

Arts Groups and Donors Create Fire Relief Fund for Los Angeles Artists

The fund, already at \$12 million, is led by the Getty and includes major museums, foundations and philanthropists.



By Robin Pogrebin

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Major museums like the Getty and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, along with philanthropists like Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani of Qatar and foundations like Steven Spielberg's, have raised \$12 million for a fund to support the artists affected by the California wildfires.

“L.A. is a vibrant arts culture — we don’t want it to be bottomed out, we don’t want artists who have lost stuff to get up and leave and we also don’t want people to forget about them,” said Katherine E. Fleming, the chief executive of the J. Paul Getty Trust. “When we asked people to participate, it was like pushing on an open door.”

Called the LA Arts Community Fire Relief Fund, the effort aims to support “artists and arts workers in all disciplines who have lost residences, studios, livelihoods or have otherwise been impacted by the devastating Los Angeles fires,” the organization said.

The fund will be administered by the Center for Cultural Innovation, an arts support organization. Applications will be accepted starting Monday through the center or the Getty.

Other funding efforts for artists have sprung up in a more grass-roots way through GoFundMe pages, donation centers and Google Docs.

Contributors include the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation; the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; East West Bank; the Ford Foundation; and the Mohn Art Collective, which comprises LACMA, the Hammer and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles.

“It’s such an incredibly, powerfully, complicatedly, beautifully, quintessentially multicultural place in the United States,” Elizabeth Alexander, president of the Mellon Foundation, a New York-based supporter of the fund, said of Los Angeles.

“As soon as these tragic fires started happening, we were hearing from our people — extraordinary stories that made it clear that we needed to help.”

“We still don’t know the full measure of what the loss is in terms of arts and archives,” she added. “It’s clear this is just Stage 1.”

Among the organizations that have chipped in are the filmmaker George Lucas’s Hobson/Lucas Family Foundation; Spielberg’s and Kate Capshaw’s Hearthland Foundation; the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation and the A&L Berg Foundation.

Two of the world’s largest galleries have contributed: Gagosian and Hauser & Wirth.

“This collaborative spirit was instantly activated,” said Michael Govan, LACMA’s director and chief executive. “It is kind of a landmark thing that L.A., which is so scattered, is pulling together so quickly. I don’t know that there is a precedent for that.”

Robin Pogrebin, who has been a reporter for The Times for nearly 30 years, covers arts and culture. [More about Robin Pogrebin](#)

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