



the new children's museum™

200 west island avenue san diego, california 92101 t 619 233 8792 f 619 233 8796 thinkplaycreate.org

**media contact**  
Amanda Lopez  
510-717-0738  
alopez@thinkplaycreate.org

## **Next Innovators Lab Artist Residency Funded by ResMed Foundation**

*Artist Mithsuca Berry designing workshop inspired by upcoming  
Octavia E. Butler: Seeding Futures exhibition*

**SAN DIEGO (March 8, 2024)** – [The New Children's Museum](#) (NCM) in downtown San Diego announced today that the [ResMed Foundation](#) has provided a \$10,000 grant to fund the Museum's next [Innovators Lab](#) artist residency. Running from March 8 through April 3, the program will coincide with the opening of [Octavia E. Butler: Seeding Futures](#), the inaugural exhibition in NCM's new two-year programmatic arc, Science Fiction Creates the Future.

Artist-in-Residence Mithsuca Berry (they/them) has designed an Innovators Lab workshop activity inspired by the "seeding" component of the exhibition. Participants will create and decorate mini planters, plant seeds from the Barona Indian Charter School and Barona Museum and Cultural Center's native seed bank and learn about the native uses of these plants. The workshop aims to teach empathy and connect youth with their local ecosystems. Participants will be provided seeds and care instructions to nurture their plants at home, fostering a deeper understanding of environmental stewardship and community.

For the duration of Berry's month-long residency, the ResMed Foundation grant will also support activities in the Lab's adjacent drop-in area, where the Museum will launch "Walk through the Cosmos," a new play area that will remain active through May 31. This interactive space features large, moon-like craters with surfaces that simulate different planetary terrains. It is an innovative way for children to develop motor skills and learn in a fun, space-themed setting. This is another tribute to Octavia E. Butler, to whom NASA dedicated its Mars 2020 Perseverance rover landing site, commemorating her lasting impact on science and science fiction.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with The New Children's Museum to bring Philadelphia-based artist Mithsuca Berry to San Diego for this compelling project," said Kristi Burlingame, Executive Director of the ResMed Foundation. "Through the workshop, children will have the opportunity to explore science and creativity in an exciting new way, working with their hands in the earth and growing something beautiful together. These enriching experiences not only build upon the concepts taught in the classroom, but help kids connect with one another and the natural world around them. Getting a little dirty in the name of art is hands-on learning at its best."

The ResMed Foundation has been a longtime supporter of the Museum, focused on workshops in the Museum's collaborative makerspace, The Rosso Family Foundation Innovators Lab, where local artists and experts from various fields create a design challenge to nurture creativity, problem-solving, skill-building and learning. What sets the Innovators Lab apart from other makerspaces is the inclusion of professional working artists who develop design challenges alongside the Museum's internal creative team to provide open-ended, skill-building projects that explore real-world issues. The Innovators Lab serves families with children ages 6 to 13 and provides opportunities to experiment with various ideas, materials and hands-on techniques.

"We are always looking for new ways to stimulate imagination, creativity and critical thinking in children, and collaborating with resident artists is a powerful way to do just that," said Elizabeth Yang-Hellewell, Executive Director and CEO of The New Children's Museum. "These are transformative experiences that families can't find anywhere else. None of this would be possible without the ongoing support of our valued community partners, like the ResMed Foundation, who allow us to keep imagining 'what's next?'"

### **About The New Children's Museum**

The New Children's Museum's mission is to spark creativity, exploration and a sense of belonging through interactive art experiences. Located downtown, the Museum collaborates with contemporary artists to design and create art installations and educational programs for children. The Museum brings families together in a rich educational environment that fosters creativity — blending the best elements of children's museums, contemporary art museums and community resources. In 2023, the Museum celebrated 40 years serving San Diego and 15 years as The New Children's Museum in its downtown location. To learn more, visit [thinkplaycreate.org](https://thinkplaycreate.org) or follow them on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

### **About the ResMed Foundation**

The mission of the ResMed Foundation is to promote novel research as well as public and physician awareness of sleep disordered breathing (SDB). In addition, and in recognition of ResMed's commitment to its local community, the Foundation provides support for STEM and Arts education within San Diego County. The Foundation was formed in 2002 and contributes a percentage of its annual budget to promote community causes in the areas of education for primary and secondary students (specifically in math, science and technology) as well as the arts in San Diego County. More information is available at [www.resmedfoundation.org/](https://www.resmedfoundation.org/).

### **About Mithsuca Berry**

Mithsuca Berry (they/them) is a Haitian artist, educator, and storyteller from Boston MA. Throughout their practice they've transformed what creating art means to them. Each piece

marks an epiphany in their journey of healing trauma – as it relates to existing as a black queer/non-binary person of Caribbean descent. Art has always been the intersection between their inner child and spiritual self. It responds to the question: How do I create an archive of imagery, recording the complex emotions that surface in my lifetime? Stories like theirs are oftentimes being erased. The intention is to sketch/write/RELEASE those examples into the world, for others who resonate to connect with. Their hope is that this process brings healing on a collective scale. Their work exists to protect the future autonomy of people like them. They say, “Society has always struggled with believing people like me exist, making my journey of coming into self inherently spiritual. My self-love, my healing, my play — is an experience that bends the reality we have grown attached to. My hands were made to bring that “mythology” into every visual that I can. The whimsy, the grief, the resilience. Once I have brought that story into the world, there is no denying it exists. That is how we preserve our history and pass it down to generations after us.”

###