

# 2024 in review

**YMF** Center for Music and  
Creative Technologies

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Highlights, achievements, and milestones

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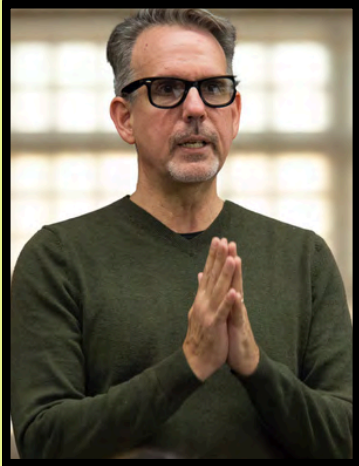
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# Letter from the Executive Director

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## WALTER ZOOLI

2024 was one of the most significant years in YMF's long and storied history. With the opening of the YMF Center for Music and Creative Technologies, we are now positioned to drive impactful and lasting positive change in the communities, schools, and organizations with which we partner. Thanks to the dedication and commitment of our board of directors, administrative team, teaching artists, the philanthropic vision of our funders, and the support of our community we have truly created an incubator for creativity, a wellspring of healing through the arts, and a haven where successful futures begin.

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**5,800+**

Participants served weekly

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**525+**

Creative Career Pathways participants

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**91%**

Revenue directed to programing

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**100%**

College admission rate of our graduating seniors

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# The YMF Way



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## VISION

We envision a world where all individuals embrace the power of music to affirm and sustain themselves, their communities, and their cultures.

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## MISSION

To disrupt systems of inequity through healing-based music education, creative career pathways, and multigenerational community engagement.

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# 1st Quarter, January - March

## YMF Center for Music and Creative Technologies Opens First Semester of Classes Begin

After three years of planning, construction, and permitting, we are exhilarated to announce that our new campus and headquarters in Historic South Central Los Angeles opened its doors in January.

The YMF Center for Music and Creative Technologies features a state-of-the-art media arts lab, audio/video recording control room, five classrooms, and a large program/performance space designed for maximum flexibility. The Center offers tuition-free music and media arts after-school and weekend classes in instrumental music, music fundamentals, music technology and production. The Center has also enabled us to significantly expand our Creative Career Pathways programs for reentry and at-risk youth, and workforce development programs in media arts.



3-storey mural of Florence Mills at CMCT



Creative Career Pathways class.



Betty Lou and Bill Gross Lobby and  
Resource Center



Lawrence N. Field Soundstage and  
Creativity Incubator

We are grateful to Christian Stayner and Alina Provost of Stayner Architects for their creative vision and steadfast guidance during the entire process, the Hollywood Community Housing Corporation (HCHC) for partnering and inviting us into their beautiful Florence Mills Apartments building, Councilmember Curren D. Price Jr. for his support and gracious welcome to Council District 9, YMF Board Member Deb Burkart for facilitating and tenaciously championing our vision throughout the building process, and our board of directors for believing in and supporting this new vision for YMF.



Ella Fitzgerald Keyboard Lab

### Creative Career Pathway Programs are Blossoming

We address inequitable access to healing, personal growth, and career readiness with programming designed for the unique needs of reentry, and economically disadvantaged youth. We've seen aggressive, anti-social affects give way to enthusiastic participation and eagerness to collaborate. Complex creative projects require perseverance to successfully complete, and powerfully instill a positive sense of self and confidence.

Creative Career Pathway programs are based on the **6 Pillars of Thriving**:

**EMOTIONAL  
MANAGEMENT**

**INITIATIVE**

**RESPONSIBILITY**

**PROBLEM  
SOLVING**

**EMPATHY**

**TEAMWORK**



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### Ebby Kahan Joins Board of Directors



We are pleased to announce that Ebby Kahan joined our board of directors this quarter. As Vice President at J.P. Morgan Chase Private Bank, he is a top performing financial advisor with over ten years experience in financial advisement and portfolio planning for business and individuals. Ebby is also a composer and pianist who is passionate about music and its power to create positive change.

