

INK NEWS

Volume 42 Issue 1, January 2021



- FAR: Funds for Artists' Resilience Announces 2020 grants
- *MARZ Dreams*: mixtape project highlights emerging artists
- Allegra Searle-LeBel explores art's power to heal



INK SPAWN

A note from Executive Director Libby Maynard

The last board meeting of 2020 saw two new DreamMaker projects adopted: Project: REBOUND and Native Health in Native Hands.

Project: REBOUND will transform neglected basketball courts into colorful works of public art, bringing together the worlds of sports and art by painting what are essentially large-format murals on the court surface. These public courts will become safe, visually appealing places that can inspire people of all ages with expressions of community pride. To learn more or get involved, contact Benjamin Funke at benjaminfunke@mac.com.

Native Health in Native Hands (NHNH) brings a holistic approach to caring for land and all life. The first NHNH project, “Plants that Nourish Us,” is a collaborative community-building project that crosses multiple disciplines including arts, writing/poetry, storytelling, and photography, as these intersect with traditional ecological knowledge and the revitalization of the Wailaki language. An online “book” composed of community art, poetry, photography, stories, recipes, and language will be created, with an eventual goal of printing copies for in-hand community use as well. This will facilitate the other aspect of the project, which is direct connection with nature. To learn more or get involved, contact Perry Lincoln at perrylincoln98@yahoo.com or Shannon Wilhite at scmwilhite@gmail.com.

And so ends 2020. What a year!?! As we enter 2021, we have vaccines coming, more relief funds on the way, and perhaps a new normal that we can help craft. The arts and culture will help us heal, and if we truly understand the power of the arts, we will integrate them into every aspect of our lives: arts and... (healing, transportation, housing, planning, tourism, nature, athletics, you name it).

This year, Ink People will begin looking in earnest for a new facility in Eureka. We are partnering with Cooperation Humboldt, the Wiyot Tribe, Access Humboldt, and perhaps others to establish a community hub for arts, culture and cooperation. We are looking to buy a building of at least 20,000 square feet that we can remodel to suit our needs, and maybe even squeeze in some low-cost cooperative housing for artists. Got any good leads for us?



JANUARY 2021

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Mission Statement

The Ink People changes lives by connecting our communities with resources for cultural development. We encourage people to exercise their humanity, build civic discourse, and engage their creative potential.



FAR 2020 Grants Announced

The Ink People Center for the Arts has announced the winners of the 2020 FAR public arts grants. Inspired by the WPA public arts project of the 1930s, FAR: Funds for Artists' Resilience is an initiative that makes grants to artists who have experienced hardship during the COVID-19 pandemic, empowering them to produce art that inspires the community. FAR awarded eight grants between \$2,000 and \$5,000 to proposals for works of public art in Humboldt, Del Norte and Trinity counties. It is made possible by the Humboldt Area Foundation, the Wild Rivers Foundation, the Rose Perenin Foundation, and individual donors.

Libby Maynard, Executive Director of the Ink People Center for the Arts, said "We are grateful to our funders, who have made this program possible, and we are happy to be able to employ artists to help our communities heal. These artworks will be available for many years to celebrate our resilience. They will also be available digitally on our website, inkpeople.org."

In 2020 FAR issued a call for public art proposals expressing themes of equity and resilience. Five projects from Humboldt County were selected.

Margaret Kellermann's award will make it possible for her to work with collaborators to develop and produce her audiobook "Annie California," addressing the experience

of homelessness and resilience in California from the perspective of a 10-year-old girl.

Project: REBOUND, created by Benjamin Funke and collaborators, will revitalize area basketball courts with vividly colored murals based on community-sourced design.

"The J Street Regulars' Radio Hour," proposed by James Zeller and collaborators from the Sanctuary Arcata, will fund new episodes of the live streamed radio show featuring experimental acoustic music.

"Taiko Love Collaboration," by Gary Ronne and members of Humboldt Taiko, will instruct community members in the art of Taiko drumming and engage them in socially distanced public performances.

"The Gestation Project," created by Taylor Snowberger, will fund an exhibition in Eureka of artworks about childbearing and climate change made by artists who have decided not to have children in response to the climate crisis.

The Ink People partnered with the Del Norte Association for Cultural Awareness (DNACA) to award two grants in Del Norte County.

Grant recipients Jessica Slayton and Leila Moore will be creating a mural on a shipping container destined for use as a community farm stand and tool lending library at Food Forest for the Community on the College of the Redwoods' Del Norte campus.

Julie Smiley will be working with Harrington House, a nonprofit shelter for abuse victims, to create art for an exhibition of artworks addressing the concepts of "I contribute worth" and "I am worthy" at the Del Norte Court House Lobby.

The Ink People worked with the Trinity County Arts Council to award a grant to a Trinity County project led by Karli Elliott that will bring a mural painting to the Hayfork Town Square.

