



ARTogether

ANNUAL REPORT 2024





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from our ED	005	Financial Reports	039
ARTogether Center & Gallery	006	People:	040
Program Reports:		Staff	
Arts & Wellness	009	Board	
Artist Growth	017	Volunteers	
Arts in Schools	025	Artists	
Public Arts	031	Partners	
		Community Support	
		Funders:	041
		Foundations & Donors	

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Together, we supported over 1,300 individuals—through mentorship, workshops, public art projects, and school programs—all grounded in a shared vision of belonging and joy.

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As I look back on 2024, I'm struck by the courage and creativity that defined this year for ARTogether. We took bold steps to expand our reach, deepen our programs, and foster connections across the Bay Area. It wasn't always easy, but it was a year marked by resilience and the collective power of our community.

From the vibrant murals at Clinton Park that tell stories of intergenerational knowledge to our summer art camps that gave children a space to dream and create, every project reminded us why we do this work. Together, we supported over 1,300 individuals—through mentorship, workshops, public art projects, and school programs—all grounded in a shared vision of belonging and joy.

This year also brought challenges, from navigating limited resources to confronting the growing needs of

the communities we serve. Yet, in those moments of uncertainty, we found strength in collaboration. Our artists, staff, and volunteers reminded us that even in the face of difficulty, art has the power to heal, unite, and inspire.

As you read through this report, I hope you'll see not just the impact of our work, but the spirit behind it—a spirit of hope, action, and love for our community. Thank you for walking this journey with us and for believing in the transformative power of art. Together, we are building a future where creativity knows no boundaries.

In gratitude and solidarity,



Leva Zand
Executive Director, ARTogether

ARTOGETHER CENTER AND GALLERY

A HUB FOR CREATIVITY & COMMUNITY

Resource Sharing, Amplifying First Person Narratives through Art, Place Keeping

The ARTTogether Center in downtown Oakland serves as a cultural center, community hub, and exhibition venue for Bay Area refugee and immigrant artists. The Gallery exhibits solo and group shows, with a particular focus on talented and skilled artists who have historically lacked access and resources to share their own work. Our exhibitions connect artists to their audiences and their community by creating a platform for their art and their stories.

Venue Rental: Community space and resource, open to the public for meeting space.





PROGRAMS REPORTS

ARTS AND WELLNESS

ARTogether's Arts and Wellness program

harnesses the power of creative expression to promote mental health and overall well-being among refugees and immigrants, offering a range of therapeutic art experiences and workshops to build resilience and foster community connections. ARTogether offers a variety of community art programs for first and second generation refugees and immigrants and the Bay Area community. Through art workshops, youth art camps, and community gatherings, our programs seek to bring people and communities together through art, promoting fellowship, familiarity, and belonging.



Arts and Wellness program supported community members directly through these projects:

- **Children Summer Arts Camp**
- **Creative Leadership for Afghan Youth**
- **Art-Based Support Groups for Afghan Women**
- **Sewing Class for Afghan Women**
- **Children's Book Readings**

Through these projects,
the Arts and Wellness program reached

496
community
members

“

We are grateful from the bottom of our hearts for this precious experience! Wonderful organization, talented teachers and inspiring atmosphere in the art camp. My child came home with new impressions and art creations every single day, and couldn't wait for the next day. We loved everything! Very satisfied! Looking forward to meeting again!

– Parent



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Our annual Summer Art Camps, one of ARTogether's longest-running and diverse programs, provide a welcoming space for children to explore their creativity and express their imaginative ideas through art. Participating in community-based programs, such as ARTogether's Summer Art Camps **help children strengthen their connection to their new community, reduce feelings of isolation, and enhance their overall well-being**





PROGRAMS REPORTS

ARTIST GROWTH

ARTogether's Artists Growth program supports first and second generation refugee and immigrant artists seeking to deepen their artistic practices. Through mentorship, workshops, funding, and exhibition opportunities, our program empowers diasporic artists to thrive in their artistic careers.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

ARTogether partnered with the Oakland Asian Cultural Center to co-present “Longing for Attachment,” an exhibition curated by Bushra Gill that featured 30+ Bay Area 1st/2nd generation immigrant and refugee artists. **This show uplifted the stories of local, diasporic artists who reflected on what they hold onto, and let go of, when they move to another country or culture.**

“

The Mentorship Hub is the only artistic development program of its kind where a Black South African and Black American 2nd generation refugee artist like myself **could be open, vulnerable, willing to excavate blind spots, and accepting of new tools to go out into the world**—powerfully, and as poet Jayne Cortez says, ‘find [my] own voice and use it.’

