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MURAL ARTS INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES SANTA FE, NM TO BE ONE OF THREE HOST COMMUNITIES OF ITS SECOND ART & ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE

Santa Fe, NM - **Mural Arts Institute**, an initiative of Mural Arts Philadelphia, today announced that, after a competitive selection process, a team in Santa Fe, NM will be one of three teams across the country to host its second **Art & Environment Capacity-Building Initiative**. This two-year partnership between Mural Arts and Santa Fe will center participatory art to address local environmental issues. The program brings together local community partners, artists and Mural Arts staff to develop sustainable programs to create public art that addresses issues that have deep societal implications. **The theme of this iteration of the program is climate change and resilience, and the Santa Fe partners are Alas de Agua Art Collective and Three Sisters Collective.**

"Public art has the power to shed light onto societal inequities and ignite change – that is a pillar of Mural Arts' work and mission. Climate change disproportionately affects low-income communities and communities of color, contributing to an ever-glaring equity gap. This initiative seeks to demonstrate the inherent resilience of these communities in the face of the undue burden of climate change. We are eager to work with environmental experts and public art partners in Santa Fe to support their arts and solutions-oriented efforts in the face of those challenges," said Director of the Mural Arts Institute, Netanel Portier

Statement from the Santa Fe Team

"We wish to express our gratitude to Mural Arts Philadelphia for the opportunity to re-center Indigenous and Chicanx presence in Santa Fe's rapidly changing landscape. For Pueblo people especially, having images from our daily lives and culture represented in public spaces of Santa Fe outside of tourism or commerce will be a testament to our survival, resilience, and multiple ongoing contributions to this community. This project is an opportunity for all of Santa Fe's identities to be reflected, centering those who go unheard in spaces meant for art, including Artists of Color, Native artists, Immigrant, Undocumented, and Queer artists."

"The murals in the project will incorporate Pueblo/Indigenous people, history and aesthetics, the place we live - O'gha Po'Oghe - and Tewa people, and the protection of our traditional homelands and sacred places. They will reflect the many ways in which humans' survival of the climate crisis will hinge upon our relationships to each other, and our connections to land, historical migrations, and Indigenous practices that go beyond borders. Ultimately, the specific content of the murals will be driven by community conversations which center the voices of Pueblo people and revitalize ancestral knowledge. Because both of our collectives use art as a means and not as an end, this project will include workshops around seed saving, seed

bombing, creating garden beds, adobe making and other educational workshops that will teach people across race, class, gender and age. There is an opportunity here for inclusion and healing, but it must come from the people themselves.”

Over the next two years, Mural Arts Institute will provide the Santa Fe team with on-site and remote consultation services, capacity-building workshops, and an annual field-building symposium in Philadelphia (barring Covid-19 restrictions). The team will also receive \$94,000 in funding towards a demonstration project, designed and planned with support from Mural Arts.

The other two communities to host the program are in Austin, TX and Kern County, CA. Mural Arts’ Art & Environment Capacity-Building Initiative began with a first cohort in 2017 with organizations in Akron, Ohio, Memphis, TN and Detroit, MI who completed projects in 2019. Learn more about one of the completed projects in Memphis, TN.

About the Santa Fe, NM Team

In Santa Fe, New Mexico Indigenous and Chicanx artists, activists, scholars, and community members that comprise Alas de Agua Art Collective and Three Sisters Collective are working towards addressing the complex dynamics of colonial history, cultural erasure and environmental racism in Santa Fe, O’gha Po’Oghe, Tewa Territory. Alas de Agua Art Collective is an intersectional grassroots space providing resources and opportunities for artists of color, Native artists, immigrant, undocumented, and queer artists who have historically and currently been marginalized and not afforded the same resources. They offer opportunities for said artists to provide alternative narratives, and they remove barriers and creatively go around them. Three Sisters Collective utilizes a Pueblo rooted, matriarch-led framework to create a culture shift that counteracts social and environmental injustices in the community. Indigenous and communities of color in and around Santa Fe have borne the burden of environmental disregard including the storage of nuclear waste on Pueblo territory, the overgrazing of land and overharvesting of plant medicines, contamination of waterways, and heightened vulnerability of women and girls towards violence from temporary workers of environmentally extractive industries (MMIWGT2S).

About Mural Arts Institute

The Mural Arts Institute is dedicated to advancing research on and development of socially-engaged public art practices. Established in 2017 as an initiative of Mural Arts Philadelphia, the Institute’s approach is centered around connection: building networks, developing partnerships, and convening artists, community and partners to collaborate around participatory public art practices. Our work is in service to a larger movement that values equity, fairness and progress across all of society. We offer the Mural Arts model to other change-oriented cities across the country to build the capacity of artists, arts organizations, cultural institutions, municipal governments and more with the goal of igniting change with public art. The Mural Arts Institute is supported by The JPB Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Mural Arts Philadelphia is the nation’s largest public art program, dedicated to the belief that art ignites change. For more than 35 years, Mural Arts has united artists and communities through a collaborative and equitable process, creating nearly 4,000 artworks that have transformed public spaces and individual lives. Mural Arts aims to empower people, stimulate dialogue, and build bridges to understanding with projects that attract artists from Philadelphia

and around the world, and programs that focus on youth education, restorative justice, mental health and wellness, and public art and its preservation. Popular mural tours offer a firsthand glimpse into the inspiring stories behind Mural Arts' iconic and unparalleled collection, which has earned Philadelphia worldwide recognition as the "City of Murals." For more information, call 215-685-0750 or visit muralarts.org. Follow along on social media: @muralarts on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and @MuralArtsPhiladelphia on Facebook, and [phillymuralarts](#) on YouTube.

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