

THE KANSAS CREATIVE ARTS INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

LATINO ARTS AND CULTURE ROUNDTABLE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2017, The Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission (KCAIC) secured the services of a consultant to facilitate a Latino Arts and Culture Leadership Roundtable, which took place on Tuesday, November 14, 2017. (Appendix I) The purpose of the Latino Arts and Culture Roundtable was to:

- Assess the Kansas Latino Arts and Culture field; and
- Determine the existing needs and possible opportunities for Latino arts and culture producers, presenters, and participants.

Members of the Roundtable included a cross section of regional Latino leaders from arts and culture, education, arts and entertainment, fine arts, as well as community based social service providers.

The Kansas Latino community is as diverse as the wider national Latino landscape. Latino residents make up close to 12% of Kansas' population, but in just 2 years, that number will grow by 20%. Its most discernible characteristic is its diversity and youth. Thirty four percent of Kansas' Latino community self-identify as other than Mexican or Mexican American, with individuals hailing from Puerto Rico, Central America and South America. It is also a young community, with 60% of its population under the age of 30.

METHODOLOGY

The key outcome for the KCAIC was to gain recommendations on how to better serve Latino arts and culture presenters, producers, and audiences. The following methodology was used(Appendix II):

- Define the Latino arts and culture experience in Kansas;
- Provide a cultural context of Kansas' general and Latino demographics as well as a snapshot of the national and regional arts and culture landscape
- Establish A SWOT analysis of Kansas' Latino arts and culture ecosystem; and
- Explore a vision and strategies for effective local and regional network and partnership building.

DEFINING THE LATINO ARTS AND CULTURE FIELD

Roundtable participants were asked, "What Does Latino Arts and Culture in the Kansas Region Mean to You?"

- Latino communities are diverse and made up of both long time, historical Kansas residents and newly-arrived members;
- Latino arts and culture is a vehicle for sharing the many stories of the Kansas Latino experience, both with each other and the broader Kansas community.
- Latino arts and culture in Kansas means pride and power-it is the sharp end of the sword, and Latino artists and residents need to understand how to wield it in Kansas.;
- Latino identity in Kansas is defined by the many intersections and experiences of its people. Acknowledging these multiplicities is key in creating a vibrant arts and culture field;
- Latino arts and culture is representation. Seeing one's self is reflected through the lens of arts and culture and is important to feeling a sense of belonging.

LATINO ARTS AND CULTURE IN KANSAS SWOT

STRENGTHS

- ✓ Arts and Culture is ubiquitous in Latino communities—there is no separation.
- ✓ Fluidity and access to many communities especially as it relates to language
- ✓ Latino talent pool is expanding
- ✓ Latino community is resilient and adaptable
- ✓ Our diversity (many intersections and different origins) is our strength
- ✓ Data shows the economic impact of arts and culture and Latino participation in the arts—sharing this with decision makers is important
- ✓ Corazón/Passion
- ✓ Latino arts and culture includes a range of professional, semi-professional, and amateur artists
- ✓ Multicultural and multilingual
- ✓ Arts and culture providers are characterized by both nonprofit and for profit.
- ✓ Latino residents in Kansas have an entrepreneurial spirit

OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ Increasing diversity presents shifts in perspectives and representation
- ✓ There is a clear need and opportunity to create a culture of mentorship within the Latino community
- ✓ Create more safe spaces for Latino arts and culture as well as civic engagement
- ✓ Programming that represents the past, present, and future Latino narratives
- ✓ Using arts and culture for civic engagement and voter registration
- ✓ Artists running for elected positions
- ✓ Latino leadership in community development and funding institutions

WEAKNESSES

- ✓ Latino identity is consolidated/compressed into one identity
- ✓ Latinos are often labeled or stereotyped
- ✓ Latino arts and culture in Kansas has a weak infrastructure and pipeline
- ✓ Latino arts and culture producers work in isolation or are insular
- ✓ Geographic distance creates challenges in working together and networking
- ✓ Rural states lack vision for arts and culture much less, Latino arts and culture
- ✓ Undocumented and immigrant communities isolate themselves and don't get involved due to fear
- ✓ Latino identity, arts and culture, lack inclusion especially around diversity of race and ethnicity
- ✓ Latino arts and culture producers and leaders are often included in wider Kansas conversations as tokens. We can't, nor do we want, to speak for all
- ✓ Lack of funding for arts and culture in general
- ✓ Household income of Latino families is over 50% less than state average
- ✓ Need a shift in how Latino residents are perceived and how they perceive themselves

THREATS

- ✓ Tokenism will create limited perspectives, opportunities and content in Latino arts and culture
- ✓ Language barriers prevent participation, access and inclusion
- ✓ Current political climate—DACA, deportation, economy, and decreasing social services threaten our community every day
- ✓ Quality of education in Kansas and the region threatens building healthy Latino arts and culture
- ✓ Displacement/gentrification is growing Kansas regions
- ✓ Lack of equity and inclusion in the arts and culture sector for emerging and culturally specific communities exist at the local level
- ✓ Perception that culturally specific organizations are exclusive to that community only

VISION

A vision statement represents the ideal conditions of any effort to achieve its highest aspirations. Visions are future forward, directional, audacious and descriptive. The following vision statement was developed from synthesizing concepts, statements and ideas gathered from the Roundtable.

The Latino Arts and Culture field in Kansas is a vibrant, inclusive, diverse and collaborative regional network of artists, organizations, community based organizations, businesses and residents, that celebrates the historic and contemporary intersections and experiences of an ever-expanding Latino presence in the Midwest and beyond.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies were put forth by the Roundtable towards achieving the proposed vision.

1. Continue to convene the Latino Arts and Culture Roundtable
 - a. Hold meetings in various locations throughout the state, including the regional partnering states, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Missouri.
 - b. Create overall group agenda, goals and objectives
2. Create an online platform to:
 - a. Establish network and contact information
 - b. List events and opportunities
 - c. Foster mentorship opportunities
 - d. Exchange resources, funding and programmatic information as well offer help
3. Connect Kansas resources to Kansas residents
4. Create a series of strategies and plans to enlist Kansas public agencies to support Latino arts and culture
5. Create cross state alliances and leadership opportunities
6. Find funding and support to measure and evaluate Latino arts and culture field in the region
7. Education—how do we engage the next generation of artists and creative workers?
8. Recruit artists as leaders
9. Create cultural festivals to engage broader communities
10. Leadership/Academia/Curriculum Exchanges
 - a. Education
 - b. Arts Advocacy
 - c. Arts and Culture Management
 - d. Network Building
 - e. Work with Kansas Leadership Center to incorporate arts and culture management
11. Partner with public resources like parks and libraries
12. Aspire to 100% Latino participation in KCAIC programs, resources and funding opportunities
13. Engage the private sector
14. Don't play it safe/don't compromise
15. Be generous with time, information and experiences (failures can be opportunities)
16. Cultivate relationships with local and regional media
17. Allow healing to take place—past trauma is transferred through multiple generations