### Education Through the Arts Internship

Exploring the Arts, a bi-coastal mentoring organization founded by Tony Bennet, offers a unique Arts Internship Program that places a cohort of juniors from public Title I high schools in two-year internships at arts organizations. The program seeks to demystify the professional arts world and facilitate direct engagement with the arts sector in their city. Jareli, our ETA intern, gained valuable experience in all aspects of nonprofit arts organization operation, including fundraising, resource management, and program development. Her culminating project was the creation of a “Community Game Night,” which enabled students and families to build community through an evening of playing board games and art-making activities.



Jareli, our ETA intern.

### “Cielo” Premieres

Creative Career Pathways students completed their first short film, which premiered at our grand opening event. “Cielo” tells the story of a young musician who enters a competition with a \$1,000 prize. After failing the initial audition, he learns that his younger sister needs glasses, which his family can’t afford. Inspired, he overcomes his self-doubt, reenters and wins the competition, and his sister a pair of glasses.

Click below to watch:



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## 2nd Quarter, April - June

### Grand Opening and Community Celebration

The YMF Center for Music and Creative Technologies (CMCT) grand opening celebration in April was a great success. With musical performances from across cultures, food vendors, and family activities, it was an extraordinary day of community building and connection.

Attendees toured the state-of-the-art media arts lab, audio/video recording control room, five classrooms, and the Lawrence N. Field Soundstage and Creativity Incubator. They also experienced demonstrations of our tuition-free after school and weekend music and media arts classes.



Walter Zooi and YMF Boardmember Daniel Rothmuller.



Vijay Gupta offered a stirring musical tribute to the Center and YMF.

“Our goal is establishing the YMF Center as a vital community resource for positive youth development through community power-building that provides our Historic South Central communities access to the healing and developmental advantages of the arts through tuition-free classes, as well as economic opportunity through Creative Career Pathways programs and workforce development training.”

*Walter Zooi, executive director*



Councilman Curren D. Price shared his excitement about the benefits CMCT will bring to CD9.



Maqueos Music, A Place Called Home's youth ensemble.



Booker (center), Philip Graulty (right) of Street Symphony's Midnight Strings.

## Music as a College Pathway Workshop



As a result of our recent partnership with the Alpert Music Center at Los Angeles City College (LACC), Trevor Andries, Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Jazz Studies brought an ensemble of talented students to perform for YMF students and their families in June.

After the performance Mr. Andries gave a presentation demonstrating that music is a plausible and accessible pathway to secondary education at LACC and similar institutions. He then answered a flurry of questions from our students and family members who were clearly excited and inspired by the opportunity.

## YMF Students Perform with Acclaimed *Los Cambalache* Ensemble

Student ensemble, *Los South Central Players*, had the opportunity to perform with nationally acclaimed *Son Jarocho* ensemble *Los Cambalache* at our annual Spring Concert in June. The popular *Son Jarocho* genre originates from the Mexican state of Veracruz, and is notable for its unique combination of Latin American and African rhythms.



### Spring Concerts Arcoss YMF School Sites

Over 3,000 students across 22 YMF school sites performed in spring concerts for family and friends.



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### Jessa Calderon Workshop and Performance



In the first iteration of what will become an Indigenous Artist In Residence program at CMCT, we presented a workshop and concert featuring artist and activist Jessa Calderon.

Jessa is a Tongva, Chumash, and Yoeme songwriter, poet, hip-hop artist, and author who's work encourages healing and spirituality through evocative imagery and intuitive practices.

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### YMF Participates in Compton Unified's Steamfest

Compton Unified School District's (CUSD) "Art And Technology: Innovating for a Better World STEAMfest," was an held for all CUSD schools to highlight their STEAM programs (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math). Our Newcomers English Learning program students showcased their increasing facility with English through collectively written lyrics for songs they created using digital audio workstations.



## 3rd Quarter, July - September

### YMF Receives LA2050 Grant

YMF is grateful to have been selected to receive a grant for our Creative Career Pathways Programs from the SNAP Foundation as part of this year's LA2050 Grants Challenge. We look forward to working with all of the amazing organizations in our LA2050 Grantee Cohort striving to make LA a better for everyone.

