



CULTURAL COALITION

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Cultural Coalition, Inc's Mission is to connect communities and generations to ancestral knowledge and practices through artistic cultural preservation and programs that celebrate Chicano, Latiné, and Indigenous heritages.

ABOUT CULTURAL COALITION, INC.



Since 1996, Cultural Coalition, Inc, a non-profit arts organization has been dedicated to providing accessible arts engagement through unique cultural programs. Our Vision is to celebrate diverse cultures, serve families, provide cultural education, and create new traditions.

OUR MISSION is to connect communities and generations to ancestral knowledge and practices through artistic cultural preservation and programs that celebrate Chicano, Latiné, and Indigenous heritages.

Our programmatic activities aim to educate, promote and develop cultural arts programs and engage artists in the Phoenix area while preserving, producing, and presenting socially significant community traditions.

Through art events and multidisciplinary performances, we tell our collective universal stories, and our traditional icons are kept alive and relevant to our contemporary culture.

Supporting our local Chicano, Latiné and BIPOC artists is an imperative goal of our organization. Artists are the visionaries and communicators of contemporary issues; it is vital to continue utilizing the arts as a way to reach new audiences while preventing commercial exploitation and cultural appropriations.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDERS



Dear Friends & Supporters of Cultural Coalition,

Looking at all we accomplished in 2023, I am so pleased to share it was an amazing year that surpassed our expectations. Our ability to provide more programs, increase the number of communities we serve, and reach larger audiences was due to the unwavering support and dedication of our artists, donors, volunteers, staff, and board.

A big milestone for us, after 27 years, we updated our mission! Our organization has grown so much, in who we are, what we do, and who we serve. It was time to reexamine who we are, and reflect that in our mission statement. Adopted in September 2023, Cultural Coalition's new mission is to:

Connect communities and generations to ancestral knowledge and practices through artistic cultural preservation and programs that celebrate Chicano, Latiné, and Indigenous heritages.

We embodied this new mission when we relaunched our annual spring fundraiser Volver, debuted a fun new fall fundraiser concert, **Calaca Café** at Crescent Ballroom, which also saw the return of Zúm Zúm Zúm. We also partnered with more arts and culture organizations in 2023, which led to greater opportunities for our artists.

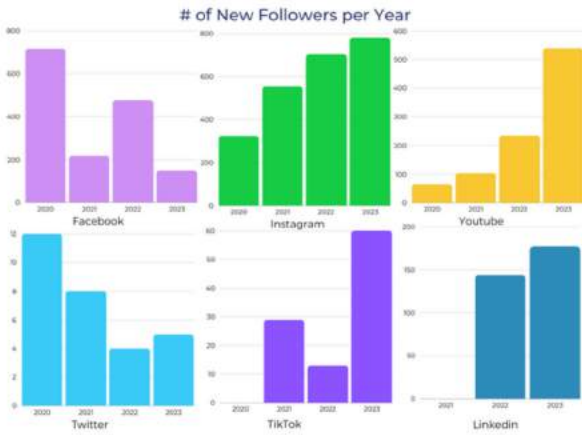
Another milestone for us was the launch of our Mask Alive Art Collection online. Featuring over 500 objects that tell the history of Arizona's performing arts. We also installed eight pop-up exhibits at two locations in downtown Mesa. Both of these programs were free to the public, increasing access to the cultural arts!

Thank you, Gracias, Tlazokamati,

Carmen & Zarco Guerrero

2023 ORGANIZATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

This was the first full year Cultural Coalition had two full time employees working for the organization... and it shows! Staff were able to write over 35 grants, apply for over 20 corporate sponsorships, and awarded a combined total of over \$120,000.



