

MIKE KELLEY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

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MIKE KELLEY FOUNDATION AWARDS ARTIST PROJECT GRANTS FOR THE SECOND YEAR *Grants to Eight Los Angeles Organizations Totaling \$319,000*



LOS ANGELES, CA., March 22, 2017 – The Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts announced today the 2017 recipients of its Artist Project Grants, an initiative in its second year which seeks to further Mike Kelley’s philanthropic work and honor his legacy by supporting innovative projects with artists at Los Angeles nonprofit institutions and organizations. Benefitting both artists and organizations, the grants support compelling and inventive projects in any medium, particularly work that is lesser-known or has proven difficult to make or fund. This year’s grantees are **Human Resources/356 S. Mission Rd.; The Industry; La Plaza de Cultura y Artes; REDCAT (Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater); The Society for the Activation of Social Space through Art and Sound (SASSAS); University Art Museum, California State University, Long Beach; Vincent Price Art Museum, and Pasadena Arts Council/Volume.**

"These artists and organizations exemplify the ambitious and imaginative spirit of this grant," said Mary Clare Stevens, Executive Director of the Foundation. "From new works—such as Liz Glynn’s sculptural stage set of fire and steel—to the first-ever performance of the late composer James Tenney’s magnum opus, to critical examinations of art history, the projects reflect the remarkable scope and variety of artistic and curatorial practices in Los Angeles."

The recipients include a diverse range of small and mid-size organizations, which will highlight a mix of individual practices, collaborations and group exhibitions. *Regeneración: Three Generations of Revolutionary Ideology*, a research-driven exhibition at the Vincent Price Museum, explores three generations of Los Angeles artists engaged in the exchange of revolutionary and anarchist ideas between the U.S. and Mexico and will also feature new works by four artists.

“It is especially poignant at this moment in American and Mexican history to place Los Angeles’s lineage of social movements into context,” said participating *Regeneración* artist Patricia Valencia. “The grant will extend both the cultural scholarship and grassroots awareness of these histories. By realizing the project at the museum, which is part of East Los Angeles College, and in a predominantly Mexican-American community, I hope that the question of ‘What comes next?’ will be raised to a new generation.”

Conceptual artist Lauren Woods uses history as a lens through which to view the social politics of the present. In her hybrid media projects, which incorporate film, video, sound, public intervention, and site-specific work, she creates ethno-fictional documents and explores how traditional monument-making can be translated into new models of commemoration. Her exhibition at the University Art Museum, California State University, Long Beach will be part of a long-term focus conceived of by the newly appointed director of the museum, Kimberli Meyer, which concentrates on artists practicing outside hegemonic systems.

“When the news came in that this vision would be supported by the Mike Kelley Foundation, I felt tangible relief to know that despite the radical, almost overnight shift in the political climate of our country, there are people and institutions in the arts— allies—willing to not only continue to engage and call attention to the sociopolitical issues that my practice is deeply invested in addressing, but also to push forth an agenda that commits to the protracted struggle to end structural injustice,” noted Woods.

The 2017 cohort of grantees were selected through a competitive application process by a panel of artists, curators, and art writers, which included Charles Gaines, Gene Moreno, Frances Stark, Astria Suparak, and Jan Tumlir. Totaling \$319,000, the grants cover project-related expenses, allow for a modest portion of the organization’s overhead costs, and recognize the participating artists with a dedicated fee. The grant-funded projects will take place throughout 2017–2018, and the Foundation will share updates on performances and exhibitions on its website.

“When Mike Kelley established the Foundation in 2007, he aimed to encourage expansiveness and fearlessness in all disciplines. As funding for the arts is shrinking, this charge is more vital than ever. It is an honor to be able to support and celebrate the artists and the arts organizations that will present these remarkable projects,” said Stevens.

For organizations interested in applying for the next round of Artist Project Grants, updated information for the 2018 cycle will be posted later this spring on the Foundation’s website (last year’s guidelines remain there for reference only).

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About the Foundation

The Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts seeks to further Kelley's philanthropic work through grants for innovative projects that reflect his multifaceted artistic practice. The Foundation also preserves the artist's legacy more broadly and advances the understanding of his life and creative achievements. The nonprofit Foundation was established by the artist in 2007. For additional information, please visit www.mikekelleyfoundation.org.

About the Artist

The work of artist Mike Kelley (1954–2012) embraced performance, installation, drawing, painting, video, sound works, and sculpture. Kelley began his career in the late 1970s with solo performances, image/text works, and gallery and site-specific installations. He came to prominence in the 1980s with a series of sculptures composed of common craft materials. The artist's later work addressed architecture and filmic narratives using the theory of repressed memory syndrome coupled with sustained biographic and pseudo-biographic inquiry into his own aesthetic and social history. Regarded as one of the most influential artists of our time, Kelley produced a body of deeply innovative work in dialogue with American popular culture as well as both modernist and alternative traditions.

