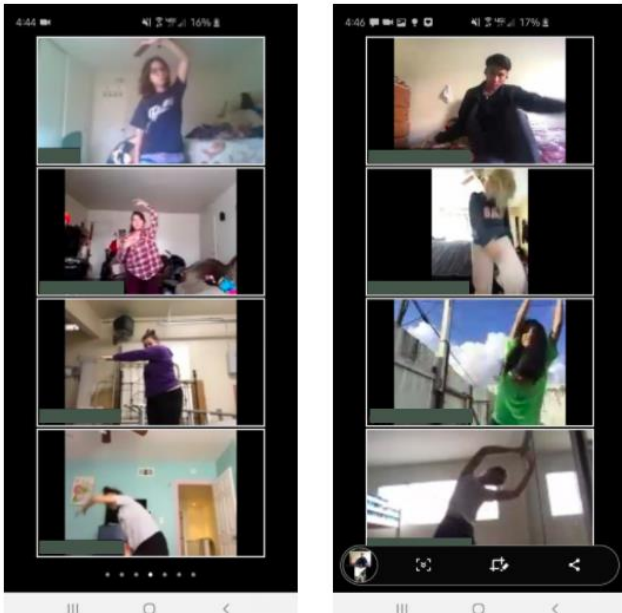




CLARE ROSE
FOUNDATION

Clare Rose Foundation's Responsive Leadership and Holistic Response During the COVID Pandemic

Spring 2020



transcendANCE Youth Arts Project dancers
rehearse via ZOOM during quarantine, Spring 2020.

“The Clare Rose Foundation has consistently come through for transcendANCE and all Creative Youth Development organizations, our artists, and young people and that deepened when we needed it most during these challenging times of Covid-19. It is remarkable how much their offerings supported virtually every aspect of our organization that needed the support in order to pivot quickly and bring our programs and services to virtual spaces. The Clare Rose Foundation is thoughtful and responsive in critical times to the organizations it serves and transcendANCE feels a deep sense of relief and gratitude for that.”

-Cat Corral
Co-Founder & Executive/Artistic Director
[transcendANCE Youth Arts Project](#)

When COVID-19 hit and quarantine began, Matt D'Arrigo, Director of Creative Youth Development for the Clare Rose Foundation, knew the months ahead would be difficult for the field of creative youth development (CYD). D'Arrigo has firsthand experience leading a community-based organization through two economic downturns. 9/11 occurred just four months after D'Arrigo founded [A Reason to Survive \(ARTS\)](#) in 2001, so D'Arrigo faced the resulting recession as a new executive director. He also

weathered the 2008 recession, which occurred a few months after ARTS opened its first facility. D'Arrigo knew this was going to be worse.

D'Arrigo and Anne Vincent, President of the Clare Rose Foundation, embrace trust-based philanthropy, and they invest their time, energy, and hearts along with funds. Consistent with the [Trust-Based Philanthropy Project](#), Clare Rose Foundation approaches their grantee relationships from a place of trust, humility, and transparency.

Since joining the Clare Rose Foundation in 2017 to lead the Foundation's efforts in creative youth development, D'Arrigo has spent the past 3 years establishing close relationships with CYD leaders throughout San Diego. He brought needed capacity and staff support to activate [the San Diego Creative Youth Development Network](#), including in hiring Katie Lorge as CYD Programs Manager at Clare Rose. The Network is a coalition of program providers, young people, and partners that meet regularly to share, collaborate, and support one another. Clare Rose Foundation (CRF) provides key funding and staff support to the Network, which includes and extends beyond CRF grantees.

Long involved with the national movement to advance CYD, D'Arrigo has also continued to deepen and expand his relationships beyond San Diego, including with funders and leaders in the CYD national movement. These connections provide San Diego CYD organizations with links to colleagues around the country, awareness of best practices, visibility for San Diego, and fresh perspectives on all aspects of CYD, from funding to recruitment and retention. It has been particularly valuable during the COVID crisis to connect with others nationally as so many people are facing similar, unanticipated challenges.



CYD stakeholders from throughout the United States share how they continue their work while adapting to quarantine, Spring 2020.

Phase I COVID Response: Quick & Holistic

Clare Rose Foundation channeled its awareness of grantees' evolving needs into action with a quick COVID response. CRF immediately set up weekly calls with the Network to connect everyone and to listen and understand the organizations' urgent needs. "The weekly CYD Network check-in was vital in the earliest days of adjusting to new conditions, grounding for me as Fern Street's leader. I cannot emphasize enough the

importance of regular, peer contact,” reflects John Highkin, Vice-President of [Fern Street Community Arts](#).

