

CITY OF TACOMA ARTS & CULTURAL VITALITY DIVISION ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Tacoma's cultural sector embodies innovation and perseverance, and the Arts & Cultural Vitality Division is proud to support a thriving and collaborative creative ecosystem. We work with creatives, organizations, and cultural partners in serving the evolving needs of our community through funding, public art, community programming, and professional development.

New research proves what we can see all around us - that investing in arts and culture has significant and measurable impacts on our community's economic and social wellbeing. The following report illustrates the far-reaching impacts that our collective investments in the cultural sector have on our community.

2023 Arts & Cultural Vitality Division Staff

- Chevi Chung, *Community Programs Specialist* *
- Daniel Garcia, *Community Programs Specialist* **
- Clarissa Gines, *Tacoma Creates Program Coordinator*
- Lisa Jaret, *Tacoma Creates Program Manager*
- Rico Lastrapes, *Tacoma Creates Program Technician* *
- Amy McBride, *Division Manager* *
- Elm McCrummen, *Tacoma Creates Program Assistant* **
- Ricky Reyes, *Public Art Project Manager* **
- Rebecca Solverson, *Public Art Program Manager*
- Naomi Strom-Avila, *Funding & Cultural Programs Manager*
- * Served through summer 2023
- ** Started summer 2023

2023 Tacoma City Council Members

- Mayor Victoria Woodards
- Council Member John Hines (District 1)
- Council Member Sarah Rumbaugh (District 2)
- Council Member Keith Blocker (District 3)
- Council Member Catherine Ushka (District 4)
- Council Member Joe Bushnell (District 5)
- Council Member Kiara Daniels (At-Large)
- Council Member Olgy Diaz (At-Large)
- Deputy Mayor Kristina Walker (At-Large)



Youth gather with the Moon Princess for a lantern parade at Tacoma Moon Festival. Photo courtesy of Chinese Reconciliation Project Foundation.

“Art has the unique power to jolt us out of our own perspective, giving us the invaluable opportunity to see the world through another’s eyes. In a world that can often seem full of tension, our creative ecosystem reminds us that we can recognize and celebrate powerful shared experiences and the value of diversity. It provides us with the chance to learn, acknowledge our commonalities, and bond more closely with each other. Those who share their creative work with us and bring cultural experiences to life in our city are true community builders. Throughout history, art has also found ways to break boundaries and push us to examine the world around us. We need this more than ever today. I am so grateful that the creative community in Tacoma never shies away from exploring the unimaginable, questioning convention, and shining a light on the beauty that surrounds us. Our creative community brings to life the spirit of Tacoma in its fearlessness and authenticity. I am proud to help celebrate Tacoma’s unique creative voice and all the exciting artistic and multicultural work that energizes our city and helps to unite us.”

-Tacoma City Councilmember Jamika Scott, District 3

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We gratefully acknowledge that we rest on the traditional lands of the Puyallup People where they make their home and speak the Lushootseed language.

Cover: 1) Lantern paddle at Tacoma Ocean Fest. Photo courtesy of Foss Waterway Seaport. 2) Performance at Healing Movement dance event. Photo courtesy of The Barefoot Collective. 3) Steamroller printing at Tacoma Wayzgoose. Photo courtesy of Write253. 4) *Ripple Effect* mural by Mary Mann. Photo courtesy of Mary Mann. 5) Dance performance at Asia Pacific New Year Celebration. Photo courtesy of Asia Pacific Cultural Center.

ARTS & CULTURAL VITALITY DIVISION 2023 OVERVIEW

This overview covers Arts program year January 1 – December 31, 2023.

ARTS FUNDING



COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECTS

\$138,000
awarded to **27**
organizations and
groups

193 programs and
events produced

44,763
participants at
in-person events

15,167 views of
online programs

95.5% of all
programs and
events were free

TACOMA ARTISTS INITIATIVE PROGRAM

\$96,000 awarded
to **24** artists
for the 2023-24
biennium

5 programs and
events produced
in first year

485 participants
at in-person
events in first year

519 views of online
programs in first
year

100% of all
programs and
events were free

PUBLIC ART



1 Art & Placemaking
Plan



8 new murals



4 permanent public art
projects managed for
outside agencies



4 permanent public
art projects for City of
Tacoma



2 major artworks
repaired



17 new traffic box
wraps

TACOMA ARTS COMMISSION



15 volunteer arts advocates



635 hours of volunteer service

ARTS PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES



TACOMA ARTS MONTH

- 315 people attended Kaleidoscope opening party
- 159 community-produced events
- 79 artists participated in the Tacoma Studio Tour
- Over 100 artists participated and 3,004 people attended Arts at the Armory

3

RESOURCES FOR CREATIVES

3 free workshops hosted



artTown TV SHOW

Produced 2 episodes with
8 segments

175

CULTURAL COMMUNITY PAID

Paid opportunities for 175 creatives and organizations

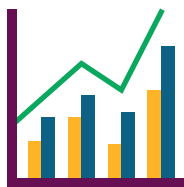


TACOMA POET LAUREATE

- 18 events, readings, workshops, and presentations
- Thousands of people served in person and virtually

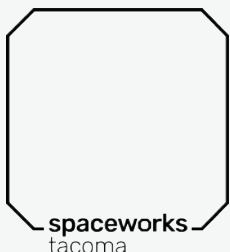
ARTS & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY STUDY

IN 2022, TACOMA'S NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE INDUSTRY:



- Supported 2,065 jobs
- Generated \$163 million in total economic activity
- Generated \$87.2 million in household income
- Generated \$28.7 million in tax revenue

SPACEWORKS TACOMA



- 35 business incubator participants
- 13 art installations, 15 murals, 2 video installations
- 19 professional development and networking events
- 1,510 hours of technical assistance
- 18 participants selling products at the WSHM store

Find out more about these programs and services at cityoftacoma.org/arts.

