

**Dear Members of the Petaluma Public Art Committee;**

**Thank you** so much for your support for Rivertown Revival (RR), Friends of the Petaluma (FOPR), and the many artists you supported with your Sponsorship in 2019.

As last year's event was our 10th anniversary we wanted to celebrate in a way that would be inspiring to all those who attended, but would also highlight our many visual artists who have supported our efforts over the years, and to encourage a few new artists to join us. We ultimately believe that Rivertown Revival is not just a fund raiser for FOPR but a moment in the life of Petaluma where we all can pause, and celebrate all that is good and creative about our town. With your help we feel we created the most vibrant and memorable Rivertown Revival yet!

In case you missed the event live, I wanted to share with you the art we were able to fund and create through the work of goal artists and volunteers. Your support also inspired us to create our first every Day 2 of the event entirely focused on the visual art of RR. This was a free community "Art Walk and Picnic" during which the community was welcomed to visit the peninsula, bring a picnic lunch, see the art up close and speak with the artists.

All of the pieces you will see here were finalized and staged the Friday before the event, and stayed up through the entire weekend. All the artists of the larger pieces were given a social media post prior to the event, describing their art and introducing their piece to the public.

1. The "temple" main stage:

The main stage was a concept first conceived by Josh Windmiller and the Rivertown team and was intended to be a place of "worship", an honoring of music, art, community and nature. We brought this idea to local artist Kevin Clark, who was already creating something similar for Burning Man. Kevin created the metal frame of the "temple" and members of our operations team created a very stable wooden base strong enough to hold the structure. We then enlisted



two local visual artists Karen Lockert and Anna Ullerich, who painted an image of the Petaluma River in a style that evoked stained glass windows for the back drop.

This was by far our largest piece of art this year, and one we will be able to use and build on for years to come. It took a lot of time, a lot of sweat, and a lot of love. It cost more money than we expected, but was ultimately a beautiful piece to behold, and we are extremely proud and grateful for it.





## 2. Flower tower

The Flower Tower is another creation by Kevin Clark that has graced our wedding hill for the last two years. We are very grateful to Kevin for allowing us to use this piece at the cost of his equipment and labor only. The towers take all day to put up and require at least 3 people and a crane to assemble and break down.





### 3. River Carousel

The River Carousel is an interactive floating art piece by local kinetic sculptor Stephen Lockert. This was a piece Stephan began in 2018 and completed with the help of his family, and visual artist Anna Ullrich for RR 2019. This was our only art piece that brought people up close to the river. It was a quite place of playfulness and repose, where attendees could reflect on the magic and beauty of the river.



Stephen is also the creator of our popular See Saws and was able to add to the intricate images of the history of Petaluma he has been carving on to them. Details that are sometimes lost in the business of the festival.



4. Stained Glass Windows. The back drop of our Revival tent stage this year, was created by local artist Mae Blackmore. Large wooden framed windows hold her paintings, printed and placed on the back of the glass in a way that allows the sunlight to light the imagery from behind. Entitled "Origins" explores the roots of Petaluma, Friends of the Petaluma River as an organization, and Rivertown Revival Itself. The imagery was a collaboration between Mae and RR art wrangler Margaret Kuffel. The founder of FOPR and one of the visionaries behind RR, David Yearsley, is depicted in upper corners of the piece. The young girl with the umbrella is from one of the first RR posters, and the herons represent the sculptures created for our 2018 RR by Beth Hibbard. The image in the middle represents a non specific Miwok woman with her hands outstretched to represent the first stewards of the land, and the river water itself depicts the origin of all life.







5. Town Facades - The idea for this piece has been on our vision board for a long time, and with the support from the PPAC we were able to get this started. We have always wanted to make the link between the RR festival. and its connection to the history of Petaluma. One way rethought we could do this was to align the main pathway of the event with old town street scenes with specific references to Downtown Petaluma. This year Star Downy, local artist and long time RR volunteer, created our first four scenes. We fell in love with what she created! This is a project we plan to build on with a new artist each year.



6. Sculpture Garden. This years sculpture Garden was curated by local artist Jessica Rasmussen. She was able to gather 11 smaller art pieces by local artists to align the pathway and beyond. One of the most photographed pieces was an interactive piece made by Aaron Milligan-Green - Inviting the participants to create music with found upcycled objects.





7. Another piece we were able to commission is a painting on drop cloth by Karen Lockert. Karen has a series of paintings where she re-imagines the American Flag. With sponsorship money we saved from other areas, we were able to add this piece to the event. This very large two part painting serves as a wall to the back of the Main Stage, but is also the first thing participants see when they enter from the front path to the event. Karen's piece sets the stage for suspending people's preconceived ideas of ordinary life as they enter the event, and evokes a spirit of imagination and inclusiveness in a subtle no confrontational way.





8. Migration. This piece was created by Local artist Beth Rose Hubbard, Beth has worked with us in the past creating herons and crane sculptures that aligned the front path in 2018. This piece entitled "Migration" was envisioned by art coordinator Margaret Kuffel and Jessica and was executed with beauty beyond our imagination by Jessica. Placed on the back fence of the event, the intention was for the participant to consider the idea of borders and what they mean to us currently and in the lives of our families. Jessica created a prompt that allowed for interactions from the public. Responses varied from an ancestor's name, to a short reference of journey across a border.