Following the first Network call during quarantine, the Foundation set up the grants that formed its Phase I COVID response. CRF announced COVID-response grant opportunities one day after California Governor Gavin Newsom enacted a shelter-at-home mandate for California. (CRF focuses its grantmaking in creative youth development in California.) A small, nimble family foundation, **Clare Rose Foundation has been able to make decisions and implement them at a pace required by the urgent needs of their grantees during this crisis.** Vincent remarks, “The work our San Diego CYD partner organizations do is transformative in the lives of young people. CYD organizations are fulfilling essential needs in the lives of young people, including during this pandemic. This work is urgent, and we are committed to doing all that we can to support our partner organizations.”



CYD organization A Step Beyond addressing food insecurity among students and families in their program through daily food distribution during the pandemic.

“Clare Rose's commitment to trust-based philanthropy during this COVID-19 pandemic has meant so much to our community of young creatives! We received the funding to get our distance learning program up in just days, ensuring that our youth have access to their community of support. Personally, CRF's trust-based model has helped to restore my faith in the philanthropic process,” shares Brandon Steppe, Founder and Executive Director of [The David's Harp Foundation](#).

Clare Rose Foundation committed to a COVID response driven by program and practitioner needs. “CRF's response was quick and highly responsive to needs expressed by the CYD community--and with concern for all community members and organizational layers. Matt's leadership has been exemplary in so many ways: pooling resources, connecting us to CYD leaders and peers across the nation, advocating for funding and support with grant makers and philanthropists, as well as making spaces for all voices to be heard and get the support they need on a regular basis,” comments Rachelle Archer of [Artful Leadership](#) and a member of the San Diego Creative Youth Development Network.

The existing trusting relationships with and among grantees meant that grantees were forthright about their needs and situations. In mid-March 2020, when D’Arrigo wanted to know just how dire cash flow and financial reserves were for these typically small budget organizations, he emailed Clare Rose’s group of grantees asking how many months of operating funds they each had in the bank. “Not only did everyone respond, but almost every ED hit ‘Reply All’, sharing their response with the full group,” says D’Arrigo. “That’s trust.”



Media Arts Center San Diego will hold its Teen Producers Projects program during Summer

Releasing Funding & Securing Additional Funds

By the third week in March 2020, Clare Rose Foundation made funds available to address immediate needs of grantees. These COVID-response programs include:

- **Front Lines Fund - Emergency Relief for Teaching Artists**

These direct, one-time grants to teaching artists are within the IRS’s disaster or emergency hardship rule and are intended to alleviate some of the hardships being faced by this important group within the CYD community. CRF worked with the Network to identify which teaching artists had the most immediate need. The Foundation secured advice from its legal team and foundation advisors to determine the best avenue to award funds directly to individual artists and how to maximize funds granted. Clare Rose Foundation supported 42 artists within three weeks. Funds were granted following a streamlined, digital application and selection process.

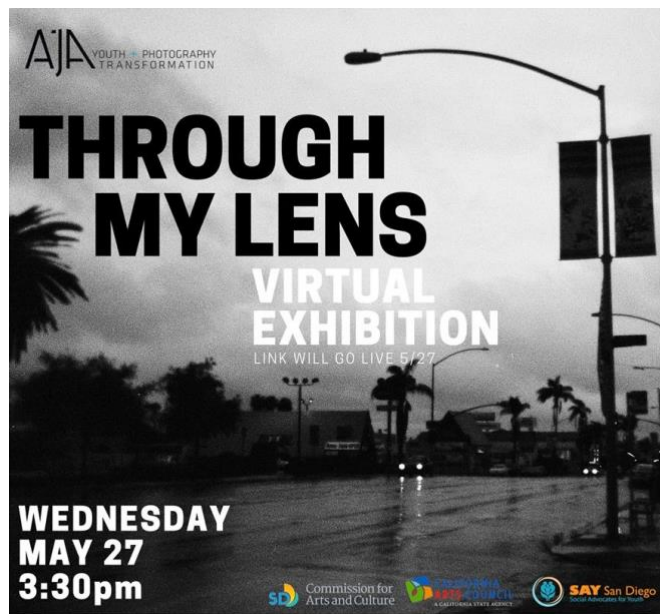
- **Supporting CYD Organizations, Teaching Artists, and Young People in going digital/virtual**

As it became apparent that organizations would need to connect with young people virtually and that most organizations and youth were not equipped with the necessary technology to do so, CRF created a technical assistance grants program for purchasing equipment, subscriptions, and setting up platforms **to support virtual programming and operations so that grantees could** connect with the young people in their programs and with each other.