TACOMA CREATES

This overview covers Tacoma Creates program year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.

FUNDING



- \$4.5 million distributed to 56 cultural organizations
- 1,185 total programs and events
- 1 million participants across all programs
- 78% of programs were free for all participants
- 119,000 attendees accessed reduced-price options at ticketed events

YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS



- 35 organizations provided youth education programs
- 412 youth education programs offered
- 71,300 participants at youth education programs
- 78% of programs were free for all participants

PARTNERSHIPS



tacoma public library
Start here. Go anywhere.

- 27 organizations provided education programs in partnership with TPS
- \$1.1 million of Tacoma Creates funds used to support TPS student success
- 98% of TPS schools had a connection with at least one Tacoma Creates organization
- 175 field trips supported with free bus transportation
- 24 organizations presented 67 programs in partnership with TPL
- 1,600 attendees at free programs

TACOMA CREATES ADVISORY BOARD



12 community volunteers



252 hours of volunteer service

Read the full 2022-23 Tacoma Creates Annual Report at tacomacreates.org.

IMPACT BY COUNCIL DISTRICTS

District 1

Arts Funding:

4 Community Arts Projects programs, 2 TAIP artists

Public Art:

1 permanent artwork for Zoo

Arts Programming:

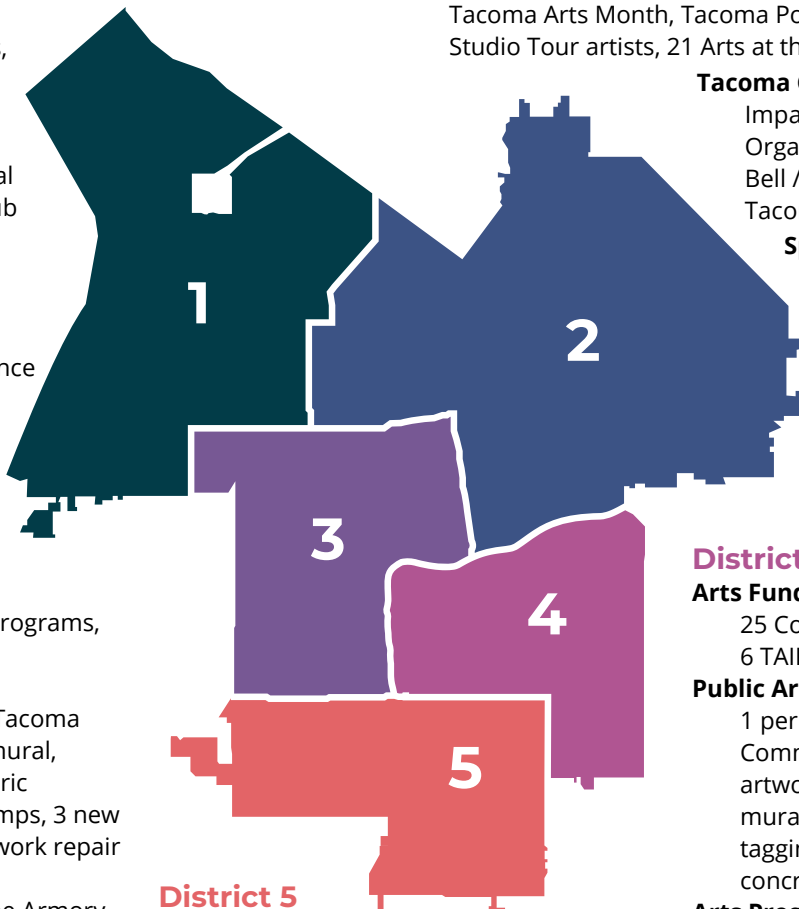
Tacoma Arts Month, Tacoma Poet Laureate, artTown, 15 Tacoma Studio Tour artists, 28 Arts at the Armory artists

Tacoma Creates:

Impact Funding and Comprehensive Organizational Support, Beyond the Bell / Club B after-school programming, Tacoma Public Library programming

Spaceworks:

Training and technical assistance for creative entrepreneurs



District 3

Arts Funding:

27 Community Arts Projects programs, 4 TAIP artists

Public Art:

1 Art & Placemaking Plan for Tacoma Mall Subarea, 1 anti-tagging mural, 1 library mural, series of historic plaques, new storm drain stamps, 3 new traffic box wraps, 1 major artwork repair

Arts Programming:

Tacoma Arts Month, Arts at the Armory, Tacoma Poet Laureate, artTown, 17 Tacoma Studio Tour artists, 16 Arts at the Armory artists

Tacoma Creates:

Impact Funding and Comprehensive Organizational Support, Beyond the Bell / Club B after-school programming, Tacoma Public Library programming

Spaceworks:

Training and technical assistance for creative entrepreneurs

District 2

Arts Funding:

12 Community Arts Projects programs, 11 TAIP artists

Public Art:

1 permanent artwork along Fawcett Ave, 1 permanent artwork for Browns Point Playfield, 1 permanent artwork for Melanie's Park, 1 celebration for Black Lives Matter Mural, 7 new traffic box wraps, 1 anti-tagging mural, 1 major artwork repair

Arts Programming:

Tacoma Arts Month, Tacoma Poet Laureate, artTown, 12 Tacoma Studio Tour artists, 21 Arts at the Armory artists

Tacoma Creates:

