRts*
Community Partner(s): *Japantown Task Force*
Exploration Grant **Award: \$10,000** **Project Budget: \$10,000**

This project will engage the Japantown Task Force in a planning process to explore the issues and strategies relating to the role of the arts in the on-going Japantown revitalization process. This is particularly timely given that the neighborhood is undergoing one of the most significant transitions in recent history with the sale of six key properties in the eight square block area. Because of this, there is an uncertainty about the neighborhood's survival as a destination of Japanese American culture and heritage and there is a clear need for a more strategic approach for the arts in Japantown.

The organizers of the project will identify individual and organizational community arts assets in the neighborhood and work with them to identify key art related issues in the existing redevelopment plans and research potential arts strategies for community development.

The target audiences for the project are community arts assets active in Japantown; members of the Japantown Task Force; and the Japantown community at large.

Applicant: *Door Dog Music Productions*
Community Partner: *To be determined through the planning process*
Exploration Grant **Award: \$10,000** **Project Budget: \$15,000**

Door Dog Music Productions (DDMP) will embark on an exploratory cross-cultural project, largely centered on women's song. We have chosen the lullaby as a point of entry to research the worlds of emigre women in particular that live and work in San Francisco. These women are the mothers, children, nannies, restaurant workers, executives and teachers around us every day. They keep these songs alive through their native languages or have adapted what they can

remember for the next generation. At the core of this project are people's precious life histories, and the success of this investigation will be on creating relationships that will allow us to collect songs reflective of their lives.

Two possible outcomes are projected for public activities depending on the women who choose to participate. We will potentially create an informal opportunity for the women to share their songs with one another and the public. With permission this can be recorded as a DVD or CD that each participant can have. It is also possible that this research will yield a collection that will become the basis of a commissioned work by master artists to premiere in the fall of 2009 at the World Music Festival. The planning process will focus on identifying potential community partners and participants in the process through targeted community outreach.

The audiences for this project are two fold: the immigrant women singers of the traditional songs for children and their respective communities who cherish these songs; and the general world music festival public. DDMP's events draw a significant cross-section of the San Francisco Bay Area's ethnic communities. Generally, the age demographics of the audience are between 30 and 60 years of age.

Applicant: *Fernando Marti in collaboration with Amanda Lopez*
Community Partner: *El Tecolote newspaper*
Exploration Grant *Recommended: \$10,000* **Project Budget: \$10,000**

"Desplazamientos/Displacements," by printmaker and installation artist Fernando Marti and photographer Amanda Lopez, will consist of up to ten site-specific installations and montages at prominent sites throughout the Mission. Through El Tecolote newspaper, we will engage the community in the creative process, juxtaposing historical materials (El Tecolote's archival photographs, literary text from Mission writers, and underlying historical cartography) with newly shot photographic portraits and interviews, to map neighborhood changes and give voice to today's residents.

The project will examine the demographic, cultural, economic and cultural shifts effecting the Mission District by juxtaposing historical materials with newly shot photographs, and interview materials covering the area's past, present and potential future. The artists will use temporary photo booths at accessible public locations in the neighborhood where these interviews can be captured along with photos by Lopez. The installations in each location will be built up by community members and each installation, when complete, will be captured by Marti in the form of a poster that will be distributed through El Tecolote.

The audience begins with local residents, business owners, youth and veteran community organizers contacted by El Tecolote and the artists, who will be actively engaged in the creation of the art through brainstorming sessions, oral history interviews, portraits, and contributions of text and mementos. The audience also includes the wider neighborhood that will experience the art as both passersby and as active participants adding to the installations, and El Tecolote's 10,000+ readers through poster inserts in the newspaper.

Applicant: *Flyaway Productions*
Community Partners: *LaborFest*
Tradeswomen, Inc.
Exploration Grant *Recommended: \$10,000* **Project Budget: \$10,000**

Flyaway Productions seeks to engage the community of San Francisco tradeswomen to develop a new full-length dance project "The Ballad of Polly Ann," and to create an oral history about women ironworkers and others who worked on Bay Area bridges from 1930-present. Community partners LaborFest and Tradeswomen Inc. will provide access to these women.

This planning process will involve the development of an oral history by historian Harvey Schwartz through contributions by Bay Area women involved in the trades. These stories and technical information will inform Flyaway's artistic team in the shaping of the dance, music composition and set construction. Community members will also help determine the best site for the project with the program development team.

LaborFest provides contact with the general labor audience in the Bay Area to facilitate both our research and the presentation of that research. Tradeswomen, Inc. reaches San Francisco tradeswomen and will generate interest in the oral history project from women in the trades through their electronic newsletter, sent to more than 600 tradeswomen and supporters. Both have partnerships with numerous related organizations and associations. Flyaway has an on-going audience of up to 5,000 per performance project.

