

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

Applicant: *Bindlestiff Studio*
Community Partner(s): *South of Market Community Action Network*
Realization Grant **Award: \$31,500** **Project Budget: \$272,143**

The initiative, Neighborhood Integration & Preservation through the Arts (NIPA), combines arts and civic engagement to spark community dialogue, catalyze change, create public policy and shared learning. NIPA will engage residents of San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood to share their stories through workshops held at Bindlestiff Studio and other community spaces. NIPA will culminate in a play that promotes understanding across groups segregated by race, gender, class or occupation, while increasing access to cultural resources and artistic opportunities.

Both performers and audience members will have a chance to "talk story" after each performance to share concerns and experiences to develop collective solutions to problems and eventually help develop a community-identified priority for an organizing campaign. The project will engage community partners, identify supportive government agencies that can support community development priorities, and develop an accessible way for policy makers and other decision makers to hear and understand a community driven agenda.

About 11,585 residents live in the South of Market neighborhood. Most are low-income, families of color and at a high risk of displacement. Among these residents, about 60% earned less than \$25,000, 25% over age 25 did not graduate from high school, 38.07% report having a disability, 33% speak little or no English, 38.14% are Asian, 0.45% are Pacific Islander, 12.29% are black, and 1.07% are American Indian.

Applicant: *Brava Theater Center/Brava! For Women in the Arts*
Community Partners: *University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) National Center for Excellence in Women's Health*
University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) New Generation Health Clinic
Realization Grant **Award: \$35,000** **Project Budget: \$66,000**

Project "Glass to Diamonds" is a collaboration between BRAVA, UCSF's National Center for Women's Excellence and their Mission District community clinic, New Generations. Through an innovative combination of theater training, health education and leadership development, teenage and young women of color will come to "embody" strength, self-esteem and knowledge of self and others, and transmit this to their peers through public performances that are local, city-wide and national.

"Glass to Diamonds" will work with 30 young women from the Mission and Bayview/Hunters Point who will write and perform an original 45-minute theater piece that addresses critical health issues effecting young women. These young women will develop leadership skills, teamwork and be trained as Peer Health Educators and actors. This collaboration will be able to create a best practices model that can be replicated by other Centers for Women's Excellence across the country through UCSF.

"Glass to Diamonds" is directed at low-income teenagers and young women of color in the Mission District and Bayview/Hunters Point who experience inadequate access to culturally competent reproductive health care and information, and are at greater risk of unplanned pregnancies, or infection by HIV or STI.

Applicant: *Cultural Odyssey/The Medea Project*
Community Partners: *Women's HIV Program at University of California, San Francisco (UCSF)*
National Center of Excellence in Women's Health
Realization Grant *Award: \$35,000* *Project Budget: \$75,000*

"Dancing with the Clown of Love" is a collaboration between Cultural Odyssey's Rhodessa Jones and The Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women, and the Women's HIV program at UCSF. The project will include residency activities leading to public performances at the Burial Clay Theater in the Western Addition neighborhood of San Francisco. It is Rhodessa Jones and The Medea Project's latest cultural offering and is an artistic exploration of love in the time of HIV/AIDS.

Rhodessa will work with over 20 women from Women's HIV/AIDS Program in a workshop process to develop a performance incorporating their stories and experiences. The participants will explore the whys, wherefores, and the reasons that lie behind the AIDS epidemic in the lives of African American women. Five to ten of the workshop participants will perform in the final show. Roundtables prior to and audience talkbacks after the performance will alert the San Francisco public to this health epidemic.

The target audience for "Dancing with the Clown of Love" is African American women who have HIV/AIDS, their children and family members. The project will also reach a large non-traditional audience comprising artists, art administrators, criminal justice workers, at-risk youth and their parents, female ex-inmates, feminists and general theater goers. Cultural Odyssey's adult audience comprises Bay Area residents interested in experimental interdisciplinary performance and theater. Approximately 40% of our audiences are black, 40% are white and 20% Latin and Asian American.

Applicant: *Dance Brigade*
Community Partners: *Quan Yin Healing Arts Center*
New College Women's Spirituality Program
Realization Grant *Recommended: \$35,000* *Project Budget: \$70,350*

Lesbian-feminist leaders of Dance Brigade, Quan Yin Healing Arts Center, and New College's Women's Spirituality Program and their program participants, will collaboratively create three panel discussions, free outdoor performances on Valencia Street, and six professional dance/music/spoken word performances at Dance Mission Theater. We will highlight three decades of neighborhood lesbian-feminist leadership; and explore how we are dealing with dying as cancer ravages the women's community, and how spirituality, alternative healing, and art sustain us.

