GRASS VALLEY-NEVADA CITY
CULTURAL DISTRICT
CULTURE CONNECTION

Welcome to Culture Connection

Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District's newsletter, featuring the events, stories, and people of our community

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The Business of Art

Heartfelt thanks to our keynote speakers, presenters, and panelists for making The Business of Art so meaningful. We are grateful, too, for the insights, expertise, and generous spirit that accompanied our attendees. If you joined us last Saturday, please let us know how we did by answering a few questions will help us reflect on future opportunities, and our service to you. COMPLETE OUR BRIEF

SURVEY NOW.

We also extend our gratitude to our partners, Sierra College, YubaNet, and the County of Nevada.

Provide Feedback on Draft Focus Areas and Projects!

The County of Nevada is seeking your input. They have gathered your project ideas, conducted analysis, met with stakeholders, and reviewed numerous related planning documents. Now they would like to hear your feedback on the draft recommendations to address recreation issues and opportunities. This is a wonderful civic engagement opportunity and an important moment to share your thoughts about the role and value of art, and our artists as cultural assets; as well as our California Cultural Districts in the context of our rural setting. Lend your voice, and take the survey today!

Survey is open from March 12 - 24

Recreation and Resiliency in Nevada County

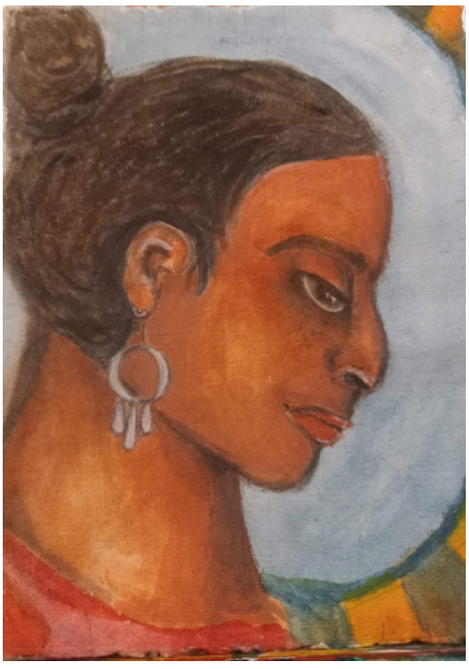
Strengthening Our Communities & Safeguarding Nature

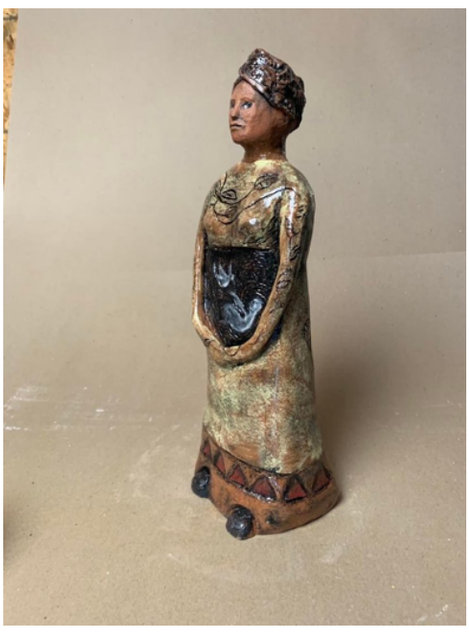
Artist Spotlight - Juliette Morris Williams

In January of this year figurative sculpture, and mixed media artist Juliette Morris Williams received a 2024 Fellowship from the First Peoples Fund to create a new body of work. The Artist in Business Leadership Fellowship is a yearlong program that helps independent Native artists pursue art as a way to build a business to support themselves and their families. The program provides professional development training, mentorship, and funding to launch them into success and support Fellows in cultivating more ways to share their knowledge and gifts with others in their communities.

We took a moment to congratulate Williams on her recent sucess, talk about her work, and find out what's next.

We asked Williams when she recognized her calling to be an artists and she shared some tender truths, coming on the heels of her recent fellowship award. "This is a bittersweet question at the moment - my Mother, Carole Morris, passed in January. She was and is such a muse for me. But she was also the person who introduced me to the art world - she was a volunteer for the public elementary school system program called Let's Look at Art. She would visit the classrooms with large prints of famous work, and we would discuss them." It was through this program that Williams says she fell in love with Rousseau's *Sleeping Gypsy*, and Diego Rivera's *Flower Seller*.





