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Kick Off the New Life of the Historic Tacoma Armory
RECLAMATION
A Free Community Gathering produced by Tacoma Arts Live
Saturday, November 12 at Tacoma Armory

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TACOMA, WASH.— Tacoma Arts Live presents [RECLAMATION](#), a free community gathering to kick off the new life of the Tacoma Armory. The event on Saturday, November 12 from 11 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. signifies Tacoma Armory's intended transformation from a historic fortress to an innovative community hub for arts and culture. The gathering is produced by Tacoma Arts Live in collaboration with neighborhood partners including [EPIC's](#) Brendan Nelson. RECLAMATION asserts the centrality of community in the future of the Tacoma Armory.

[RECLAMATION](#) honors the legacy of the Hilltop and embraces its future with live performances of music and dance (Step, R&B, Hip Hop, Jazz, Drumline), visual arts, fashion shows, a marketplace featuring local artists and makers, hands-on workshops, local eats, and community resources.

"RECLAMATION is an arts gathering inspired by and for our community," explains David Fischer, Executive Director of Tacoma Arts Live. "RECLAMATION also marks a formal transformation for the Tacoma Armory, once a building of imposing walls that for too long was a symbol of colonialization. As the new non-profit owners of the Tacoma Armory, we are taking this opportunity to repurpose the building as an innovative hub of arts, culture, and community."

Community leader Brendan Nelson, whose work includes projects with Peace Community Center, EPIC, and Hilltop Action Coalition, adds, "I'm happy to see another space in the Hilltop being reclaimed for community use. I believe that this event will be inspiring and uplift the powerful cultural roots of the Hilltop."

Featured performers at the festival reflect the past, present, and future of the Hilltop and Tacoma's historic Black community: [The Kareem Kandi World Orchestra](#) nods to the storied tradition of Tacoma's jazz era. [Cole'lition](#) presents the R&B and smooth jazz credentials that took neighborhood-born brothers Michael and Anthony Cole on the road internationally and fostered the Hip Hop and Gospel talents of second-generation bandmate, Michael Cole, Jr. of 2fifty3. Hilltop boutique, Extraordinary You will present a fashion show. Meanwhile, the present and future will be in the capable hands (and feet) of featured youth musicians and dancers, including [Vision Step Team](#), the [Lincoln High School Drumline](#), and [Tacoma Urban Performing Arts Center's](#) West African drum and dance company, under the guidance of Ghanaian master Awal Alhassan.

In addition to performances, festival attendees can join in all-ages dance workshops with Tacoma Arts Live Teaching Artists, including a Hip Hop session with Ariel Advincula (aka Boonie) and their crew, Mexican Ballet Folklórico with [Bailadores de Bronce's](#) Jessica Grossman and Mindful Movement with [Barefoot Collective's](#) Katie Lappier. The younger guests will enjoy an interactive storytime with the [Tacoma Reads](#) featured book, *Thank You, Omu* with [Dr. John Gaines](#), and Tacoma-born Oakland Ballet alumna and dance educator Erika Turner Davis, who will help children bring the story's characters to life through movement.

Visual art will be front and center, starting with a newly commissioned work from celebrated artist [Tiffany Hammonds](#). Honing her talents in [Fab5's](#) neighborhood youth program, Hammonds has completed significant works including large-scale murals that help define the Hilltop's visual aesthetic.

There will be interactive arts activities for all ages, food from local eateries, and a vendor marketplace: featuring local artists, makers, and merchants, where attendees can support micro-enterprises while getting a head start on the holidays.



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Community health will also be a focus: a vaccination clinic offered by the [Tacoma Pierce County Health Department](#) will offer free COVID-19 boosters and [Genoa Healthcare](#) will offer free flu shots. Additional health, economic, and social programs will offer information on their services.

“Today, the Armory is like a giant red-brick question mark for many people,” comments Tacoma Arts Live’s Director of Community Engagement, Antonio Gómez. “While it’s been quiet in recent decades, it used to host presidential addresses, sports tournaments, expos, and concerts. Our task is to reinvigorate the building in that uniquely Tacoma way that merges past and present. To offer experiences that are a window to the world while also honoring its Hilltop location and the neighborhood’s historic Black and immigrant communities.”

Earlier this year, Tacoma Arts Live was gifted the historic 1908 structure with the intent to transform the space utilizing the vibrancy of the arts. The nonprofit began this work while the Tacoma Armory was owned by the private Roberson Company, programming performances as well as hosting international touring exhibitions such as *Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel: The Exhibition*, *Imagine Van Gogh* and *The Infinite*, a virtual reality tour of the International Space Station. Through Tacoma Arts Live, it has also programmed and hosted large-scale events such as Mary Bridge Children’s *Festival of Trees*, Latinx Unidos del South Sound’s *Festival Latinx*, and the recent theatrical production, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, as well as making the venue available for private productions and events.

[RECLAMATION](#) is a free community gathering at Tacoma Armory (1001 South Yakima Avenue in Tacoma) on Saturday, November 12 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.. For information about RECLAMATION, to register as a vendor at the event, or to learn more about Tacoma Arts Live’s education programs and upcoming events, visit tacomaartslive.org.

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Tacoma Arts Live’s mission is to energize the community through live performance. Founded in 1979, Tacoma Arts Live is a non-profit organization recognized for leadership in presenting world-class performing artists and providing one of the largest arts access and education programs in Washington State. Tacoma Arts Live is located at Tacoma Armory and presents events in venues throughout the South Sound. Learn more at TacomaArtsLive.org.

Tacoma Arts Live gratefully acknowledges the following Sponsors for support of the 2022-23 Season: [ArtsFund](#), [Arts WA](#), [Bamford Family Foundation](#), [Boeing](#), [Columbia Bank](#), [Florence B. Kilworth Foundation](#), [The Forest Foundation](#), [KNKX](#), [Mary Bridge Children’s - Multicare](#), [M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust](#), [Tacoma Creates](#), [National Endowment for the Arts](#), [Pierce County](#), [Safeco Insurance Foundation](#), [Umpqua Bank](#), [US Bank Foundation](#), [The Washington State Arts Commission](#), and [William Kilworth Charitable Foundation](#).