

PRESS RELEASE

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RE: SCEF River Arts Festival- Large Cultural Event

Santa Cruz Education Foundation hosts the
River Arts Festival
May 17th & 18th

For a list of [Participating Artists](#),
a [performance schedule](#), [art activity schedule](#), and [map](#)

The River Arts Festival celebrates Santa Cruz's rich cultural and natural resources while paying tribute to the illustrious "Santa Cruz Venetian Carnival" of 1895. The River Arts Festival brings the community together in an exciting cultural extravaganza to raise funds in celebration and support of art in our public schools. On **May 17th and 18th** from **11a.m.- 5p.m.**, **San Lorenzo Park** will become the "Piazza di San Lorenzo", an aesthetic **contemporary arts and crafts marketplace**. **Admission is free.**

75 Juried artists will exhibit and sell their high quality fine art and craftwork. Painting, sculpture, woodwork, ceramics, textile work, glassblowing, metalwork and other techniques will be **demonstrated** through out the event. Many Open Studios artists will be featured as well as internationally known artists Tom Killion and Paul Nzalamba, showing their newest work. 10% of the artists' sales will go to enrichment programs for 7,000 Santa Cruz City School students.

The public is invited to enjoy inspirational **art installations, musical performances, great food** and **free art activities** for the whole family. Information about the San Lorenzo River's past and plans for its future will be on display. And to add to the excitement, the SCICA will host a **Kinetic Sculpture Race** along the river.

Great **musical performances** by professional groups as well as student groups will take place on the **Duck Island Stage**. Kim Luke, Gault Elementary mother of three, will be performing with her band "Chop Suey Orchestra", a jazz jug band that is super hot! Visitors will love dancing to Batucada-nana's Brazilian beat and New Speedway Boogie's classic rock. Santa Cruz Baroque Festival will perform early classical flute arrangements and show the audience a variety of beautiful instruments. Enchanting troubadour, The Great Morgani, is sure to steal the show as always.

Artists have been working for at least the last 3 months on large **works of art** that will be **installed** throughout the park. These pieces *will inspire, engage, puzzle, amuse, seduce and influence* the public. Metal smith, Kirk McNeill will unveil "Schooling Hammerheads", tall sharks that remind us of the incredible beauty that exists in our ocean and the importance of preserving it. Kathleen Crocetti's Multi-media class at Mission Hill Middle School will be installing 110 handmade silk flags across the pedestrian bridge. This display will go down in Santa Cruz's historical archives. And you'll have to see for yourself the larger than life figures [created by local talent](#) Eike Waltz!

Art stations, hosted by local education organizations **will offer people of all ages the opportunity to make their own artwork**. The Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History will demonstrate games played by the Ohlone people. Learn how to play the Stave game and make your own set, including game pieces, instructions, and a handy travel pouch for your game! Learn Kite-making and Sand Painting from Sea Cliff and New Brighton State Park docents. The Art Material Reuse Project will offer Mask Making and making mythological sea creatures using recycled materials. The Museum of Art and History, Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, UCSC's Life Lab Science Program, Cabrillo College, Bay View Elementary, and Santa Cruz Mountain Art Center will also conduct art workshops, most of them are free.

Live demonstrations of artists working in different mediums will give insight into various artistic processes. Brayton Furlong will be creating glass sculpture with a flame. I B Bayo will demonstrate traditional Nigerian Reverie Appliqué, an ancient textile art form. Painters Lynn Jaye and Kumar Lama will show how they develop their paintings from beginning to end. Pottery lovers can see a ceramicist hand-building a vessel and using tools to carve the surface. Woodworkers, weavers, instrument makers and more will show how they use their tools to craft their incredible artwork.

The River Arts Festival will **create more awareness of the San Lorenzo River**, its beauty and importance in our lives. The San Lorenzo River Committee will display maps and their *Ideas to Activate the San Lorenzo Riverway*. **Student art and poetry** will be on display celebrating the San Lorenzo Watershed's natural history. People can register their opinion about the river and its surrounding neighborhoods at a poll or add an animal or plant to the River Mural Project.

The **Food Court** around the *Piazza* will serve savory selections of snacks, coffee, tea, smoothies, ice cream and desserts. A delicious menu from **India Gourmet** will be offered.. Customers can enjoy relaxing and eating their food under umbrella covered tables in the center of the "Piazza di San Lorenzo".

The birth of the River Arts Festival was inspired by the **historic Venetian Water Carnival** held on the San Lorenzo River in downtown Santa Cruz from 1895-1920. Our city forefathers conceived this event to help bring visitors back to the city after the disastrous fire of 1894. The event featured a floating regatta of decorated floral boats, races, music and entertainment. We are hoping to revitalize the river area and draw **cultural tourism** to the heart of Santa Cruz. Here's to a Santa Cruz Renaissance!

The River Arts Festival promises grandeur and fun while nurturing an appreciation and support for the arts and local ecology.

www.RiverArtsFestival.com