Impact Funding and Comprehensive Organizational Support, Beyond the Bell / Club B after-school programming, Tacoma Public Library programming

Spaceworks:

Training and technical assistance for creative entrepreneurs, planning for affordable studio spaces, rapid and permanent murals, window and video installations, partnership with WSHM store

District 4

Arts Funding:

25 Community Arts Projects programs, 6 TAIP artists

Public Art:

1 permanent artwork for Eastside Community Center, 1 permanent artwork for E. 64th Street, 1 intersection mural, storm drain stencils, 2 anti-tagging murals, Safe Routes to Schools concrete art stamps

Arts Programming:

Tacoma Arts Month, Tacoma Poet Laureate, artTown, 7 Tacoma Studio Tour artists, 12 Arts at the Armory artists

Tacoma Creates:

Impact Funding and Comprehensive Organizational Support, Beyond the Bell / Club B after-school programming, Tacoma Public Library programming

Spaceworks:

Training and technical assistance for creative entrepreneurs, permanent murals, planning for public art training and public art

District 5

Arts Funding:

10 Community Arts Projects programs, 2 TAIP artists

Public Art:

1 permanent artwork for Larchmont Streetscape, Safe Routes to Schools concrete art stamps, 1 storm drain mural, 6 new traffic box wraps

Arts Programming:

Tacoma Arts Month, Kaleidoscope opening party, Tacoma Poet Laureate, artTown, 3 Tacoma Studio Tour artist, 14 Arts at the Armory artists

Tacoma Creates:

Impact Funding and Comprehensive Organizational Support, Beyond the Bell / Club B after-school programming, Tacoma Public Library programming

Spaceworks:

Training and technical assistance for creative entrepreneurs

The Arts & Cultural Vitality Division is proud to nurture our city's creative ecosystem, providing support to our artists and organizations as well as opportunities for all residents and visitors to access and participate in the arts. We encourage the development of the local arts community through the distribution of funding for arts and cultural programs, the management and stewardship of the City's public art collection, and the production of a variety of public programs and resources for creatives that enhance and contribute to Tacoma's local economy.

 cityoftacoma.org/arts

 @TacomaArtsCommission

 @TacomaArts

The following report covers Arts programming year January 1 – December 31, 2023.

ARTS FUNDING

COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECTS

This funding program supports organizations and groups producing arts-focused community projects that are inclusive, accessible, and/or address equity issues.

- \$138,000 awarded to 27 organizations and groups
- 193 programs and events produced
- 44,763 participants at in-person events
- 15,167 views of online programs
- 95.5% of all programs and events were free
- 1,279 artists involved in producing programs and events

Funded organizations: ALMA, Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Barefoot Collective, Blue Cactus Press, Chinese Reconciliation Project Foundation, Collective Liberation in Practice, Craftopia, First Evangelical Church of Tacoma, Hilltop Artists, Johnnygirl Sound Therapy & Healing Arts Studio, The Kareem Kandi World Orchestra, Kowch Surferz Anonymous, Lincoln International Business Association, Making A Difference Foundation, No Mine Studios, Northwest Sinfonietta, Safe Streets, South End Neighborhood Council, Supportive Housing Association, Tacoma Community College, Tacoma Light Trail, Tacoma Ocean Fest, Tacoma Opera, Tacoma Refugee Choir, Tacoma Sister Cities, Toolbox Laboratories, Write253



Attendees watch a dance performance at Tacoma Ocean Fest at the Foss Waterway Seaport. Photo by Katie Cotterill.

"An event like this helps remind people what we all have in common, that we can all share in local beauty and accept responsibility to work together on ocean protection. You have done another brilliant job – well done!"

- Kathie Flood, Tacoma Ocean Fest eco-booth partner

"I have attended the last three concerts and greatly enjoyed fabulous programs. Today's concert was exceptional. While not a devotee of classical music I could appreciate both a wonderful program and wonderful performances."

- Peter Bennett, concert attendee at First Evangelical Church of Tacoma

TACOMA ARTISTS INITIATIVE PROGRAM

TAIP recognizes the creative expression of Tacoma artists, financially assists them in generating new work and growing their skills, and engages the broader community through free public components.

- \$184,000 in total funding requests from 46 applicants
- \$96,000 awarded to 24 artists for the 2023-24 biennium
- 5 programs and events produced in first year
- 485 participants at in-person events in first year
- 519 views of online programs in first year
- 100% of all programs and events were free
- Council Districts of funded artists: 2 from District 1, 11 from District 2, 4 from District 3, 6 from District 4, 1 from District 5

Funded artists: Anida Yoeu Ali, Luna Malia Azzouni, Kristina Batiste, Burl Battersby, Jaziré Ché, Hadiya Finley, Antonio Gomez, Mary Mann, Hugo Moro, Roxann Murray, Yoshi Nakagawa, Vernon Ng, Yixuan Pan, Melinda Raebyne, RickyLovesPainting, Addy Sandoval, Sophie Marie Schatz, Daniella Shepherd, Masahiro Sugano, Merilee Tanbara, Nicole Turner, Kris Vermeer, Cassio Vianna, Donovan Wilson

“I have nothing but POSITIVE feedback for this whole program and the Office of Arts and Cultural Vitality in general!!! I absolutely LOVE meeting the other artists in my cohort. The gatherings we have had are inspiring. I feel like I've grown a lot from the work over this past year, fulfilling the goals that were set in the process.”
- Mary Mann



Screening of Masahiro Sugano's film, *If Hafez Wrote A Haiku for Cowboys*, at The Grand Cinema. Photo by Anida Yoeu Ali.



