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SC

**Hispanic/LatinX
Arts Assessment**

**SOUTH*
CAROLINA
ARTSCOMMISSION**



**PALMETTO
LUNA ARTS**



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Legacy - I want to be able to leave work that is appreciated and remembered.

- Dre Lopez





ABOUT THIS ASSESSMENT

The Purpose

This statewide assessment, funded through a strategic partnership between the South Carolina Arts Commission and the Hispanic Alliance of SC, and conducted in collaboration with Palmetto Luna Arts, offers an unprecedented opportunity to bridge cultures through art across the state by leveraging the reputation, networks, and knowledge of these partners.

This report and its recommendations aim to expand collective knowledge and inform strategies to accelerate access to resources for South Carolina's emergent Hispanic and Latinx arts community and help foster an inclusive, inspiring, and vibrant ecosystem where emerging artists can access new opportunities and platforms to thrive.

The Arts are a Catalyst for Change

The arts are unique in their potential to create space for dialogue, knowledge, and understanding, particularly in these polarizing times. Identifying the most equitable and efficient ways to facilitate concrete partnerships among artists, art organizations, communities, and government will provide greater opportunities, connectivity, and ultimately a deepening of cultural understanding.

As the state's Hispanic population continues to grow, the arts can build a powerful and effective bridge across cultures, creating proximity, fostering dialogue, and encouraging greater understanding of the unique traditions that help build the mosaic of the American experience.

This report opens a window into the vast opportunity to utilize arts as a vehicle for connection and communication that can seed a greater sense of belonging. It is also an invitation to reach out, to encourage the richness of history, cultures, and arts forms coexisting in our state to fully express the beauty of their diversity, and in the process, remind us of our common humanity and show us how to weave a new idea of *us*.

METHODS

In executing this assessment, our methodology encompassed a holistic approach that involved gathering insights from a diverse array of sources. This included conducting in-depth, in-person interviews with 26 artists, with the majority of these interactions conducted in Spanish to facilitate a deeper level of communication and understanding. These interviews took place in the comfort of their homes, their studios, or at local coffee shops, providing an intimate setting conducive to candid discussions about the artists' experiences and perspectives.

Moreover, recognizing the importance of inclusivity and breadth of representation throughout our state, we supplemented these face-to-face interviews with video interviews when logistical constraints prevented in-person meetings. This approach ensured that we could capture as many voices as possible, thereby enriching the depth and diversity of our data.

In addition to these interviews, we administered surveys consisting of 12 questions, available in both Spanish and English, to a total of 63 artists. This comprehensive dataset provided us with a robust understanding of the experiences, challenges, and aspirations within the Hispanic and Latinx artistic community in South Carolina.

Furthermore, we engaged with 12 art organizations, conducting video calls and surveys to glean insights into their perspectives, challenges, and opportunities.

Through this multifaceted methodology, we were able to gather rich and varied data, culminating in a comprehensive assessment that reflects the breadth and depth of the artistic ecosystem in our region.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Forming an Advisory Committee that accurately represented the diversity of art fields and cultures in our state was the first step in this process. Our Advisory Board played a crucial role in guiding our approach, generously sharing insights, resources, and contacts. They reviewed the final findings, offering feedback that enhanced the quality and relevance of this final report.



Antonio Colón-Román

Photographer
Based in Charleston



Diana Farfán

Ceramicist
Based in Greenville



Orlando Corona

Painter, Printmaker
Based in Greenville



David Rrodriguez

Musician
Based in Columbia



Will Davis

Poet
Based in Charleston



Ivan Segura

SC Commission for Minority
Affairs, Palmetto Luna Arts ED
Based in Columbia



PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

Before delving into the discoveries from this study, it's essential to express our sincere gratitude to the generous and talented Hispanic and Latinx artists whose participation was integral to its success. Their insights, creativity, and commitment served as the cornerstone of this report.

Through sharing their stories, perspectives, and artistic endeavors, they not only deepened our comprehension of South Carolina's artistic and cultural tapestry but also laid the groundwork for more inclusivity within the arts community.

We commend each artist for their contributions, acknowledging the distinctiveness they bring to our vibrant artistic community in South Carolina. Their unwavering dedication fuels our collective mission to foster cross-cultural understanding, collaboration, and enduring positive transformations.

