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The Actors Fund Breaks Ground On \$120 Million Hollywood Arts Collective

By **David Robb**

February 11, 2021 10:30am



Artist rendering of the Hollywood Arts Collective

The Actors Fund

The Actors Fund broke ground today on the Hollywood Arts Collective, a \$120 million project that will include 151 units of affordable housing for artists, an 86-seat theater, art galleries, rehearsal studios, nonprofit arts office space and a new home for The Actors Fund's Western region headquarters. It's expected to open in 2024.

See the virtual groundbreaking [here](#):

The Hollywood Arts Collective Virtual Groundbreaking



Located on Hollywood Boulevard between Wilcox Avenue and Schrader Boulevard, the Hollywood Arts Collective “is exactly what our city needs and deserves: affordable housing for the extraordinary artists who make Los Angeles the creative capital of the world,” said Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti. “And it’s also a performing arts space and center right here in the heart of Hollywood that will showcase what makes this community so special and vibrant.”

“It’s been a challenging year and this project gives us a source of pride,” Garcetti said during the virtual groundbreaking. “It’s a reason to hope. It shows us a path to restoring our economy, revitalizing our neighborhoods and helping everyone. A path that begins with investing in the heart and the soul of our city. It represents the best of who we are as Angelenos: a dynamic collection of dreamers and doers who put in the hard work every single day to make this a city of belonging, compassion, fairness. A place where we don’t shy away from tough challenges — we run to them. So thank you all so much and I look forward to the ribbon cutting, and to all of the incredible creative work that will grow and flourish at the Hollywood Arts Collective.”

Mayor Eric Garcetti

City of L.A. via Facebook

The project, which is being developed by Thomas Safran & Associates, will consist of two buildings: the Arts

Building, designed by the Hammel, Green and Abrahamson architecture firm, and the Residential Building, designed by Withee Malcolm Architects.

With nearly \$100 million in public support and conventional financing already secured from sources such as the City of Los Angeles, the State of California, the Los Angeles Development Fund, and the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, The Actors Fund says it expects to raise at least \$20 million philanthropically in support of the project as part of a public capital campaign, with \$5 million already raised toward that goal.

“This project is going to mean a lot to the entertainment community of Los Angeles,” said Annette Bening, vice chair of The Actors Fund. “Thanks to the generosity of one very important donor, the Los Angeles community at large and the residents of the Hollywood Arts Collective are going to have the chance to rehearse, sing, dance, act and perform, and then witness all of these new artistic collaborations at the Glorya Kaufman Theater. This brand new state-of-the-art 86-seat theater is going to be the crowning jewel of the Arts Building and of The Collective.”

“We are so proud to partner with The Actors Fund in this important endeavor for the performing arts entertainment industry,” said Jordan Pynes, president of Thomas Safran & Associates. “We are building 151 high quality affordable housing units for artists in the

Annette Bening

Chris Chapman

Hollywood community. Our firm has built thousands of affordable units around the Los Angeles area. And our reputation and our commitment is to provide superior design, maintaining our properties to the highest standards and enriching the lives of those who live in our buildings. We are very proud of the team we’ve assembled and we wanted to give special thanks to Glorya Kaufman, Monica Horan and Phil Rosenthal for their generous lead gifts to this amazing project.”

Kaufman, the renowned philanthropist who has also made substantial donations to USC, UCLA, the Los Angeles Music Center, and the Los Angeles Public Library, said that “My passion has been theater and dance and helping causes that help support people, therefore The Actors Fund has been the crown jewel in my philanthropic life. I’m so excited about being part of this new project for the performing artists that will receive shelter, care and support in LA.”

The Actors Fund, she said, “encourages and celebrates curiosity, creativity and innovation. Congratulations on reaching this milestone at this very difficult time. Let us take comfort that Shakespeare had to close his Globe Theater in the time of a pandemic. With hope in his heart he reopened after the danger was over. Shakespeare reminds us that true hope is swift and flies with a swallow’s wings.”