Opening reception at Tacoma Art Museum's community gallery space, featuring self-portraits created by 11 young artists who worked alongside Mary Mann. Photo courtesy of Mary Mann.

“This workshop was very helpful in providing me with a space to create freely in a chill and nonjudgmental environment, which was great because I sometimes find it hard to give myself time to create. My final product, a dynamic, eye-catching, and loud piece, accomplished every goal I originally proposed, and more. I thoroughly enjoyed this experience and hope to make more art like this in the future.”
- Will Sikes, teen participant in Mary Mann's portrait painting workshop

MUNICIPAL ART PROGRAM

The City of Tacoma dedicates 1% of construction costs of capital projects to the creation of public art through the Municipal Art Program. These projects are part of the City-owned Municipal Art Collection.

Tacoma Mall Subarea Art & Placemaking Plan

Artist Team: Horatio Law & Linda Wysong. Research and outreach for plan to guide public art and placemaking investments over the next 10 to 15 years. Partnership with Environmental Services.

Larchmont Streetscape Poetry

Lead Artist: Saiyare Refaei. Artwork development for Larchmont poetry concrete stamps, in collaboration with Larchmont Elementary School students. Partnership with Environmental Services.

East 64th Street Improvements

Artist: Elisheba Johnson. Artwork development for permanent site-responsive artwork. Partnership with Public Works.

Safe Routes to School Concrete Stamps

Artists: Maila Cervania, Stephanie Pride, Mateo Smith, Jessica Spring, Dion Thomas. Artist-designed concrete stamps installed as part of Safe Routes to Schools improvements. Partnership with Public Works.

Hilltop Plaque Project

Artist: Whitney Brady. Development of content for site-specific historic plaques. Partnership with Public Works.



Ripple Effect mural by Mary Mann, along Schuster Parkway. Photo courtesy of Mary Mann.



Artist Jorge Mota paints a traffic-calming mural for McKinley intersection.



Larchmont Elementary school students create poetry for streetscape project.

In addition to 1% for Art projects, the Public Art Program partners with other City departments to engage artists in problem solving – from environmental messaging, to illegal tagging, to traffic calming, to building neighborhood identity.

Environmental Services *If It Hits The Ground, It Hits The Sound!* Campaign – ongoing partnership

- Storm Drain Concrete Stamp – Artist: Chandler O’Leary. Custom concrete stamp for installation around new storm drains.
- STAR Center Storm Drain Mural – Artist: Jesse Peterson

In 2023, the City of Tacoma’s Environmental Services Department was awarded a National Association of Clean Water Agencies Award for Public Information & Education for the *If It Hits The Ground, It Hits The Sound!* Campaign. The campaign was produced in partnership with the Arts & Cultural Vitality Division. Ongoing efforts include the creation of stencils, storm drain murals, concrete stamps, and the first annual *Ground to Sound* Film Festival.

“We’re very lucky in the city to have a separate stormwater and wastewater system...but a lot of people believe that what goes in the storm drain gets treated. We’ve tried multiple different [ways] to educate the public on this over 20 years...with very little success...[*If It Hits The Ground, it Hits the Sound!*] is the most effective thing we’ve done in 20 years. It’s just amazing the impact it’s having.”

- Mike Slevin, Environmental Services

In 2017, the City of Tacoma Environmental Services (ES) recognized a gap existed in its educational outreach efforts when 50% of respondents in a survey mistakenly believed that stormwater is treated. In fact, in Tacoma, 90% of stormwater is not treated, which means that pollutants and trash that go down the storm drain end up in the Puget Sound. In 2019, a cross divisional team of employees started an educational art campaign to address this need. This campaign generated the tagline: “If it Hits the Ground, it Hits the Sound.” The campaign continues to produce murals, stencils, t-shirt designs, vehicle wraps, concrete stamps, and social media posts. This effort educates the public on stormwater pollution, engages with underserved neighborhoods, and builds partnerships with internal and external stakeholders.



Storm drain mural by Jesse Peterson at STAR Center.

Black Lives Matter Mural

Lateral Force, Lead Artist: Dionne Bonner. Community celebration for Black Lives Matter mural project in Tollefson Plaza. Partnership with Tacoma Art Museum and City of Tacoma's Human Rights Commission.

Lutshootseed Stamps

Artist: Chris Duenas. Installed dozens of concrete stamps with Lushootseed phrases and original artwork along Fawcett Avenue, between 6th Avenue and S. 19th Street. Artwork continues to be installed throughout the city as opportunities arise.

Schuster Parkway Mural

Ripple Effect, Artist: Mary Mann. Completed underpass mural to help mitigate illegal tagging. Partnership with Public Works.

38th Street Jersey Barrier Mural

Artist: Jorge Garcia. Completed jersey barrier mural to help mitigate illegal tagging. Partnership with Public Works.

M Street Mural

Artists: Jorge Garcia and David Long. Designed underpass mural to help mitigate illegal tagging. Partnership with Public Works.

Traffic Box Wraps

Artists: RR Anderson, Curtis Ashby, Joseph Brooks, Anna Brones, Bethany Fackrell, Loretta Morgan Fernandez, Jeremy Gregory, Rodney King, Fin Martens, Mark Monlux, JJ Noll, Jesse Peterson, Matamatanonofu Porter, Zak Rivera, Linda Sholberg, Mark Anthony Smith, Anna Warnecke. Designed and installed 17 new traffic box wraps throughout the city to help mitigate illegal tagging. Partnership with Public Works.

South Tacoma Library Mural

Artist: Dionne Bonner. Installation of exterior mural to help draw attention to the building. Partnership with Tacoma Public Library.

