

**COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL SERVICES**

ARTIST OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS

Nominate an Artist for the Award

Background - Over the last 42 years, the County of Santa Cruz has selected outstanding artists nominated by the public and has honored them through the Artist of the Year Award. This award recognizes artists for outstanding achievement in the disciplines of performing, visual, or literary arts.

Previous Artists of the Year: Tandy Beal, Lou Harrison, James Houston, George Barati, Charles Hilger, William Everson, Doug McClellan, Jack Zajac, Linda Burman-Hall, Adrienne Rich, Frans Lanting, Paul Whitworth, Lynda Watson, Morton Marcus, Carol Summers, Jessica Williams, Karen Thuesen Massaro, Monica Parker, Laurie King, Richard Deutsch, Manuel Santana, Robert Kelley, Phil Collins, Susana Arias, John Babcock, Geoffrey Dunn, Shmuel Thaler, Shelley Phillips, Cheryl Anderson, Ellen Bass, Yermo Aranda, Annie Morhauser, Stephen Kessler, Tammi Brown, Janet Johns, and Micha Scott.

Nominees must meet the criteria established by the Commission:

- Must be nominated by a resident of Santa Cruz County
- Artist must reside in Santa Cruz County.
- Artist must have a national or international reputation/standing.
- Artist must have contributed to the cultural enrichment of the local community.
- Artist must have created or presented work in Santa Cruz County.

Nomination Process

Only residents of Santa Cruz County are eligible to make nominations. Santa Cruz County Parks will notify the nominees and provide them with application information. Nominees must return their application materials by the required date to be considered. A new process will open each year. Materials will be held over for up to three years for consideration.

Nomination letters must be received by March 16, 2026. **In your dated nomination letter, please include:**

- Your name and address
- The name of the artist and their contact information, including: e-mail, website, phone and local address
- A brief description of why you are nominating them for the award, and how they meet the criteria listed above

Send your nomination letter to: kathy.dewild@santacruzcountyca.gov

Selection Process

The selection panel is composed of the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission, which is made up of up to ten commissioners appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The panel will review all eligible applications, and the artist will be selected based on materials provided by the nominated artist which document:

- Excellence in the body of work presented
- Contribution to the cultural enrichment of the local community.
- Reputation of artist nationally and/or internationally