

November 2023

On November 18, Arts Benicia opened its seventh and eighth gallery exhibitions of the year, *Properties of Water* and *Solano Water Stories*. The response to these exhibitions by visitors, the excitement of the artists about their participation, and the importance of the subject matter reminds us how significant the work is that we do in the arts.

*Properties of Water* includes 90 works by artists from throughout the US and Canada, of diverse media including painting, sculpture, glass, fiber art, ceramic, and video; each



*Properties of Water, November 2023*

artist has responded to the theme of water, our most essential resource. *Solano Water Stories* is part of a larger Arts Benicia grant project called *Stewarding our Water Resources: Solano Artists Create, Collaborate, and Educate*, funded by the California Creative Corps, a program of the California Arts Council. This exhibition and other project activities are engaging artists in creating original material to educate Californians about water conservation and climate mitigation.

These are just two of the eight gallery exhibitions we hosted this year, including bringing back our *Next Generation* exhibition after a three-year hiatus. Add to that the eight Arts Benicia Presents exhibitions in local venues, a weekend pop-up exhibition supporting Benicia Arsenal Artists Open Studios, and a dynamic roster of arts education classes at both our Commanding Officer's Quarters classrooms and our printmaking Annex, and you have year-round, city-wide opportunities to experience exceptional art and artmaking.

After two years in the Commanding Officer's Quarters, we have rebuilt our post-pandemic youth education program, with EcoArt Camp in the summer and youth art classes initiated this fall. We are excited to have received funding from the California Arts Council to begin a teen-focused printmaking program, adding a new mentoring component to our Teen Art Program, with novice printmakers working alongside experienced artists.



*Family Art Day, Shadow exhibition, October 2023*

Grant support is an important source of revenue for Arts Benicia, but grant monies, from the City of Benicia to the Federal government, have declined in recent years as many communities face fiscal constraints. In addition, many grants are program specific and

do not provide funding for operating support.



***This is where your gifts and memberships come in – you provide the ongoing support that is essential for Arts Benicia to plan and implement its programs in 2024 and into the future. We need your support and ask that you consider making a gift before year end.***

*Next Generation Exhibition, March 2023*

Our fundraising goal this year is \$30,000. To kick off our campaign, our Board Chair

Janet Glore Valls and her husband Joseph Valls

have established a matching gift fund of \$5,000 – for every dollar donated up to that amount, they will match your gift. Please help us take advantage of this opportunity. We know with your generous support we can reach our goal. We want to thank our longtime donors for their support and invite others to become first-time and ongoing donors. Together, we can share in the significance of what we do – creating, collaborating, educating – nurturing the creative arts in our community.

With great appreciation,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Celeste Smeland".

Celeste Smeland,  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janet Glore Valls".

Janet Glore Valls,  
Chairperson, Board of Directors

Arts Benicia is a 501 (c)(3) organization with Tax 68-0157927

To make a donation, please visit <https://artsbenicia.org/donate/> and click on "Donate Now" or mail your check to Arts Benicia, PO Box 545, Benicia, CA 94510.

If you are receiving benefits from an IRA, you may already know that many retirees can donate all or a portion of their required minimum distribution (RMD) directly to charity. This is called a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) and it can reduce your taxable income. Please check with your tax advisor. Thank you.