I am grateful the Mentorship Hub takes place in Oakland. The same Oakland that was once a haven for Black families escaping the South in the 1900s (including my family) is now a beacon for immigrants and refugees from all over the world. The Mentorship Hub’s geography carries depth and weight for me personally, spiritually and artistically. One final reason the Mentorship Hub speaks to me,

artistically—its secret sauce: the culture of ARTogether. The Mentorship Hub’s language and messaging, for instance, is healing-centered, liberation-oriented, humane, and specifically targeted to immigrant and refugee artists living in the San Francisco Bay Area. As a result, its workshops, facilitators, exercises, fellow cohort members, the way chairs and desks are set up, how meals are served, being paid for one’s participation in the program, and other practices, **foster agency and autonomy, fueled by radical hospitality, enabling emerging immigrant and refugee artists to soar.**

– Ipeleng Kgositsile

”



In 2024, Artist Growth Program directly support 245 artist through:

- Art Exhibitions
- East Bay Open Studios
- Mini-Grants & Community Sponsorships
- Professional Development Workshops
- Mentorship Hub Artists Residency
- Online Artist Directory
- Artist-run Events at Center

Through these program Artist Growth Program reached

400+
community
members



PROGRAMS REPORTS

ARTS IN SCHOOLS

ARTTogether's Arts in Schools program

provides spaces where newcomer students feel safe to express themselves, have fun, and make friends. What began as a humble endeavor in 2019 with a music production class, has now blossomed into an arts education initiative encompassing visual art, dance, and music; we currently engage half a dozen schools in different capacities ages K-12.

The 2023/24 school year incorporated:

- **Five art classes**
- **Two workshops**

Most projects center around the two largest newcomer schools in the East Bay: Oakland International High School (OIHS) and Fremont High School in East Oakland, with additional growth this year in Contra Costa and students of expanded age ranges. Our programs include dance, visual arts, music and performances.

**Through these projects,
the Arts in Schools program engaged**

**372
students**

**2'021 total
attendance**

“

“I thank God that they allowed me to come here to play. My family is not here. I like music and I feel that music changes me...and brings me happiness.”

– Carlos 9th grade





PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

This year ARTogether's Scholarship Program was proud to award 7 newcomer students from Fremont High School, gifting them with professional art materials to explore, create, and show the world their imagination. These students were nominated by their teachers for having a passion for the arts, and **many have been drawing and painting for years without the resources to grow their talents.**

Our annual art award aims to lift up these students' passion for the arts, and we can't wait to see what they create.



PROGRAMS REPORTS

PUBLIC ARTS

ARTogether’s Public Arts program

aims to engage and uplift the community by creating inclusive and accessible art experiences in public spaces, showcasing the talents and stories of refugee and immigrant artists, and fostering a sense of belonging and cultural appreciation.



“

[through ARTogether]...I got a chance to communicate and work together with a lot of people who are also immigrants from different countries [like me], through the process of [creating art] we also got to know each other and I got to know more about their culture through their stories”.

– Alona, 16 years old, participant student

In 2024, the Public Arts program, provide direct service and support to 37 youth and adults through projects like:

- **Shadow Movements Workshop**
- **Tabling at community and partners events**
- **World Refugee and Immigrant Day Festival**

These projects reached

**800+
community
members**





PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

The Clinton Park Community mural project brought together a cohort of multicultural participants to activate Clinton community center, with its artistic attention validating that the previously under-resourced park is deserving of care and resources. At the heart of the mural is a storytelling circle under a **heritage oak tree, symbolizing the exchange of knowledge between elders and youth. The mural also features a community garden**, a nod to the park’s role as a vital green space for the area, and the site of future growth.

PROGRAMS' REACH

ARTOGETHER'S IMPACT

In 2024 ARTogether provided **19** unique programs (a total of **263** sessions) to our community and a total of **over 2350** individuals participated in our workshops and events.

FINANCIAL REPORT

REVENUE & EXPENSES

ARTogether’s Financial Report in 2024:

- Revenue: \$618,997.95
- Expenses: \$820,084.09

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	\$6,301	\$47,172	\$76,052	\$305,192	\$374,423	\$536,624	\$716,349
Expenses	\$6,300	\$15,912	\$51,528	\$239,864	\$243,825	\$551,746	\$572,557

ARTOGETHER'S COMMUNITY

STAFF

Polina Marso/Arts and Wellness Program Manager, **Sabina Kariat**/Public Arts Program Manager, **Sarah Dawson McClean**/Communication and Marketing Manager/ Photographer, **Michelle Lin**/Artist Growth Program Director, **Goli Hashemi**/Arts and Wellness Program Director, **Nick Kanozik**/Arts in Schools Program Director, **Miles Markstein**/Development Director, **Leva Zand**/Executive Director

and Kiana Karimi/ Website Design, Romina Zabihian/ Design and Visual Branding, Carlo Castillo/ Social Media and Communication Intern