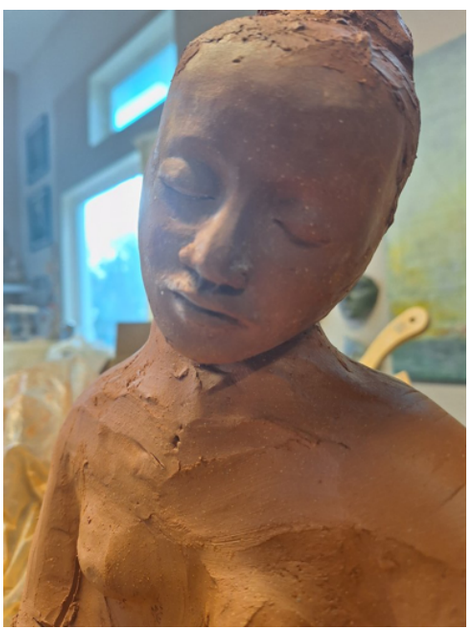
In the midst of this bittersweet time, Juliette Williams is looking towards the future and making plans for her fellowship funds. "I am honored to be a fellow with the First Peoples Fund, because I feel that I can reach more people now and continue the work I so dearly love. The Fund enables me to travel to Oklahoma, New Mexico and Mexico City to gather materials and experiences that will enrich my work and provide me with an entirely new body of work. This work is entitled: Mujeres Divinas - Indigenous Women of North and Central America."

'Mujeres Divinas: Indigenous Women of North and

Central America', focuses on women, selected by Williams, as individuals who have done something to futher the education of their communities. “For example, I am featuring the work of Roxanne Swentzell (Santa Clara Pueblo) and her sculpture as well as her horticultural work (cultivating native plants indigenous to that area) to assist her tribe in maintaining their health.” Each woman that Williams brings her focus to will have her work honored with a sculpture and a wall hanging, showing what she does and what it brings to her community.

These days Williams works mainly with handmade paint and pigment, naturally dyed cloth, and clay. She currently studies under two well known artists in the Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District. They also happen to be two of the artists whose work she admires.

“My dear friend Jennifer Rugge, who creates incredibly soulful and interpersonal work that touches us all - we all come from the same Earth, and she gives us glimpses of where we have been and where we are going. My teacher and dear friend Deborah Bridges is another artist who touches people with her beautiful figurative sculptures. She explores the many faces we can sometimes 'put on', but also the faces who show who we truly are...”



We’re always curious about what inspires artists, and in Nevada County we often hear the astounding natural beauty as one of the many reasons. “Most of the time I am inspired by the world around me. The people and how they relate to their environment. I love color and movement, and in sculpture I especially love the way light and shadow plays with the piece to create not just a mood but also a message.”

As Williams takes a deep dive into her next body of work we asked, what’s next?

“Lots of travel, and some very good work! I will be celebrating the solar eclipse in April at the Choctaw Cultural Center in Durant, Oklahoma, as well as meeting with the archaeology team there to learn more about the land. My father's family came to Arkansas and Oklahoma on the first Trail of Tears, and it is a very important part of my work to tell my family's story in this project.”

You can learn more about the artist and her work at juliettemorriswilliams.com

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TiLT - Spring Equinox Edition

Thursday, March 21, 6:30 - 8:30

Wild Eye Pub
535 Mill Street, Grass Valley

The TiLT Open Mic Series is back!

Upstate California Creative Corps grantees *The Poetry Crashers* present TILT - Spring Equinox Edition. Celebrate our planet's equilibrium as we tilt upright and ready ourselves for the sweet renewal of spring and all the pollinated profundity she brings!

Bring your poems of renewal, fertility, and transformation. Share your expressions of springs gone by and hopes for seasons yet to come - poems, prose, songs, jokes and storytelling are all invited to the mic!

Protect Arts Funding
Bring Your Voice to the Capitol!

April is Arts, Culture & Creativity Month!

Nevada County Arts Council staff and board members will be headed to the Capitol again this year to keep advocating for the arts.

This is an opportunity to meet with State legislators and gather with fellow county arts councils and advocates as we share the important work that artists and culture bearers do to support the health of our communities and move the needle on important issues.

Lynn Schugren - Pianist

Sunday, March 24 2:00pm

St. Josep's Hall
410 S Church Street, Grass Valley

This concert is a benefit for the building restoration of St. Joseph's Museum and Cultural Center.

General Admission $35, students pay on a sliding scale.

Reception to follow.