- **Financial modeling, scenario planning, and emergency plans**

With this funding stream, the Foundation is working with community partners to provide financial modeling and scenario planning services to grantees that seek this support.

Based on grantee responses and one-on-one conversations, CRF identified cash flow as a top priority. Clare Rose had already committed to 5-year, general operating support grants to seven organizations and to additional grants for other CYD collaborating programs. By early April, the Foundation released remaining 2020 operating grants funds to grantee CYD organizations so they had the funds in hand as revenue slowed down while unanticipated technology expenses mounted.



STUDENT PHOTO BY CELINA R

Aja Project held a virtual exhibition of student work in Spring 2020 with technology that mimicked the experience of wandering through an exhibition.

Seeking to maximize what Clare Rose can do during this time, the Foundation also reassessed 2020 plans, reallocating funds to provide more general operating support to grantees in the wake of the pandemic. “Just as our partners had to let go of many of their plans, so did we as a foundation. We reallocated funding to ensure we had resources available for a long term, multi-phase approach. We also made hard decisions to hold money back for later disbursement in summer, fall, and winter when some organizations need money now,” says D’Arrigo.

Engaged in several national networks of funders, CRF was tracking leadership and responses in other communities in order to identify best practices in the sector. The need for additional funding support beyond Clare Rose’s funding capacity was clear, along with the reality that public sector revenues in San Diego would be significantly below projections given the loss of tourism and convention tax revenue. Called

Transient Occupancy Tax, or TOT, this diminished revenue stream is the primary source of funding for the City of San Diego's Commission for Arts and Culture, which in turn funds many arts and culture organizations in San Diego.

Leveraging relationships with the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture along with San Diego Grantmakers and the San Diego Foundation, the Clare Rose Foundation helped to **initiate and lead development of a San Diego pooled fund, the Arts + Culture Challenge Fund**. CRF provided seed funding for the effort along with The San Diego Foundation. The partners in the Arts + Culture Challenge Fund, all well-known in the community, give the initiative credibility with the public. This credibility and visibility are essential to the Fund's success since the vision includes community contributions to augment the commitments from the funding partners.



Media Arts Center San Diego announces on social media that the San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge Fund grant the organization received will support its creative youth development programs and other community programming, Spring 2020.

Knowing that small- and mid-sized organizations in San Diego face the greatest threat of financial crisis and potential closure, D'Arrigo and colleagues successfully advocated for the initial wave of funding to go to small- and mid-sized groups with budgets from \$150k and \$1.5m. CRF, alongside partners in the Arts + Culture Challenge Fund, pushed for equitable approaches to the Fund's decision making process. They also worked to include a statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion with regard to the Fund's grantmaking process.

The partners in the Fund created a streamlined application process with a one-week turnaround between the application deadline and announcement of funding decisions. San Diego CYD organization that applied to the Challenge Grant succeeded in receiving full funding, infusing an additional \$113,000 in new funds for CYD programs. Each CYD organization received up to \$10,000 from the Fund, alleviating some immediate financial pressure during a time of great need.

When San Diego’s daily newspaper ran two weeks of profiles on the impact of COVID-19 on arts groups, the reporting did not discuss small, community-based arts organizations, including creative youth development organizations. The Clare Rose Foundation sought to rectify the gap in coverage. D’Arrigo successfully appealed to the arts editor, writing and securing publication of an [Opinion piece in the San Diego Union-Tribune](#). The article drew public and media attention to the importance and needs of creative youth development organizations. The article describes the essential role of CYD groups in their communities: “These deeply impactful organizations primarily serve low-income communities of color and operate on lean budgets. Unlike larger institutions, they don’t have wealthy board members or connections to major philanthropists. Only 1/4 of the groups have fundraising staff.” He underscores that, should any of these organizations disappear, it will negatively affect the most vulnerable young people in our communities. In addition to visibility in the broader community, the Opinion piece bolstered the spirits of CYD groups.

Social and Emotional Support & Practical Counsel

In their practice of trust-based philanthropy, Clare Rose Foundation provides support that extends beyond monetary to include promoting self-care, creating community, connecting people and organizations, and strengthening leadership and capacity of organizations. Just as with CYD being concerned with the whole being of young people, Clare Rose is committed to the well-being of individuals who are part of the CYD



The San Diego CYD Network’s weekly video chats are a safe space and a source of community and information.

community as well as to programs and organizations overall. This means investing in the well-being of adult practitioners and staff as well as young people.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Clare Rose had begun offering professional development opportunities related to self-care. This new area of investment is the result of a landscape analysis that confirmed the large percentage of CYD executive directors and staff experiencing burnout and high levels of job-related stress. Network input has informed the format of the

professional development, which includes both group opportunities as well as grants to support self-directed opportunities for individuals.