LA2050 is an initiative driving and tracking progress toward a shared vision for the future of Los Angeles.



### Community Partnership with J.P. Morgan Chase Finalized



YMF became an official community partner of J.P. Morgan Chase Bank in July. As a community partner, YMF will be able to host a variety of Chase financial literacy workshops and share resources with our community.

The first of these was a workshop that focused on budgeting, smart saving habits, and financial goal setting for children. Specific topics included role modeling sound money management habits and supporting proper money decisions. Also offered were tips and activities to help children learn good financial habits that they will use throughout their lives.



(Left to right), Yolla Kairouz, Cesar Tinoco, Walter Zooi, Erika Castelanos, Ebby Kahan.

### Creative Drop-In Program Introduced

Open to youth ages 16 - 24 in South Los Angeles communities, Creative Drop-In is a program in which someone can “drop in” any time during regularly scheduled hours, whether they are currently enrolled in a YMF session or not. During these hours, youth have access to our music and media technology, musical instruments, as well as quiet rooms where they can write or just relax in a safe creative environment. A YMF engineer and youth ambassador are available to guide and assist.



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### At the 29th Annual Central Avenue Jazz Festival



YMF's Los South Central Players at the Dunbar.

YMF was honored to again receive an invitation to participate in the 29th Annual Central Avenue Jazz Festival, a nationally renowned celebration of jazz and culture in Historic South Central. YMF's *Los South Central Players* performed at the legendary Dunbar Hotel just five blocks south of the YMF Center. In a special surprise appearance, LA Mayor Karen Bass, accompanied CD9 Councilperson Curren D. Price, Jr. offered words of encouragement to our students and shared her belief in the power of music to transform individuals, communities and civil society as a whole.



LA Mayor Karen Bass speaking at the performance.



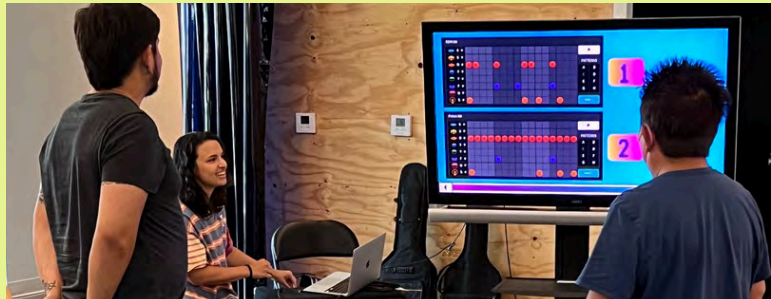
Los South Central Players

## Teachers Teaching Teachers



We believe in providing consistent professional development opportunities for our teaching artists to help them grow as educators and achieve the greatest impact on our students.

In August, YMF teaching artist Kenzie Jones shared her unique approach to teaching music technology and production to a wide range of students, from middle schoolers to the men and women of Homeboy Industries in our Mike Stoller Music Heals program. Kenzie has developed a number of effective and engaging strategies that encourage student creativity and individual expression through the use of various music creation software platforms.



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## Martin Flores Named Director of the Mike Stoller Music Heals Program for Homeboy Industries' Homeboy Art Academy



Martin Flores (left) with Homeboy Industries founder Father Gregory Boyle

Long-time YMF Teaching Artist Martin Flores was named Director of the YMF Music Heals program by program founder and namesake, legendary composer Mike Stoller. Martin has been with the program since it first began in 2017. His remarkable ability to connect with and engage Homies of all ages and backgrounds, combined with his dedication to the mission and goals of the program have been one of the primary reasons for its growth and success.

YMF is proud of our partnership with the Homeboy Art Academy, which hosts the Mike Stoller Music Heals program. Founded by acclaimed muralist and NEA Heritage Fellow Fabian Debora, the Academy emphasizes the power of art to heal, build connections, bring attention to inequalities, and transform lives.

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## 4th Quarter, October - December

### Hispanic Heritage Month Performance

Our *Los South Central Players* had folks on their feet and dancing at the Hispanic Heritage Month Community Celebration hosted by the South Park Recreation Center in October.