Lúnasa

Friday, March 22
Doors Open 6:30pm | Show begins 8:00pm

The Miners Foundry
325 Spring Street, Nevada City

Named for an ancient Celtic harvest festival in honour of the Irish god Lugh, Lúnasa was formed in 1997 from members of some of the greatest Irish groups of the previous decade, an early review from Folk Roots magazine described the band as an “Irish music dream team.” Lúnasa is a gathering of some of the top musical talents in Ireland.

The bar opens at 7:00pm and the show begins at 8:00pm. Special pre-show entertainment beginning at 6:30! KVMR and the Foundry will be hosting a “Celtic Session” only for ticket holders.

What is a “session”? A session a traditional gathering of musicians who jam together and entertain bystanders. A handful of regional musicians from the KVMR Celtic Festival Stage will be playing in the Stone Hall prior to the concert. You’re welcome to join with your own instrument or simply enjoy more great live music. *Special thanks to KVMR!*

“Lúnasa has catapulted both themselves and the music onto another plane where creative juices reign supreme.” – *The Irish Times*

“Anybody who listens can’t help but find them contagious.” — *Billboard*

"Lúnasa reigns as the new Celtic royalty." — *Boston Herald*

Open Mic

Mondays 6:30-9:00pm

Seven Stars Gallery & Gathering Space
210 Spring Street, Nevada City

Join singers, songwriters, musicians, poets, and story tellers of all styles for a lively weekly open mic. Originally housed at Cosmic Roots this open mic has found a new home at the Seven Stars Gallery. Come check it out!

Sierra Jazz Camp - Registration is open

Each year the Sierra Jazz Society hosts a Summer Jazz Camp for advanced middle school students through adult. Jazz Camp is a fun, focused, and supportive environment where you have the opportunity to jam with motivated peers and study with a faculty of professional musicians and educators.

This year's Jazz Camp takes place from Monday, June 17 through Friday, June 21st from 9:00am – 4:00pm at Yuba River Charter School in Grass Valley. All instrumentalists and vocalists welcome. Get Jazz Experience in Combo and Large Ensemble Formats!

In the spirit of Bill Douglass, the Sierra Jazz Society continues his mission to encourage jazz performance and education in Nevada County. Their annual jazz picnic in June, summer jazz camp, and select live performances throughout the year will continue to be a tribute to Bill and his lived understanding of the powerful effect of music on our lives.

Teachers for this year include:

- Matt Langley – Saxophones & Camp Director
- Ellen Johnson – Vocals
- Tommy Coster – Piano, Theory, Composition, Music Production & Marketing
- Chris Golden – Bass
- Tim Bulkley – Drums

Now's the time to register!

Arts Advocacy in Nevada County

Last week we hosted Randy Cohen, VP of Research and Policy at Americans for the Arts as he joined us for the release of the Arts & Economic Prosperity (AEP6) suvey results of Nevada County.

After a year-long hands on the ground process collecting over 1,000 audience-intercept surveys from attendees to nonprofit arts and culture performances, exhibitions, and special events across Nevada County we are excited to share these results. Perhaps you filled one out, and for that we are grateful.

The groundbreaking AEP6 study—which marks the most extensive data collection effort in the 30-year history of the study nationally—has broken new ground by prioritizing equity, social impact, community engagement, and inclusivity.

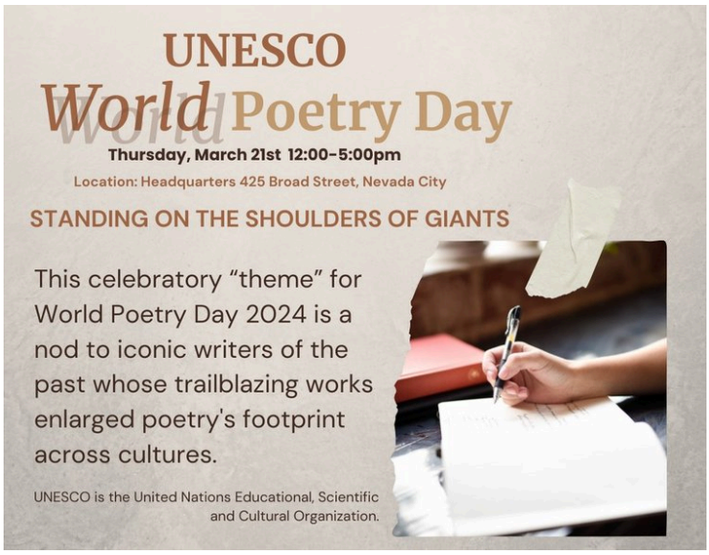
"Bottom line," Cohen said, "they are not just food for the soul, the arts are putting food on the table. It is more than a one-time transactional moment, it's where we've been, it's who we are, and it's where we're going."