“This is a creative community and we need to be able to have housing where people who work in the entertainment industry can live,” said Horan, who starred for many years in *Everybody Loves Raymond*, which was created by Rosenthal, her husband. “Thanks to The Actors Fund for creating this affordable housing, and us being able to support it. We feel we are so part of the community, and we are so grateful for this opportunity.”

“I’m proud to say that people in our industry, in California and across the country have relied on The Fund for nearly 140 years,” said Actors Fund chairman Brian Stokes Mitchell. “And our doors are always open to them. They come in times of need, for compassionate help and support. What they find is much more. They

Actors Fund

find a community. A pathway to stability and resiliency in their career and life. The building blocks that lead to health and wellness. And now, in the heart of Hollywood, they’re coming home. But it’s not only about the needs of people in entertainment. It’s also about the wider community. And this project will give back to Hollywood and to greater Los Angeles in countless ways.”

Actor and director Chandra Wilson, who’s a member of The Actors Fund’s Western Council, said: “This project is the culmination of 11 years of planning and development by The Actors Fund, Thomas Safran & Associates, Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell, and the City of Los Angeles Departments of Cultural Affairs and Transportation. By 2024, this project will be a reality, here, in the heart of Hollywood, a beautiful new space for our arts and entertainment community. With affordable housing, gardens, a fitness room, sound-proof rehearsal studios, nonprofit arts spaces and galleries, a training center, and – yes – parking. And who will be the closest neighbor? That’s The Actors Fund, whose new home will be right on site.”

Said Los Angeles City Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell, in whose district the project is being built: “This is an example of how we can build affordable housing by utilizing existing city property. In this instance, a former service parking lot that we’re building on. Using city assets to help address one of the issues of our day, and that is a lack of affordable housing. I have championed this project from the beginning. We need to support our local artists in the industry. And we can do that by providing covenanted affordable housing, as artists struggle sometimes. So they need this kind of support in Los Angeles. We need to support the creative class. This is one way to do it. This is also the result of the collaboration with my office on doing the legislative and the funding work, to really push a project through like this. It’s 100% affordable housing and there are a lot of players to help make this happen. So much goes on behind the scenes to get to this day. And just know that we’ll stay directly engaged throughout the construction of this project so we can get it completed on time and on budget. We do

that by making sure that there are not bureaucratic hiccups that halt or slow down the project. That's what a council office does to work with partners to get to this kind of success."

Keith McNutt, executive director of The Actors Fund's Western region, said: "The Hollywood Arts Collective is the embodiment of The Actors Fund's vision: a world in which individuals contributing to our country's cultural vibrancy are supported, valued and economically secure. In addition to the benefits to our wider community, it's important to remember those who will directly benefit from the Hollywood Arts Collective. That's the people we serve at The Actors Fund; 67% earn less than \$40,000 per year. More than half of those receiving emergency financial assistance last year live in California. Our career and life, health and wellness, and housing programs are constantly evolving to meet the needs of the growing diversity within our community.

"The entertainment community has been deeply affected by this pandemic," McNutt added. "It's estimated that 95% of artists and creative workers have lost income and 63% are unemployed. Hundreds of thousands of jobs are no longer being supported. But The Actors Fund is always there for them, anywhere in the country: from our founding in 1882; to our epic benefit performance of Julius Caesar in LA in 1916; to the opening of our West Coast office in 1973; to the Palm View affordable housing residence in West Hollywood in 1998 – right up to today."

Since mid-March of 2020 and the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown, The Actors Fund has provided more than \$19 million in direct financial assistance to more than 15,000 people in need in performing arts and entertainment, while continuing to provide services that includes affordable housing opportunities, health care and insurance counseling, senior care, and secondary career development.

"Congratulations and thank you to everyone who is making the Hollywood Arts Collective a reality," said Joe Benincasa, president and CEO of The Actors Fund. "On behalf of Bob Wankel, the Chair of The Actors Fund Housing Development Corporation, our Board of Directors and every Trustee of The Actors Fund, thank you and congratulations. You are building community. You are building a stronger community of performing arts and entertainment professionals, right there in Hollywood. So congratulations and thank you."

This article was printed from <https://deadline.com/2021/02/hollywood-arts-collective-the-actors-fund-groundbreaking-1234691844/>



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