



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kristen Madsen, 707-565-6120

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The Arts Respond: Creative Endeavors Occur in Response to the Fires

Since the wildfires of 2017, Sonoma County’s creative community has been engaged in arts activities across all artistic genres and disciplines as a way to help heal both themselves and the community. They can be counted in the mix of individuals and organizations who have set aside their former everyday issues in pursuit of the more pressing need to serve as Second Responders to their neighbors throughout the County.

“Artists have the ability to help us look at our collective experience through a unique lens which can help us make better sense of our emotional responses,” said Chair of the Board of Supervisors James Gore. “Our creative community has really risen to a new level of community support and engagement through their remarkable response to the fires.”

As examples, the Children’s Museum is offering an interactive fire fighter playhouse that engages children and their families in imaginative and therapeutic play. Sonoma County Parks Foundation is bringing musical performances together with guided hikes at the Shiloh Ranch Regional Park. The Santa Rosa Symphony will perform “Sonoma Strong,” a work commissioned by Santa Rosa native Paul Dooley in response to the fires which will have an encore performance the first weekend of October. Ceramicist Gregory Roberts is creating individual porcelain vessels, made in the shape of the Round Barn using ashes from community members’ homes.

These activities are a fraction of the responses that Sonoma’s creative community is undertaking in their role as “second responders” to the fires. Creative Sonoma is actively compiling a list of these creative responses to the fires that have occurred and that are still to come which can be seen at www.CreativeSonoma.org. The page also includes a link to profiles of artists who lost homes and/or studios during the fires and who continue to create new work to be sold, seen and heard.

Creative Sonoma is proud to be affiliated with all of the creative individuals, entrepreneurs and organizations who have used their unique skills to help us all find our way home from the suspended reality in which we have been existing. Or at least, to bring it into sight. If you would like to support the artists and organizations who were impacted by the fires, you can find a link to our grantees at <https://www.creativesonoma.org/creativeresponders/>.

Rick Toyota, Chair
Marcia Barahona

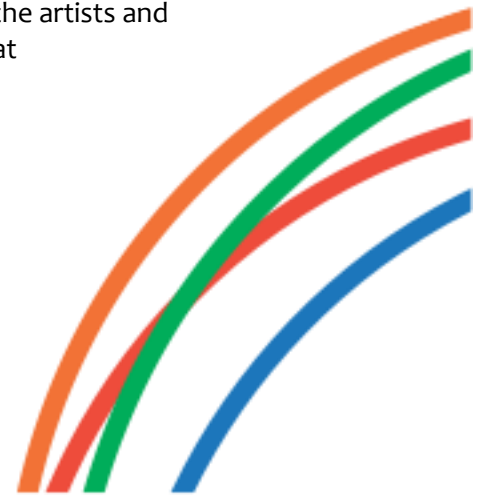
Jennifer Edwards, Vice Chair
Chris Denny Matt Devine

Marne Dupere Elisa Stancil Levine

707.565.7170

141 Stony Circle, Suite 110
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

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Creative Sonoma is also funding arts residencies at area schools specifically focused on using the arts to address trauma. Students have worked through some of the emotions of their recent experiences through art projects like creating “Monsterpieces” to help manage fears by understanding the causes, making masks to explore their internal and external selves, and building tiny fairy houses complete with high look-out posts and escape routes.

In addition, Creative Sonoma is still offering grants to members of the creative community who sustained physical damage to their homes and/or studios as a result of the fires. Information is available at: <https://www.creativesonoma.org/fire-recovery-and-response-grants/>.

If you are a member of the creative community and are not yet included on our “Creative Response” page at www.CreativeSonoma.org, please contact us at CreativeSonoma@sonoma-county.org.

A division of the Economic Development Board of Sonoma County, Creative Sonoma is dedicated to supporting and advancing the creative community of Sonoma County. It works with individuals, organizations and businesses whose work is creative at its core. Its vision is that creativity become a defining characteristic of Sonoma County alongside wine, food, and natural beauty.

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