“ ***Success is doing what I love - el éxito es poder hacer lo que me gusta.*** ”



Hoover Castano, Glass Artisan



Aaliyah
Aldo Muzzarelli
Alejandro García-Lemos
Ana Córdoba
Anastasia
Ángel Moronta
Antonio Modesto Milian
Ariana Bove
Ashley
Camela
Daniel Romero
David Rodríguez
Deliza Bates
Diana Farfan
Dre López
Edgar Cano-López
Elizabeth Houck-Zozaya
Ericka Olvera Hernández
Esperanza
Gabriela Patania
Gage Coleman
Hoover Castaño
Ismaly Ortega
Javy Pagan
Jessica
Jojan Olmos
Jose Romero
Jose Vergara
Josquel Toro
Juan Camilo González

Juan González
Juan Sosa-Atanacio
Juliet
Julio César Morales
Justin González
Karoline Shaffer O'Rourke
Laura Lesllo
Lauren Andreu
Luis Jaramillo
Luz
Mari Knowles
María Castro
Maribel Acosta
Marisol López
Miguel Aldana
Orlando Corona
Patricia Alfonso
Rey Alfonso
Rubén Gómez
Ruby Ballesteros
Sammy López
Sara D Espinoza
Stephanía FRX
Tania Ro
Victor Ruiz
Yarelis Cardona
Yelitza Díaz
Yito Yael
Yulian Martínez-Escobar
Zachary Díaz

A full-page photograph of Luis Jaramillo, an older man with grey hair and glasses, smiling and sitting on a red wooden stool in his art studio. He is wearing a blue button-down shirt and dark trousers. The studio is filled with art supplies, including an easel, a workbench, and various materials. Large windows in the background let in bright light.

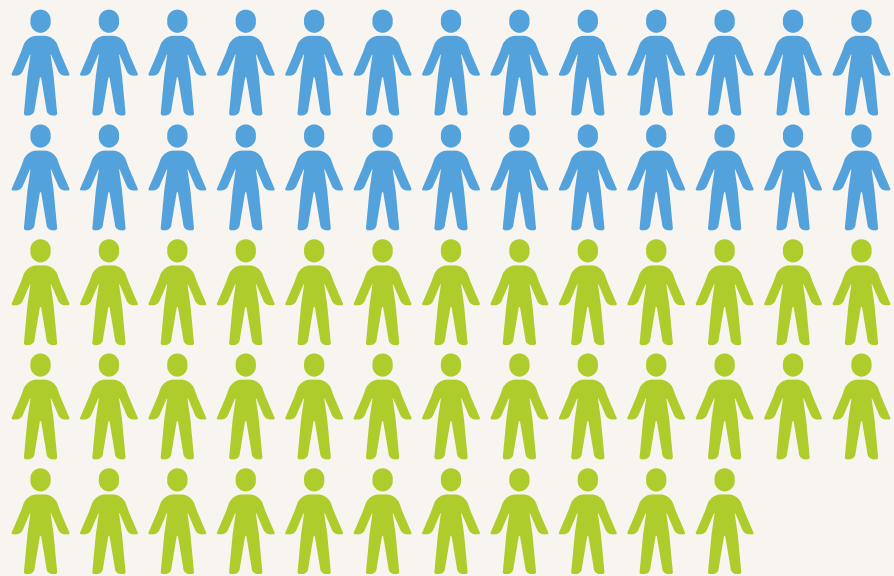
Luis Jaramillo, Painter & Printmaker

ARTISTS

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS



We surveyed **63**
SC Hispanic/Latinx artists.



26 of those artists participated
in in-depth interviews.



We surveyed **12** art
organizations.

Question:

In What City Do You Reside?



Our study on Hispanic and Latinx artists in South Carolina aimed for comprehensive representation, not only in terms of demographics but also geographically. Through surveys and interviews conducted across the state, we prioritized inclusivity and ensured diverse participation from various regions. This approach allowed us to attain robust coverage throughout South Carolina, capturing the nuanced experiences and perspectives of artists from different communities. By embracing this breadth of experience, our study provides a rich tapestry of insights into the contributions of Hispanic and Latinx artists across the state, fostering a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of their cultural impact and artistic endeavors.

