

2017 AMOCAT Arts Awards

The AMOCAT Arts Awards recognize the people and organizations that positively impact the community with their passion, innovation, and commitment to the arts. AMOCAT Arts Award recipients are nominated by the public and selected by the Tacoma Arts Commission.

There are three categories for recognition: Arts Patron, Community Outreach by an Organization, and Community Outreach by an Individual.

2017 Arts Patron **Tacoma Housing Authority** www.tacomahousing.org

Established in 1940, Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) helps Tacoma meet the growing need for affordable housing. THA does this in several ways: it develops and manages real estate; it provides rental housing; in partnership with thousands of landlords, it helps families pay the rent in the private rental market; and it delivers supportive services to help families succeed not just as tenants but also as parents, students, wage earners and builders of assets who can live without assistance. THA seeks to do its work in ways that help neighborhoods be attractive places to live, work, attend school, shop, and play, and that help its city be safe, vibrant, prosperous, attractive and just.

THA believes that art helps this work in several ways. Art beautifies the landscape, and beauty is contagious. Art helps residents view their neighborhood as a distinctive place. Art helps them welcome others to the neighborhood while allowing them to feel like the community is theirs. Art can do this especially if the residents are engaged in the process.

THA's commitment to including public art has resulted in three projects at Bay Terrace: Yuki Nakamura's *TransFORM* benches, Diane Hansen & Jennifer Weddermann's *Seabranches & Pearls* metal and glass wall sculpture, and Christopher Paul Jordan & Kenji Stoll's *Home Court* basketball court. It has also resulted in music programming at Bay Terrace led by Will Jordan, and a playground mural at Bergerson Terrace.

2017 Community Outreach by an Organization

Monkeyshines

Ms_Monkey@hotmail.com

www.facebook.com/MonkeyshinesTacoma

Monkeyshines began in 2003 as a one-time event with the simple thought that we all have the ability to positively impact each other. In that first year, a small group of individuals created over 200 glass floats, embossed with the face of a monkey, and hid the pieces all over Tacoma. Their hope was that the joy of finding a treasure would ripple throughout the community and uplift it.

And that it did! The excitement generated that first year spurred the anonymous artists to commit to 12 years of the Lunar New Year cycle. In subsequent years, participation in Monkeyshines has grown. Glass studios donate shop time; glass artists, painters, sculptors, writers, elementary school children, and other creatives make gifts for the city; and volunteers wake up early to hide the small pieces of art throughout Tacoma.

In the early morning hours surrounding Chinese New Year, people can be found walking all over Tacoma waving flashlights and rustling bushes. They say "hello" to each other; they laugh and smile; and they cheer as a fellow hunter jumps in the Puget Sound to swim for a floating treasure.

The camaraderie and joy generated through Monkeyshines was too good to stop so, after the first 12 years had passed, the ever-growing band of anonymous Monkeyshiners committed to a second 12 year cycle. This time they asked the community to add their own art and the community answered in a big way, contributing original photographs and prints, sculptures, jewelry, stories, songs, folklore, laser cut treasures, glass marbles, and more.

Monkeyshiners are proud to be in Tacoma, a city that not only embraces this event, but asks itself, "What can I share?"

2017 Community Outreach by an Individual

Michael Haeflinger

www.michaelhaeflinger.com

www.write253.com

Michael Haeflinger writes poetry, plays a very loud guitar in his basement, has one dog, is married to a polyglot, loves watching baseball, and rides a bicycle when it's not too hot outside. His professional life includes being Executive Director for Write253, a nonprofit literacy arts organization that serves Pierce County youth by providing workshops, poetry festivals, and publishing opportunities, including Louder Than a Bomb: The Tacoma Teen Poetry Festival and The Tacoma Poetry Festival Youth Day.

He is the author of two collections of poetry: *Love Poem for the Everyday* and *The Days Before*, both published by Dog On A Chain Press. In 2016, he released *Let's Don't Be Crazy*, a spoken word album partially funded by the Tacoma Arts Commission.

His current favorite poets include Rainer Maria Rilke, Gwendolyn Brooks, Nate Marshall, Jack Gilbert, Clarence Major, and Emily Dickinson. He began writing poetry in high school under the encouragement and guidance of his junior year English teacher, Ms. Miller. Like her, Michael hopes he can help introduce young people to writing that helps them define their lives.