9. Rivertown Revival "Folk Art". One of the categories the sponsorship paid for last year was our yearly creation of signs, booths, small stages, seating, decorations, and other curiosities. We do our best to only use recycled, repurposed and donated pieces, but this year we were able to create more than usual, touch up old pieces with fresh paint colors, buy new stencils, and create useful and playful items that we will be able to use for many years. These pieces were imagined and built by volunteers in the community on our Sunday Work days prior to the event. Wether it is cutting, painting, building, or sewing there is usually a task for everyone no matter the age, or skill level. Here are a few images of those days and the pieces that came out of them.







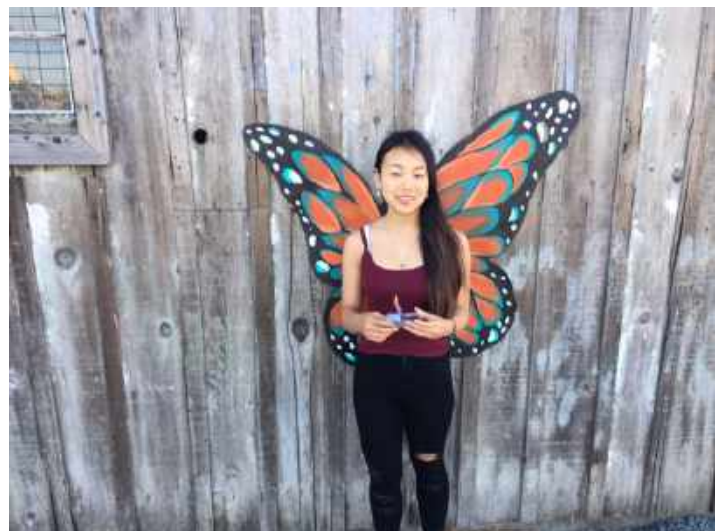




### **Things that went well and things we learned along the way.**

Ultimately the best thing that came out of this was the ability to widen our circle of local artists, and expand the visibility of visual art at our event. All the people we worked with were very willing to collaborate with our visions, and we were happy to also let them have enough autonomy to create something that represented who they were as artists. We were able to pay for supplies and offer stipends to most of the participating artists, and we provided social media shout outs to the one's working on larger pieces. We event extended the festival to an art focused Day 2.

Reaching out to artists we knew also brought in new artists through word of mouth, some of which volunteered their projects. Below are images of "The Dreamer Mural" " a collaborative piece by teens involved in the Art Start Program in Santa Rosa and mentored by Molly Best We were so taken with their piece we put it on the very prominent side of the barn so it would be easily viewed.



<https://www.rivertownrevival.com/news/2019/7/dreamer-mural-butterflies>

As a team we focused our resources on creating art that would last over time. We wanted to create pieces we could use in new ways for the coming years; at RR and/or other festivals hosted by Friends of the Petaluma River. This would provide the public with more opportunities

to see the work, and take some pressure off of us from having to constantly build the entire event with new art every year.

This art sponsorship and our excitement around the art inspired us to create our first ever day 2 of Rivertown Revival - the Rivertown Art Walk an Picnic. This we decided would be a free day without any content, but with all the art, and majority of the infrastructure, in place. We decided to invite the community to come to the peninsula for a picnic, see and touch the art close up, and to meet the artists. A few of us arrived early Sunday morning to clean up trash and tidy up the place, and set out picnic tables near some of the larger art pieces. We invited all the artists as well, and approximately 8 of them were present. Anywhere from 40 to 60 people from the public showed up that day, and the feedback from them was very positive. No one brought a lunch however, so the community building aspect of this day was not as powerful as it could have been. Even though low turn out is common for a first year, we were disappointed, and decided that next year, we needed to increase our marketing, do some personal outreach, and perhaps provide a food truck to encourage people to come and stay a while.

The entire team is dedicated to keep this art-filled Day 2 tradition going, as we feel it will blossom into a new tradition in the town that will ultimately support and celebrate art and artists.

Images from Rivertown Art Walk and Picnic.



Another learning curve for us was our estimates of the cost of some of the art. We had a budget for all the art pieces we wanted to create and stipends for artists. We had to make some adjustments on this as the main stage required a new foundation, which cost more than we had anticipated. Also, in our original proposal we neglected to consider the increased need for security due to our added day of art, and the increased need for support from our Operations Crew for art placement and break down. We cut back on money ear marked for the folk art and stipends for the two art directors. We also found some other sources to help us fund some of the performance art, so the bulk of the money would be invested in the visible structures enjoyed by the public on both days of the festival.

**In conclusion,** I wanted to thank you all as members of the Petaluma Public Art Committee for offering us this opportunity to highlight and expand our relationship with community art and local artists. We highly value this aspect of our community, and feel very deeply about continuing to make it an essential part of our event every year. You made our 10th anniversary particularly spectacular, and we look forward to more creations and celebrations of art, music, land, and community for years to come.

Thank you for our sponsorship, and for all the you do to further the love of art in Petaluma.



Photo credits:

Philip Pavliger  
Debbie Wilson  
Margaret Kuffel  
Stephen Lockert