AREAS OF GROWTH IN 2023

- Individual Giving increased 38% compared to 2022
- Program and Festival Sponsorships DOUBLED
- Secured FOUR NEW GRANT AWARDS totaling \$23,100
- Grew social media followers by OVER 100% on three platforms: YouTube, TikTok, & LinkedIn

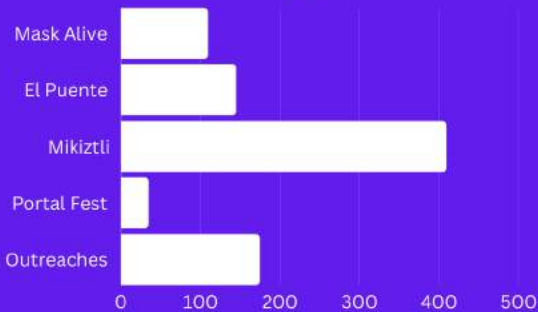
CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

- 338 hours donated by 90 volunteers
- Provided over a dozen outreaches & educational activities in eight different cities
- Collaborated with seven different arts & culture organizations to produce events and programs

INSPIRING GENERATIONS

- NEW weekly music and robotics programs offered at After School Arts Program
- Hosted a 2-day mask making workshop for high school students visiting from Colorado
- Supported over 180 youth performing artists at our four annual festivals

Artist Supported



NEW THIS YEAR

The Mask Alive Museum Online Collection and pop-up exhibits were launched! Providing free access to over 500 works of art, online and in-person. Cultural Coalition installed eight different pop-up exhibits in two locations in downtown Mesa. They displayed works by Zarco Guerrero, costumes folkórico companies, photographs, videos, and works by his apprentices.



After School Art Program @ El Rancho del Arte Apartments

Since 2016, Cultural Coalition's has operated a free After School Arts Program at El Rancho del Arte serves over 100 local children annually, from ages 5 to 13. Open 240 days during the school year, Mondays through Fridays from 3 to 5:30 p.m., the program provides a safe space for students to come for a free meal provided by St. Mary's Food Bank, homework help, art activities, and field trips.

We continue to partner with Local First Arizona, Mercy House, Empact, and the Mesa Police Department Community Relations - Youth Programs to provide occasional programming and special events for the students at the classroom.

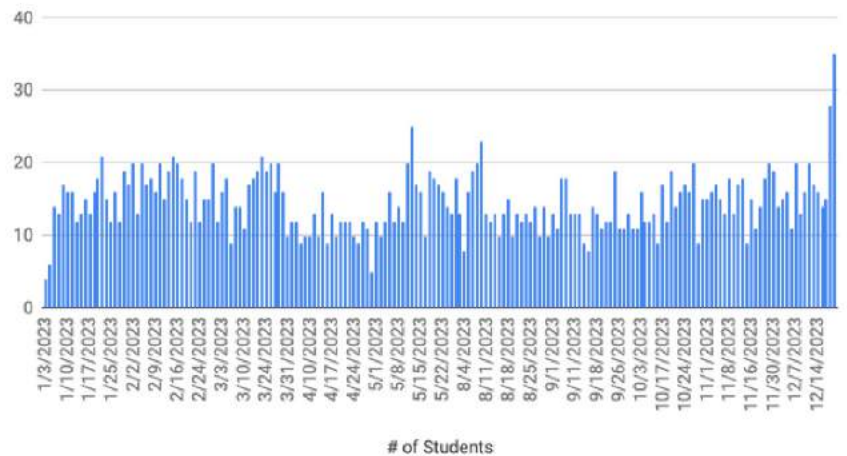
Funding for this program is provided by our standing service contract with Community Development Partners, Wells Belles and individual donations.

NEW IN 2023

Thanks to a grant from YWCA, Intel, and SRP we launched the Mariachi S.T.E.A.M. AZ music and robotics program in June as a free four day summer program. It was so well received by the students, and inspiring for our community, that we implemented the weekly activities of music and robotics for the 2023/2024 school year.

In these weekly activities, students are able to learn how to play multiple musical instruments and receive hands-on instruction related to coding, mechanical and electrical engineering.