To learn more about FAR 2020, go to <https://www.inkpeople.org/far>.

2021

CALL FOR EXHIBITION PROPOSALS

DO YOU HAVE A VISION FOR THE ARTS IN OUR COMMUNITY?

The Ink People Center for the Arts announces a call for virtual exhibition proposals at the Brenda Tuxford Gallery. We are seeking curated proposals by exhibition organizers addressing topical issues and themes. Exhibitions will take place in 2021.

Submit a one-page proposal explaining the concept for your exhibition and up to five JPEG image files to www.inkpeople.org.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
MARCH 15, 2021





Allegra Searle-LeBel *explores art's power to heal*

When the nation entered quarantine in response to the COVID-19 pandemic many of us retreated into domestic stasis, doom scrolling from the confines of our homes. Allegra Searle-LeBel headed into the Arcata Community Forest with a videographer to express herself through dance.

The result is “Let’s Heal 2020,” a short solo dance

conceived for film, performed and choreographed by Searle-LeBel with collaborators including writer/director Lawrence Scott Kirschenbaum and videographer Matt St. Charles. Justin Martinez edited the video to the gauzy synths of American experimental band Son Lux.

In the video’s opening moments we see the

dancer approaching the performance space. When she enters the forest the camera moves along with her — tilting up to frame the sky, then swooping low to pan across the surface of a fallen redwood giant at close range. It comes across a hand that's motionless but active, all five fingers tensed and driving into the decaying wood. As the camera pulls back again we see that the hand belongs to a long-haired, blue-robed dancer. She begins to move, and the dance unfolds from that tightly focused shot.

Searle-LeBel's dance vocabulary brings together movements from multiple dance traditions. "I have trained in ballet and modern contemporary dance, and also have done many years of yoga," she said. "For college I went to UC Berkeley. I studied peace and conflict studies there, and also dance. For me, dance has always been not just about movement, but also about telling stories."

Dancing in the Arcata Community Forest was a way to contend with pandemic restrictions on performance, and at the same time to embrace a message of renewal and resilience. "The heart of the piece is this burnt-out old growth stump, that has an entire new tree growing out of its top. We also have the capacity for regeneration, and for growth, and for life. And so that was really what led me to choose that specific location... getting to dance with that energy."

"I was trying to figure out what it means to create art during this tremendously pivotal moment. And I have gotten to the place where it's like, it needs to be local. It needs to be, like, focused on this tree: touching this ground. Giving witness to it."

"Working through COVID-19 has been crazy, as a dancer. I had to stop the other projects I was working on, go back to square one and say, 'How do we tell a story through dance when we can't be with an audience in the same place?' At least for me, those were incredibly difficult constraints to have to work with."

St. Charles's camera works with the choreography to make "Let's Heal" a prime example of dance

that's conceived for film. When Searle-LeBel elevates one leg very slowly before pivoting and sinking into goddess pose, the camera sinks along with her. It drops down again to shoot her backbend from a dramatically foreshortened position. The speed of the footage slows as the dancer's hands slide caressingly down a length of fallen log, then up her leg as it lifts and draws in close to her body. When she stands in tree pose, the camera wheels up to give us a view of the forest from below.

Even if Searle-LeBel couldn't dance with other people, collaboration continued to be an important part of her process. "Oftentimes the director will ask for a shot or an angle that I've never thought of. Or I'll say, hey, I think that this would be a really good place for this kind of movement. Then we figure out the camera angles. I'll look at the footage and say: we missed this movement that I think is really key. Or, I think we can cut those two seconds, it's too long. We go back and forth, and it gets better as we provide input to each other."

"I was looking at where we can crack ourselves open and let grief be expressed. And also where we can let it pass through us, so that we're not stuck in it, because at this point we don't have that luxury. Dance is... a powerful tool for unsticking people. And I've always believed that dance is available for everyone. It's not something that is only defined by how high you can kick your leg or how long you can stay on point."

"I miss dancing with other people more than I can say. But my friends and colleagues have been having these conversations about what live performance is going to be like when we get to do it again. And I think there's some incredible art that's going to be created, once we're able to be back together."

Check out "Let's Heal 2020" at www.inkpeople.org, where it is this month's featured artwork.

MARZ Dreams

Mixtape project highlights emerging artists



The MARZ Project Media Lab, a core project of Ink People Center for the Arts, was established in Eureka in 1997 as a free media and arts production program providing underserved young people, ages 12 to 26, with the tools to express themselves creatively through visual art, poetry, audio and video production. MARZ offers instruction, mentorship and support with a specific focus on the needs and interests of emerging artists.

MARZ mentors and students have been staying in touch throughout the COVID-19 pandemic by creating “mixtapes” — not literal cassettes, but curated compilations of the musical tracks, websites, poems, comic routines, novels, and artworks that have inspired them during a period in which meeting face-to-face has, for the most part, not been possible.

