THE CHALLENGE
Silicon Valley is a challenging place to live and work if your livelihood is not connected to our extraordinarily successful technology industries, success that has driven up housing costs, strained transportation systems, and widened the income gap. COVID revealed and exaggerated the systemic challenges for our arts ecosystem and exposed the creative sector’s vulnerability and the need to increase economic security, equity, and dignity for all cultural workers. Arts groups re-examined priorities, modified programming and business models, and demonstrated a deep commitment to their communities. We know that the quest for social justice has momentum, virtual programming is here to stay, and coalitions matter. Along with the rest of our ecosystem, SVCREASES took the time for deep reflection and is aligning our programs with our research findings, strategic priorities, and equity framework.

OUR MISSION
SVCREASES works to strengthen the resilience and relevance of small multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary arts groups and individual artists who bring our international community together, nurture the joy and creativity of the people who live here, raise the burning questions of our time, and drive social change.

Our mission is to accelerate Silicon Valley’s creative culture by building the capacity, visibility, and accessibility of the arts.

IN 2021 SVCREASES INVESTED $2.95M IN THE LOCAL ARTS ECOSYSTEM

- Capacity: $1,950,000
- Visibility: $645,000
- Accessibility: $355,000

Arts Ecosystem: The interconnected and interdependent network of artists, funders, venues, organizations, students, teachers, connoisseurs, and audience members who make up our creative community.
IN 2021 WE:

- Supported 81 diverse local arts leaders through ongoing, facilitated peer roundtables
- Awarded 77 operating grants to a diverse range of small and mid-sized arts organizations
- Conducted online workshops, multiple town halls, and gatherings for over 500 artists, arts leaders, and creatives
- Hosted a genARTS Silicon Valley month-long experimental exhibition space at Camino Brewing Co. with 31 participating artists
- Engaged The Center for Effective Philanthropy to survey 97 current grantees and assess the success of SVCREATES’ grant programs
- Adopted new, formal SVCREATES program goals rooted in equity, research, and values

SVCREATES’ support of a collaboration between Red Ladder Theatre Company and Child Advocates of Silicon Valley was instrumental in the design and launch of dynamic and vital arts programming for our county’s foster kids. SVCREATES’ commitment to providing arts experiences to high-need populations has been critical to engaging these young people in a range of online and soon in-person activities which build important skills, connections, and confidence through arts.

Frederick J. Ferrer, CEO, Child Advocates of Silicon Valley

SPOTLIGHT

Adaptability & Relationships
Throughout the past year, local arts organizations pivoted and modified programming to continue to deliver important arts experiences to the local community. And, in doing so, they acknowledged the value of the deep relationships with each other and with SVCREATES.

A FEW HIGHLIGHTS:

Red Ladder Theatre Company shifted its SVCREATES funded work with youth in the foster system (a partnership with Child Advocates of Silicon Valley) to provide asynchronous video programming, engaging the children in a series of interactive videos in the creative process, paired with hands-on art activities. Participants were able to remain actively involved in all aspects of the creative process and feel connected to others and to their artistry, even at a time when we could not gather in person for workshops.

SVCREATES grantee Mosaic America produced the Mosaic Festival Silicon Valley, a free outdoor six-hour experience. Approximately 1,500 people engaged with Silicon Valley’s diverse cultures featuring over 35 arts groups, artists, city and community organizations, and culture bearers aimed at strengthening community, cultivating belonging, and catalyzing inclusion through inter-cultural and co-created art. This festival brought together a diversity of audiences and cultural disciplines encompassing cuisine, art and crafts, workshops, and healing practices.
IN 2021 WE:

• Advocated for arts funding at the local, state, and national levels resulting in increased resources for local arts organizations and artists

• Featured 124 artists and art groups in Content Magazine, including a piece on how the arts informed the Google Campus Project in partnership with San José Spotlight

• Partnered with San José State University and West Valley College to feature 24 "up-and-coming" photographers and fashion design students in Content Magazine

• Produced and showcased 19 artist profile videos on social media

• Created 30 Content podcast interviews with cultural leaders and local artists

• Awarded the genARTS Silicon Valley Movers & Shakers award of $2,500 to More Más Marami Arts

The conversation with the local arts and culture organizations assembled by Content Magazine informed Google’s strategy to incorporate multiple opportunities for public art in the San José Downtown West Design Standards and Guidelines.

Ricardo Benavidez, Director, Social Infrastructure at Google

RAISING THE VOICE AND VISIBILITY OF OUR CREATIVE CULTURE

SPOTLIGHT

Back In-Person

In June 2021, Content Magazine celebrated the reopening of in-person arts experiences with participation in South First Friday in San Jose. In collaboration with Anno Domini and Kaleid Gallery, Content Magazine and its partners activated several blocks of San Jose’s SoFA district. The outdoor, in-person Pick-Up Party featured music, art, and San Jose’s lowrider car club Low Conspiracy.

