The CalArts main campus sits on the unceded ancestral lands of the Chaguayavitam, the people of Chaguayanga, whose present-day descendants are citizens of the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians. They have been here for millennia and will forever call this place home. Through meaningful partnership and collaboration, CalArts is committed to lifting up their stories, culture, and community.
The CalArts Land Acknowledgment as Endorsed by the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, the First Peoples of Santa Clarita

THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT
The CalArts main campus sits on the unceded ancestral lands of the Chaguayavitam, the people of Chaguayanga, whose present-day descendants are citizens of the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians. They have been here for millennia and will forever call this place home. Through meaningful partnership and collaboration, CalArts is committed to lifting up their stories, culture, and community.

STATEMENT HISTORY
For three years, the California Institute of the Arts has been building its relationship with the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians—the First Peoples of Santa Clarita.

They are among more than 600 distinct tribal communities who have maintained their lifeways and cultural traditions despite the ongoing—and unrelenting—colonial project. Indigenous nations and communities require more than words and gestures from allies: They deserve substantial, tangible action.

CalArts–Fernandeño Tataviam collaborations include a Community Arts Partnership (CAP) youth program, which is helping Fernandeño Tataviam K-12 students to cultivate their own art practices and secondary students to prepare for post-secondary arts education. Other joint efforts feature campus engagements with Fernandeño Tataviam leaders in cultural presentations and dialogue, providing CalArtians a stronger sense of their place as guests on Fernandeño Tataviam lands. The Institute is exploring ways to give a permanent area to the Fernandeño Tataviam on campus.

As this relationship continues to grow, the Institute introduced in November 2022 a Fernandeño Tataviam–endorsed land acknowledgment for use by the CalArts community. Combined with meaningful engagement and actions, land acknowledgments reorient community thinking about place and about occupied lands.

STATEMENT USE
CalArts developed the land acknowledgment in close collaboration with Fernandeño Tataviam leaders and encourages its use in email signatures and as an opening statement before campus events, presentations, and performances.

While the use of the acknowledgment is not mandatory, it’s worth remembering that successful relationship-building hinges on full community support and buy-in. The Institute is grateful for CalArtians’ commitment to this effort and for their contributions to a long, healthy bond with the First Peoples of Santa Clarita.