

ALLIANCE FOR CALIFORNIA TRADITIONAL ARTS AWARDS \$200,000 TO SUPPORT THE LIVING CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE STATE

The Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA) is awarding \$200,000 to California nonprofit organizations to support folk and traditional arts. The annual Living Cultures grant supports cultural communities and Native California tribes engaging in traditional practices which include dance, music, material arts, foodways, storytelling and the sharing of indigenous knowledge through storytelling.



Living Cultures grantee Dance Elixir teaches Palestinian folk dance in Oakland, CA. Photo: Ricardo Esway.

Since 2005, the Living Cultures grants have supported **nearly 600 community-based projects**, with more than **\$3.4 million** in funding across **50 counties** in California. This year's cohort includes the creation of women's regalia among the vibrant tribes of Humboldt County, a premiere of a contemporary Cambodian dance work, Mexican folklorico workshops in rural Kings and Tehama counties, a celebration of spring equinox by the Bay Area's Kazakh and Central Asian communities, and dance and drum festivals celebrating African and African Diaspora traditions across California.

"California is on the leading edge of demographic change for the country," says ACTA's executive director Amy Kitchener. "These grants provide artistic resources to deepen cultural practices and strengthen the connections between communities," Kitchener says. This year's Living Cultures grants reach into many corners of the state, from Humboldt, Yolo, and San Bernardino counties to the urban centers of the greater Bay Area, Los Angeles and San Diego.

A distinguished panel of cultural and community experts reviewed applications over a three-day period; ACTA board of directors approved the final grant selections. The Living Cultures Grants Program is supported by the Walter & Elise Haas Fund, The Flora & William Hewlett Foundation, and the Surdna Foundation, with additional support from the California Arts Council and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles Arts Commission.

The following California organizations will receive \$5,000 Living Cultures awards:

- **Afro Urban Society**, Oakland, Alameda County: Music and dance exploration of African history and identity.

- **Alaska Natives at Fort Ross**, Jenner, Solano County: Event celebrating the traditions of the Alaska Native diaspora.
- **Bay Area Bomba Y Plena Workshop**, Oakland, Alameda County: Teaching students Afro-Puerto Rican music and dance traditions.
- **BrasArte: The Damasceno Brazilian Cultural Exchange**, Berkeley, Alameda County: Support for a month-long festival highlighting the deity of the sea.
- **Calpulli Tonalehqueh**, San Jose, Santa Clara County: Indigenous Mexican New Year gathering.
- **Cambodian American Resource Agency**, San Jose, Santa Clara County: Folk tale-inspired dance drama for the New Year festival.
- **Centro Cultural Techantit**, Los Angeles: Festival celebrating the marimba, a sacred and secular instrument among the Mayan people.
- **Charya Burt Cambodian Dance**, Windsor, Sonoma County: Premiere of a contemporary Cambodian stage work.
- **Chitresh Das Institute**, San Francisco: Classes for youth in the North Indian dance form of Kathak.
- **Dance Elixir**, Oakland, Alameda County: Free Palestinian folk dance classes and performance.
- **Dance Group Xorotroptzi**, Culver City, Los Angeles County: The Bulgarian American Cultural Educational Foundation's annual concert.
- **Grupo Folklorico Princesa Donaji**, Los Angeles: Acquisition of traditional Oaxacan dance costumes.
- **Hungarian Folk Singing Circle/Nepdalkor**, San Francisco: Hungarian folk music workshops.
- **Indian Performing Arts Center**, Northridge, Los Angeles County: Workshops in the North Indian dance form of Kathak and Hindustani classical music.
- **Karen Organization of San Diego**, San Diego: Dance classes for youth and weaving circles for the older generation of Karen, an ethnic minority group from Burma.
- **Kings Cultural Center**, Hanford, Kings County: Traditional Mexican folklorico classes in rural towns throughout the Central Valley.
- **Kinnara Gagaku**, Los Angeles: Acquisition of traditional dress for the Japanese American music ensemble.
- **KStar Productions**, Oakland, Alameda County: Supports artists at the Black Choreographers Festival.
- **La Ultima Parada**, San Jose, Santa Clara County: Supports Mexican Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebration.
- **Mahea Uchiyama Center for International Dance**, Berkeley, Alameda County: Supports the Kapil'i Polynesian dance and music workshops.
- **Native Women's Collective**, McKinleyville, Humboldt County: Creation of traditional necklaces for a lending bank of Native regalia.
- **Network of Myanmar American Association**, Monterey Park, Los Angeles County: Traditional Burmese dance classes for youth and new costumes.
- **North American Guqin Association**, Union City, Alameda County: Concert and roundtable discussion about the guqin, a Chinese zither.

- **Oaxaca Tierra del Sol**, Windsor, Sonoma County: Supports the Oaxacan spring cultural festival of Guelaguetza.
- **Omnira Institute**, Oakland, Alameda County: An ongoing program “Roots of Freedom, Roots of Faith,” connects African-American cultural practices and African spiritual roots.
- **Our Lady’s Guild**, Red Bluff, Tehama County: Mexican folklorico lessons for youth and professional development for teachers.
- **Radio Santa Ana: El Centro Cultural de Mexico**, Santa Ana, Orange County: Women-focused radio series for the indigenous Purepecha community.
- **Rara Tou Limen**, Oakland, Alameda County: Supports the “Rasanble! Haitian Arts & Culture Festival.”
- **SambaFunk!**, Oakland, Alameda County: Arts and drum workshops with an artist-in-residence from Salvador, Brazil.
- **Senderos**, Santa Cruz: Mexican folkloric dance classes and Oaxacan Banda de Viento music instruction for Latino immigrant youth.
- **Silk Road House**, Walnut Creek, Contra Costa County: Music classes in the dombra, a stringed instrument from Central Asia.
- **Souly Dance Arts**, Los Angeles: Support for dance and drum artists at the “Djanjoba,” a gathering during Black History Month.
- **Teatro de la Tierra**, Fresno: Project exploring how indigenous Mixtec traditions are practiced during Dia de los Muertos.
- **Teatro Jornalero Sin Fronteras**, Los Angeles: Development of a social justice-focused theater piece, “Historias Del Rio 2017.”
- **Tekura Jegnás**, San Diego: Workshops in Kalenda, the stick fighting practice of the Caribbean and African American communities.
- **Umoja Ensemble of the Inland Empire / We the People Cultural Dance Center**, San Bernardino: Dance and drum workshops at the “Ultimate Doundounba Festival.”
- **Ventura County Arts Council**, Ventura: Classes and looms for the indigenous immigrant Mexican community to learn from a master Zapotec weaver.
- **Veretski Pass**, Berkeley, Alameda County: A CD release and public performances of pre-Holocaust Czech-Jewish klezmer music.
- **WasabiKai**, Los Angeles, Los Angeles: Japanese pottery and Ikebana flora design classes at the Senshin Buddhist Temple.
- **World Stage Performance Gallery**, Los Angeles: Free West African drumming classes for women in Leimert Park.
- **Xiadani del Valle**, Fresno: Traditional dress for Oaxacan folklorico dancers and a learning exchange with Los Angeles dance teachers.

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Read more about our grantees here: <https://actastories.atavist.com/2018-living-cultures>