Question:

What type of art do you specialize in?

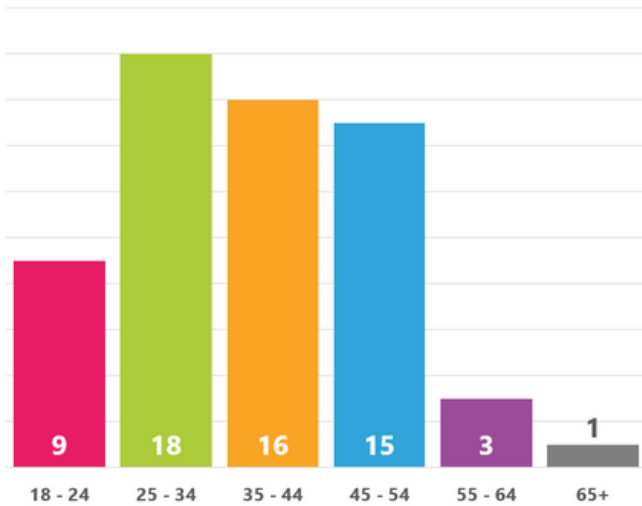
Among the surveyed artists, the findings reveal a predominant focus on visual art, particularly painting. Following closely behind are the performing arts, which encompass musicians, singers, and folkloric dancers, highlighting the diverse range of artistic expressions within the community.

This study showcases a wide array of artistic disciplines, underscoring the multifaceted nature of the Latinx and Hispanic community in South Carolina. It also highlights the depth of creativity and artistic endeavors within the region.

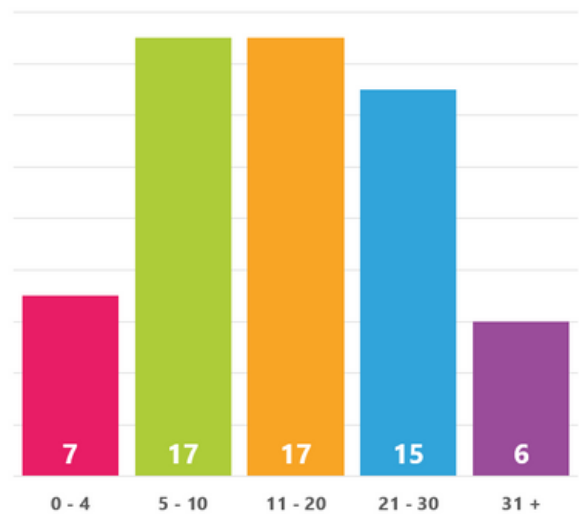


Tapestry-like chart illustrating the different disciplines represented in this study of SC Latinx and Hispanic Artists

How old are you?



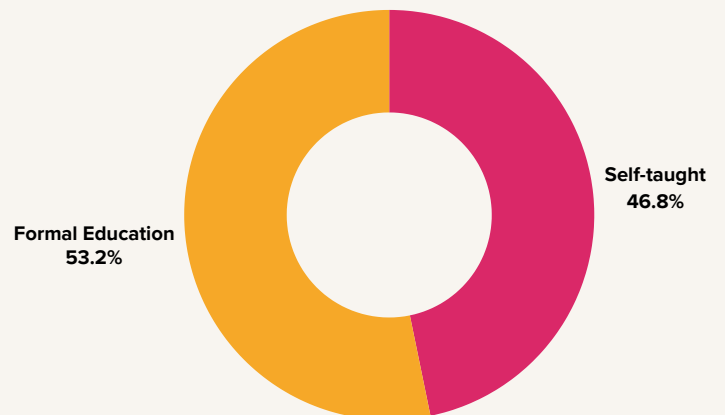
How long have you been practicing your art?



Are you a full-time or part-time artist?



Are you self-taught or formally trained in your artistic field?



Question:

What nationality or heritage do you represent?



