

CALIFORNIA DESERT  
ARTS COUNCIL



## ANNUAL REVIEW 2016-17

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**CALIFORNIA DESERT ARTS COUNCIL, LLC (#47-4567732)**

A nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization founded in December 2015 to unify, empower, and promote the arts and culture communities in the Coachella Valley region



**CHRISTI SALAMONE**

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2016/17**

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THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE TIME FOR THE ARTS in the Coachella Valley region. We're seeing new and exciting events, garnering international media attention, and finding new audiences. Since moving to Greater Palm Springs in 1986, I've witnessed the birth and growth of impressive cultural events and institutions. Conceived and developed by creative talent and supported by patrons, business, government, residents, and visitors, they serve as magnets for visitors and shape the character of this wonderful place.

Working in the creative sector for longer than 20 years I've been part of ongoing dialog with colleagues and community stakeholders about needs and opportunities for creative expression in our region. As our cultural landscape grows richer and more dynamic, the need for an organizing force became clear. Who better than our organization to champion the development of the arts and culture sector by creating opportunities for visual and performing artists, empowering and advocating for the creative community, curating experiences for residents and visitors, and promoting the region as an arts and culture destination?

We created the California Desert Arts Council (CDAC) to help grow and sustain the arts through four service pillars: advocacy, business and professional development, cultural tourism and promotion, and education.

CDAC offers a unified voice and a centralized resource to facilitate collaboration and strategic alignment of the arts community. Our efforts identify and channel valuable resources and information to support and create jobs so vital to our local economy. Our valuable partnership with the Greater Palm Springs CVB is already producing outcomes in brand and product development to support cultural tourism. We are so grateful for this relationship.

Our goals are simple: more innovative new opportunities for artists of all kinds, more visitation instigated by the arts, more engagement from local residents, and more jobs and long-term positive impacts on our economy.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE ARTS.

CALIFORNIA DESERT ARTS COUNCIL (CDAC) was founded in December 2015 with a mission to unify, empower, and promote the arts and culture community of the Coachella Valley region. Its roots trace to 2007, when ad-hoc members of the community, including representatives of the long-established nonprofit La Quinta Arts Foundation (LQAF), began meeting to discuss the needs and objectives of the region's creative sector.

In order to obtain a baseline understanding of the region's cultural assets, the group commissioned the 2012 Creative California Desert Economic Study. The report revealed almost one out of every five persons working in the Coachella Valley is employed in the creative sector, generating a raw impact of about \$1 billion per year in 2010. The study also identified the need for formal organization and representation of the arts community.

## LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

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La Quinta Arts Foundation (LQAF) took the lead to incorporate and obtain non-profit tax exemption for CDAC. It continues to provide seed funding and in-kind support, including staffing. A Memorandum of Understanding with the Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) established a partnership to collaborate to develop the arts and culture sector, and execute cultural tourism strategies.

## MISSION

California Desert Arts Council unifies, empowers, and promotes the arts and culture communities of the Coachella Valley region.

## VISION

The arts in all forms and constructs are vital assets to thriving communities. CDAC champions vibrant, diverse, and exceptional arts and culture in the Coachella Valley region.

***"California Desert Arts Council could help arts organizations show how they could impact a wide region instead of just a few individuals."***

**Bruce Fessier**  
*The Desert Sun*

***“We must grow and nurture the creative economy in such a way that will boost the tourism and leisure industry and raise the cultural profile of Greater Palm Springs.”***

**Scott White, CEO**  
Greater Palm Springs CVB  
at the Greater Palm Springs Economic Summit

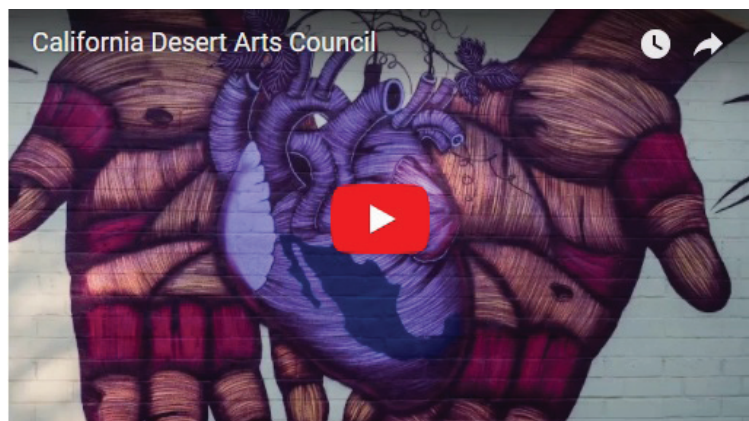
### GETTING ROLLING

Capturing creative, business, civic, and tourism stakeholder input garnered from a series of listening sessions and needs assessments, CDAC determined our organizational service pillars:

- Advocacy
- Business and Professional Development
- Cultural Tourism and Promotion
- Education

We then set about developing a business plan detailing goals, objectives, and initiatives under each service pillar.

