

State of the ARTS

2008

Highlights

Big Read

In October, Venturans were asking one another "What page are you on?" as many community members read "Bless Me, Ultima" by Rudolfo Anaya as part of Ventura's Big Read. This month-long celebration of reading included more than 30 free events countywide: a kick-off party, lectures by renowned local academics, children's and family programs, a youth mural project, a staged reading, and numerous discussion groups in both English and Spanish. In partnership with the Ventura County Library, the City of Ventura received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to participate in this national initiative designed to restore reading to the center of American culture.



Tortilla Flats Mural

Tortilla Flats, a diverse, working-class community razed during highway construction in the 1940s and 50s, was reborn as a permanent public art mural on its original site in the Figueroa Street Underpass beneath the 101 freeway. The project seeks to restore both a sense of place to an area once rich in cultural history as well as a better connection between Ventura's downtown and beach. Beginning in 1994, artists MB Hanrahan and Moses Mora began collecting photographs and conducting oral histories of an entire community to share with generations to come. Said Hanrahan, "I'm gratified that the City has chosen to recognize the historic importance of this neighborhood."



Olivas Adobe Restorations

The Olivas Adobe is a priceless treasure that represents a vanishing California tradition. Through a matching grant from the California Cultural and Historical Endowment, work has begun on seismic retrofitting and site stabilization, electrical upgrades, and rehabilitation of the site. With a goal of increasing the Adobe's role as a community asset and living history site, other renovations will improve signage, expand interpretative programming, and add new interactive exhibits. A Community Development Block Grant will be used to install ADA-compliant bathrooms. Planning is already underway for a grand re-opening celebration in Spring 2010.



Our Mission

"Weave the arts into everyday life throughout Ventura" by

- Creating cultural experiences that are diverse, enriching and inclusive
- Ensuring access to and education in the arts
- Promoting awareness of our cultural heritage and history
- Providing opportunities and support for artists and arts organizations; and
- Supporting economic development and tourism, especially in the Downtown Cultural District

CITY OF
VENTURA
COMMUNITY SERVICES
Cultural Affairs



Supporting Our *Creative Infrastructure*

Cultural Funding Program 21 local arts organizations received a total of \$161,500 in grants and nine performing and literary artists received Artists Fellowships totaling \$39,000.

Mayor's Arts Awards recognizes artistic achievements and contributions to the cultural community by City residents. This year's recipients were Affinity Bank (Arts Patron), Phil Taggart (Artist in the Community), Moses Mora (Arts Leader), Kathleen Noblin (Arts Educator) and Jennifer Livia (Emerging Artist).



Working Artists Ventura (WAV) Project Construction has begun on this downtown project to build affordable live/work space for artists, housing for mixed-income families, and a theater/gallery, all built to the highest standards of LEED certified green technology. The project is scheduled for completion in Fall 2009.

Celebrating Local Artists And The Built *Environment*



Public Art Program incorporates an artist's vision into capital improvement projects. Recognizing the substantial economic and social benefits gained through art in public spaces, the City established an ordinance allocat-

ing two percent of capital improvement project costs for the commissioning of artwork.

Municipal Art Acquisition Program Since its inception in 1999, the collection showcases the breadth and diversity of the county's visual art community through sculpture, painting, photography, etching, and ceramics.

Promoting Access And *Cultural Tourism*

ArtWalk This two-day, bi-annual event promotes regional artists in more than 80 downtown galleries and merchant sites.

Street Fairs Our longest running special events, the Holiday Street Festival and Fourth of July Street Fair, bring 600 hand craft vendors, live entertainment on five outdoor stages and attendance upwards of 50,000 to downtown Ventura.

Music Under the Stars hosts top quality performers, dancing and dining in the historic Olivas Adobe courtyard every Saturday night throughout the summer.

Festival in the Park features professional visual and performing artists and their students at Barranca Vista Park, a kids swap meet and free family activities.



Performances in the Park Free, professional summer family theatre performances at Barranca Vista Park by Gypsies in a Trunk.

Starlight Cinema Now in its second year, this free series screens classic films outdoors in Ventura's many City parks and served more than 1,000 residents.

Educating Through The Arts

Cultural Arts Classes More than 400 classes taught by professional artists in the visual, performing and literary arts, aimed at adults, children and senior populations and held primarily at the Barranca Vista "Imagination Center" site and select elementary schools.

Children's Celebration of the Arts brings professional artists into classrooms for art-making lessons from around the world reaching 6,500 children per year.

Arts Education Master Plan Working together with the Ventura Educational Partnership Arts Collaborative to develop a District driven, comprehensive program to ensure the arts are an interdisciplinary, sequential part of every student's education.

Preserving Our *Heritage*

Cowboys, Heroes & Outlaws features bilingual workshops, period entertainment, a Cowboy College and Chumash Village to keep Western history alive for all ages at the Olivas Adobe.

Discover Ventura Arts and Historic Tours 70 tours per year by expert guides take 2,000 visitors and locals through our city's many historic, cultural, culinary and even "haunted" sites.

Albinger Archaeological Museum Excavation site and home to many artifacts including an ancient earth oven and the Mission's water filtration building.



Ortega Adobe Downtown's sole witness to its Spanish/Mexican heritage and the home of Pioneer Ortega, believed to be California's first commercial food operation.