McKinley Neighborhood Plan Implementation

- National Endowment for the Arts Grant - \$100,000 received to support placemaking and artist training in McKinley, in partnership with the Neighborhood Planning Program and Spaceworks.
- McKinley Intersection Mural – Artist: Jorge Mota. Implemented “Community Booster Project” traffic-calming mural, in partnership with Neighborhood Planning Program and Public Works.
- McKinley Hill Mural – Artist: Curtis Ashby. Implemented by Spaceworks Tacoma.

Public Art Maintenance

- People's Park bench repair and re-installation
- Bridge of Glass – Crystal Towers repair and cleaning
- Bridge of Glass – Seaform Pavilion LED lighting upgrade
- Ongoing maintenance of murals



Venetian Wall panel replacement on the Bridge of Glass.



Installing *Northwest Basket Weaving Designs* at Melanie's Park. Artwork by Denise Reed and Sharron Nelson with Chris Duenas.

Murals and traffic box wraps are an effective way to mitigate illegal tagging throughout the City. Instead of spending limited City staff maintenance hours on painting over illegal tagging, local artists can turn blank walls and traffic boxes into community assets that help define our public spaces.

“[Last night, Eastside Neighborhood Council] spontaneously took about 5-10 minutes of their meeting to praise the murals in their community. They spoke at length about how much they loved the artists and the messages in the murals. They said they felt the selected artist and the mural designs truly captured the spirit of their neighborhood and represented their values. Their faces absolutely lit up when they were talking about all the murals, and they all got very excited. They were all clearly very happy with the work and really cherish it (they were reciting all the locations of murals by heart!)”
- Christina Caan, City of Tacoma Council Policy Analyst



Ripple Effect mural by Mary Mann, along Schuster Parkway. Photo courtesy of Mary Mann.



Traffic box art wrap designs by Anna Warnecke and Matamatonono Porter.



PUBLIC ART PARTNERSHIPS

The Arts & Cultural Vitality Division provides leadership in public art management for partner agencies, strengthening the public art ecosystem in our region and increasing opportunities for artists. The following projects are in partnership with Metro Parks Tacoma:

Browns Point Playfield

Artist: Paige Pettibon. Proposal development for permanent site-responsive artwork.

South Pacific Aquarium

Artist: Mindy Barker. Artwork fabrication for permanent site-responsive artwork.

Melanie's Park

Artist Team: Denise Reed and Sharron Nelson, design support by Chris Duenas. Artwork development for permanent site-responsive artwork, *Northwest Basket Weaving Designs*.

Eastside Community Center

Lead Artist: Tiffany Hammonds, in partnership with First Creek Middle School students. Development of youth-involved mural.

TACOMA ARTS MONTH

Held each October, Tacoma Arts Month is a celebration of arts and culture in our community.

Opening Party

- Performances and activities by: Meanroth Ny of the Southeast Asian Comedy Collective, Golden Bamboo Walking Club, Jaziré Ché, Cassio Vianna, Das Biest Performance Project, Tacoma Poet Laureate Christian Paige, Write 253/Line Break Press, Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Burl Battersby/Voices of Tacoma, Mary Mann and the SAMI Art Club, Kristina Batiste, Toolbox Laboratories, FabLab, Tacoma Light Trail, Tacoma Tree Foundation, Alchemy Skateboarding, Metro Arts Tacoma, Latinx Unidos of the South Sound.
- Visual art by Roxann Murray, Calvin Satiacum, Yoshi Nakagawa
- Film screenings by Donovan Wilson and Melinda Raebyne
- Catering by TriniPlate
- 315 people in attendance at this free community event
- Event partners: Metro Parks Tacoma and STAR Center

AMOCAT Arts Awards

Recognizing outstanding outreach, engagement, and involvement in the arts. Nominated by community; selected by Tacoma Arts Commission

- Arts Patron: Foster's Creative
- Community Outreach by an Organization: Southeast Asian Comedy Collective
- Community Outreach by an Individual: Kristina Batiste and Reid Ozaki

"The SE [Asian] Comedy Collective is a valuable asset to the Tacoma community. The collective provides a platform for Southeast Asian comedians to share their stories and experiences, and it helps to promote diversity and inclusion in the arts. The collective is also committed to social commentary and uses its platform to raise awareness of important issues facing the Southeast Asian community."

- AMOCAT Arts Award nomination from community member

"The Tacoma Pottery Salon (founded by Reid Ozaki and Kristina Batiste) is a pop-up watering hole for Tacoma's clay community. It's a space to gather, build relationships, and learn from a featured speaker/presenter about their education, body of work, and technique. In this city of glass, the Salon is shining a light on Tacoma's rich (and oft-overlooked) history of potters."

- AMOCAT Arts Award nomination from community member

Community Events

- 159 community-produced events

Tacoma Studio Tour

- Free two-day event
- 79 artists at 50 studio locations covering Council Districts 1 - 5
- Average of 95 visitors to each studio
- Over \$28,000 in earnings from sale of work

"I think the increased number of studios open was exciting for people, and being in the Lincoln District I got many comments about how much people liked knowing about artists working in or near their neighborhood, the increase in the number of South End/Eastside studios is great!"

- Tacoma Studio Tour participating artist



Write253 welcomes visitors to their print shop during the Tacoma Studio Tour.

TACOMA ARTS MONTH

Held each October, Tacoma Arts Month is a celebration of arts and culture in our community.