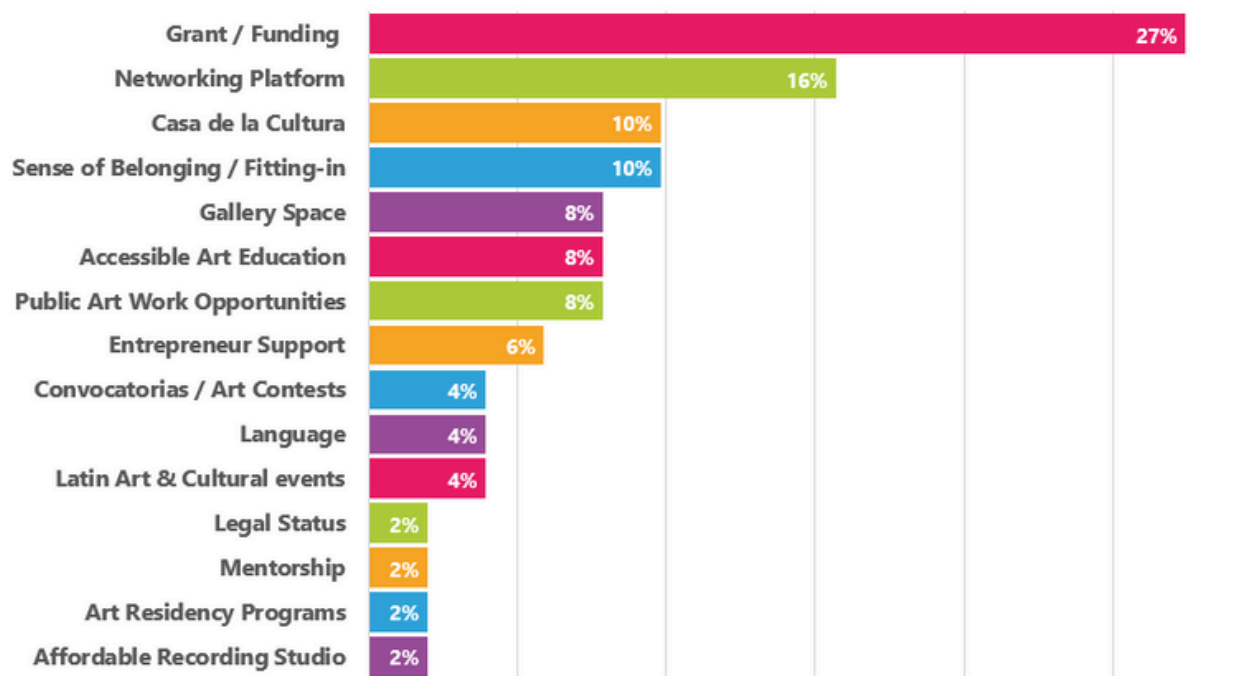


Marcel Portilla Band, La Fiesta 2023 in Greenville



Question:

What tools or resources do you wish existed or had access to?



Participants felt that improving grant access is critical to support them in overcoming financial hurdles and thriving in their creative endeavors.

A *Casa de la Cultura*, (literal translation would be House of Culture), is a community center dedicated to the promotion and preservation of cultural heritage. These centers, common in Spanish-speaking countries, often provide accessible education, workshops, and events focused on various art forms such as music, dance, theater, visual arts, and literature. They serve as vital hubs for cultural exchange, fostering community engagement and offering opportunities for local artists to showcase their work. By offering resources and support, these centers play a crucial role in nurturing artistic talent and ensuring that cultural traditions are passed down to future generations.