In 2023, nonprofit arts and culture organizations and their audiences generated $66.0 million in economic activity in Nevada County—$31.9 million in spending by the organizations, which leveraged an additional $34.1 million in event-related spending by their audiences. This economic activity supported 1,359 jobs and generated $13.2 million in tax revenue.

Along with Randy Cohen, the Arts & Economic Prosperity panel included Kimberly Parker, Nevada County Economic Development Program Manager; Gil Mathew, Executive Director of Nevada County Economic Resource Council; Jon Blinder, President of Nevada County Arts Council's Board of Directors; and Kellie Cutler, Truckee Cultural District Program Manager and member of the Truckee Chamber's Board of Directors. The panel was facilitated by Eliza Tudor, Executive Director of Nevada County Arts Council.

If you'd like to read the whole report and find out more aobut the economic impact of our creative sector, check it out on our website.

World Poetry Day



Thursday, March 21
12:00-5:00pm

Headquarters
425 Broad Street
Nevada City

Join Nevada County Arts Council, Sierra Poetry Festival, and local poets for a day of poetry writing on the theme *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants.* Come and be inspired, share your creativity, and find community. Help us kick off Arts, Culture & Creativity month as we celebrate all things poetry!

Madeleine Peyroux

Friday, March 22, 2024
Doors open 7:00pm | Show at 8:00pm

The Center for the Arts
314 W. Main Street, Grass Valley

Much like songbird Edith Piaf, Madeleine Peyroux spent her teenage years busking the busy streets of Paris. Just like the 'little sparrow', Madeleine befriended the city's street musicians and made its Latin quarter her first performing stage. Years later, Peyroux would cite iconic Piaf as an influence on her music and record a rendition of the classic La Vie En Rose, soulfully capturing the tune's romanticism and melancholy.

Born in Athens, Georgia in 1974, Madeleine "grew up in a house filled with music" and from an early age "instinctively realized music's soothing power" but it was her teenage years in the French capital that turned the childhood notion into an all-consuming vocation for life.

Young Madeleine moved to Paris with her mother in 1987 following her parents' divorce. "To soothe me during the upheaval", she recalls, "I was given a guitar and took to playing in the streets almost immediately."

Get your tickets today!

Wolf Jett
with Cheyenne Skye

Friday, March 29
9:00pm - 12:30am

Crazy Horse Saloon and Grill
230 Commercial Street, Nevada City

The sound of Wolf Jett will make you dance, sing and possibly even howl! Their music is a celebration of life, infusing folk, blues and americana into what can only be described as "cosmic mountain music."

Frontman Chris Jones was born in the south and raised in California. His songs combine the best of both worlds to create a vibe that is fresh, yet immediately familiar to a broad audience. He is a powerful presence oozing with soul and is joined by longtime collaborator Jon Payne on drums, Duncan Shipton on bass and Will Fourt on dobro/guitar. Laura T. Lewis adds a captivating dynamic on vocals/percussion as well.

The relaxed groove carries a funkier impact than what one might expect. Audiences quickly find themselves floating in a fever dream driven by the rich imagery of the vocals and organic synchronicity of the musicians.

Sierra Poetry Festival

Saturday, April 13
8:30am-5:30pm

The Center for the Arts
314 W Main Street, Grass Valley

The 8th Annual Sierra Poetry Festival is fast approaching, with less than a month to go!

The festivities will kick off with an opening welcome from Shelly Covert, Executive Director of the Nevada City Rancheria, and Eliza Tudor, Executive Director of the Nevada County Arts Council. This will be followed by our keynote speaker, Jane Hirshfield, presenting *Saying Yes to the Difficult*.

Joining Jane Hirshfield, this year's festival features poets Molly Fisk, Jason Bayani, Georgina Marie Guardado, Farnaz Fatemi, Maxima Kahn, ChaRon Smith leading a workshop, along with a performance by The Poetry Crashers. Attendees can look forward to workshops, book signings, a segment dedicated to celebrating the youth voices within our community, and one of the day's highlights: *In Conversation*, featuring international poets Pádraig Ó Tuama and Sam Willetts.

Stay to participate in the Nevada County Reads wrap-up party and conversation where poet Ross Gay will engage in a dialogue with Nevada County Librarian and local poet Tricia Caspers-Ross about his book, *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*.

We are still looking for volunteers on the day, if you are interested in lending a hand and attending parts of the festival, please send us an email at info@nevadacountyarts.org

Tickets

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