Driven by a desire to nurture community connection and provide emotional and practical support, Clare Rose initiated and committed to underwriting three weekly Zoom meetings for the San Diego CYD Network. Each regular gathering has a specific focus, and weekly sessions have centered on mindfulness, self-compassion, community and relationship building, and organizational and program needs. The Network seeks to be culturally competent and relevant in its variety of offerings, and has remained responsive to the real-time needs of the Network. Participation is strong. Gatherings are free with no registration required and meetings occur on the same day and time each week.

The frequency of the meetings and supportive atmosphere have been a lifeline for many individuals. Cecelia Kouma, Executive Director of [Playwrights Project](#), remarks, “By gathering leaders of various CYD groups, **Clare Rose Foundation’s leadership has helped lift my eyes off the trees and look at the full forest.** I am grateful to have a safe space to share questions, concerns, and insights among my peers and learn about resources and brainstorm best practices. Their support has significantly improved my ability to lead my organization through these uncertain and challenging times.”

Predating the pandemic, D’Arrigo has had an open-door policy since soon after he joined Clare Rose. Grantee executive directors and staff regularly call, text, and email, seven days a week, anytime they want or need to connect. D’Arrigo has one-on-one telephone calls and meetings, providing an empathetic ear and counsel as someone who has faced the same challenges they face, whether with board members or fundraising or in finding ways to meet young people’s needs. The tone of the conversations is one of openness, candor, and support without judgment. The ongoing dialogue and mutual sharing that are central to these exchanges means that CRF is both fluent and current in the challenges and opportunities that San Diego CYD organizations face.

Recognizing that CYD executive directors and staff were under tremendous pressure to sustain their organizations, pay staff, and continue to support young people, D’Arrigo proactively shared advice and offered support. He has sent several straight talk, or tough love, emails to the group of Network executive directors with recommendations and considerations, including to “get small now” and, regarding planning, to “try to just focus on 3 months at a time” given the near impossibility of doing long-term planning given the range of unknowns.

D’Arrigo reflects, “Passionate leaders can have blind spots in times of crisis and be fogged by emotion or idealism. They are just too ‘close’ to it. My role (because of my capacity) is to stay at 30,000 feet to continually monitor the landscape--locally, regionally, and nationally--of what is really happening. I then compare that reality with what I’m hearing on the weekly calls. If I feel there’s a disconnect in reality of the seriousness of the [COVID] situation and how long it might last, that’s when an email

would go out.” Organizations have shared that D’Arrigo’s advice has helped as they face tough decisions and grapple with an array of emotions and issues.

CRF has also sought to provide practical help with the large volume of information on the ever-shifting landscape of COVID-related regulations and opportunities. Under the auspices of the San Diego CYD Network, CRF gathered, organized, and shared information on COVID response loans and grants as their grantees sought to process the torrent of information announced each day. Clare Rose Foundation continues to compile and curate opportunities for webinars, funding, and resources and shares them via weekly emails to Network partners.

Phase II - Continuing Support & Forging a New Future

As Clare Rose implemented its initial response to the new reality, CRF was also strategizing on seizing the opportunity to discard old norms and shape a better future for CYD programs and for young people. Clare Rose Foundation began to have conversations with the Network and with public and private funders to sow seeds of a jointly envisioned future. CRF’s vision is that of visible, valued, and sustainable organizations that provide more young people with access to CYD programs’ powerful combination of wrap around services and creativity-based skill building.

D’Arrigo shares, **“Our focus now will be, together with the Network, to thoughtfully and intentionally reimagine what the future needs to look like and to begin building it together. At CRF, we will continue our push and focus on systems change. We are treating the organizational symptoms of COVID in partnership with our Network, while we continue working with cross-sector allies trying to change the systems that cause them: philanthropic and government.”**



Staff and teaching artists at A Step Beyond connect and support one another via ZOOM during quarantine, Spring 2020.