Arts at the Armory

- Free two-day event
- Over 100 artists participated
- 3,004 attendees
- Over \$50,000 in earnings from sale of work (estimated)
- Live performances by Syncopation Foundation and Steve & Kristi Nebel
- Event sponsored by Tacoma Arts Live at the Tacoma Armory

“The event was simply beautiful to see all of that creativity, activities for kids, etc. Those attending were delighted! On the business side, I imagine you not only put over \$100,000 in sales directly to artists, but generated sales tax revenue for the city. A win win. We are so grateful to see our tax dollars at work!”
- Lucia Harrison, Arts at the Armory participating artist

“Great turnout, accessible, fun and awesome artists to meet, mingle, and connect with. All of my friends that came absolutely loved it too!”
- Arts at the Armory participating artist

Communication and Sponsorship

- Weekly newsletters and social media posts announcing upcoming events
- Media sponsorships with KBTC, KNKX, NW Public Broadcasting, ParentMap, Preview Magazine, Showcase Media, South Sound Business, South Sound Magazine, South Sound Talk



Hands-on painting experience at Arts at the Armory.



Attendees at Kaleidoscope participate in a hands-on craft project with Toolbox Laboratories.



A Tacoma Studio Tour attendee participates in a collage activity at the studio of Amy Lewis.

RESOURCES FOR CREATIVES

The Arts & Cultural Vitality Division collaborates with local organizations to provide free professional development workshops for Tacoma creatives and organizations, providing them with skills to advance their work.

- Spaceworks Tacoma presented Building Better Business Foundations, Part I and II
- Rainbow Center presented LGBTQ+ Core Competency and Gender Diversity

TACOMA POET LAUREATE

The poet laureate actively contributes to and advances Tacoma's literary community in meaningful ways through readings, performances, workshops, presentations, publications, and special projects. Programming serves thousands of community members in person and virtually.

- 2021-2023 Tacoma Poet Laureate Lydia K. Valentine hosted or participated in 10 programs
- 2023-2025 Tacoma Poet Laureate Christian Paige hosted or participated in 8 programs, including the City of Tacoma's and Olympia's Juneteenth Celebrations
- Hosted 'Pass the Torch' event in April at Tacoma Public Library's Moore Branch and via [Facebook livestream](#) to celebrate the transition of poets laureate.

artTown TV SHOW

artTown is a cultural documentary-style TV show exploring Tacoma's emergence as a major creative hub in the Pacific Northwest. The series offers segments featuring diverse perspectives on a variety of creative disciplines.

- Researched, planned, and produced 2 episodes with 8 segments featuring: [Black Lives Matter Mural](#), [Tacoma Boat Builders](#), [Johnygirl Sound Therapy & Healing Arts Studio](#), [Mary Mann](#), [Curtis Ashby](#), [Trenton Quiocho](#), [Daniel Garcia](#), [Maria-Tania Bandes Becerra Weingarden](#)

"What a great event last night! I left so inspired and in awe of the talent of the poets and the commitment of your department to connecting people to art and poetry."
- Tacoma City Councilmember Kristina Walker, At-Large



2023-2025 Tacoma Poet Laureate Christian Paige.



Johny Oliver demonstrates her sound therapy instruments during an interview for artTown.

In 2022-23, we collaborated with Americans for the Arts to conduct a comprehensive study of Tacoma's nonprofit arts and culture industry. The study documented the economic and social benefits that nonprofit arts and culture organizations, and their audiences, have both locally and nationally.

Study findings are based on the responses of 88 arts and culture organizations and 923 audience surveys.

In 2022, Tacoma's nonprofit arts and culture industry:

- Supported 2,065 jobs (national median for cities of similar size: 579)
- Generated \$163 million in total economic activity
 - \$87.1 million in spending by organizations (national median for cities of similar size: \$12.8 million)
 - \$75.9 million in event-related spending by audiences (national median for cities of similar size: \$16.8 million)
- Generated \$87.2 million in household income paid to residents (national median for cities of similar size: \$18.4 million)
- Generated \$5.2 million in local revenue (national median for cities of similar size: \$756,300)
- Generated \$6.5 million in state revenue (national median for cities of similar size: \$968,600)

Of Tacoma's 2.2 million nonprofit arts and culture audience members in 2022:

- 80.4% resided within Pierce County
 - Spent an average of \$30.70 per person on event-related purchases, excluding admission
 - Event-related expenditures totaled \$55.1 million
- 19.6% resided outside Pierce County
 - Spent an average of \$47.63 per person on event-related purchases, excluding admission
 - Event-related expenditures totaled \$20.8 million

Audience members shared their appreciation for how arts and culture impacts the well-being of our community:

- 89.2% said "This activity or venue is inspiring a sense of pride in this neighborhood or community."
- 86.7% said "I would feel a great sense of loss if this activity or venue were no longer available."
- 77.1% said "This venue or facility is an important pillar for me within my community."
- 87.3% said "My attendance is my way of ensuring that this activity or venue is preserved for future generations"

PANELISTS

Thank you to the following 84 community members who served on panels in 2023 to review applications for funding and public art. Panelists bring a diversity of perspectives and experiences to the review process, stemming from their connection to community and knowledge of relevant subject matter.

