GRAND 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.

A Year in Review and Looking Ahead

We've embraced the past to move, on with purpose, into a promising future. 2025 was a big year for the cultural district, and we're ready to share it with you and invite you into the coming year. Read Director Melissa Cassady's letter.

Through her advocacy and support, the Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District's mission to celebrate the creative students at our local schools, last year, Melissa Cassady was recognized as a Champion of Change by the Nevada County Arts Council.

During 2025, we provided technical assistance, grant crowdfunding and philanthropy support to thousands of artists and cultural workers, and we hosted our annual Creatives Meetup, which brought together over 200 people to celebrate our community. Through Nevada event, We began our new Arts Public Space program of the Nevada County Arts Council, which will bring more art to our downtown, and we launched our new website and Culture Connection newsletter.

We also improved online transparency for our tenants with our Tenant Listing Portal, and we began to assessing Nevada County's cultural assets for our Cultural Data Project, the first step in our long-term strategic plan.

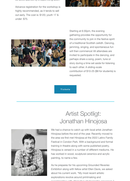
Nevada County Arts Council is one of California's top ranking county arts agencies, and with a wide array of arts programs and services, and its mandate to support and promote the arts, it's the go-to agency always at the center or some of opportunities for stakeholders to collaborate. Nevada County Arts Council is a partner in the Cultural Data Project and Arts Public Space.

In 2026 we also contemplate a year-long study of the economic impact of our creative community, and we will continue our work to make our downtown more inviting and vibrant, a place, a gathering place for everyone, day and night.

These are just a few of the ways we supported our community during 2025, and through which we will continue to deepen our service to our arts community.

To keep in the know, please complete and keep abreast of tenancies. Members provide valuable information to the Cultural District, and it's the best way to receive notices of opportunities to attend or participate in events and programs. Our tenants are our most frontline marketers, from the creatives of our tenants. You are our family!

Sincerely,
Your Friends at Nevada County Arts Council



Nevada County Creatives Meetup

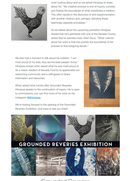
Thursday, January 4th, 5-7pm

Sierra State Gallery
210 Spring Street, Nevada City

Join us for the first Creatives Meetup of 2026!

We will be mingling in the new gallery space in Nevada City, with the Nevada County Arts Council team, and we'll be sharing what we've been up to and what's ahead. We invite you all to join us in creating this community-wide gathering, a space where we can connect, share ideas, and support one another's supportive local artwork.

The Sierra State Gallery, the venue, has been a very receptive host to artists, and we thank Sierra State and our community in the State Gallery - Nevada City Contact Gallery.



Annual Alasdair Fraser Community Music Gathering

Saturday, January 8
9:30am - 4:30pm

Nevada City
Veterans Hall
217 Spring Street,
Nevada City, CA

The public is invited to join Scottish fiddle master Alasdair Fraser for a day of music, dance, and community. Alasdair and his friend Natalie Haas, the all-day MC, spent the day with participants playing and exploring beginning Scottish tunes and dances, learning about ornamentation, and generally having a great time.

Alasdair Fraser will teach a medley of Scottish tunes, a Highland fling, a reel, a strathspey, arrangement of traditional pop songs (examples, maybe as a preview of what you'll learn, Coldplay's "Yellow" and the game-based instrument-building song "Ukulele Song" by Cake), and a set of strands-see sessions, children should be prepared to participate in a game.

Alasdair Fraser

Attendees will be learning a tune, a dance, and a game. Fee is $25 (cash or check) for a single day.

Starting at 9:30am, the evening gathering provides the opportunity for participants to show what they've learned during the day, and for Alasdair and Natalie to perform a set of music and dance. Fee for the evening is $20 (cash or check) payable at the door. Fee for both days is $40 (cash or check) payable at the door.

Contact Alasdair

Artist Spotlight: Jonathan Hincpoa

Jonathan Hincpoa

"We had a chance to meet up in person and asked Jonathan Hincpoa before the end of the year. Recently moved to Grass Valley, Jonathan is a local artist who exhibited at the Nevada County Fair. Within a background of Indigenous Peruvian culture, Jonathan Hincpoa's work in Grass Valley Hincpoa is steeped in a number of different methods, the artist's work ranges from sculpture, to ceramics, to painting, to carving and more.

So he prepared for his upcoming Discovery Reveries exhibition, which opens at the Grass Valley Art Center on January 2, he spent the last few months in a creative exploration mode, almost performing and experimenting with his creative process, and documenting it on tape. The artist's exhibition will be on display **January 2 from 5:00 - 7:00pm** at The Center for the Arts in Grass Valley.

"When asked of what prompt is the inspiration for his exhibition, Jonathan Hincpoa said, "I'm inspired by the process of creation." A search of Jonathan's exhibition's title, "Discovery Reveries" leads him back and forth between the process of creation, and the process of discovery. Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork." Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork." Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork." Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork." Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork."

"We only have a moment to talk about his exhibition. I can't pronounce all of his titles, but the artist's favorite piece, "Ukulele Hincpoa" which artwork will be very much present in Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition, and Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork." Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork." Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork."

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Do we talk about the upcoming exhibition's Discovery Reveries exhibition, and what's in store for the artist's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork." Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork." Jonathan Hincpoa's exhibition's description describes the artist's creative process, from the artist's perspective, as a "dance between the artist's mind and the artwork."

Grounded Reveries

Featuring works by Ellen Davis
and Jonathan Hincpoa

Lively photographic processes and immersive textures

Opening Reception & Gallery Walkthrough:
Friday, January 2, 5PM - 7PM
Exhibition Dates:
January 2 - February 14, 2026
The Grassroots Gallery at The Center for the Arts
314 W. Main Street, Grass Valley

Grounded Reveries is an exploration of focus on experimentation to create unique visual textures and tactile surfaces. Ellen Davis and Jonathan Hincpoa offer the audience a sly glance at a process of creation, and the artists' work invites the viewer into a dance between the artist's mind and the artwork's emerging pre. The work takes a large step back from the digital, drifting into a tactile exploration of analog processes, including photography, sculpture, and photographic. These images are meant to be experienced up close, touch lens, voice, and place gives a first-person another dimension of expression and interaction.

Annual KVMR Fundraiser with John McCutcheon

Saturday, January 6,
7:00pm

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

Folk singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist John McCutcheon has been the backbone of American folk music since the late 70s, crooning a wide range of songs with deep roots in American culture, from traditional ballads to contemporary folk music, and from the Appalachian Mountains to the Pacific Northwest. He has also written songs about his respected folk heroes like Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger.

Come out and enjoy an evening of music from the Grass Valley-based KVMR fundraiser.

Community Spotlight: Neighborhood Center of the Arts

In honor of Black Heritage Month, we are spotlighting Neighborhood Center of the Arts, a community in Grass Valley, that celebrates African American culture and heritage. Neighborhood Center of the Arts is a community of Grass Valley, that celebrates African American culture and heritage. Neighborhood Center of the Arts is a community of Grass Valley, that celebrates African American culture and heritage. Neighborhood Center of the Arts is a community of Grass Valley, that celebrates African American culture and heritage. Neighborhood Center of the Arts is a community of Grass Valley, that celebrates African American culture and heritage.

"We're not just preparing people where to go career. Meaning, connecting back and conversation with people. You have to get out of your head and into your community. We've been at Grass Valley for years and we've watched the community grow and the community change. We've been located at our current location for over 15 years. We've been in the community for over 15 years. We've been in the community for over 15 years. We've been in the community