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San Luis Obispo Museum of Art to Receive \$75,000 Our Town Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

(SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif.) — The San Luis Obispo Museum of Art has been approved for a \$75,000 Our Town award from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to support the *Braiding Water* project. This is one of 57 grants nationwide, totaling \$4,175,000, that the NEA has approved in the Our Town category. These creative placemaking grants support projects that integrate arts, culture, and design activities into local efforts to strengthen and authentically engage communities, center equity, advance artful lives, and lay the groundwork for long-term systems change.

“The National Endowment for the Arts is pleased to support a wide range of projects, including *Braiding Water*, demonstrating the many ways the arts enrich our lives and contribute to healthy and thriving communities,” said NEA Chair Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD. “These organizations play an important role in advancing the creative vitality of our nation and helping to ensure that all people can benefit from arts, culture, and design.”

"We are so proud to be awarded this highly competitive grant! Recognition like this from the National Endowment for the Arts helps to shine a bright light on SLOMA's mission to prove that art matters by using art as a doorway to deeper insight and connection," said SLOMA's Executive Director Leann Standish.

"Braiding Water" is a community-inspired exhibition and public art project by California artist April Banks, focused on water, and local BIPOC communities' relationships to it, through culture and art. SLOMA presents this project in partnership with R.A.C.E. Matters SLO and the City of San Luis Obispo. The project will launch in late 2023 with community events led by R.A.C.E. Matters, which will guide an exhibition in mid-2024 at the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, followed by a public art project presented as part of the City's Public Art program.

For more information on the projects included in the Arts Endowment grant announcement, visit arts.gov/news.

About San Luis Obispo Museum of Art

The San Luis Obispo Museum of Art (SLOMA) is the heart of the California Central Coast visual arts community and a vital link to the cultural life of the region. It is dedicated to showing that Art Matters: We enrich our community by using art as a doorway to deeper insight and connection. Located at 1010 Broad Street, on the west end of Mission Plaza in San Luis Obispo, California, admission to this 501(c)(3) public benefit nonprofit arts organization is free to all. More information can be found at www.sloma.org.

About the Artist

April Banks is a Los Angeles-based artist and creative strategist. Her hybrid practice sits between image, space, and experience. Recent works, from encaustic to steel sculpture, time travel through historical archives and memories. April graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture from Hampton University in Virginia in 1996. She earned a MS in Environmental Design from Art Center College of Design in Pasadena in 1999.

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