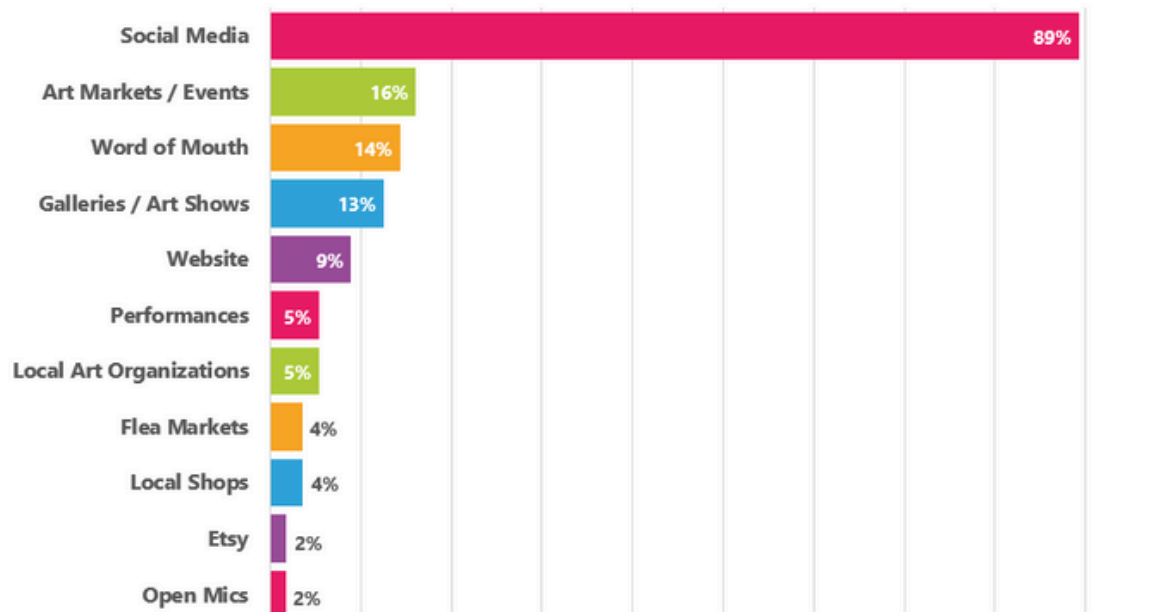


I think ultimately, artists need access to community resources such as education, career development, funding, and work or studio spaces. I think there should be more creative spaces and events for shared cultural exchanges.

- Daniel Romero

Question:

How do you share your work with others?



Question:

Is there anything holding you back?

The recency of arrival, whether to the country or the state, seemed to play a crucial role in the challenges faced by many artists. Newcomers often struggle to find where to share information about their work or learn about available opportunities.

When it comes to language, some of the most financially successful artists are fully bilingual or grew up in the United States. However, language remains a significant barrier for many who are not bilingual. Addressing these language barriers while also providing educational resources and grant opportunities will help create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all artists.

Question:

What is your preferred language?



Question:

What does success look like for you as an artist?

Out of all the questions, "What does success look like for you as an artist?" elicited the most moving responses. Many took their time to reflect deeply on what success meant to them personally and how it spoke to their career and journey.

There was a palpable sense of melancholy in some answers, particularly from those who have dedicated their lives to art for many years. These artists often spoke of the struggles and sacrifices they faced, balancing their passion with the practicalities of life. Yet, their words also carried a quiet confidence, a testament to their resilience and unwavering commitment to their craft.

In contrast, the new generation of artists expressed their visions of success with vibrant energy and hope. Their responses highlighted a sense of optimism and a belief in the transformative power of art. They spoke of breaking barriers, achieving recognition, and making meaningful contributions to their communities.

This dynamic and evolving nature of artistic expression within the Hispanic and Latinx community reflects a rich tapestry of experiences, aspirations, and emotions. Together, these perspectives underscore the multifaceted journey of being an artist and the profound impact of art on personal and collective identities.

“Discovery. It is not about the money you make, but little things, insights, flashes of discovery. I’m always improving on my technique. That’s what makes me happy.”

- Luis Jaramillo

A photograph of an art installation or performance. In the foreground, a man with long dreadlocks and a beard is kneeling on a concrete floor, focused on carving a coconut shell into a mask. He is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. In the background, a woman with large hoop earrings and a dark dress stands holding a green microphone, appearing to be speaking or performing. The setting is a room with a brick wall, illuminated by red and purple stage lights. The overall mood is artistic and creative.

Juan Pablo Vizcaino Cortijo

ART ORGANIZATIONS

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS



Todo Se Puede, by Orlando Corona

Question:

**Do you have
bilingual staff?**

**Yes
41.7%**

**No
50%**

**Working On It
8%**

Participating Organizations

South Carolina Children's Theatre
Aiken Center for the Arts
Charleston Gaillard Center
Charleston Stage
701 Center for Contemporary Art

City of Greer Cultural Arts Division
The City of Clemson Arts Center
Redux Contemporary Art Center
Metropolitan Arts Council
North Charleston Cultural Arts Dept
Artisphere

Question:

In your opinion, what do you perceive is holding back Hispanic or Latinx artists from accessing your services or offerings?