To test the theory that the arts and culture assets in all nine Coachella Valley cities could be collectively promoted under a tourism banner, we completed a 60-page application and won a 2016 World Festival and Event City Award from the International Festival & Event Association (IFEA). The application detailed our region’s world-class events and their infrastructure and support systems. Greater Palm Springs joined other premier destinations around the globe in receiving this distinction, reinforcing the potential of our cultural tourism objectives.



### PUBLIC DEBUT

CDAC made its public debut November 1, 2016, with a video presentation at Coachella Valley Economic Partnership’s 12th Annual Greater Palm Springs Economic Summit, which drew more than 750 business and civic leaders to the Palm Springs Convention Center.

## CADESERTARTS.ORG

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Local artists and arts organizations identified the lack of and need for a single collection and dissemination point for creative sector information, as well as a central resource for residents and visitors to find them and their offerings.

Aligned with our service pillars, the website provides:

- An arts and culture calendar and curated itineraries for residents and visitors
- Arts and culture opportunities, including jobs, calls for artists, and residencies
- Access to free and low-cost training, technical assistance, and professional services
- Information about advocacy tools and resources
- A news blog and access to a free e-newsletter
- Information about CDAC's efforts, and how (and why) to support the arts

***"We've created a website that's easy to use and loaded with useful information ... designed to meet the needs of producers and consumers of art and culture."***

**Christi Salamone**  
*The Public Record*

## SOCIAL MEDIA

California Desert Arts Council launched social media channels in October 2016 to align with National Arts & Humanities Month. CDAC has a growing social media audience on multiple platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We plan to establish a LinkedIn presence for B-to-B interactions, and we park our videos on YouTube.

## E-NEWSLETTER

CDAC began publishing a monthly e-newsletter in December 2016 with links to sector news, a curated selection of events, and highlights of upcoming CDAC news, events, and opportunities.

## BRAND IDENTITY

California Desert Arts Council's brand identity, values, and attributes are reinforced throughout communications and messaging. As thought leaders in the community, CDAC is committed to speaking with a knowledgeable, friendly, and concise voice, and to craft clean, consistent, and engaging communications to inform and empower.

## VALLEY VOICE

## We should support the transformative power of the arts

If you've ever lost yourself in a song, marveled at a painting, or felt the energy of live theater, you understand the transformative power of the arts. They win our attention, distract us from the mundane, show us beauty and joy, challenge our understanding, and help us interpret our experiences and empathize with others.

The arts enhance our quality of life and make us better people. By providing arts education to children, we produce adults who are better-rounded, creative problem solvers, and compassionate. And a variety of studies show people who engage in the arts, as participants or spectators, enjoy greater health and personal satisfaction.

The arts also have a sizable economic benefit. They not only provide entertainment and cultural opportunities for those of us who live here, but also attract visitors, who patronize our hotels, restaurants, attractions, and stores.

Last June, Gov. Jerry Brown signed a budget that included a \$108 million funding increase for the statewide California Arts Council to meet the needs and demand for arts programs benefiting diverse communities across the state. The new California Desert Arts Council (CDAC) will work to capture our fair share of those grant dollars to support programs focused on arts learning and engagement; equity and access; cultural tourism and community development; and technical support and resources.

As marquee events such as the Palm Springs International Film Festival, Modernism Week, and Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival (aka Coachella) gain wider appeal, they create an attractive framework for other arts and culture events and venues — from galleries to theaters to pop-up and nontraditional spaces — to become



**Christi Salamone**

visible and grow in lockstep with their first-class programming.

The Coachella Valley is home to a diverse and dynamic artistic community, rich in cultural heritage. The regional creative economy accounts for one out of every five jobs and generates almost \$1 billion per year in raw impact. Arts and tourism leaders see this as a strong foundation on which to grow. The question is where to start.

This month, the California Desert Arts Council will kick off its Community Conversations Project, a series of informal listening sessions held throughout the valley that start an important conversation on the critical importance of the arts in our community and ways community members can help shape the future and harness the transformative power of the arts locally.

The arts are vital to the quality of life and economic development of the Coachella Valley region. A robust arts community will attract people who want to live, work, and visit here. As a community, we must nurture and invest in the arts. Through the CDAC, everybody who enjoys art, music, theater, dance, and other creative pursuits — or who cares about the cultural profile or the economic well-being of our community — has an opportunity to get involved and help our arts thrive for the greater good.

Christi Salamone is president and CEO of California Desert Arts Council. Email her at [christi@cdadesartarts.org](mailto:christi@cdadesartarts.org).

