



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

## PRESS RELEASE

Date: October 14, 2021

Contact: Kathy DeWild

831-454-7933

### 2021 COUNTY ARTIST OF THE YEAR: GUILLERMO "YERMO" ARANDA

*Virtual Profile Performance Saturday, October 23, 3:00- 4:30 PM*

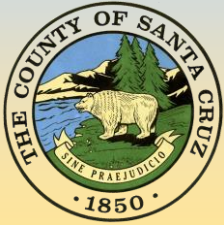
Each year, the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission presents the Artist of the Year award to local artists for outstanding achievement in the discipline of performing, visual, or literary arts who have also made a substantial contribution to the cultural enrichment of Santa Cruz County.

Multi-media artist Yermo Aranda has been named 2021 Artist of the Year. Aranda will be honored for his work and contribution to the arts in Santa Cruz County on October 23, 3:00 p.m. At a live-streamed performance, Aranda will be speaking about his work and the Whitehawk dancers will also perform.

Born and raised in the San Diego area, Aranda comes from a family of artists, craftsman, and musicians. He is a co-founder of "Toltecas en Aztlan" (1968), a collection of multi-media Chicano Artists. He is also co-founder and First Director of "El Centro Cultural de La Raza" (1971-75), a cultural art center focusing on Latino and Indigenous Art forms. As the Centro's first Administrative Director, Aranda initiated the first Chicano Park Murals in San Diego in April of 1973. Chicano Park is now recognized as a National Historical Landmark.

Within a year after arriving in Watsonville in 1983, Aranda began to practice and teach Aztec dance and co-founded the Whitehawk Dancers, a cultural arts organization providing Visual and Performing Arts Workshops for youth. In 1985, the first "Xilonen" ceremony on the West Coast was held. This gathering of Aztec dancers continues to this day, the second weekend of July. In 1995, ten Whitehawk dancers went to Shingu, Japan as part of the Sister Cities program, where they danced at the World Exposition in Wakayama. Aranda's contributions to the White Hawk Dancers has always been on a volunteer basis, and its focus has always been the youth of our communities.

–more–



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Aranda helps youth develop their artistic skills, utilizing murals as the means to involve youth in the arts. He has over 80 murals in the Santa Cruz and Monterey County areas, all youth projects. Currently he teaches art and the process of mural painting locally and throughout the State of California, working with elementary students in Northern California and inmates in a California state penitentiary.

Over the years, Aranda has been commissioned and sponsored by a host of agencies and organizations, including the California Arts Council, Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County, Santa Cruz County Arts Commission, Santa Cruz County Office of Education, Community Foundation Santa Cruz County, Mexican American Community Services Agency of San Jose, and the City of San Diego. Among the awards Aranda has received are a Gail Rich Award in 1997, Watsonville YMCA's Community Racial Justice Heroes Award in 1999, a Community Heroes Recognition from Santa Cruz County and the Santa Cruz Sentinel, and in 2000, a Jackie Kennedy Award from TV 8, Salinas.

Over the last 34 years, the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission has selected outstanding artists nominated by the public and has honored them through the Artist of the Year Award. Nominees must be a resident of Santa Cruz County, must have a national or international reputation, must have contributed to the cultural enrichment of the local community, and must have created or presented work in Santa Cruz County.

For more information, including how to nominate an artist for the award, please visit <https://www.scparks.com>.

WHAT: Arts Commission Artist of the Year Virtual Performance

WHEN: October 23, 3 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

LINK: <https://tinyurl.com/2z7xcb2j> (Passcode: 644488)

One tap mobile :

US: +16699006833,,87872723001#,,,,\*644488#

or +13462487799,,87872723001#,,,,\*644488#

Webinar ID: 878 7272 3001

Passcode: 644488