And in December, Content Magazine hosted a Pick-Up Party for Issue 14.1 “Discover” at Blanco Urban Venue in San Jose’s San Pedro Square, supported with funding from the City of San Jose’s Abierto program and featuring music, visual art, creative experiences, and performances by 14.1 featured artists, including music by Dox Black, Jack Pavlina, and Derrick Sanderlin. This party also featured the annual genARTS Silicon Valley Movers & Shakers award, given to San Jose based More Más Marami Arts.

After just three years of creating theatre and producing events, More Más Marami Arts is honored to be recognized in the community as the 2021 genARTS Silicon Valley Mover & Shaker. The support of SVCREATES and genARTS allows us to continue to engage with young artists and others in the local community and to create more inclusion and more art in the South Bay Area.

The team at More Más Marami Arts
IN 2021 WE:

• Provided ~1,200 hours of online and in-person arts programming for at-risk youth in our community and court schools

• In partnership with Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE), launched our 7th annual ArtsEdConnect grant cycle for teachers to access online arts education modules for their students

• Provided funding to Local Color SJ and the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles for their collaboration on the South First Street (SoFA) Pocket Park mural, located in Veggielution's new community garden in San Jose

• Managed artist selection process for a new youth-focused mural at 6th Street Studios & Art Center in downtown Gilroy, funded by Blue Shield of California

• Served over 550 students across Santa Clara County in the Poetry Out Loud Program; county finalist, Delali Bruce, was named State Poetry Out Loud Champion, representing California in the national competition in April 2021

SPOTLIGHTS

Gilroy

In 2021, SVCREATES began a “listening tour” of Gilroy. In an effort to better serve the arts ecosystem in this historically under-resourced region of our county, we met with individual artists, and arts and community leaders, to form an advisory group of local creatives to help us understand the unique challenges and opportunities in the City of Gilroy. These initial conversations (mostly over Zoom) resulted in our first in-person Gilroy Arts Circulo, bringing artists and arts leaders together to begin to build a network to discuss strategies for advancing the Gilroy arts ecosystem.

Arts & Health

In collaboration with ICA San Jose, we created an impactful art installation that celebrates and honors healthcare professionals and shares the enduring stories of patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project artists Peter Foucault and Chris Treggiari created “Timeline of Greatness,” a large-scale, digital multimedia installation incorporating a series of community engagements. This project includes utilizing 1,000+ vaccine vials to create a modular wall-mounted multimedia piece that will travel to community and vaccine sites throughout the San Jose area. The engagements and collection will act as a multimedia archive, charting the stories of COVID and the great work that was done to save countless lives and produce a vaccine.
IN 2021 WE:

• Premiered the Business of Arts and Culture, in collaboration with the Silicon Valley Business Journal (SVBJ) in May 2021.

• Formed partnership with Joint Venture Silicon Valley to co-create and annually publish the local arts segment of their Index of Silicon Valley.

• Launched regional strategy to collaborate with municipalities throughout the county to leverage public and private resources for local arts.

• Piloted the ArtsWeb arts/business relationship-based service hub, providing eight initial arts groups and artists with coaching, technical support and custom designed consulting services.

SPOTLIGHT

Business of Arts and Culture

SVCreates commissioned national research firm Creative Community Builders to update our 2010 research study and map the landscape and characteristics of the Silicon Valley arts ecosystem 10 years later. In May 2021, we released the publication and hosted a discussion facilitated by SVBJ President and Publisher Mary Huss with Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez, Nicole Taylor of Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and SVCreates CEO Connie Martinez.

This publication is informing shifts in SVCreates’ programming and resource allocations, and is being shared with the wider community to help civic leaders and donors better understand who we are as a cultural sector and what we bring to this special community. Presentations to Arts Commissions, City Councils, Chambers of Commerce, Rotaries and the like are underway as SVCreates expands its reach across the county. We believe engagement and investment in our arts ecosystem requires a nuanced understanding of our region’s unique and beautiful complexity, and the value of the arts in overcoming our civic challenges. The full report is available online, here.

The Silicon Valley Business Journal proudly partnered with SVCreates to publish The Business of Arts and Culture. The data is compelling, the framing of our unique cultural sector is inspiring, and the call to action is important to our economic and social well being. Congratulations to the SVCreates team for their impressive body of work.

Mary Huss, President and Publisher, Business Times and Silicon Valley Business Journal

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Pear Theatre has been so privileged to be a part of SVCreates’ ArtsWeb Program. We have been able to redefine our Mission and Vision and recommit to the Values that will carry us into the next 20 years of theatre making. Without it, I’m certain that The Pear would not have been able to make the swift, decisive adjustments needed to move the organization meaningfully forward in defining who we are and who we want to be.

Sinjin Jones, Executive Artistic Director, Pear Theatre
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