## PRESS AND RECOGNITION

California Desert Arts Council has received press from local and national outlets, attracting recognition from a variety of blogs, newspapers, and newsletters.

In late 2016, CDAC published an op-ed and received news coverage in *The Desert Sun*, which was highlighted in the California Arts Council's ArtBeat Newsletter.

Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP) mentioned CDAC in its weekly newsletters and in its *Vision Greater Palm Springs* magazine.

### Highlights:

- ✓ This Week at CVEP e-newsletter mentions: 9/27/16, 10/4/16, 10/11/16, 10/18/16, 11/8/16, 11/15/16, 11/22/16, 11/29/16
- ✓ *Vision Greater Palm Springs* magazine, page 33
- ✓ *The Desert Sun*, Skip Descant, 10/1/16
- ✓ *Palm Springs Life*, "Transformational Tourism," 10/10/16
- ✓ *Greater Coachella Valley Business Journal* feature, 11/1/16
- ✓ *The Desert Sun*, Valley Voice, 11/18/16
- ✓ *The Desert Sun*, Bruce Fessier, interview/feature, 11/20/16
- ✓ *California Art Beat*, a publication of California Arts Council, 11/30/16
- ✓ Coachella Valley "What's Happening" 11/23/16, 12/1/16
- ✓ *Palm Springs Life Art+Culture*, Winter/Spring 2017, Editor's Letter
- ✓ International Festivals & Events Association, 12/1/16
- ✓ *Idyllwild Crier*, artist Robert Ferguson/CDAC partnership, 4/13/17



## ADVOCACY

California Desert Arts Council recognizes that successful advocacy efforts are attained by coalescing the community around a goal, and mobilizing them into action. Critical to that effort is cultivating partnerships with civic and business leaders, and amassing information and data to support each cause.

CDAC began collecting, aggregating, and facilitating easy access to information on our resource platform. We pursue ongoing data collection to support cultural asset mapping, collaborative programming, granting resources, and shaping cultural policy.

Activism resources available on CDAC's website include: connection to the region's elected officials, public arts and cultural commissions, arts advocacy organizations, and legal & professional assistance.

An advocacy initiative underway is an effort to champion the Coachella Valley for California State Cultural District designation with several outcomes in mind:

- ✓ Brand the region as a world-class (and year-round) arts and culture destination.
- ✓ Foster collaboration between artists and organizations.
- ✓ Create professional opportunities for local artists.
- ✓ Enable organizations to build and engage audiences through unified marketing.
- ✓ Provide a platform to expand the role of Hispanic, Native American, and artist communities to ensure an authentic experience and avoid displacement.
- ✓ Inspire greater pride in place.



*Top: An artist puts the finishing touch on his mural for Coachella Walls. Center: Traditional dance highlights the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians' pow-wow. Bottom: A college student visits the studio of artist Phillip K. Smith III during Desert X.*



*Artists, arts administrators, educators, economic development and tourism professionals, and other stakeholders participated in three listening sessions — in Indio, Palm Desert, and Palm Springs — providing valuable information, perspectives, and programming ideas to the staff of CDAC.*

### Highlights:

- ✓ Attended the California Arts Council State Cultural District Designation Public Input Meeting, Los Angeles (10/3/16)
- ✓ Attended the California Arts Council Public Meeting and Grants Workshop, Riverside (12/15/16)
- ✓ Research of arts councils: strategic plan, membership, directory models.
- ✓ Grant research; California Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts.
- ✓ CDAC prepared and submitted an application to the California Arts Council for consideration of Cultural District designation by the State of California. Although we did not meet the criteria established for cohorts of the initial roll-out, we received valuable feedback for the next application round in 2019.



## BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CDAC listening sessions revealed a desire for opportunities to assemble the community to network, share ideas and resources, and collaborate, while also providing valuable instruction, tools, and resources for learning and enrichment.

### ARTS SALONS

CDAC presents free monthly salons to accomplish these and other objectives. The events spotlight host arts and culture establishments and draw an average of more than 50 artists, arts administrators, and government representatives to each program.

The first salon, on May 17, 2017, at CREATE Center for the Arts in Palm Desert, featured three thought leaders in an interactive program about summer strategies for artists and arts organizations:

- ✓ **Joyce Kiehl**, director of communications, Greater Palm Springs CVB
- ✓ **Arlene Amick**, director of audience engagement & communication, Palm Springs Art Museum
- ✓ **Erick Lemus**, consultant

The second salon, June 13, 2017, at Coachella Valley Art Center in Indio, featured sculptor **Patrick Blythe** discussing “Art, Soul, and Community.”

At the time of this writing, CDAC has scheduled a salon each month of the 2017-18 season in locations across the Coachella Valley.

### AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS NATIONAL ARTS MARKETING PROJECT

Big Strategies & Real Tactics for Connecting Artists, Audience, and Place, a full-day professional development workshop scheduled for October 12, will feature **Ben Stone** of Smart Growth America and **Joseph Yoshitomi** of Straightforward Marketing & Consulting, who offer expert instruction on arts marketing, audience development, cultural tourism, and creative placemaking. CDAC organized the event in partnership with Americans for the Arts and host and sponsor UCR Palm Desert.



*Top: More than 50 artists and arts administrators attended CDAC's first free monthly arts salon to discuss summer strategies for the creative community. Bottom: Artist Patrick Blythe presented the second arts salon about his life in art.*



*Joseph Yoshitomi (left), a marketing and audience development consultant, and Ben Stone, who specializes in cultural districts and creative placemaking, headline a full-day workshop, Big Strategies and Real Tactics for Connecting Artists, Audience, and Place, on Oct. 12 at UCR Palm Desert.*



*On behalf of the Greater Palm Springs destination, CDAC applied for and won a prestigious World Festival and Event City Award from International Festival and Event Association. CEO Christi Salmone accepted the award at an event in Tucson, Arizona.*

***“Marquee events, such as music and film festivals, create a framework for local arts events and organizations to promote their programming and grow their audiences.”***

**The Editors**  
*Palm Springs Life ARTS+CULTURE*

## CULTURAL TOURISM & PROMOTION

### Highlights:

- ✓ On behalf of Greater Palm Springs, CDAC prepared a 60-page application and won a World Festival and Event City Award from the International Festival and Events Association (IFE A), the first time this award was presented to a region versus an individual city.
- ✓ CDAC attended a Greater Palm Springs CVB FAM for travel writers and subsequently connected art writer Scarlet Cheng with Simeon Den/Agnes Pelton Society in Cathedral City.
- ✓ CDAC and the CVB attended the XLIVE Conference in December 2016, meeting with large-scale event producers and vendors to assess their viability in Greater Palm Springs.
- ✓ CDAC became a Founding Member of Desert X and forged a connection with College of the Desert for student docents. Desert X is a valleywide, biennial exhibition of site-specific art installations.

**Brand development:** CDAC and Greater Palm Springs CVB are collaborating on a strategy and campaign to brand and promote Greater Palm Springs as a destination for arts and culture.

**Product development:** CDAC is developing tours, programs, and experiences to align with CVB’s Destination Development Plan, which aims to increase visitation from 12 million to 16 million by 2026. CDAC is also advising and assisting a student developing a public art tour app for the Greater Palm Springs CVB.

**Visitor itineraries:** CDAC publishes and promotes itineraries for culture-loving visitors and residents. Itineraries are available for lovers of visual arts, architecture and design, and music and stage. We also provide arts concierge picks and will soon introduce guest concierge picks. CDAC works with CVB to aggregate these experiences in marketing efforts to visitors.

**Market assistance:** CDAC consults and collaborates with the CVB as it expands the presence of the Arts and Culture category on its website and in print and digital marketing.



*"By providing arts education to children, we produce adults who are better rounded, creative problem solvers, and compassionate."*

Christi Salamone  
Valley Voice  
*The Desert Sun*

## EDUCATION

UNDERSTANDING THE CRITICAL NEED TO EDUCATE and retain a creative workforce, CDAC has set a path to engage with all local school districts, colleges, and universities in a consultative and collaborative manner.

## MEET THE CREATIVES

CDAC partners with One Future Coachella Valley (formerly Coachella Valley Economic Partnership), serving on its Arts, Media, and Entertainment Industry Council and programming and recruiting more than 30 professionals to participate in **Meet the Creatives**, a half-day career explorations event on Oct. 17, 2017, for high school juniors and seniors interested in careers in arts, media, and entertainment. The program will accommodate 180 students and include career panels on digital storytelling and photography, digital design, visual and performing (fine) arts, and creative and other writing. Students will learn soft skills and resume writing tips, and participate in portfolio reviews and mock interviews.

**CALIFORNIA DESERT ARTS COUNCIL, LLC**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
June 30, 2017

ASSETS	
Cash and Equivalents	93,402
Prepaid Expenses	2,484
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TOTAL ASSETS	95,886
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LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable	10,800
Deferred Revenue	25,000
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Total Liabilities	35,800
Net Assets	60,086
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TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	95,886
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**CALIFORNIA DESERT ARTS COUNCIL, LLC**  
**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS**  
June 30, 2017

REVENUE	
Grants	100,000
Contributions	300
In Kind Contributions	30,058
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TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	130,358
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EXPENSES	
Program Expenses	108,549
Administration Expenses	26,339
Website	6,897
Accounting	2,500
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TOTAL EXPENSES	144,285
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Excess of Revenues over Expenses	(13,927)
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