2023 Daily Attendance



**"All summer break I was looking forward to coming back to the After School Program to draw."
~ Jose P., age 11**

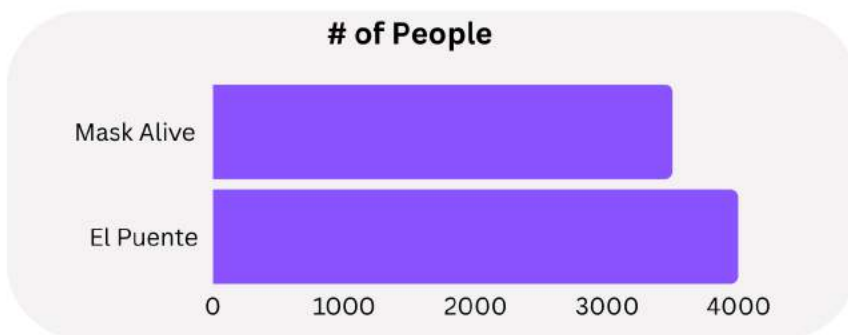
FESTIVALS

Mask Alive Festival

The 6th Annual Mask Alive Festival took place on Sunday, March 5 at Pioneer Park in Mesa and had the largest number of masked audience members ever! **NEW THIS YEAR**, Artistic Director Zarco Guerrero collaborated with Taiko Drum Troupe Koshio Gumi and experimental rock band Enparoxismo to create new masks for their groups to perform in.

Long time collaborators Primavera Ballet Folklórico also revived an original dance they created with Zarco back in 1982, wearing his Nagual Masks - La Mascarada!

Funded in part by Raza Development Fund, the City of Mesa Diversity Office, and Mesa City Councilmembers, the festival was presented as a free family friendly event with arts activities, food vendors, and more artist vendors.



El Puente Festival

El Puente, the spanish word for bridge, features youth performance artists to bridge generations and cultures through traditional arts. The 11th Annual El Puente Festival took place on Sunday, April 2 at Tempe Center for the Art.

Free performances in the Studio and lobby, and arts activities throughout the facility make this event a true multigenerational experience. **NEW THIS YEAR:**

- Borderlands Theater performed a short play, *La Reina*, with Zarco's 8-ft puppets
- More art activities - yoga, hula hoops, & print making
- Hosted our 1st VIP Donor Reception before the event to thank sustaining donors who have supported the organization over the years

Funded in part by the City of Tempe, TCC Rocks.



77%

of survey respondents said they learned something new about indigenous cultures in Arizona



"I love the enrichment and authenticity that you provide for this festival. I did not grow up in the regions of my ancestors. I imagine your celebrations are an expansive expression of their traditions and culture. Thank you."



Portal to the Past Festival

The 5th Annual Portal to the Past Festival celebrated the art and ingenuity of the Ancestral Sonoran Desert People on Saturday, November 18 with an estimated 750 people in attendance. A partnership with S'edav Va'aki Museum (formerly Pueblo Grande Museum), the festival featured O'Odham artist demonstrations, performances, and crafts that highlight the history of water in the desert.

NEW THIS YEAR:

- A traditional Toka Tournament using a stick and puck made by women of the Salt River, Gila River, & Tohono O'Odham Nation was played before the festival
- Talk & Book Signing with Authors Thosh Collins and Chelsey Luger
- A tour of the Park of Four Waters prehistoric canals

Supported by the Arizona Humanities Council, S'edav Va'aki Foundation, Raza Development Fund, TCC Rocks, and individual donors.

MIKIZTLI: Día de los Muertos Festival

Over 8,500 attendees celebrated the season on transcendence at our 12th Annual MIKIZTLI: Día de los Muertos Festival on Sunday, October 29 at Steele Indian School Park in Phoenix.

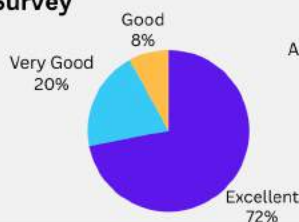
NEW THIS YEAR:

- Expanded the event footprint two ares of the park to give families more room to watch performances
- Increased the number of food trucks with alleviated long lines
- LARGEST number of vendors booths ever - Over 60!
- Over 400 artists of all ages performed, puppeteered, or conducted art activities throughout the day

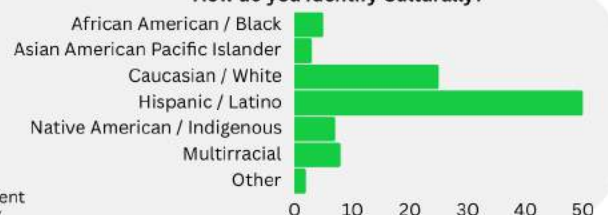
MIKIZTLI remains a free community event thanks to support and funding provided by AT&T, Raza Development Fund, Piper Charitable Trust, Phoenix Office of Arts & Culture, Arizona Commission on the Arts, M3F Fund, Lerner & Rowe, Cox Charities, and more.