- Awareness of our venue, transportation downtown, and titles that appeal to them. We would like to have more input from the community on what else we are missing.
- We've not done a good job at going into the Hispanic and Latinx communities to talk about what we do. This community may not know we exist and that they are welcome here with their families.
- The most obvious thing is that our performances and classes are in English, so that creates a large barrier for non-English speaking people or those that don't feel comfortable in English.
- They are focused on Latinx produced events, not public city offered events.

Question:

In terms of your organization's efforts to connect with more diverse artists, What has worked well? What has not worked?

- We find word of mouth and building individual relationships to be most helpful. When people have a good experience with us, they tell their friends.
- Creating events specifically around Latin artists with a Latin curator.
- Many of the artists who apply for studio space, teaching opportunities, exhibitions, learning opportunities and our Lightning Residency hear about them through word of mouth from other artists.
- Working with an organization like Art Pot that already has established connections in the community has been extremely helpful.
- We always appreciate when the Hispanic Alliance shares our opportunities with their constituents. The Latinx artists we currently work with share positive experiences with their arts communities.

Camela Guevara, Fiber Artist and Sewist

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTIONABLE TAKEAWAYS





Introduction to Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the feedback collected from artists through this arts assessment and were developed collaboratively by the Hispanic Alliance, the South Carolina Arts Commission, and Palmetto Luna Arts, in consultation with a statewide committee of Hispanic artists.

Our primary goal is to facilitate access to information, resources, and new platforms for Hispanic/Latinx artists. Secondly, we aim to provide community-informed and actionable recommendations for organizations, foundations, and institutions interested in increasing their knowledge, capacity and confidence to engage Hispanic artists.

Three overarching themes have been identified as key priorities to effectively engage and support Hispanic and Latinx artists in South Carolina: **Access & Connectivity, Visibility, and Professional Development.**

Access & Connectivity

Language Access

Approximately 21% of the artists surveyed reported feeling more comfortable communicating in Spanish.

Provide information in Spanish

Translating key information, including websites (or landing pages), into Spanish will help facilitate the accessibility and navigation of information for Spanish speakers.

Assign a Bilingual Point of Contact

It is critical to hire bilingual staff who can effectively interact with Spanish-speakers. Alternatively, organizations can establish partnerships with bilingual organizations or pay professional interpreters.

Access & Connectivity *(continued)*

Culturally-Inclusive Partnerships

Partnering with trusted organizations and intermediaries will expand organizational reach and increase the knowledge, cultural competency, and skills of staff to serve a wider audience.

Build Trust

Include the knowledge and experience of trusted organizations and individuals serving the Hispanic community and include their feedback in strategic planning to help make processes and programs more inclusive.

Invest in Partnerships

Include new partners in the budget and in future grant requests and advocate for investments that honor their time, knowledge, and experience.

Collaborate to Disseminate Information

Leverage existing relationships and networks to communicate opportunities for engagement and participation.

Access to Funding

Advocate for Increased Funding

Building on the advocacy work of the Hispanic Alliance, it is essential to push for more funding specifically earmarked for Hispanic and Latinx artists by increasing access to capital, creating new grants, or expanding existing ones.

Simplify Funding Application Processes

A cumbersome grant application process can discourage artists from pursuing funding. Funders can address this by streamlining the application process and providing clear eligibility criteria, instructions, deadlines, and feedback workshops.

Create Artist Residencies and Fellowship Programs

Develop paid residency and fellowship programs specifically for Hispanic and Latinx artists to provide them with the time, space, connections, and resources needed to focus on their work and develop new projects.

Access & Connectivity *(continued)*

Access to Arts Education

In addition to the multiple emotional, academic, and social benefits of exposing youth to arts, providing intentional opportunities for students to interact with diverse artists can contribute to creating a more inclusive arts culture ecosystem and encourage future Hispanic/Latinx artists.

Invite Hispanic artists into classrooms, after school programs, and camps and encourage their recruitment and placement as Artists In Residence in K-12 schools.

Advocate for the inclusion of Hispanic and Latinx artists, works of art, and art history in state arts standards

Expand access to underserved Hispanic youth by providing stipends and scholarships to experience arts education and strengthen their own personal artistic skills

Visibility

Organizations such as Palmetto Luna Arts, the Hispanic Alliance of SC, and ArtPot have been instrumental in promoting the visibility of Hispanic and Latinx artists. There is ripe opportunity to partner with them and build on their efforts to highlight Hispanic arts and culture in South Carolina.

