

Rhythmix and AEF Bring Visual, Performing Arts to Students

This fall, the Alameda Education Foundation (AEF) and Rhythmix have embarked on a new partnership to help get arts education into our schools during the pandemic.

Since 2012, Rhythmix Cultural Works has provided arts assemblies for elementary school students in grades 2-5. This free youth arts education program was designed to both foster awareness of world cultures and empower underserved youth through exposure to educational world music and dance performances.



Virginia Jourdon, whose "Liberty" is shown here, is one of the artists that elementary students studied this fall.

Due to the pandemic this year, the program is now offering free recorded performances that can be shared with classrooms. The focus is specifically on exposing students to artists of different cultures. Each assembly also includes an artist profile and recorded art lessons, provided by AEF, that relate to the cultural focus that month.

So far the featured performing artists have included Cunamacué (dedicated to promoting Afro-Peruvian culture through its music and dance); Cascada de Flores (which brings Mexican arts traditions alive); and The Qadim Ensemble (which performs music of the Near East). Visual artists have included Peruvian-American muralist Talavera-Ballón, Mexican-American muralist Irene Juárez O'Connell, and Hindu/Muslim painter Salma Arastu. The artists' work and videos can be seen on the [PAL Gallery](#).

Rhythmix is currently taking registrations for the spring 2021 PAL series, which will include performance videos by the Crosspulse Percussion Ensemble (world percussion and body music), Chelle! & Friends (music of New Orleans), Sewam Dance (American Indian dance), Tandy Beal's Magic Carpet (world music and dance) and Eth-noh-tec (Asian-American storytelling theater).

The PAL program is offered free to 2nd - 5th grade teachers in Alameda County and is supported by the Alameda Community Foundation, Bill Graham Memorial Foundation, California Arts Council, Kiwanis Foundation, Quest Foundation, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Lauren & Joshua Cook, Laurel Scheinman, Victor Jin & Dianne Richmond, and the Shuler-Heimburger Family Fund.

“We are excited to offer these educational arts experiences that we hope will inspire and remind students of the beautiful cultural diversity of our community and world,” says PAL Coordinator Michelle Labrador. “We all need this now more than ever!” Teachers can find more information about the program on the [Rhythmix website](#) or by emailing pal@rhythmix.org.