Applicant: *Jacinta Vlach in collaboration with Howard Wiley*
Community Partner(s): *African American Art and Culture Complex*
Exploration Grant *Award: \$10,000* *Project Budget: \$11,500*

Lead artist and choreographer Jacinta Vlach will collaborate with musician Howard Wiley to facilitate and direct an original dance-theater production celebrating the rich musical and multi-cultural history of San Francisco's Fillmore district. Starting January 2008 lead artist Jacinta Vlach in partnership with African American Art and Culture Complex (AAACC) and a community-based planning committee will administer a 9-month planning period to develop an effective partnership. During the exploration grant, Vlach and Wiley will engage individuals and organizations from the Fillmore in critical discussions exploring the theme of the project: urban development and its impact on the culture of communities. The two intend to use the material garnered from historical records, interviews, community forums, and youth performing arts workshops that they obtain from the community.

The project will be executed in three primary phases. In the first, the artist will establish a partnership with the AAACC. The second will focus on logistical activities including assembling the project facilitation team, planning and conducting facilitator workshops and trainings, securing space for community forums and rehearsals, conducting research and attaining financial support for project production. The third phase of the planning process will focus on additional research and community outreach to ensure community buy-in and collaboration.

The intended audiences, first and foremost, are the residents of the Fillmore/Western Addition. Secondly, the project seeks to serve audiences throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond, of all demographics, socio-economic backgrounds, and generations.

Applicant: *Purple Moon Dance Project*
Community Partner(s): *Lesbian Health & Research Center*
Exploration Grant *Award: \$10,000* *Project Budget: \$13,000*

Purple Moon Dance Project will collaborate with the Lesbian Health and Research Center in a planning process to develop an on-going multi-cultural, multi-generational program for lesbian women of color, specifically Latina, Asian Pacific Islander, and African American. The partners seek to create a program that supports the creation and appreciation of visual and performing arts, and focuses on individual and community health and well-being.

Through a series of workshops fashioned after "quilting circles," the participants will create remembrance flags to honor significant people in the participants' lives, as well as, performance pieces that will evolve from, or are inspired by, the stories and cultural experiences that the participants and their flags evoke. With the support of LHRC, we will be able to tie these experiences to ways that participants can improve their own well-being and the health of their families and community. The partners intend to build the program through a planning process that

will allow our community members to participate on many levels, thereby building the program based on the input we receive.

The target audience is lesbian women of color, particularly Latino, African American and Asian Pacific Islander.

Applicant: *Radar Productions*
Community Partner(s): *Openhouse*
Exploration Grant **Award: \$10,000** **Project Budget: \$13,000**

Radar Productions will plan a collaborative, year-round arts program with Openhouse that will serve San Francisco's rapidly growing and under-served LGBT senior population. To design the program, Radar's Artistic Director, Michelle Tea, and Openhouse's Executive Director, Moli Steinert, will conduct research, meet with regional organizations currently serving LGBT seniors, organize LGBT senior focus groups and a community input meeting, and engage their respective Boards in designing the collaborative arts program to be conducted in 2009. The eventual program will enable LGBT seniors to see themselves reflected in the arts and will engage LGBT artists and seniors in the creation and production of creative work.

Seniors are estimated to comprise approximately 15% (or 18,000) of the City's 125,000 LGBT residents. There are currently no on-going non-profit arts programs serving the cultural interests of LGBT seniors.

Applicant: *Rebecca Shultz in collaboration with Lynn Johnson*
Community Partner(s): *potential partners include Openhouse and New Leaf*
Exploration Grant **Award: \$10,000** **Project Budget: \$32,000**

This project will address issues surrounding the development of housing for LGBT seniors in San Francisco. Community-based theatre directors Rebecca Schultz (lead artist) and Lynn Johnson will collaborate with organizations serving LGBT seniors to gather personal histories and engage seniors in the creation of an original theatre work. This piece will be performed by a combination of seniors and professional actors, and will be presented at professional venues, and community and senior centers. This grant will support the research and project development stage of the process.

The goals of the project are to highlight the personal histories of LGBT elders, to document and stage an inter-generational dialogue amongst members of the LGBT community, and to examine the importance of home and kinship structures for the LGBT community through giving voice to its elders.

As this project seeks to raise awareness about a population that is often invisible (even within the LGBT community), there will be multiple target audiences: younger members of the LGBT community that may not have the opportunity to engage in dialogue with their elders; seniors, both LGBT and heterosexual; and a broader cross-section of the community that would benefit from understanding the issues LGBT seniors face.