Mikiztli Survey

How would you rate your overall experience?



How do you identify culturally?



OUTREACH & PROGRAMS

Community Outreach

Cultural Coalition artists, volunteers, and staff are dedicated to bringing free cultural arts engagement activities and programs to our communities.

You may have seen our mask making booths, altar art activities, performances, or puppeteers at these events in 2023:

- Glendale Arts & Culture Festival
- Kids in Focus Noche de los Niños at Arizona Heritage Center
- Phoenix Art Museum Amalia Mesa-Bains **Archaeology of Memory** Exhibit Opening
- MAC season opener
- Phoenix Art Museum Family Fundays - May & October

Educational Workshops

Our hands-on cultural arts activities and programs enable us to create meaningful connections between communities and traditional arts. Some of our favorites this year included:

- Phoenix Art Museum Día de los Muertos altar making activity with Felipa Lerma
- 2-Day Mask Workshop with Teens at Zarco's studio
- Music of the Americas presentations by Carmen & Zarco Guerrero in schools for grades 1 to 5
- Día de los Muertos & Our River Stories masked storytelling performances by Zarco Guerrero at over 15 libraries, schools, and community centers

Collaborations & Partnerships

Our capacity to take on new collaborations and partnerships was greatly increased this year. Together with other arts & cultural organizations, neighborhood associations, and artists, we produced or supported some amazing new events in 2023:

- Dia de los Niños Festival in North Phoenix
- Maryvale Mercado Día de los Muertos Community Festival
- Indígena: A Latin American Indigenous Celebration event at Tempe Center for the Arts
- Native Holiday Market by OXDX Clothing at Tempe Center for the Arts



CITIES CULTURAL COALITION ARTISTS & OUTREACHES VISITED IN 2023:

PHOENIX
PRESCOTT
CASA GRANDE
CAMP VERDE
CHANDLER
FLAGSTAFF
GILBERT
GOODYEAR
COOLIDGE
TUCSON
TEMPE
MESA
GLENDALE



MASK ALIVE! ART COLLECTION

Cultural Coalition's Mask Alive! Art Collection legacy project was made public as an online collection in the summer of 2023. This was two years in the making, and finally made possible thanks to a gift from the Friends of Mexican Art that supported the hiring of an intern.

The online collection features high resolution photographs of the objects, detailed descriptions, a history of the objects if they have been used in performances or productions, videos, and personal narratives from the artists.

Visitors can explore five different online exhibitions, learn about the artists, and even visit a Mask Mercado with masks that were donated to fundraise for the project.

Accomplishments this year include:

- Over 200 more works of art added to the collection
- Over 500 total works of art have been inventoried
- Raised over \$12,000 for exhibits, programs, & staff
- A mini grant from Arizona Humanities supported the purchase of materials for pop-up exhibits and an artist talk with Zarco Guerrero
- A grant from the City of Phoenix Office of Arts & Culture enabled us to hire a part time Student Worker to help continue this work during the 2023/2024 school year
- Eight pop-up exhibits were installed in two Downtown Mesa locations - 111 W Main St & K'é Community Labs:
 1. Carnival Masks
 2. Nagual Masks
 3. A Study in Noh Masks
 4. Taiko Noh Masks
 5. Mask Apprentices
 6. Youth Masks: Growing Up with Tradition
 7. QuetzalCoatl Dragon & Cara Dentro
 8. CalaKabuki & Calaca Masks

"I am happy we have organizations in place like the Cultural Coalition to pass down the arts, storytelling and traditions to our next generation."

~ Adrian G., Artist Talk Attendee



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

VOLVER

I Will Be Back
A Taste of Ancestral Knowledge



Our 2023 Spring and Fall fundraisers were such fun events, where we really had a chance to connect with our supporters in a more meaningful way. VOLVER and the Calaca Café at Crescent Ballroom reenergized us, reigniting our passion for creating connections between our donors and our artists. These two events gave us a chance to show everyone who their donations support when they give to Cultural Coalition.

Together, we raised over \$10,000!

We heard wonderful feedback from attendees at both events, and are looking forward to hosting more FUN-raisers that celebrate our Chicano, Latiné, and Indigenous artists in 2024.