Thirty participants from the partner organizations will be involved in creating the project activities. They will gather stories from their peers and other feminists in the neighborhood to find out how they remain strong in the face of an increasingly anti-feminist mainstream culture and how they are personally dealing with death and dying. These stories will inform panel discussions organized by each of the partners to connect an older generation of lesbian and feminist-women community members with the new generation. The collaborating organizations will work with members of the community to create performances informed by stories gathered by the community, histories of feminist organizations in the area, and healing rituals created by participants.

Target audiences include feminist activists, women's health advocates, women dealing with health and death and dying issues, women's spirituality enthusiasts, social justice and cultural historians, and neighborhood residents who are connected to the three partner groups.

Applicant: *Galeria de la Raza*
Community Partner: *The Freedom Archives,*
artists Julio Morales and Carlos Gonzalez
Realization Grant *Recommended: \$31,500* *Project Budget: \$47,650*

"Mission Echoes: Art & Public Dialogue" comprises a series of four artist residencies conducted by visual artist Julio Morales in collaboration with Galeria de la Raza, The Freedom Archives, and youth development consultant Carlos Gonzalez. Serving twenty Mission District youth ages 13-19, this community-building partnership will help youth to develop their creative voice as a tool for the formation of public dialogue, and lay the foundation for the development of a youth-run Graphic Design Studio and Media Lab. The project will conclude with an exhibition showcasing the artistic projects developed during each of the four creative artist residency modules.

Gonzales will incorporate youth development and entrepreneurial training programs into the overall project curricula, focusing on a multi-disciplinary approach to empower the youth participants through direct experience, while using the arts as a positive medium to engage youth in learning skills and building overall self-awareness. The Freedom Archives' audio and video resources and knowledge in new sound-based technologies will add an important layer to the youth's understanding of the formation of historical narratives, social movements and activist strategies, and will bring elements of archiving, research, writing and sound production to the development of the project's curricula.

Latino youth, ages 13 to 19, represent approximately 67% of all youth in the Mission District. The project will seek to outreach to the youth participants' friends, peers, families and schools, as well as the general public interested in community-based art education programs.

Applicant: *Intersection for the Arts*
Community Partner: *Mission Community Council*
Realization Grant *Award: \$35,000* *Project Budget: \$50,000*

Intersection and the Mission Community Council are proposing a multidisciplinary "Civic Life Project" that aims to engage the infinite power of art to enable Mission District residents to express and address pressing concerns regarding their neighborhood. The goal is to integrate community-based artistic processes into public advocacy activities and help to inform critical civic dialogue and critical public policy decisions. The project includes community-driven workshops, public exhibitions/performances at Intersection for the Arts, the 16th Street BART Plaza, and other neighborhood settings.

Through a series of advocacy activities including town hall meetings, collaborative work groups and public art projects, community members will identify and organize around the needs and priorities of their neighborhood on their own terms. The project hopes to empower diverse members of this community to propose alternative solutions to ongoing problems in the neighborhood.

Intersection for the Arts is targeting the Mission District residents and people who are working with the Mission Community Council's more than 35 community-based members, as well as, artists and activists from across the City who might be interested in a project that aims to fuse artistic and political methodologies for encouraging San Francisco residents to participate in civic life.

Applicant: *Joan Osato collaborating with Jeannie Barroga*
Community Partner(s): *Asian American Residential Recovery Services, Inc.*
Realization Grant *Award: \$31,500* *Project Budget: \$139,000*

Joan Osato and Jeannie Barroga will partner with Asian American Residential Recovery Services to develop and produce a theater project called ICDT (I Can Do That Theater). ICDT, which

combines the best practices of Expressive and Drama Arts Therapy with the artistic guidance and producing talents of these two established Bay Area artists, will mentor clients in crafting a script, and produce a full theatrical production at Thick Description in San Francisco.

For the client/artist, this will be an opportunity to engage in a rigorous process of self-examination, allowing them to process conflict and strengthen their recovery through the practice of an art form, including writing, theater arts and performance. For the community, this will be a chance to build a successful model for artistic and community partnerships built through Expressive Arts Therapy and Theater that can potentially have use in the fields of social services, culturally specific substance abuse and mental health programs.

The target audience for this project includes multi-cultural, intergenerational theater audiences of San Francisco, as well as, service providers working in mental health and substance abuse treatment, city/county/state/federal agencies who fund treatment, Asian Pacific Islander community members and clients in recovery and their families.