Applicant: *Red Poppy Art House*
Community Partner(s): *Mission Economic Development Agency*
Mission Small Business Association
People Organizing to Demand Economic/Environmental Rights
Exploration Grant **Award: \$10,000** **Project Budget: \$13,460**

Through the Neighborhood Initiative for Cultural Engagement (NICE) project, Red Poppy Art House seeks to collaborate with Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA), Mission Small Business Association (MSBA), and People Organizing to Demand Economic/Environmental Rights (PODER), to forge an innovative collaboration between the artistic, business, non-profit

and residential sectors of the Mission to create a sense of community and to address the high incidence of crime. The NICE project will spearhead a bi-monthly Merchants Market Festival along the 24th Street corridor.

The partnership is convinced that such on-going cultural activities, when guided by an integrated process, can facilitate a safer, vibrant, more diverse, small business-friendly, residential community that naturally dissipates crime, vandalism and gang activity. The partners will form an advisory council to help foster dialogue between all the involved parties and a core team of artist-organizers who will guarantee the artistic integrity of the initiative.

The target audience are residents of the Mission District living between Mission Street and Potrero Avenue and four blocks North and South of 24th Street.

Applicant: *San Francisco Print Collective*
Community Partner(s): *Chinese Progressive Association*
Mission Anti-Displacement Partnership
Exploration Grant **Award: \$10,000** **Project Budget: \$12,850**

This project will plan the development of a community-based graphic arts workshop in association with the Chinese Progressive Association (CPA), Mission Anti-Displacement Partnership (MAP), and their constituencies. The workshop will use public art (silkscreen printmaking, graphic design, murals and web design) to train neighborhood residents in the implementation of successful media campaigns. Participants will learn to access existing print and electronic media and to create independent media forms that give voice to the Chinese and Latino residents of Chinatown and the Mission District.

The San Francisco Print Collective will work with CPA and MAP to create culturally appropriate outreach materials and recruit participants for silkscreen, graphic design, mural, web design and press trainings. Once equipped with skills and art from the workshop, participants will work with MAP and CPA outreach teams to distribute posters to the Mission and Chinatown to educate other community members about the community partners' respective organizing campaigns. Additionally, through the planning process, the partners will identify another partner who works with the Filipino American community.

The target audience for the proposed project consists of the Chinese Progressive Association, the Mission Anti-Displacement Partnership, the constituency of these organizations and the low income and working class immigrant residents of Chinatown and the Mission District.

Applicant: *StageWrite*
Community Partner(s): *Starr King Elementary School*
Exploration Grant **Award: \$9,940** **Project Budget: \$9,940**

StageWrite proposes to work together in partnership with Starr King School in the Potrero Hill neighborhood to develop an oral history project with elementary school aged girls. This exploration phase would enable StageWrite to develop a deeper relationship with several classes and teachers, allow for genuine community dialogue, involve planning and meeting time with the arts committee, staff, and families at the school. We will use the medium of theatre to build community within the various cultural communities of the school as the girls explore their personal histories, those of their families, and those of their larger community.

The idea for a girls project sprung from an immediate need for the neighborhood in which the school is located. The Potrero Hill Housing Development, where many of the students at Starr King reside, is home to a very active female gang into which many of the young girls have been recruited. We are interested in tracking a group of approximately 10 students through a number of years in order to work in-depth on a theatre and literacy exploration.

We intend to have an informal culminating show with the group for the school community and the families of the students. However, the main production would take place within the realization phase if we were able to continue to that point. Our immediate audience is the student body of Starr King as well as their families and community members from Potrero Hill.

Applicant: *Zaccho Dance Theater*
Community Partner(s): **Bayview Hunters Point Mobilization for Adolescent Growth in Our Communities (BMAGIC)**
Exploration Grant **Award: \$10,000** **Project Budget: \$23,050**

“Picture...Bayview,” a project conceived and directed by Zaccho Artistic Director Joanna Haigood, will focus on the dreams and aspirations of the multi-generational residents of Bayview Hunters Point (BVHP). This interdisciplinary, site-specific performance work hopes to capture the stories of the neighborhood through aerial dance, large-scale projected images of its people and places, and an original soundscape.

Through projected excerpts from taped interviews conducted primarily by BVHP youth, the audience will see and reflect upon the multi-level challenges and rewards of living in this community. Zaccho will work directly with youth from the neighborhood to provide youth leadership opportunities and participation in the creation of “Picture...Bayview.” This grant will provide a unique opportunity to initiate a deep level of planning with chosen community partners and a potential co-producer (Yerba Buena Center for the Arts), and will bolster our chances of actualizing the final site of the performance in BVHP for free public performances.

The target audience for “Picture...Bayview” includes: project participants, BVHP residents; BVHP constituencies served by Zaccho and BMAGIC; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts audiences, staff and volunteers.