



ARTS COUNCIL For Monterey County

Enriching the lives of our community through the arts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Four Monterey County Artists Awarded Prestigious California Arts Council Individual Artist Fellowships

A Total of 71 Central California Artists Receive Award

[MONTEREY COUNTY, CA. September 7, 2023] Four artists from Monterey County join the ranks of 67 other Central California artists to receive distinguished 2023 California Arts Council (CAC) Individual Artist Fellowships (IAF) totaling \$660,000, across 17 counties in the Central California region. The purpose of the program is to identify, recognize, and celebrate the exceptional work of California artists across all art forms. Through this initiative, the CAC aims to highlight the critical role played by artists in shaping our traditional and modern cultures. The recipients of the fellowship were chosen from a pool of 512 applicants in the region. You can find the complete list of awardees on the [SVCREATES' website](#).

The Arts Council for Monterey County (Arts4MC) congratulates the following local artists:

Ava Homa, Established Artist– Literary Arts

Homa is an award-winning author and activist. Her novel *Daughters of Smoke and Fire* won the 2020 Silver Nautilus Award and was a finalist for the 2022 William Saroyan Prize. Her book of short stories, *Echoes from the Other Land*, was nominated for the 2011 Frank O'Connor Prize. She holds a master's degree in Creative Writing and her articles have been featured in the *Globe and Mail*, *BBC*, *Toronto Star*, *Literary Hub*, and more.

JC Gonzalez, Established Artist – Visual Arts

Gonzalez is a multidisciplinary visual artist whose medium includes paintings, photography, and murals inspired by nature, infused by his Mexican American abstract style with a queer sensibility. JC's mission is to empower people through arts and culture as a powerful tool for healing and voicing contemporary issues. JC is a Public Arts Commissioner for the City of Salinas and founder of the nonprofit, *Urban Arts Collaborative*.

Jerry Takigawa, Established Artist – Photography

Takigawa is a photographer, designer, and writer. He has received many awards including the Imogen Cunningham Award; the Clarence J. Laughlin Award, New Orleans, LA; CENTER Awards, Curator's Choice First Place, Santa Fe, NM; and the Rhonda Wilson Award, NY. His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Brooklyn Museum. His monograph for *Balancing Cultures* was published in 2021.

Natalia Poehner Corazza, Emerging Artist – Muralist

Corazza is a Colombian American painter, muralist, mentor, and arts advocate working for and within the Monterey Peninsula. Through painting, she creates mystical sceneries that reveal the intimacy that exists within vulnerability while seeking guidance through gifts, dreams, faith, imagination, and connection. Corazza co-founded *La Neta Murals* and is an artist mentor at the *Youth Arts Collective* in Monterey.



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The Fellowship grants aim to provide financial support to individual artists without any restrictions. This program is designed to help artists from different regions and communities in California, working in various disciplines. The grant is divided into three categories: Emerging Artist Fellows - \$5,000, Established Artist Fellows - \$10,000, and Legacy Artist Fellows - \$50,000. The selection process is conducted by peer-review panels consisting of artists, arts administrators, and arts educators from counties throughout the region. The application submission period began on March 10, 2023, and ended on May 5, 2023. The review panels met in mid-July 2023 to finalize their recommendations.

SVCREATES, a nonprofit arts agency serving Santa Clara County, acted as the Administering Organization for the region and led a consortium of 16 county arts councils to ensure effective local outreach and representation. The Arts Council for Monterey County proudly collaborated with SVCREATES to manage the panel process for "micro-regions" in Central California, ensuring extensive coverage in each county.

"We are pleased to collaborate with CAC and SVCREATES in acknowledging these talented artists from Monterey County," said Jacquie Atchison, Executive Director of Arts4MC. "This highlights the remarkable capabilities of our local artists. Each of them has made a significant impression in their respective fields, and the financial support provided by these fellowship grants will be meaningful."

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*Arts Council for Monterey County (Arts4MC) is committed to enhancing the quality of life for all residents in our region through the arts. We provide a variety of ways to make art more accessible to everyone, including but not limited to providing **Arts Education** programs through schools and community organizations, offering business resources for artists and nonprofits through **BusinessWorks**, creating studio and public art spaces for local artists by **Curating Public Exhibitions** and via our **ArtWorks** locations, awarding **Scholarships**, and providing **Grant Funding** to individual artists and nonprofits for community programs and events related to arts and culture. To learn more, visit arts4mc.org.*

ABOUT SVCREATES

SVCREATES is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization working to elevate Silicon Valley's creative culture and strengthen the Santa Clara County region through the arts. SVCREATES builds the cultural sector's capacity through grants and programs, raises the voice and visibility of our creative culture, and increases access to arts for high-need communities. To learn more about SVCREATES, visit www.svcreates.org.