

ALAMEDA COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION

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PRESS RELEASE

Alameda County Board of Supervisors to Honor the 2021 Arts Leadership Award Recipients and Celebrate National Arts and Humanities Month on Tuesday, October 12, 2021

(Oakland, CA) – The Alameda County Arts Commission is pleased to recognize six individuals for their achievements and contributions impacting the arts community and residents of Alameda County. The following individuals are the recipients of the 2021 Alameda County Arts Leadership Award: Lisa Bullwinkel, Gregory Conway, Kala Ghaty, Carl Larson, Vanessa Thomas and Angela Wellman. The six award recipients will be honored by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors with commendations presented in conjunction with the County’s celebration of October as National Arts and Humanities Month. The event will take place during the Board’s meeting on Tuesday, October 12, beginning at 10:45 am and is available to the public by online teleconference. Due to COVID-19, the meeting is closed to in-person attendance by members of the public. For information, please visit the Alameda County Board of Supervisors’ website at www.acgov.org/board.

Each year the Members of the Alameda County Arts Commission review nominations submitted by the public for the Arts Leadership Award program and then select the award recipients. The Alameda County Arts Commission acknowledges all of the nominees for their leadership in the arts and for their service to our community. Additionally, the Arts Commission thanks the Alameda County community members who submitted nominations.



Supervisorial District One

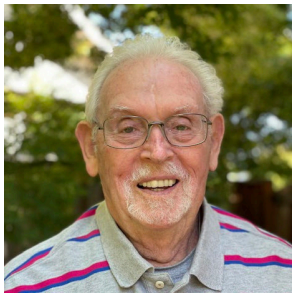
Kala Ghaty of Fremont is the Founder and Director of Kalamandir Art School in Fremont and Special Education Teacher for Fremont Unified School District. Kala Ghaty founded Kalamandir Art School over twenty years ago and has taught visual art classes to hundreds of students of all ages. Kala specializes in teaching Tanjore and Mysore which are two forms of classical South Indian painting. As a Special Education Teacher for over

twenty years, Kala regularly integrates the arts into her curriculum. Kala organizes opportunities for her students to share their visual artwork and classical Indian styles and techniques with the larger community. Events have been held at local organizations including the Fremont Cultural Arts Council, Fremont Main Library and the Indian community center Kannada Koota of Northern California.



Supervisorial District One

Vanessa Thomas is the Co-Founder of the Dublin Arts Collective. She is also an active supporter of many local organizations including the Pleasanton Art League, Livermore Art Association, Tri-Valley Artist Studio Tour, Tri-Valley Cultural Tourism Working Group, and Lapis Lazuli Art Club. Vanessa is a South African-born, mixed race, freelance journalist with a scientific and research background who has made Dublin her home since 2013. She views herself as a catalyst for connecting people. Her involvement in community-based projects began in her teenage years in South Africa and has continued ever since. Vanessa is also a writer and contributor to the Dublin Patch, a TEDx speaker, and the author of a children’s book. She is an exhibiting artist, published floral photographer, and the owner of an online floral photography site named Fables and Flora. Vanessa was nominated for Dublin Citizen of the Year in 2017 for Volunteer Work in the Arts and in 2019 she was the recipient of the Mayor’s Award for her volunteer contributions to the community with the Dublin Arts Collective. She writes about, supports and promotes the artists and art scene in Dublin and the Tri-Valley area.



Supervisorial District Two

Carl Larson is an Artist and Arts Educator who teaches Tole and Decorative Painting at the Newark Adult School in Newark. In his 40 years of teaching, he has taught thousands of students the folk art painting traditions from Western Europe, primarily Norway and Germany. Carl is widely recognized as one of the foremost artists in the field. He teaches three classes per week at the Newark Adult School to students who come from all areas of Alameda County. Carl is an exhibiting artist whose work has been featured in the Decorative Painter publication, and he regularly exhibits his paintings at regional locations such as the Newark Library, Alameda County Fair, the Norwegian Hall, and the Scandinavian Cultural Center in San Francisco. He is an original member and has been an active participant of the Northern California Decorative Artists Association since it was started in 1973 in Alameda County. He is also a long-time member of the California Rosemaling Association. Through his work and teaching, Carl creates a supportive and thriving arts community for students of all ages and backgrounds including emerging artists, seniors, and working adults.



Supervisorial District Three

Angela M. Wellman is an award-winning Musician, Scholar, Arts Educator, Photographer and Activist. She is also the Founder of the Oakland Public Conservatory of Music in Oakland which centers Blackness in the development of American musical culture and identity by providing quality, affordable music education for underserved and under-resourced populations. Her work is centered on designing music teaching and learning practices that nurture the development of wholeheartedness through courageously embracing vulnerability. As a professional trombonist, Angela has performed with the McCoy Tyner Big Band, Joe Williams, Al Grey, Slide

Hampton, and other noted musicians. She is a recipient of multiple local and national awards. In 2021, Angela was a remote Artist-In-Residence at Black [Space] Residency in collaboration with Villa SF, during which she conducted research on African American musicians in Paris, particularly looking at the influences of Jazz and Hip Hop in France. Angela is completing her dissertation about the impact of racism and white supremacy on access to music education for Black students.



Supervisorial District Four

Gregory Conway is a life-long resident of Castro Valley. Gregory received his B.A. in Music Education and Saxophone Performance from California State University East Bay and currently plays in the Chabot College Wind Symphony. He is an Executive Board Member of the Jenny Lin Foundation in Castro Valley and the Symphonic Band Director of the Foundation's summer program. Every year, the Jenny Lin Foundation presents a youth music program for Bay Area student musicians, and offers two scholarship awards to recognize the achievements as well as the potential of student-musicians at Canyon Middle School in Castro Valley. From 2005 to 2021, Gregory was the Director of Instrumental Music at Hopkins Junior High School in Fremont where he shared his passion for music with thousands of students. He is currently the Large Group Festival Coordinator of California Music Educators Association Bay Section, and recently joined the Executive Board of the California Orchestra Directors Association. Gregory is currently a graduate student at San Jose State University pursuing a Master's Degree in Instrumental Conducting.



Supervisorial District Five

Lisa Bullwinkel is the Founder and Director of the Berkeley Arts and Culture Hotline, Former Chair of the Berkeley Civic Arts Commission, Steering Committee Member of the Berkeley Cultural Trust, Coordinating Committee Member of the Community for a Cultural Civic Center in Berkeley, and a Board Member of the UC Chancellor's Community Partnership Fund. Lisa has led many projects to help increase support of and funding for arts organizations in Berkeley. She was instrumental in developing the City of Berkeley's Festival Grant Program and increasing the City's annual funds for the Arts Grants program. From 1991 to 2006, Lisa was the Executive Director of the Solano Avenue Association. As the Director, she produced the Solano Avenue Stroll and Parade which in 2000 was designated a National Local Legacy and is documented in the Library of Congress. Under the business name "Another Bullwinkel Show," Lisa has produced over 250 public and private events and festivals including the Berkeley Jazz Festival, Berkeley Kite Festival, Chocolate and Chalk Art Festival, and Berkeley's Fourth of July Celebration at the Marina.

For more information about the program or the award recipients, please contact the Alameda County Arts Commission at (510) 208-9646 or by email at artscommission@acgov.org

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