2024 will also be big year for Cultural Coalition Executive Director Carmen Guerrero as she begins her Virginia G. Piper Fellowship! During her sabbatical, Carmen will be visiting museums in the United States, Canada, and Mexico to research collections, exhibition, and fundraising strategies for the Mask Alive Art Collection Legacy Project.

**"This was
the most
joyful
fundraiser
I've ever
been to!"**

OUR OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, AND GOALS FOR 2024

- Hire a program manager
- Increase our collaborations and partnerships
- Grow our Individual Donors by 20%
- Secure new locations for Mask Alive Art Collection pop-up exhibits
- Add two new members to our board
- Identify new grants & sponsorships to support our programs, events, and staff



MEET THE STAFF

THE AWESOME PEOPLE BEHIND OUR ORGANIZATION



ZARCO GUERRERO
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
ZARKMASK.COM



CARMEN GUERRERO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CARMENCREATIONS.COM



RENEE AGUILAR
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



STIRLING ANDERSON
TEACHING ARTIST
CREATIVE DESIGN MANAGER



AMI ROGERS
PRODUCER
EVENTS MANAGER



ASHLEY CULBERTSON
OFFICE MANAGER
BOOKKEEPER



ELYANNA SMITH
ART AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT ASSISTANT

OUR AMAZING BOARD:

President -

Zarco Guerrero, Artist/Storyteller

Vice President/Treasurer -

Tom Pynn, Pynn & Associates

Fundraising Chair -

Patricia Federico, Mi Tierra Healing Arts

- **Richard Castillo**, Musician/Attorney at Law
- **Dr. Mark Sorenson**, Star School Superintendent
- **Itzimba Figueroa**, Civil Litigation Paralegal
- **Zarina Guerrero**, Marketing & Social Entrepreneurship Specialist

OUR APPRENTICES & TEACHING ARTISTS

THE AWESOME PEOPLE BEHIND OUR ORGANIZATION

APPRENTICES



**RACHAEL
MARSHALL**
APPRENTICE



**MARSHALL
VOSLER**
APPRENTICE



**ALEX
WILLIAMS**
APPRENTICE

TEACHING ARTISTS AT AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM



STIRLING ANDERSON



EMILY JOHNSON



NAHNALAH GUERRERO



MURRY TYLER



ROSE HOGUE



BETH SWADENER
VOLUNTEER



JOSE
COOKING - LOCAL FIRST



RONNIE PEREZ
MUSIC



AMELIA GOE
GARDENING - LOCAL FIRST

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION!

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Rancho del Sol
701 E Main St
Mesa, AZ 85203

THANK YOU ARTISTS

THE AMAZING ARTISTS AT OUR FESTIVALS & PROGRAMS



**BALLET FOLKLORICO
QUETZALLI-AZ**



**COATLICUE DANZA
MEXICA**



PRIMAVERA FOLKLORICO



ROSIE'S HOUSE



**OLLIN YOLIZTLI
DANCE ACADEMY**



MARIACHI RUBOR

MORE ARTISTS

Desert Sounds Mariachi
World Martial Arts Academy Lion Dance
Desert Dance Theater
Tatiana Crespo & Chispas
Astarte Belly Dancing
Enparoxismo
Violet Duncan
Harmony Project Mariachi
Cruz Waila Band
Lynn Hubbard
Gregory Hill
Felicia Cocotzin Ruiz
Zúm Zúm Zúm
Adrian Garcia

Koshio Gumi
Harmony Project
Indigenous Enterprise
QVLN-Quetzal Guerrero
Borderlands Theater
Jessica Packard
Gustavo Angeles
Keli Akimel Traditional Basket Dancers & Singers
Thosh Collins and Chelsey Luger
Nicol Carlos
Cory Hubbard
Powerdrive
Felipa Lerma
Edgar Alejandro Gamez Sosa

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING CULTURAL COALITION

UPPER LEVEL SUPPORTERS



PROGRAM LEVEL SUPPORTERS

City of Mesa
Community Development Project
Crescent Ballroom
Friends of Mexican Art
INTEL

JARS Cannabis
S'edav Va'aki Foundation
Southwest Human Development
Unidos US
YWCA

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