Image captions L–R: Charlemagne Palestine, *GesamttkkunnstMeshuggahhLaandtttt*, installation view at Witte de With, Rotterdam, Netherlands, 2016. Photo: Aad Hoogendoorn. Courtesy the artist and Witte de With.; Barbara Carrasco in front of her mural at Union Station. Photo by Harry Gamboa, Jr.; lauren woods, Billboard at the intersection of Fairfax Ave. + Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, Commissioned by the MAK Center for Art and Architecture, 2010, Courtesy of lauren woods and the MAK Center. Photo by Gerard Smulevich.

Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts 2017 Artists Project Grants

Human Resources/356 S. Mission Rd.

GesamttkkunsttMeshuggahhLaandtttt

\$40,000

Human Resources will present *GesamttkkunsttMeshuggahhLaandtttt*, an exhibition and series of solo and collaborative performances by artist Charlemagne Palestine, which span five decades of sound, sculpture, video, and performance. Known for his history of exuberant provocation, Palestine's works and happenings reveal a highly personal, all-embracing spirit that he has termed "maximalist." Palestine envisions the project as a total work of art, an overwhelming environment of movement, color, and sound that presents work from every artistic phase and field of activity of his career—from his compositional gestures borne out of his encounter with the 97-key Bösendorfer Imperial piano while teaching at CalArts in the 1970s to his "Divinities," the stuffed animals that surround the artist during his performances and travels.

GesamttkkunsttMeshuggahhLaandtttt traces two vital histories—that of Charlemagne Palestine's career, and that of the actual building where the project will be mounted, 356 S. Mission Rd., a printing press in the 1920s, and then, following World War II, a piano storage warehouse. Just as this project returns Palestine to the origins of his practice, it also returns the building to its past lives.

The Industry

Galileo

\$40,000

In The Industry's *Galileo*, director Yuval Sharon radically reimagines Bertolt Brecht's play *Life of Galileo* on a stretch of public beach in San Pedro around an enormous fire sculpture by Los Angeles-based artist Liz Glynn. A 30-member cast of singers, actors and dancers and an 18-piece orchestra with original music by composer Andy Akiho will bring to life Galileo's story in a carnivalesque atmosphere. The action of the play follows the Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei and his conflict with the Roman Catholic Church. In this adaptation, the play becomes an elemental fable about the triumph of freethinking over authority. The bonfire at the center of the production will emanate from a sculptural stage set also by Glynn, who drew inspiration from Galileo's own drawings of the phases of the moon, as well as from the set designs of Isamu Noguchi. Made from steel, Glynn's ambitious set will evoke torches, a town square, the Inquisition's pyre, and the sun itself. As Galileo states in the play: "The only truth that finds its way into the world is the truth that we push through. If reason is victorious, it's only thanks to reasonable people." It's an idea that feels more urgent than ever, brought to life through a fusion of visual art, theatre, music, and dance.

La Plaza de Cultura y Artes

L.A. History: A Mexican Perspective

\$40,000

Jointly presented by LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes and the California Historical Society as part of the Getty Foundation's *Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA* initiative, *¡Murales Rebeldes!: L.A. Chicana/o Murals Under Siege* explores the ways in which Chicana/o murals in the greater Los Angeles area have been contested, challenged, censored, and even destroyed. Through the stories of seven muralists, the exhibition offers viewers insight into the powerful and radical messages that murals can carry, as well as the means by which these messages are suppressed. A centerpiece of the project is a re-installation of Barbara Carrasco's *L.A. History: A Mexican Perspective* (1981), a piece that typifies the struggles of Chicana/o muralists. Originally sponsored by the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) for the city's bicentennial celebration, Carrasco's 16-by-80-foot portable mural depicts Los Angeles history from the perspective of its ethnic communities. The mural was censored by the CRA and became a symbol of the struggle over competing visions of Los Angeles's history. Since its creation, *L.A. History* has only been displayed once in its entirety, at Union Station in 1990. The exhibition will bring the mural back for public viewing for the first time in 25 years.

REDCAT (Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater)

Chalk Circles

\$40,000

Artists in this exhibition consider ways in which performing and visual arts intersect, often documenting, reimagining, or restaging acting methodologies. The role of the actor, the figure of the performer, and their different perspectives on the construction of a character inform several projects in *Chalk Circles*, while others focus on the frictions of a body in a fictive/theatricalized space. The title of the exhibit points to Bertolt Brecht's seminal parable of theater, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, written in the United States in 1944. The project will feature works and new commissions by local and international visual artists who have used theater, theatricality, performance, and performativity as a self-referential tool to feed the instability of such terms. Featured artists include Peio Aguirre, Carola Dertnig, Dora García, Adrià Julià, Joachim Koester, David Levine, Emily Mast, Silke Otto-Knapp, Catherine Sullivan, Santiago Roldos (Muegano Teatro), and Kerry Tribe.