These mixes are now posted online as part of the interactive project MARZ Dreams. Visitors to the MARZ website can click on different

selections to access a unique array of audiovisual references, hearing songs and watching videos that have shaped each artist's worldview.

The diversity of MARZ mixtapes underscores how wired it now is to the rest of the globe. The breadth of these emerging artists' creative influences is striking. Selections ranging from mainstream pop hits to deep cuts from the regional underground shed light on MARZ artists' hopes, dreams and fears for the future, as well as the challenges they contend with in the here and now. These include poverty, disability, homelessness, and addiction - all factors exacerbated by the pandemic in recent months.

“The first music that really inspired me was an album called ‘God Help the Girl,’” Elaine George said. That 2009 album, by Stuart Murdoch of the Scottish indie pop band Belle and Sebastian, “was basically about a girl who was hospitalized and then ran away and started making music.” George, a poet and musician, made a mix including tracks by her current favorite musicians, Sacramento-based indie rockers CAKE and Queens native singer-songwriter Melanie Martinez. She is currently recording her first album with MARZ producer Cory Goldman under the name Candy Wife.

Jeff Tuck takes photographs and makes experimental hip-hop tracks under the name Socket 7. His tastes in literature run to classic 20th century dystopias: his mix includes shout-outs to George Orwell's "1984," Aldous Huxley's "A Brave New World,"



and Ernest Hemingway's "The Sun Also Rises," in addition to American hip-hop producer Blockhead's album "The Music Scene."

The artist known as DrinkingMoonlight, a trap / R&B producer, artist, and audio engineer, fuses elements from electronic music and world music to create unique melodic and bass-driven tracks, some of which feature his vocals. His mix delves into the contemporary R&B underground with tracks like “Cooking Up,” by Zaytoven, “Drugs You Should Try” by Travi\$ Scott, and “This Woman’s Work” by Zacari, featuring Che Ecu.

Louie Lingard, a recording artist from Eureka, shares music, memes, and comic videos under the name NotLewy on his TikTok account, where he has amassed almost five hundred thousand followers. “I suffer from a multitude of disabilities and use my music as a way of dealing with my problems.”

he said. His musical reference points include the albums “Blue Hour” by Los Angeles-based indie band Ruby Haunt, “Starz” by Swedish cloud-rap pioneer Yung Lean, and Minnesotan songwriter Corbin’s “Mourn,” a concept album about a protagonist who builds a bunker for himself and his lover to survive the apocalypse.

NotLewy videos are short, profane, and often very funny, so steeped in absurdist pop culture references that the mere act of describing them tends to elicit giggles. “Dababy live in concert from da baby isle” features Lingard and a couple of masked collaborators playing the music of North Carolina-born rapper Dababy on toy keyboards in the baby aisle of a big-box store, intercut with a shot of the artist languidly dancing the Nae Nae while an authoritative female voice off-camera enunciates the past participle, “I shat.”

The NotLewy TikTok feed offers a memorable portrayal of the challenges inherent in navigating young adulthood with a disability. At the same time, it’s a document of millennial adolescence whose broad contours will be familiar to anyone who grew up in late 20th- or 21st century America, bearing witness to the weirdness of this place.

“I’m excited for the opportunity to showcase the varied interests of our students,” MARZ audio mentor Cory Goldman said. “We’re often very goal-oriented when we are working, so it’s nice to take the time for all of us to learn a bit more about each other and our influences. I hope readers discover interesting work, and that this project will forge new connections between like-minded artists!”

Learn more about the MARZ Project at <https://www.inkpeople.org/marzproject>. Follow Ink People and the MARZ Project on social media @inkpeoplecenterforthearts and @marz.project

Cover: Gary Ronne of Humboldt Taiko, whose proposal “Taiko Love Collaboration” received a FAR 2020 grant. Photo credit James Lamping. p. 3: A vision on the streets of Old Town Eureka during the December 2020 Promenade of Dreams, sponsored by Synopsis Eureka and Ink People Center for the Arts. Photo credit OES Photography. p. 4: Songwriter Nigella Baur playing live on the J Street Regulars’ Radio Hour, Dec. 30, 2019. “The J Street Regulars Radio Hour,” proposed by James Zeller, was the recipient of a FAR 2020 grant. Photo credit James Zeller. p. 6: A still from “Let’s Heal 2020,” a video and dance performed and choreographed by Allegra Searle-LeBel. Photo credit Allegra Searle-LeBel. p. 8: MARZ Media lab recording artist Louis Lingard, aka NotLewy, in Eureka, 2020. Photo credit Louie Lingard. p. 9: “Sickly Sweet,” a collage by MARZ artist Elaine George, aka Candy Wife, from the forthcoming album by the same title. Photo credit Elaine George.

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2021

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"Flash Dancer," by Jack Sewell. 2020



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