



*Amara Tabor-Smith and Ellen Sebastian Chang's "House/Full of Blackwomen." Photo credit: Robbie Sweeny*

## **Newly Funded Public Art Projects Center Community Stories and Participation**

*Funds support four temporary, place-based public art projects in San Francisco and Oakland that creatively address timely community issues.*

*Oakland, Calif.* – The Kenneth Rainin Foundation announced today that four public art projects will receive a total of \$537,000 through its [Open Spaces Program](#). The projects invite community participation to highlight critical issues such as gentrification and displacement; sex trafficking and well-being of Black women and girls; loss of youth of color to violence; and labor rights, domestic violence and sexual abuse of Latina immigrant women.

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“When designed with the community, public art has the power to create space for and give voice to underrepresented groups,” said Adriana Griñó, Arts Program Officer. “The selected artists and nonprofits have been working in these communities for years and will use that history to engage community members in reclaiming and authentically telling their own stories.”

The Open Spaces Program supports nonprofits to partner with artists to create temporary, place-based public art projects in San Francisco and Oakland. These projects showcase the significant role that artists can play in initiating and expanding conversations about the most critical issues of our time. The artist-nonprofit teams will use their longstanding relationships in these communities to thoughtfully carry out the projects.

2020 Open Spaces Program grantees include:

- ***And the Community Will Rise*** – [Chinatown Community Development Center](#) will collaborate with lead artists [Francis Wong](#), [Lenora Lee](#) and [Ilaria Salvadori](#) on an immersive artistic experience to explore the legacy of and significant role that residents in Chinatown public housing play in ensuring San Francisco’s social, political and cultural integrity in the face of gentrification and displacement. Multimedia performances, community programming and exhibitions will take place at and around the Ping Yuen housing complex. *And the Community Will Rise* will build upon the Center’s 42-year history of serving Chinatown.
- ***The New Chitlin Circuitry: Reparations Vaudeville “an act of insistence of black female original genius”*** – [Dancers’ Group](#) and lead artists [Amara Tabor-Smith](#) and [Ellen Sebastian Chang](#) will use Afro-Surrealist Vaudeville, a theatrical variety show format, to reclaim and highlight the creative labor and influences Black women have birthed in art, healthcare, politics and style. *The New Chitlin Circuitry* is the next iteration of *House/Full of Blackwomen*, a multi-year project that began in 2015 to address issues of

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displacement, well-being and sex trafficking of Black women and girls in Oakland.

- **THE BLACK W(HOLE)** – [Destiny Arts Center](#) and lead artists [Marc Bamuthi Joseph](#), [Brett Cook](#) and Sarah Crowell will create installation and performance elegies for young people of color who have been lost to violence. Destiny Arts Center brings knowledge from Destiny Arts Youth Performing Company, founded in part as a response to the tragic loss of young people in the community and the need for meaningful opportunities for the youth to tell their stories. Also drawing upon the lead artists' experience as longtime Oakland residents with practices in socially engaged art, the performers and artists will build relationships with the youth's loved ones and sensitively uncover how their lives might best be celebrated.
- **Y BASTA YA!** – [Mujeres Unidas y Activas](#) and lead artists [José Navarrete](#) and [Debby Kaiiyama](#) have been organizing expressive art workshops for Latina immigrant women, many of whom are healing from sexual assault and domestic violence. Y BASTA YA! will continue to help the women reclaim their bodies and their stories through a series of performances, public artworks, workshops and forums. This project builds upon two decades of work by Mujeres Unidas y Activas with Latina immigrant women in the Bay Area.

These projects were carefully selected from [10 finalists](#) by a panel of jurors. The panel included Jocelyn Jackson, co-founder of People's Kitchen Collective, a 2017 Open Spaces Program grantee, and founder of JUSTUS Kitchen; Perana Reddy, Director of Programs at A Blade of Grass; and Weston Teruya, artist and member of Related Tactics Collective.

The Rainin Foundation's inaugural Open Spaces Program grantees created three community-driven public art projects in 2017. Visit the Rainin Foundation website to [see the lasting impact of their work](#) and for more information on the [Open Spaces Program](#).

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**About the Kenneth Rainin Foundation**

Kenneth Rainin Foundation is a family foundation that collaborates with creative thinkers in the Arts, Education and Health. At the Rainin Foundation, we believe in taking smart risks to achieve breakthroughs. We support visionary artists in the Bay Area, create opportunities for Oakland's youngest learners, and fund researchers on the forefront of scientific discoveries. Since 2009, the Foundation has awarded \$37.5 million in funding to support small to mid-size arts organizations in the Bay Area that are pushing the boundaries of creative expression. [More at krfoundation.org](http://krfoundation.org).

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