The Society for the Activation of Social Space through Art and Sound (SASSAS)

Changes: 64 Studies for 6 Harps

\$33,000

The Society for the Activation of Social Space Through Art and Sound (SASSAS) will present the world premiere of James Tenney's masterpiece, *Changes: 64 Studies for 6*

Harps. Tenney (1934–2006) was an American composer, pianist, influential music theorist, and pioneer in electronic and computer music. Written in 1985, *Changes: 64 Studies for 6 Harps* uses a FORTRAN IV computer programming language to poetically render the 64 chance procedures of the I-Ching, the ancient Chinese divination text, into a microtonal harmonic field performed on six specially tuned harps. While Tenney completed all 64 studies during his lifetime, only 16 were transcribed for performance. Since 2006, dedicated former students have worked to transcribe the remaining studies. With the task recently completed, the Tenney Estate has honored SASSAS with the opportunity to present this ambitious work, which will be mounted at 356 Mission Rd. and will be free to the public. Video, audio, and photographic documentation of the performance will be accessible to the public through SASSAS’s online archive, bringing *Changes* and the understanding of Tenney's work to a wider audience.

University Art Museum, California State University, Long Beach

lauren woods

\$40,000

The University Art Museum (UAM) will present a solo exhibition of new work by lauren woods, a conceptual artist whose hybrid media projects—film, video and sound installations, public intervention, and site-specific work—engage history as a lens by which to view the socio-politics of the present. Challenging the tradition of documentary/ethnography as objective, she creates ethno-fictive documents that investigate invisible dynamics in society, remixing memory and imagining other possibilities. She also explores how traditional monument-making can be translated into new contemporary models of commemoration, substituting the traditional marble and granite for new media. Recently, woods unveiled *Drinking Fountain #1*, a new media monument to the American civil rights movement, past and present activists/organizers, and the spirit of resistance. Part sculpture, part intervention, the piece is located underneath the remnants of a recently rediscovered Jim Crow “White Only” sign in the Dallas County Records Building in Dallas, Texas, and is included in a larger public artwork, *A Dallas Drinking Fountain Project*. The UAM exhibition is part of a five year-focus that probes white supremacy and structural injustice and commits to deep and long-lasting investment in the work and ideas of artists outside the hegemonic systems.

Vincent Price Art Museum

Regeneración: Three Generations of Revolutionary Ideology

\$50,000

Vincent Price Art Museum will present *Regeneración: Three Generations of Revolutionary Ideology*, a research-driven, multi-artist exhibition examining the transnational exchange and circulation of revolutionary and activist ideas across generations and between the U.S. and Mexico. The exhibition centers on three instances of cultural production, each called “Regeneración,” or Regeneration, and the

interconnected ideas and relationships among them: *Regeneración*, a pre-revolution Mexican political newspaper (1900–1910; published in Mexico and the U.S.); *Regeneración*, a publication associated with the Chicano Art Movement (1970–1975; published in L.A.); and the artist-run experimental space, Public Resource Center/Centro de Regeneración (1990s; L.A.). Curated by Pilar Tomkins Rivas, Director of the Vincent Price Art Museum, the exhibition will use social mapping to trace the influence of Mexican revolutionary thought on the artist and labor movements in L.A. County stretching from Edendale to the San Gabriel Valley. The project promises to reveal a historic convergence of art, community, and global politics that has become central to the ethos and experimental practices of many artists working in Southern California today, merging visual arts with politicized and performative action, print media, and social activism.

Pasadena Arts Council/Volume

Gifts of the Spirit: Auto da Fe

\$36,000

Raised in a Pentecostal household, Ron Athey grew up with both Evangelical and Spiritualist traditions, attending revivals, illustrating sermons, tuning to ecstatic states, and practicing spirit dancing, faith healing, stigmata, prophecy and glossolalia. As part of Pasadena Arts Council's program *Volume*, the installation/performance *Gifts of the Spirit: Auto da Fe* explores how Pentecostal "gifts" have remained a psycho-neurology within the artist, in a changed form, long after he left the faith. In this work, the artist creates a "living machine" of vocalists, hypnotists, typists, and musicians. Spiritualist and avant-garde practices (speaking in tongues, hypnosis, channeling, automatic writing) bring this mechanical choir into transformative, ecstatic communion with the viewer/audience. The project also includes a collaboration with composer Sean Griffin. This event will yield text—remnants, records—to be published as an artist's book/experimental autobiography.