Applicant: *Kate Connell collaborating with Oscar Melara, John Calloway and Gustavo Vazquez*
Community Partner(s): *The San Francisco Public Library*
Realization Grant *Award: \$31,500* *Project Budget: \$35,000*

Four Portola District artists—Kate Connell, Oscar Melara, John Calloway, and Gustavo Vazquez—the San Francisco Public Library and Portola residents will all collaborate to produce “Portola Play, A Multimedia Tool Chest.” Designed for the 2008 opening of the new Portola Branch Library, the Tool Chest will be filled with a collection of new library resources which create a living portrait of the Portola. Outreach to date has included neighborhood-wide potlucks and a block party where residents have come together to share ideas and build a sense of community. The library was selected as a partner because in the area it is a center for public life and the only non-medical social service for all ages and denominations in the Portola.

The concept of Portola Play came about through lengthy conversations between residents, Library staff and the participating artists and will consist of an actual chest filled with 1) “Porto-Loteria,” a neighborhood based interactive game with images, 2) “My Portola” a DVD describing the neighborhood through residents’ own oral histories, and 3) “Song of the Garden,” an original musical score that weaves together the musical tastes and cultural heritage of the neighborhood with ambient sounds of the Portola. The project will also include an exhibition coinciding with the opening of the new branch library and a website where the 3 resources will be downloadable by distant viewers.

The target audience for this project includes the artists’ neighbors, the residents of the Portola District in Southeast San Francisco, who are also the participants in Portola Play. The project will reach children, teens, adults and seniors in this underserved working class neighborhood. Through tri-lingual outreach, they will include longtime residents and recent immigrants. Their neighbors are Asian, Latino, African American, Italian, Maltese, Greek, Lithuanian, Irish American and Jewish.

Applicant: *Poor Magazine*
Community Partner(s): *Central City SRO Collaborative, a project of the Tenderloin Housing Clinic*
Artist Tony Robles
Realization Grant *Award: \$31,500* *Project Budget: \$35,000*

The project will use theater arts as a vehicle to educate the public about condition in Single Resident Occupancy (SRO) hotels in San Francisco. Poor Magazine will be partnering with the Central City SRO Collaborative (a project of the Tenderloin Housing Clinic) and artist Tony Robles. The project organizers are seeking to use theater as a tool of empowerment, enlisting

the help of residents in the SRO Community, particularly within the Tenderloin, as resources – writers, designers, cultural historians, etc. – to stage a play that will utilize their talents and bring attention to housing and economic issues in a city that is becoming increasingly polarized.

Local author and artist Tony Robles will write and produce a full theater production, working collaboratively with current and former SRO residents to co-create all aspects of the production. SRO residents will participate in playwriting and performance workshops lead by Tony Robles and Poor Magazine's executive director Tiny Gray-Garcia. Participants will also receive training in multi-media and art, as well as, literacy assistance and access to needed technology.

Project participants will be current and former SRO residents struggling with issues of poverty, houselessness, racism and police brutality. Through community education, the project seeks to create and present solutions to the housing crisis in San Francisco by outreaching to low- and no-income communities of color in the Bay Area.

Applicant: *Queer Cultural Center*

Community Partner(s): *Shanti Project
Magnet*

Femina Potens

Realization Grant

Award: \$31,500

Project Budget: \$102,900

“The Healthy Community Project” is a collaborative initiative between the Queer Cultural Center, Shanti Project, Magnet and Femina Potens which seeks to promote the development of a healthy LGBT community by enabling LGBT artists to launch creative community dialogues on important medical and health issues in the Castro. Shanti Project enhances the quality of life, health and well-being of people living with breast cancer and HIV/AIDS. Femina Potens is a non-profit gallery and performance space dedicated to the advancement of women and transgendered artists. Magnet promotes the physical, mental and social well-being of gay men, providing sexual health services and on-going community cultural activities.

The Healthy Community Project will stimulate the creation and presentation of 28 original public art projects, exhibitions, literature programs and community forums that address health-related issues such as living with HIV, surviving cancer, working in the sex industry, amphetamine abuse and the emerging field of queer senior health care needs. The Shanti Project will design an evaluation strategy that will enable the partnership to qualitatively and quantitatively measure to what degree, and in what specific ways, the programs contributed to building a healthy LGBT community.

QCC, Femina Potens and Magnet will widely distribute a joint call-to-artists to solicit concepts for its 28 health-related programs. The partners will be looking for well conceived projects exploring health issues that could potentially attract LGBT residents who do not respond to conventional health education campaigns.

The City's 125,000 LGBT residents constitute the project's target audience. It is estimated that San Francisco's 125,000 LGBT residents include an estimated 50,000 people of color, 15,000 transgender people, 10,000 immigrants, more than 18,000 seniors, over 10,000 people living with AIDS, HIV and cancer, and several thousand sex workers.

