

CATALYST MUSE



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CATALYST MUSE AWARDED \$10,000 GRANT TO MAKE DOCUMENTARY FILM

(Topanga, CA) Community Engagement of Orange County, CA has awarded Catalyst Muse Creativity & Change Consultancy a \$10,000 grant to make a short, documentary film about the 4th Annual Akumal Arts Festival (AAF) on Mexico's Caribbean coast. Festival programs will be held Friday - Sunday, January 28-30, 2022. It all started in 2018 in Akumal, a small town situated between Cancun and Tulum, on what's known as the Riviera Maya.

A conversation about safety between a business owner and a civic leader led to talk about better lighting on the bridge over the main highway. This brainstorm led to the thought of beautifying the bridge, which led to the idea of beautifying the town, which began to unify the town. All of this led to a community wide festival that quickly tapped into a global network of street artists. One hundred and two artists from 13 countries are scheduled to paint murals, offer workshops, and cultivate vital exchanges of wisdom, knowledge, and passion for this work.

Community Engagement is a longtime supporter of the festival and proponent of creative placemaking. According to the US National Endowment for the Arts, creative placemaking is the practice of "integrating arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities."

Through this lens, Kim Zanti will direct the film, in collaboration with AAF co-producer and longtime colleague Marti Johnston, videographers Melissa "Zippy" Downing of COLabs, and Joe Schipani of Flint Public Art Project in Michigan. These kindred spirits recognize that artists are a powerful force for transformative change. Our film is for audiences hungry for stories that show us a better way to solve problems, sustain health and hope for the future of our planet. The film will be submitted to film festivals around the world and serve as a centerpiece of talks, writing, and conversations with audiences specifically knowledgeable or curious about creative placemaking as a visionary practice.

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