Sophia Agtarap, Stephen Antupit, Alan Aplin, Curtis Ashby, Connie Behe, Tasi Biersack, Ashley Bole, Beverly Bowen-Bennett, Brian Boyd, Eli Boyd, Faith Brown, Jasmine Brown, Mariesa Bus, Kate Cendejas, Amanda Chavira, Jennifer Chin, Marley Clousing, Ricky Clousing, Heather Conklin, Alyce Conti, Sheree Cooks, Whitney DalBalcon, Brandi Douglas, Michael Duggan, Jackie Fender, Heide Fernandez-Llamazares, Mera Foster, Amanda Gerber, Hannah-Clarke Gilmore, Carol Goforth, Jeremy Gregory, Marvin Griffin, Diane Hansen, Mette Hanson, JW Harrington, Sarah Jane Hoppe, Larry Hosley, Doug Immerman, Lisa Johnson, Steve LaBerge, Amelia Layton, Janece Levien, Kelly Lynch, Vivian MacBain, Iris Macias, Chelsea McElroy, Abby E. Murray, Wade Neal, Jillian Nettels, Tamiko Nimura, Teruko Nimura, Gillian Nordlund, Naomi O'Connor, Sean Olson, Theresa Pan Hosley, Preston Peck, Gerardo Peña, Krista Perez, Ellen Peters, Faaluaina Pritchard, Joanna Rasmussen, Brian Robinson, Jeanette Sanchez, Tara Scheidt, Lauren Scheidt-Padron, Kenya Shakoore, Jessica Smith, Chris Spaulding, Wendy Spaulding, Cydney Stephens, Damahn Sterline, Faith Stevens, MaryMikel Stump, Patsy Surh-O'Connell, Jes Takla, Greg Tanbara, Karen Thompson, Christopher Uebelhor, Alejandra Villeda, Rachel Wilkie, Wind Dell Woods, Heidi Wygle, Rory Wygle, Leslie Young

This 15-member volunteer commission is made up of Tacoma residents with expertise as practicing artists, arts professionals, educators, and arts supporters. They advocate for the arts and provide policy direction to support the ongoing development of public art and arts programs and projects in Tacoma.

Commission members: Michael Kula (Chair), Jeanette Sanchez (Vice Chair), Jasmine Brown, Heide Fernandez-Llamazares, Sarah Jane Hoppe, Marissa Kall, Wade Neal, Derek Nunn, Jamika Scott, Kenya Shakoor, MaryMikel Stump, Alejandra Villeda, Joe Williams, Ton Williams, Heidi Wygle. City Council liaisons: John Hines, Keith Blocker (alternate)

- 635 hours of volunteer service
- Council Districts of commissioners: 2 from District 1, 7 from District 2, 2 from District 3, 2 from District 4, 2 from District 5

SPACEWORKS TACOMA

Spaceworks makes Tacoma culturally vibrant and economically strong through training and support for artists and creative entrepreneurs. Spaceworks was launched in 2010 as a joint initiative of the City of Tacoma and the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce and is operated as a program of the Chamber with its own staff and steering committee.

- 35 business Incubator participants
- 13 Woolworth Window installations
- 15 murals
- 2 video installations
- 19 professional development and networking events for alumni
- 1,510 hours of technical assistance for microenterprises
- 18 participants selling products at the Washington State History Museum store
- 1 new Incubator Facilitator
- 1 new Program Director

"These classes have made the overwhelming aspects of business a lot more digestible."

– Christina Crawford, Creative SOULutions

"I never thought I would be able to write a business plan, much less one that I am proud of!"

– Ginny McClure, Good Luck Shop

Find out more about Spaceworks Tacoma at spaceworkstacoma.com.



Taylor Woodruff of Grit City Grindhouse, a 10 year business/alum of Spaceworks Tacoma. Photo by Spaceworks Tacoma.

Community painting day at the Black Lives Matter Mural in Tollefson Plaza.

TACOMA CREATES

Tacoma Creates is a voter-approved initiative to increase access to arts, culture, heritage, and science experiences throughout Tacoma by reducing barriers to access and expanding offerings, particularly for underserved youth. Tacoma Creates funding supports non-profit arts, culture, heritage, and science organizations in expanding equitable access to public programs, increasing opportunities in neighborhoods throughout Tacoma, expanding educational options for youth, and building sustainability for continued services to the community.

The following summary covers Tacoma Creates programming year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.

Read the full Tacoma Creates Annual Report at tacomacreates.org.

TACOMA CREATES FUNDING

2022 – 2023 Comprehensive Organizational Support and Impact Funding

Tacoma Creates funds eligible arts, culture, heritage, and science non-profit organizations in Tacoma to support their public programming work, with a focus on equity, access, and public benefit.

- \$4.5 million distributed to 56 cultural organizations
- 1,185 total programs and events
 - 773 general public programs
 - 412 youth education programs
- 1,014,893 participants across all programs
- 78% of programs were free for all participants
- 119,000 attendees accessed reduced-price options at ticketed events

Funded Organizations: Alchemy Skateboarding, Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Barefoot Collective, Buffalo Soldiers Museum, Chinese Reconciliation Project Foundation, Classical Tuesdays in Old Town Tacoma, Communities for a Healthy Bay, Cousin Collective, Destiny City Music Collective, Entertainment Resource Alliance, Fablab Education, Foss Waterway Seaport, Gallucci Learning Garden, Greentrike, Hilltop Artists, Hilltop Business Association, Job Carr Cabin Museum, Latinx Unidos of the South Sound, LeMay – America’s Car Museum, Mi Centro, Museum of Glass, Music and Heart in Wright Park, Northwest Sinfonietta, Orchestral Recital Series of Tacoma, Permaculture Lifestyle Institute, Puget Sound Revels, Rainbow Center, Spaceworks Tacoma, Symphony Tacoma, Tacoma Art Museum, Tacoma Arts Live, Tacoma Boat Builders, Tacoma City Association of Colored Women’s Clubs, Tacoma City Ballet, Tacoma Concert Band, Tacoma Historical Society, Tacoma Light Trail, Tacoma Little Theatre, Tacoma Musical Playhouse, Tacoma Ocean Fest, Tacoma Opera, Tacoma Refugee Choir, Tacoma Sister Cities, Tacoma Tree Foundation, Tacoma Urban Performing Arts Center, Tacoma Youth Symphony Association, Tahoma Indian Center, Ted Brown Music Outreach, The Grand Cinema, The Kareem Kandi World Orchestra, The Night Media Foundation, The Playground KiKi, Truth Movement Innertainment, WayOut Kids, World Affairs Council of Tacoma, Write253



Tacoma Historical Society’s registrar helps a visitor with a research project, using the THS newspaper collection.

