



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

City of Palo Alto Staff Report to Public Art Commission

Meeting Date: March 21, 2024

RE: Agenda Item 2 – Approval of artist Alma Landeta as the next project artist for the King Artist Residency

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Public Art Commission approve Alma Landeta as the next resident artist for the Dr. Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King Artist Residency.

Background:

In the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King, for whom King Plaza is named, the City of Palo Alto Council asked the Public Art Commission to consider commissioning a permanent work signaling the City's commitment to race, equity, and belonging. The Public Art Commission is committed to a permanent platform for ongoing conversations about equity, inclusion, and belonging in Palo Alto through the arts. As a result, the King residency program was established. Additional information about the King AIR program, its mission and goals, as well as the scopes of previous artist residency projects is available on the King Residency website and PAC staff report for the Joint Meeting with the Human Relations Commission from March 17, 2022 (https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-services/public-art-commission/pac-staff-report-march-2022_king-residency-update.pdf).

Analysis:

Guided by the PAC 2024/25 working priorities to develop public art projects that will continue to advance empathy, ethnic and cultural inclusion and celebration, and social, racial, and gender equity, the Public Art Commissioners emphasized the importance of continuing the King Artist-in-Residence program. Funding in the amount of \$50,000 for the next residency round was approved by the PAC at the October 19, 2023 PAC regular meeting. The funds support a six-month period of creative community engagement that will inform the creation of an artwork for King Plaza that will be in place for six months to one year.

Staff launched an artist call in December 2023 and had 24 artists apply to the call by the deadline. The panel selected four finalists in February who were paid a stipend to develop conceptual proposals for their Palo Alto residency. The four finalists made public presentations

March 7, 2024 about their artistic practice and relevant experience as well as their conceptual proposal for the King Residency in Palo Alto. Members of the public were invited to observe the presentations and provide feedback to the panel before they made their final decision. The selection panel consisted of:

Ben Miyaji – Public Art Commissioner
Kojo Pierce – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Manager, City of Palo Alto
Barbara Goldstein – Public Art Consultant, Art Builds Community
Pantea Karimi – Artist
Rayos Magos – Artist and former King Artist in Residence
David Sigua – Library Services, City of Palo Alto

The selection panel recommended artist Alma Landeta as the next artist for the King Residency.

Timeline, Resource Impact, and Policy Implications:

If approved by the PAC as the project artist, Landeta's residency will launch in April – May 2024. The artist will have access to a shared studio space with public wifi in Palo Alto to use as their designated workspace. It is anticipated that the artist will take approximately six months to conduct the research and community outreach and spend about 16-20 hours per week focused on the residency project and outreach efforts, and out of that time, be physically present in Palo Alto approximately 8 – 16 hours weekly. Public Art Program staff will work closely with the artist throughout the entire duration of the King Residency project to ensure that the Artist is provided with the resources and contacts necessary to undertake the residency. The residency scope will include the following phases: Project initiation and research (1-2 months); Creative Community Engagement and synthesis of emerging themes (3-5 months); and Concept and Design Development for Temporary Artwork (1-2 months). At the conclusion of the community outreach phase of the residency, the artist will create a proposal for an outdoor temporary artwork informed by the synthesized themes derived from interactions with the community centering on a particular equity topic. If the concept is approved by the PAC, it will be expected to remain on display on King Plaza for a period of six to twelve months starting in Winter 2024-25.

The Dr. Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King Artist Residency is funded through the City's Art in Public Places CIP fund.

The City of Palo Alto Public Art Program operates in accordance with Chapter 2.26 Visual Art in Public Places Policy of Palo Alto Municipal Code. The [Municipal Percent for Art Policy](#) specifies that the City will budget one percent (1%) of its construction costs to include public art for City capital improvement projects that have a visual impact on the surrounding environment by

altering a site through new construction or reconstruction, at the initial stages of design, thereby ensuring that art elements become an integral part of the overall design. In 2015, in order to strengthen its ongoing commitment to the City's municipal public art program, the Palo Alto Council amended the Palo Alto Municipal Code to add Section 2.26.070 ["Public Art for Municipal Projects"](#) to Chapter 2.26 (Visual Art in Public Places). The Ordinance enhanced the funds available for public art and increased flexibility to provide art experiences that are timely and relevant throughout the community. According to the Ordinance, one percent (1%) of the City's annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget devoted to public art is deposited into the Public Art Fund. Funds may be used at any appropriate site within Palo Alto for permanent or temporary public art projects. Additionally, funds from two or more CIP projects may be pooled to fund a single work of art.

Attachments:

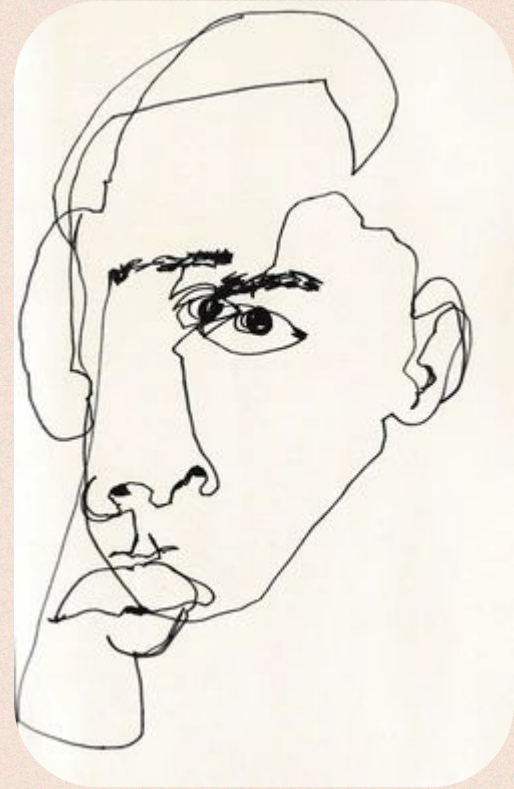
Attachment 1: A slide presentation for the finalists' artist selection panel for the King Artist Residency program by Alma Landeta.