Establish a Hispanic/LatinX Arts Network

A dedicated network for Hispanic and Latinx artists would facilitate connections, resource and platform sharing, and project collaborations.

Promote Hispanic/Latinx Art through Media and Marketing

Launching a comprehensive marketing campaign to promote Latinx art and artists through various media channels would promote the stories and work of Latinx artists via social media and local news.

Host or Support Hispanic/Latinx Art Events

Amplify the work of Hispanic and Latinx artists to broader audiences through annual celebrations such as Hispanic Heritage Month or curated exhibits, conferences, performances, workshops, and panel discussions throughout the year.

Professional Development

Investing in Hispanic artists' professional and leadership development is perhaps the most impactful long-term strategy. Providing artists with the resources and space to enhance their skills, reconnect with their vision, and nurture their passion will catalyze their ability to inspire others and build cross-cultural understanding in South Carolina.

Expand Representation on Boards

Intentionally invite Hispanic/Latinx artists and arts leaders to serve on boards, commissions, and committees and empower their voices.

Organize Workshops and Training Sessions

Focus on professional development for artists including grant writing, marketing, digital presence, financial management, and other essential skills. These workshops will empower artists to navigate the business side of their careers more effectively.

Collaborate with Educational Institutions

Work with schools, colleges, and universities to integrate Latinx art into their curricula. Examples include guest lectures, workshops, and collaborative projects that involve students and local artists.

Develop Mentorship Programs

Establish mentorship programs where experienced artists can guide and support emerging Hispanic and Latinx artists to help in skill development, career guidance, and networking opportunities for the mentees.

Conclusion

By focusing on these three strategic priorities—Access & Connectivity, Visibility, and Professional Development—South Carolina can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for Hispanic and Latinx artists. These strategies will build on the valuable work of organizations and individuals already working in the arts space, while also providing actionable recommendations for new partners to collaborate or create new resources and opportunities to engage Hispanic / Latinx artists. This intentional, cross-cultural collaboration will not only strengthen the arts ecosystem in South Carolina but also contribute to more connected, inclusive, and vibrant communities across the Palmetto state.

A Note from the Partners Involved

These recommendations were developed to help inform your own planning and strategy. They are intended to be the start of a larger conversation and to outline a path forward for a more inclusive and vibrant arts landscape in South Carolina. We invite your partnership to transform these ideas into action!

We encourage you to share this report widely to inspire further conversation and action and to reach out to the organizations listed below to start collaborating. Let us work together to build a thriving arts community that reflects the diversity of our state!



The Hispanic Alliance is the largest convener of ideas, individuals, and institutions collaborating to advance Hispanic communities across South Carolina. With the mission of fostering collaboration and connectivity among people, resources, and cultures to build thriving communities, the Hispanic Alliance envisions a vibrant and inclusive community where everyone has access to opportunities for success and prosperity.

HispanicAllianceSC.com | admin@hispanicalliancesc.com | 864.256.0760



The mission of the South Carolina Arts Commission is to promote equitable access to the arts and support the cultivation of creativity in South Carolina. We envision a South Carolina where the arts are valued and all people benefit from a variety of creative experiences. A state agency created by the South Carolina General Assembly in 1967, the SCAC works to increase public participation in the arts through grants, direct programs, staff assistance and partnerships in artist development, arts industry, arts learning, creative placemaking, and folklife and traditional arts.

SouthCarolinaArts.com | info@arts.sc.gov | 803.734.8696



Palmetto Luna Arts is a nonprofit organization focused on promoting Latino arts and culture in South Carolina. By fostering community engagement and providing platforms for Latino artists, Palmetto Luna Arts aims to enrich the cultural landscape of the state and create opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue and collaboration. Through a variety of programs and initiatives, they strive to celebrate the artistic contributions of the Latino community.

paluna.org | Palmettoluna@gmail.com | 803.606.1164

Back Cover: Rey & Patricia Alfonso



**SOUTH*
CAROLINA
ARTS COMMISSION**



LAS ARTES SON PARA TODOS

THE ARTS ARE FOR EVERYONE