“Funds from Tacoma Creates specifically are helping our organization navigate towards sustainability and combat staff burnout which is all too common among smaller organizations. The financial support helps us better navigate new program opportunities and challenges, allowing us to say yes to new opportunities, and also feel confident in our pricing structures and quality of programming.”

– Alchemy Skateboarding

TACOMA CREATES

Funding from Tacoma Creates supports both current programs and long-term sustainability, giving organizations the opportunity to build capacity for the future. From professional learning opportunities for staff and board members, to acquiring or upgrading equipment, and supporting new partnerships - increased organizational stability leads to stronger community programming.

- 84% of funded organizations reported new, adjusted, or expanded programs
- 76% of funded organizations reported productive collaborations outside the cultural sector
- 40% of funded organizations reported expanded staffing, contractors, volunteers

"Tacoma Creates is essential to stabilizing the organization, its programming, and the livelihood we are able to provide to Tacoma-based creatives. As a consistent source of funding, it plays an important role in helping us recruit and retain quality arts professionals in our city. It also is critical to our ability to expand accessibility and develop innovative programming, which is shielded from market pressures."
- Tacoma Arts Live

YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Of the 1,185 programs and events offered by Tacoma Creates organizations, 35% of them were classes, camps, or workshops exclusively for youth under age 18.

- 35 organizations provided youth education programs
- 412 youth education programs offered
- 71,300 participants at youth education programs
- 78% of youth programs were free for all participants
- 5,400 youth received discounts/scholarships at fee-based programs

"I have brought several classes to the Seaport for the Eco-Kayak program, but it never fails to surprise and delight me in seeing students discover the magic of the water and in some cases, be on the water for the very first time...and in a kayak!"

- 7th Grade Educator from Hilltop Heritage Middle School;
Foss Waterway Seaport program participant

TACOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Tacoma Creates funds support cultural organizations in providing youth education programs for Tacoma Public Schools (TPS) students during the school day as well as after school through the Beyond the Bell / Club B program.

- 27 organizations provided education programs in partnership with TPS
- \$1.1 million of Tacoma Creates funds used to support TPS student success
- 98% of TPS schools had a connection with at least one Tacoma Creates organization
- 175 cultural field trips supported with free bus transportation

"This year, we piloted new evaluation tools to better learn from our students what they gain from our programs and to give clearer information to our staff about where we can strengthen offerings... We had break-out groups for each program so staff could discuss the survey results and identify areas for improvement together. Students report that participating in glass arts encourages them to build new skills, recognize their efforts, and practice things that are difficult. They feel it is a safe space to share ideas and opinions, that student ideas matter, that they are respected, connected, and have a sense of belonging, and that they will be successful."
- Hilltop Artists



Communities for a Healthy Bay's Environmental Justice Camp participants paddleboarding.

TACOMA CREATES

TACOMA PUBLIC LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP

Tacoma Creates partners with Tacoma Public Library (TPL) as part of our commitment to support cultural programming in different parts of the city.

- 24 organizations presented 67 programs in partnership with TPL
- 1,600 attendees at free Tacoma Creates programs

EQUITY AND ACCESS

Equity and access are central goals for Tacoma Creates, and Tacoma Creates invests in equity-focused capacity building work to support individuals' knowledge and understanding, and organizations' ability and will to take action steps.

- 66 individuals representing 25 organizations participated in equity-related workshops
 - 97% of participants reported that workshop topics supported their personal growth
 - 87% of participants reported benefit from working and learning alongside other organizations
 - 65% of participants reported organizational growth as a result of the workshop experiences
- 31 individuals from 17 organizations attended a film series, exploring colonialism throughout history
- 11 hours of coaching and technical assistance provided to organizations

"Greentrike's Play to Learn program includes songs, circle time, and group activities for children and their grownups to enjoy together. It's so popular that we expanded the program to both a morning and an afternoon session. Many of the participants had not been to this neighborhood library before; now they are routinely checking out lots of kids' books and other materials on a weekly basis. It's a wonderful partnership that allows Greentrike to reach more families through the library, and the library is now serving more families because of this program."

- Michelle Massero, Neighborhood Services Manager, Tacoma Public Library

"Tacoma Creates has allowed us to begin funding ASL interpreters for our performances. This has allowed for some of our families to access programming that would otherwise be unavailable to them. For the first time this summer, the parents of one of our students was able to enjoy their performance with an interpreter present."

- Tacoma Little Theatre

TACOMA CREATES ADVISORY BOARD

The volunteer members of the Tacoma Creates Advisory Board serve in an advisory capacity to Tacoma Creates administration on funding programs to support public benefit throughout Tacoma.

Board members: Sophia Agtarap, Putter Bert, Allison Campbell, Megan Clark, Sheree Cooks, Amanda Figueroa, Roxane Hreha, Katie Mattran, Ellana Meas, Naomi O'Connor, Brian Robinson, Chase Williams

- Representing all 5 council districts with backgrounds and experience in arts, culture, heritage, science, K-12 education, and community engagement
- 252 hours of volunteer service



Kids participating in Gallucci Learning Garden's hands-on activities, presented in collaboration with Tacoma Public Library.