The Clare Rose Foundation is spearheading the effort in San Diego to rebrand CYD organizations as community health centers that are addressing public health issues for young people and the communities they live in. This is part of an ongoing awareness and education process among elected officials and other civic leaders about creative youth development's positive impact on young people's mental and social health and life skills development. Potential collaboration with program and service providers as well as funders are a natural outgrowth of this vision. D'Arrigo asserts, **“Funders need to use their platform or ‘position of power’ to inform and influence philanthropic and policy decision makers.”**

The Clare Rose Foundation's Phase II response will include additional funding. As part of the ongoing Arts + Culture Challenge Fund, CRF will provide leadership and support to an effort to give direct \$1,000 grants to BIPOC artists in San Diego's creative workforce.

Leadership Extending Nationally

In addition to Clare Rose's local partners such as The San Diego Foundation and San Diego Grantmakers, CRF is engaged with grantmaking and CYD colleagues throughout the United States. Each week D'Arrigo has multiple individual calls with national funders and stakeholders to share ideas and approaches. A number of San Diego CYD Network partners attend weekly national CYD group calls. And monthly, D'Arrigo participates in virtual meetings with Grantmakers for Education's Arts Education Impact Group, which has a current focus on creative youth development, and with the [Creative Youth Development National Partnership](#). D'Arrigo is among a group of national leaders, including Erik Holmgren and Käthe Swaback at [Massachusetts Cultural Council](#) who are pushing the CYD field to examine, “How can we be proactive, how do we build new structures, how do we use this time to not go back to the way things were?”

At the end of May 2020 D'Arrigo moderated a webinar, [Fundraising, Sustainability, and Partnerships in Creative Youth Development](#), for the Creative Youth Development National Partnership as part of an ongoing series based on the landscape analyses that are part of [Americans for the Arts' Creative Youth Development Toolkit](#).

In June 2020, in partnership with Mac Howison at [The Heinz Endowments](#), the Clare Rose Foundation convened a national virtual gathering of CYD funders. D'Arrigo shares, “First, this will be a time to connect and support each other as funders. There is tremendous burn-out and stress right now among funders. It's a ‘heavy’ space. So, we want to build a community and support network. Secondly, it is to reflect on everyone's collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic, compare notes, and then collectively strategize how CYD funders move forward from here TOGETHER to best help support

the field.” The inaugural call was so successful, Clare Rose Foundation and the Heinz Endowments decided to hold this CYD Funders Forum monthly on Zoom and are offering ongoing points of communications and collaboration for peer funders to work together toward the goal of collective action to strengthen the field of CYD.

With D’Arrigo coming from the field of creative youth development it is no surprise that he brings creativity, imagination, and tenacity to his work at Clare Rose Foundation. He is in continuous learning mode, has forged a strong network of support, and takes a holistic approach to supporting people and organizations--all hallmarks of creative youth development. He is also as committed as ever to trust-based philanthropy. In the first days of the pandemic, it was the trust between Clare Rose Foundation as a funder and its grantee organization partners that made possible such a rapid, on-the-mark response. D’Arrigo says, “I think the trust comes from being their peer for 16 years and then transitioning to this role in a thoughtful way over the past 3 years . . . the weekly accessibility and responsiveness - not just listening but actually doing what the organizations have requested of us. . . a history of walking the walk. And if we misstep or have a blind spot, I think we own up to it as well.”

D’Arrigo is also quick to credit his colleagues at the Foundation, saying, “Anne’s [Vincent, President of CRF] commitment to trust-based philanthropy has shaped our approach to our work and has been fundamental to how, together with our CYD Network colleagues, we have created a strong and nourishing CYD community. Anne’s flexibility and willingness to invest more funding in CYD and to build the capacity of the Foundation to best serve the field has made our longer-term work and our COVID-19 response possible. Katie [Lorge, CYD Programs Manager at CRF] is also essential to this work. We could not be doing what we are doing and could not have had this COVID response without her.”



Young people helped to plan A Reason to Survive’s livestreamed, virtual open house, a youth showcase and exhibition in Spring 2020.

James Halliday, executive director of [A Reason to Survive](#), reflects, “Trust-based philanthropy is undoubtedly more art than science — an artful combination of high-touch engagement and careful listening where the Clare Rose Foundation has shown deft leadership. These characteristics enabled CRF to hear and understand the needs of CYD organizations during

this pandemic, then respond with a Front Lines Fund to address the COVID-related struggles these organizations have faced.”

As Clare Rose considers the post-COVID environment for its partner organizations and for young people, the Foundation maintains that a trust-based, partner dynamic, rather than a power dynamic, is the only way to change the systems to build a better future for the young people the CYD field serves.



A student with ArtReach Mural Program in San Diego celebrates installation of a mural that was created by students at home, square by square, with live, virtual art classes in adherence with social distancing guidelines, Spring 2020.

