

Pizarro: Knight Foundation grants \$630,000 to South Bay arts groups

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The list of grantees can be found on the foundation's blog at www.knightfoundation.org, and it's encouraging to see that many of the grants support projects that reflect the region's cultural diversity or that generate excitement in public places.

Silicon Valley Ballet is receiving \$50,000 to stage Cuban choreographer Alicia Alonso's "Giselle," making it the first U.S. company to do so. Santa Clara-based Indian theater company Naatak was granted \$30,000 to support production of "Vrindavan," an original Hindi play that will have its premiere in September in Palo Alto.

Other grants will help San Jose Taiko bring its drummers to sites around San Jose -- probably catching the ear of unexpecting passers-by -- and will fund more public concerts by The Commons, the innovative public concerts that put an interesting twist on classic music (The next one is July 24 in St. James Park).

More well-known institutions like the San Jose Museum of Art, Silicon Valley Creates, the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art and Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana also received grants to help them continue or expand some of their more innovative programming. All in all, a pretty good day for the arts in Silicon Valley.

ARTISTIC TREATMENT: You don't necessarily equate cancer treatment with stunning artwork, but that's what was on display for the 250 patients and family members who arrived Monday morning for the opening of Stanford's new Cancer Center South Bay.

And from the top floor, patients receiving infusion therapy are able to enjoy views of the Los Gatos hills, which are always a beautiful sight to behold.

CAFFEINATED PERFORMANCE: If you were in downtown San Jose on Sunday, you might have caught what looked like performance art on the Paseo de San Antonio near the state building with dancers bounding on short walls holding cups of Philz Coffee.

SISTER CITY COMFORT: Last month's tragic balcony collapse in Berkeley that killed six Irish exchange students has resonated deeply with the San Jose-Dublin Sister City program. Its members have created a condolence book, a long-standing Irish tradition, where people can pass along their words of sympathy and encouragement.

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