Muchas gracias to CA State Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas for inviting us to participate in this heartfelt community celebration. Many thanks as well to City Councilperson Curren D. Price Jr. for his invaluable participation and support of this event.



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### Chase Bank Understanding and Building Credit Workshop



YMF hosted another impactful workshop provided by our community partner J.P. Morgan Chase in October. This workshop for students and families focused on understanding and building credit. Topics included how to establish credit, credit reports and scores, and building positive credit histories.

Thanks again to Erika Castelanos, Vice President, Community Manager, J.P. Morgan Chase, and our own Board members Yolla Kairuz, Executive Director, J.P. Morgan Chase Private Bank, and Ebby Kahan, Vice President, J.P. Morgan Chase Private Bank.



### Partnering with 24th Street Theater's Dia de los Muertos Festival

24th Street Theater's 19th annual Dia de los Muertos festival was a beautiful celebration of loved ones across generations. The community altar was overflowing, the tributes and performances were incredible, the food was delicious, and there was a lot of love shown by everyone for each other and those who came before us. This was the first year 24th Street invited us to officially partner with them.



*Los South Central Players performed wonderfully, and we met many future YMF students who were excited to try the music production equipment in our booth and learn more about our tuition-free classes.*

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### Jamey Lamanna Elected Board Chair



We're excited to announce that Jamey Lamanna was unanimously elected as Chairperson of YMF's board of directors in December as Margot Smith Thomas stepped down after 10 years of transformative leadership. Jamey is Partner, Chief Information Officer at Apollo Management. He has held positions at Cadma Capital Partners, Lord, Abbett & Co. LLC and Goldman Sachs. His considerable expertise in Strategic Planning, Technology Management, and Information Technology Strategy will be invaluable as we move forward.

Jamey is also a musician who has experienced the life-changing benefits of music and music education. Explaining what drew him to YMF he said "I have been passionate about music from an early age and truly believe in its ability to help people grow, express themselves, and heal."

### **Echoes Student Film Premieres**



Click on the image above to view the film on Youtube.

The second film produced by our Creative Career Pathways students, *Echoes*, premiered at our Winter concert in December. It was written, filmed, directed, edited, and scored by these outstanding young creatives. As a horror film, students focused a great deal on producing the score and sound design.

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### **Winter Holiday Concert a Multimedia Success**



This year's Winter Concert was truly memorable. Our students performed beautifully. The gift of music they shared with the standing-room-only audience was heartfelt and befitting of the season. The concert was especially significant in that it opened with the premiere showing of the film *Echoes*, followed by a question and answer session with the students who created it.

Special thanks to the parents and caretakers who outdid themselves this year, providing festive decorations and a generous spread of delicious food.



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## **PROGRAMS AND ADMINISTRATION**

**CATHIE ARTEAGA**  
YOUTH ARTS AMBASSADOR

**BREANNA FLORES**  
PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

**ARI GARCIA**  
PROGRAM AND EVENTS COORDINATOR

**NICK HON**  
CURRICULUM AND TEACHING ARTIST LIASON, IN-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

**MADDY MAJOR**  
PROGRAM MANAGER

**ALLISON MCADOO**  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR

**CESAR TINOCO**  
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

**WALTER ZOOI**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **OFFICERS:**

**JAMEY LAMANNA**  
BOARD CHAIR

**FRED SCHOLDER**  
SECRETARY

**G. BEVERLY BERGMANN**  
TREASURER

### **DIRECTORS:**

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**DEBBIE BURKART**

**LORI HYLAND**

**EBBY KAHAN**

**YOLLA KAIROUZ**

**DANIEL ROTHMULLER**

**MARGOT SMITH THOMAS**

**SKIP SUSSMAN**

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Thank you for supporting our mission and programs over the past year,  
and helping to change the lives of those we all serve.\*

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Rose Hills Foundation  
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*Kitty Sankey in memory of Edwing Sankey*  
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Barbara Abel *in memory of David L. Abel*  
Lauren LeRoy *in honor of Virginia LeRoy*

\*For a complete listing of YMF supporters, please see: [ymf.org/supporters](http://ymf.org/supporters)

# Contact Us

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