Applicant: *Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project*

Community Partner(s): *National Center for Lesbian Rights
Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center*

Realization Grant

Award: \$35,000

Project Budget: \$44,000

Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project will institute a new year-long filmmaking workshop from January through December 2008 that will enable approximately 15 immigrant queer women of color filmmakers to engage with immigrant lesbian clients of National Center for Lesbian Rights

to create compelling original films about immigration issues. The completed films will premiere as the focus of the 5th annual Queer Women of Color Film Festival in June 2009.

Participants will be selected from NCLR Immigration Project clients and QWOCCMAP filmmakers who have previously completed films through our Training Program. NCLR clients will be selected by their desire to share their stories through film, lack of access to equipment and financial support outside of the program, and their commitment to the process. QWOCCMAP participants will be selected by the quality of their past films and potential for further growth, articulation of social justice issues facing immigrants and queer women of color and their commitment to the process. The workshops will provide quality training in screenwriting, directing, editing, video production and distribution, as well as discussions about immigration issues. The key to the program will be the training and mentorship provided by QWOCCMAP's Executive Director, experienced filmmaker Madeline Lim.

QWOCCMAP is deeply rooted in the Bay Area's queer women of color community. This community is one of the largest in the country, yet few organizations primarily serve this particular community. QWOCCMAP has an intimate understanding of the needs of this constituency and draws on the strength of its diverse perspectives to build solidarity across racial, sexual and cultural lines. NCLR's Immigration Project provides free legal assistance to thousands of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer immigrants nationwide. The Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center serves residents of the Sunset District. The area is San Francisco's largest neighborhood and home to a sizeable number of Chinese, Arab and Russian immigrants. More than 55% of the residents we serve are immigrants and 45% of our full-time staff are immigrants and/or bilingual

Applicant: *Theo Rigby*
Community Partner(s): *La Raza Centro Legal*
People Organizing to Demand Environmental/Economic Rights
Realization Grant **Award:** *\$31,500* **Project Budget:** *\$44,650*

"Life Under the Radar" strives to show the realities of life for undocumented youth living in the Bay Area. Through multimedia presentations created by Theo Rigby, an accomplished photographer/filmmaker, and personal narratives created and performed by the youth, "Life Under the Radar" will intimately chronicle the lives of ten undocumented youth in San Francisco. The project will give a voice to this unique community normally in the shadows of our society.

Ten undocumented youth selected by Rigby, La Raza Centro Legal and PODER will be paired with professional photography or writing mentors and develop personal narratives using photography and/or writing. Concurrently, Rigby will create multi-media presentations that intimately chronicle the lives of selected youth in the program. The ten youth and project staff will critique Rigby's work, meet with the community partners and one another throughout the project to give feedback and guidance to the process, as well as, build a community amongst themselves. The work will reach a cross-cultural audience through a culminating community event at Mission Cultural Center and distribution of the project on DVD.

The undocumented community of San Francisco, particularly undocumented youth, is the primary audience of this project. Through a culminating event attended by the public and subsequent distribution of the work, "Life Under the Radar" will reach a wider multi-cultural platform of both undocumented and documented youth, artists, educators, politicians and members of various communities.

Applicant: *Wendy Testu collaborating with artists Stefan Klocek, Eve Mosher, Keba Konte, Taylor Neaman-Goudey, Robert Larson, Dan "the Automator" Nakamura, and Kevin Epps*
Community Partner(s): *Literacy for Environmental Justice*
Realization Grant **Award:** *\$31,500* **Project Budget:** *\$35,000*

“Welcome to the NeighborHOOD” will be a social and environmental exploration in how art can inspire communities and environmental sustainability. The project is a collaboration between eight environmentally conscious artists and the youth interns from Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ). They will create a body of artwork that will be place based, culturally relevant, celebrate the communities, and speak about its concerns with the past, present and future environment of Bayview/Hunters Point.

The 45 youth interns from LEJ will rotate in small groups of five to collaborate with the artists to photograph, gather, film materials that will serve as the basis for the artwork. Individual pieces created through this process will be installed in Herons Head Park, and subsequently brought together to make a new installation for a gallery exhibition.

The target audience for “Welcome to the NeighborHOOD” is the youth in the Bayview/Hunters Point and the school children that go on tours of Herons Head Park (where the work will be exhibited). Other audiences will include: gallery patrons, Bayview/Hunters Point community, and those lucky random people who will witness the roaming 15 foot art truck, designed by artist Keba Konte that will travel from San Diego to Portland to more widely publicize the project.