Alma Landeta

Artist & Educator

Dr. Martin Luther King & Coretta
Scott King Artist in Residence

What might happen when we slow down to see one another?



- Find a partner
- Trace the contours of their face with your eye
- Move your hand at the same pace as your eye
- Keep your pen on the paper for one continuous line
- Go sloooow

What did you notice?

Testimonies from past participants:

"Drawing this way made me feel connected."

"I felt deeply seen..."

"It was liberating to not be able to look at the paper."

"I like how the drawing shows where my focus was."



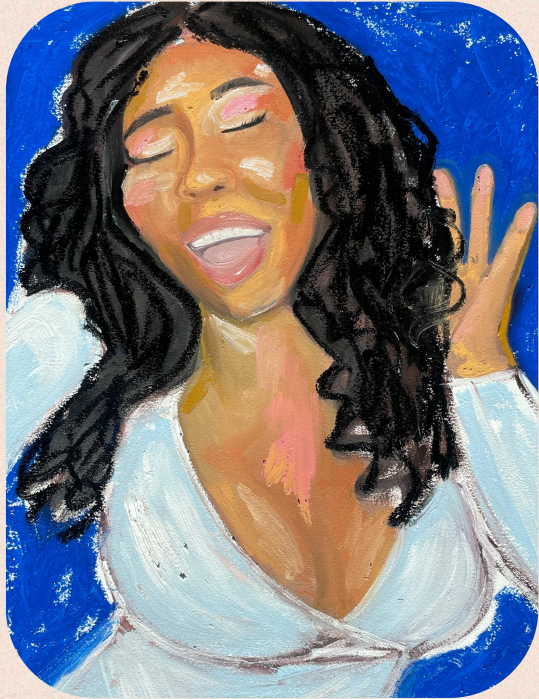
Mano y Mano, Alma Landeta, 2023



Striff, Alma Landeta, 2023

Nearly 25% of all Palo Alto LGBTQ residents and nearly 50% of Palo Alto transgender residents seriously considered suicide or hurting themselves within the year.*

* As reported in a 2019 survey from the City of Palo Alto Office of Human Services.



Kenya, Alma Landeta, 2024

Having mirrors of queer joy can be
life-saving.

Joy is the Fuel, Mural

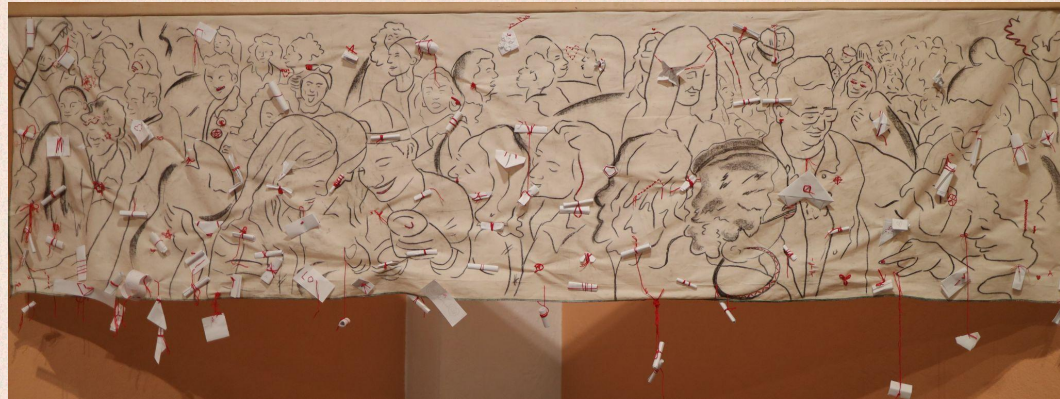


- Total Budget: \$7,000
- Collaboration with San Francisco LGBTQ+ community members to capture our diverse community
- Honoring sacred communal spaces that bring much-needed joy to the LGBTQ+ community

Cerca de Ti, Art Installation



- Total Budget: \$1,000
- Collaboration with MACLA curator and San Jose community members
- Highlighting moments of safety in queer spaces through a site-specific installation



Queer Rain, Arts Collective



- Total Budget: \$20,000
- Collaboration with artists across Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco counties
- Showcasing 40+ queer BIPOC femme & gender-expansive artists across generations



Participatory Portraits, Art Installation



- Total Budget: \$1,000
- Collaboration with SF Public Library staff and visitors
- Facilitating a collaborative portrait mural that spanned the walls of the Jewett Gallery, capturing each unique individual to pass through the space

PARTICIPATORY PORTRAITS:

1. GRAB A CLIPBOARD,
WHITE PENCIL, &
PAPER
2. DRAW SOMEONE
3. GIVE THAT PERSON
THE DRAWING
& A **RED PENCIL**
TO EDIT THEIR IMAGE



Como una Casa, Art Installation



- Total Budget: \$500
- Collaboration with SOMArts curators and gallery visitors
- Designing an installation modeled off of my abuela's living room, an attempt to create a space that reimagined home for queer Latine community





Self-portrait, Alma Landeta, 2023

Thank you!

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