



Contact: Meredith Gandy  
415.553.2116, [mgandy@kqed.org](mailto:mgandy@kqed.org)  
[www.kqed.org/press](http://www.kqed.org/press)  
Screeners available by request

## **SPARK KICKS OFF SEVENTH SEASON WITH PROFILES OF A LEGENDARY PAINTER AND A RISING MUSICIAN**

- Season premieres Wednesday, March 18 at 7:30pm on KQED Public Television -  
- Featuring renowned artist Wayne Thiebaud and singer-songwriter Vienna Teng -

SAN FRANCISCO, March 9, 2009— Discover art from the Bay Area and beyond! This March, *Spark* kicks off its seventh season with profiles of local artists with worldwide followings. Part of KQED Public Television's local Premiere Week, *Spark* returns on Wednesday, March 18 at 7:30pm with an episode featuring Pop Art legend Wayne Thiebaud and singer-songwriter Vienna Teng.

*Spark* first visits 88-year-old Wayne Thiebaud in a rare interview with the famed painter. Now based in Sacramento, Thiebaud first rocketed to fame in the 1960s with paintings of common, everyday objects such as cakes, pies, and gumball machines. Still passionate about his art and still teaching future artists through classes at the University of California at Davis, Thiebaud continues to paint on a daily basis. He invites *Spark* into the studio watch the creation of his latest work.

*Spark* then dives into the creative world of singer-songwriter Vienna Teng. A native of the Bay Area, Teng always considered music a hobby as she worked towards a career as a software engineer. In 2002, she took a leap of faith and decided to pursue her dreams in music. Now Teng can boast four albums and over a hundred performances worldwide, and *Spark* is there as she returns to the Bay Area for a triumphant homecoming performance at the Palace of Fine Arts.

Also in this episode, *Spark* joins modern dance choreographer Janice Garrett as she creates a revealing new work for her company's fifth anniversary season.

This season of *Spark* will include stories of local dancers, comedians, youth musicians, and even a look at how the current economic crisis is affecting Bay Area artists.

- **March 25** *Spark* looks at the legacy of modern dance pioneer and San Francisco native Isadora Duncan through the story of Mary Sano, who came to the Bay Area from her native Japan to dedicate her life to the preservation of Duncan's work. *Spark* also joins Ron Nagle, whose love of both ceramics and rock and roll has led his artistic career in very different directions.

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- **April 1** Photographer Katherine Westerhout, who documents beautifully decaying buildings, takes viewers inside a forgotten West Oakland landmark: the 16th Street Train Station. Comedian W. Kamau Bell shares his wry observations on race and his personal stories about being black in an Obama-era America.
- **April 8** *Spark* goes inside the world of Bhangra, a traditional Indian dance that's been revitalized by a generation of young Indian-Americans. The program also visits San Francisco's new Contemporary Jewish Museum and the current exhibition where artists from various backgrounds created objects inspired by the ceremonial Seder plate.
- **April 15** Join renowned visual artist Kerry James Marshall as he creates new murals in the atrium of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Dan Hoyle, son of famed Bay Area performer Geoff Hoyle, works on a new one-man show entitled "Right?" based on his travels across small-town and rural America.
- **May 6** *Spark* meets the 100 member Firebird Youth Chinese Orchestra, a San Jose organization that offers Chinese-American kids a chance to learn to play the traditional instruments from their ancestral homeland. Environmental artist Daniel McCormick then creates and installs a new site-specific, temporary sculpture in the wilds of West Marin.
- **May 13** The all-female vocal group Kitka performs music rooted in Eastern European musical traditions. Then, in a special collaboration with PBS's *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, *Spark* investigates how the current economic downturn is affecting artists in the Bay Area.

The EMMY award-winning website **KQED.org/spark** takes visitors even deeper into the arts community by supplementing the television series, supporting the educational outreach program, and providing unique content. The site provides a digital library of hundreds of video and audio clips of Bay Area artists, one of the largest collections of its kind available online. Subscribe to the weekly podcast, sign up for the newsletter, see the latest Bay Area art happenings, and more at [KQED.org/spark](http://KQED.org/spark).

**SparkEd** is the education and outreach program of Spark, offering media resources, educational materials and professional development training, including comprehensive Educator Guides and arts education tools to help K-12 and post-secondary educators use Spark in the classroom. SparkEd professional development provides presentations, hands-on workshops, training institutes and continuing education courses to help educators extend and deepen their capacity to teach in and through the arts. SparkEd Educator Guides are available at [KQED.org/spark](http://KQED.org/spark) and through iTunes U.

## About Spark

*Spark*, a production of KQED Public Television, is a three-part initiative in the arts that

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combines a weekly television series airing Wednesdays at 7:30pm on KQED 9, an extensive website, and a multifaceted educational outreach component. *Spark* blazes a trail through the diverse and prolific Bay Area arts community, featuring in-depth profiles of hundreds of local artists and arts organizations. Find more art tips and resources online at [www.kqed.org/spark](http://www.kqed.org/spark).