

News from: The City of Oakland

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 14, 2013

Oakland's Uptown ArtPark to Host Free Interactive, Multicultural Performances for October "Arts & Humanities Month"

Oakland, CA – Continuing to add vibrancy and cultural richness to Oakland's booming Uptown District, the City of Oakland's **Uptown ArtPark** will present four dynamic, free performances by **Gamelan Sekar Jaya** and **Ragged Wing Ensemble** in its outdoor public spaces during October in recognition of **National Arts & Humanities Month**.

Always free and open to the public, **Uptown ArtPark** is Oakland's unique outdoor gallery and performance space hosting rotating exhibits, arts performances and interactive events. In presentations developed specifically for the ArtPark, internationally acclaimed, Berkeley-based **Gamelan Sekar Jaya** will present a multimedia Balinese music and dance performance on **October 19**, and **Oakland-based Ragged Wing Ensemble** will present an original play and interactive art installations **October 24-26**. The Uptown ArtPark is located on Telegraph Avenue and 19th Street across from the renovated Fox Oakland Theater in downtown Oakland. All presentations are sponsored by the City of Oakland's Public Art Program, Cultural Arts & Marketing Division, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

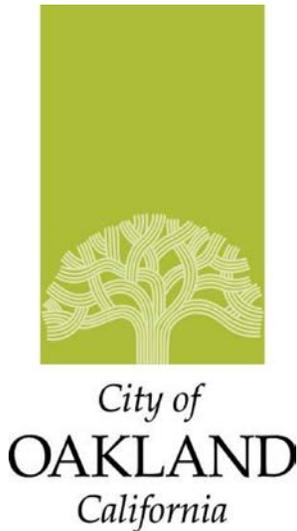
On Saturday, October 19, from 7:00-9:00 p.m., experience Bali in the Uptown with a free multimedia performance featuring **Gamelan Sekar Jaya** and live footage from Bali. Amidst giant sculptures and trees, enjoy performances by GSJ's *bamboo jegog* ensemble, the dynamic *gender wayang* quartet along with Balinese dance, and an interactive *kecak* (monkey chant). A video feed from Bali will bring the sights and sounds of this tropical island to the park – a unique multimedia experience. The 30+ performers will be led by renowned Balinese artists I Dewa Putu Berata and Emiko Saraswati Susilo. For more information on the performance, go to www.gsj.org.

On Thursday, Friday and Saturday, October 24, 25 and 26, at 8:00 p.m., Oakland-based **Ragged Wing Ensemble** will present an original play and related art installations. The world-premiere play *Buried in the Body*, written by Anthony Clarvoe and directed by Adam Sussman, explores the enduring mysteries of life, love and death. It will be followed immediately by a series of interactive art installations located throughout the ArtPark space which the audience may experience and participate in. The event will conclude by 10:00 p.m. each night. For more information on *Buried in the Body*, go to www.raggedwing.org.

Gamelan Sekar Jaya is a sixty-member company of musicians and dancers specializing in the performing arts of Bali. Founded in 1979, GSJ has performed throughout California, the US, and Bali, in venues ranging from New York's Symphony Space to remote Balinese village squares. Central to the group's success is the presence of master Balinese artists.

Ragged Wing Ensemble recently moved into its own theater space and art center in downtown Oakland after years of presenting shows at a variety of venues in the East Bay and San Francisco. Ragged Wing creates interdisciplinary performances, art events and plays exploring ancient questions in a contemporary world. Its work, which involves large-scale visual elements, original music scores and adventurous physicality, has grown increasingly site-specific as the Ensemble seeks new ways to weave art into the fabric of community.

(more)



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Page Two

The Uptown ArtPark burst on the scene in April 2013 with an eclectic exhibit of large-scale sculpture by Oakland and Bay Area artists. As the City's first and only outdoor sculpture park, Uptown ArtPark is a 24-hour public gallery and performance space showcasing outdoor sculpture by artists in Oakland and points beyond. "We conceived the ArtPark from the beginning as a sort of urban arts laboratory, where dynamic large-scale sculptures can be seen side-by-side with innovative, cutting-edge installations and multicultural performances, in a comfortable, accessible setting," said Steven Huss, Oakland's public art coordinator. "With a very strong sculpture exhibit up through next spring, we're delighted to debut some exciting theater and dance from local arts organizations in this space as well." Ragged Wing Ensemble and Gamelan Sekar Jaya are the first arts organizations to adapt new performances specifically for the unique space of the Uptown Art Park and the open areas of the Henry J. Kaiser Park, located next door to the Art Park at the corner of 19th Street and Rashida Muhammad Way.

The ArtPark's inaugural sculpture exhibit "Repurposed" debuted April 5, 2013, and will remain on display through March, 2014. The centerpiece of the exhibit is *The Bike Bridge*, a 20 by 20 foot sculpture made of recycled bike parts and other reclaimed materials by artist Michael Christian and 12 young women from Oakland high schools, sponsored by Black Rock Arts Foundation. Also featured are eight other large-scale outdoor sculptures that employ recycled materials by Bay Area artists Randy Colosky, Karen Cusolito, Bruce Johnson and Eric Powell. Visitors may also enjoy "Remember Them: Champions for Humanity," a major bronze monument by artist Mario Chiodo that pays tribute to 24 great humanitarians worldwide. It is located inside Henry J. Kaiser Park, just west of the Uptown ArtPark.

The October programs in the ArtPark take place during National Arts & Humanities Month – the largest annual celebration for the arts and humanities in the nation. National Arts & Humanities Month is a coast-to-coast collective recognition of the importance of culture in America. For more information and to see a list of activities, visit the California Arts Council site at http://www.cac.ca.gov/getinvolved/arts_and_humanities.php or Americans for the Arts at http://www.artsusa.org/get_involved/advocacy/nahm/default.asp.

The Uptown ArtPark was developed by the City of Oakland with a Creative Placemaking grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Currently funded as a three-year pilot project, the ArtPark emanated from a convergence of community advocacy for use of the site as a cultural space and the City's ongoing downtown redevelopment efforts. For more information about the ArtPark and the October events, contact Steven Huss, Cultural Arts Manager, at shuss@oaklandnet.com or (510) 238-4949, or visit <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/CityAdministration/d/EconomicDevelopment/s/PublicArt/index.htm>.

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