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Anita Fong, Tal Ariel, Jennifer Brown, Julie Ericson, Kellie Parker, Nino Fernandez, Vilasini Roy

VOLUNTEERS

Zuhal Radmanish, Lisa King, Cynthu Muthusamy, Rebs Redman, Gisela Mariscal, Nasjah McKay, Jasmin Kouhkan, Barnali Ghosh, Anirvan Chatterjee, Chien Nguyen, Lillian Rosenthal, Leop Skyes, Nicholas Basta, Meghana Bisineer, Brian Kalin O” Connel, Erica Surat Andersen, Rani Bagai, Paola Ryees Melendez, Chris McClean

TEACHING ARTISTS AND FACILITATORS

Olivia Eng, Sen Mendez, Cynthu Muthusamy, Anand Vedawala, Claudia Sanchez Gonzalez, Chetna Menhta, Sabina Kariat, Ariana Sarwari, Amina Mousavi, Dina Asna, Paola Ramirez, Angie Chaparro, Jess Nguyen, Fred C Riley III, Jarin Tindall, Caryl Kientz

AFFILIATED ARTISTS

Jy Jimmie Flora Gabiola, Ipeleng Kgositsile, Romina Zabihian, Dalar Alahverdi, Arina Sarwari-Stadnyk, Valerie Win Liu, Taro Hattori, Sabina Shanti Kariat, Jun Yang, Anita Sulimanovic, Eva Agus, Bushra Gill, Ujjayini Sikha, Jessica Nguyen, Kimberley Acebo Arteche, Samira Akbari, Somaieh Amini, Linah Sofi, Allison Goetz Davis, Sen Mendez, Peter Gee, Russel Arelis, Ezra Mara, Fernanda Martinez, Martin Rodriguez Serrano, Jaide Lin, Leyla Jamil Rzayeva, Nhien Le, Lark, Shooting Within, Dion, Mariel Paat, Renacimiento, Hargun Mahal Mann, Salma Arastu, Ria Sharma, Lorraine Lawson, Yuting Wang, Chupis, Vreni Michelini Castillo, YouBeen Kim, Tatiana Carvalho, Narges Valibeigi, Amanda Messina Gerodias, Christina Xu, Glish Group (Anastasia Shubina & Timofey Glinin), Ngân Vű, Deyci Carrillo López, Vairea Tupana Samn, Shabnam Piryaei, Beatriz Escobar, Shruti Abhishek, Judit Navratil, Edward Gunawan, Manu Kaur, Suzanne Tay-Kelley, Giovanna Lomanto, Nicola Andrews, Nishath Azad, May-Li Khoe, Neha Bagchi, London Pinkney, Lee Herrick, Kim Shuck, Ayodele Nzinga, Luiza Flynn-Goodlett, Noah Sanders, Anand Vedawala, Jingyu Li, Elsa Valmidiano, Shelley Siegel, Joy Diaz-Noriega, Ariam Araya, Jorge Freeman, Benjamin Bartu, Diana To, Jadma Noronha, Ruta Ghebrewold, Olivia Eng, Aga Ruda, Laila Waziri, Jason Wyman, Jessica Yuru Zhou, Kazumi Chin, Moragaut Souet, Laksha Dantran, Yaffa, Sonemai Bitna, Aspensong Nevarez, NiQueen Jones, Erina Alejo, Mo Asebiomo

PARTNERS

Asian American Women Artists Association, East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, Emerging Arts Professionals, Kearny Street Workshop, Oakland Art Murmur, Oakland Asian Cultural Center, Center for Empowering Refugees and Immigrants, Jewish Family and Community Service Center, Oakland International High School, Fremont High School, Czar Chavez first five - Unity Council, Samuel Merritt University, Asian Health Services, TRYBE, Clinton Park Collaboration, Oakland Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce, AYPAL

WE ALSO GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT FROM:

Ayesha Mojididi, Nilab Habibi, Noor Othman, Alona Grechana, Audge Salindong, Rojina Magar, Priyanka Khadka, Aisha Faizi, Maryam Ahmadi, Nahid Mujaddide, Muzhgan Mujadidie, 3 Lopez Media Inc, Saboor Bidar productions, Claire Burke, Masami Chin, Bushra Gill, KTVU Fox 2

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INDIVIDUAL DONORS

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