



Dear Community Member,

On behalf of the City of Ventura and the City Council, thank you for joining me in celebrating the accomplishments of the six outstanding honorees for the fifth annual Mayor's Arts Awards. I am pleased to have the opportunity to recognize the artistic achievements and contributions to the cultural

community by these City residents, artists, educators, and business leaders. Nominations for the awards were solicited from the public over a six-week period. Guiding the selection process was a panel of three prominent local citizens (including one of last year's recipients) who thoughtfully reviewed the nominations and made the final recommendations to me.

Through the Mayor's Arts Awards initiative, the City aims to cultivate greater visibility and understanding of the value of the arts, as well as provide an opportunity to develop new leadership and create new patrons for the arts. It has grown into a highly visible tradition in the community that will continue to evolve for years to come.

Like all our events and programming, these awards have been produced in partnership with local organizations, artists and businesses. We are very pleased to have Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach as our event sponsor and thank its staff for their involvement. I also wish to thank artist Lis J. Schwitters whose graphic artwork, Mark of Excellence, has become the signature design for the event and the award.

The leadership exhibited by these honorees is only a sampling of the talent and dedication of our citizenry. Ventura is fortunate to have a vibrant and active arts community of individuals, organizations and businesses leading the way. Now more than ever, the arts exemplify the heart and soul of Ventura.

Sincerely,

Christy Weir

Christy Weir
Mayor, City of Ventura

2009 Mayor's Arts Awards Selection Committee

Doug Halter, business leader

Phil Taggart, poet and 2008 Mayor's Arts Award recipient

Tony Strauss, Cultural Affairs Commissioner

2009 Mayor's Arts Award Nominees

Albert and Micheline Sakharoff

Mary Galbraith

Michele Chapin

Bill Jeralds

Chris Velasco

Patricia Strickland

Mario Boccali

Emily Thompson

David Armstrong

Roe Estep

Hilda Kilpatrick

Helle Scharling-Todd

Susan Scott

Pam Cohen

Veronica Valadez

Doc Rodgers

2008 Recipients

Affinity Bank

Arts Patron

Phil Taggart

Artist in the Community

Moses Mora

Arts Leader

Kathleen Noblin

Arts Educator

Jennifer Livia

Emerging Artist

2007 Recipients

Josh Addison

Arts Patron

Paul Lindhard

Artist in the Community

Linda Ottsen

Arts Leader

Carlisle Cooper

Arts Educator

Brian McDonald

Emerging Artist

2006 Recipients

Sandra and Jordan Laby

Arts Leaders

Gerd Koch

Artist in the Community

Clarissa Boeriu

Arts Educator

Ventura Visitors &
Convention Bureau

Special Initiative

2005 Recipients

Lee Hodges

Arts Leader

MB Hanrahan

Artist in the Community

Focus on the Masters

Arts Educator

Michel "Michellino" Petersen

Special Initiative

CITY OF
VENTURA
COMMUNITY SERVICES
Cultural Affairs



Mayor's Arts Awards



"Mark of Excellence" by Lis J. Schwitters

2009

Honoree Reception

November 10, 2009

Sponsored by
Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach

Welcome

Elena Brokaw, Director

City of Ventura Community Services Department

Mayor's Address

Mayor Christy Weir

Presentation of Awards

Eileen Riddle, Chair

City of Ventura Cultural Affairs Commission

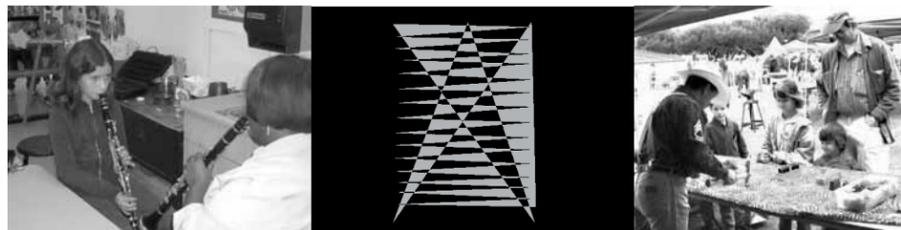
Elena Brokaw, Director

City of Ventura Community Services Department

Entertainment

Music by Valencia and Friends

2009 Honorees



Arts Patron

Albert and Micheline Sakharoff

Nominated by Councilmember Neal Andrews, Albert and his wife Micheline have been quietly and deliberately providing the financial scaffolding upon which many of our premier local arts organizations have been built. Their engagement and support for the arts have been instrumental in making Ventura a cultural center of the Central Coast.

Al Sakharoff's life has exemplified his ideals—that art and culture provide beautiful and sustaining nourishment to us as well as our children. Decorated in service to our country with the Bronze Star, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, and the European Theatre Medal, Al went on to develop a highly successful sky light company. Al and his wife, Micheline, have consistently set an example to help make cultural experiences an accessible opportunity for all of our community. Said Councilmember Neal Andrews, "This quiet, good-hearted couple have made a tremendous impact on the cultural arts available to our community and our citizens. We will honor Albert's memory with fondness and gratitude."

Artist in the Community

Michele Chapin

Nominated by Jordan and Sandra Laby, Michele has been a working California artist and outspoken arts advocate for the past 30 years. Currently, Michele works as a community arts activist, teacher and stone sculptor creating public and private commissions at Stoneworks Studio. Her extensive service to the community includes six years of teaching stone sculpture to youth-at-risk from Brighton Academy, hosting carving field trips to her studio with Art Trek, Ventura High School and the Vita Art Center. She has worked as Artist In the Classroom with youth-at-risk at the California Youth Authority, Colston Youth Facility, and with clients from the Turning Point Foundation.

An avid supporter of the Ventura ArtWalk and First Fridays, she regularly opens her studio to the public and has featured hundreds of local artists, both known and emerging. She uses the location of her studio on "The Avenue" to expose art and nature free of charge to the West side's underserved population. A member of both the Buenaventura Art Association and San Buenaventura Artists' Union, she regularly offers her sculptures at fundraising auctions for numerous local nonprofits. Her 2008 "West Side Shoe Project" featured creations made from shoes by local artists and children, culminating with an installation of over 200 pairs for Harvest ArtWalk. Her 2009 "West Side Door Project" during the Spring Art Walk involved collecting and redistributing recycled doors to turn them into art. Mayor Christy Weir presented Michele with the City Council's Beautify Ventura Award in April 2009.

A highly accomplished artist, Michele attended the University of California, Santa Cruz and was a founding member of the Santa Cruz Art Center. She moved to Ventura in 1987 and joined the arts collective, Art City, where she began a stone carving apprenticeship with Central Coast sculptors, Paul Lindhard and Joanne Duby. In time she purchased her own tools and began teaching herself to carve. Since then, she has received numerous awards and commissions, including "Best of Show" award at Ojai's Art In The Park, "People's Choice" awards at the Golden State Sculpture Competition, and three "Best of Show" awards at the Ventura County Fair; First Place for Sculpture at the Thousand Oaks ArtWalk and First Place Sculpture at the Malibu Fine Arts Festival. Her piece "Desert Flower" was purchased as one of the first pieces in the Ventura Municipal Art Collection, on permanent display at City Hall.

Arts Leader

Chris Velasco

Nominated by Joshua Addison, Chris Velasco is the founder and President of PLACE, a national nonprofit whose mission is to work with cities to create leading edge communities that promote the arts, environmentalism and social justice. For over sixteen years, Chris has been actively engaged in the creation of over 200 innovative communities and sustainable facilities. When he arrived in Ventura in 2003, he immediately began working with the arts community to develop a state-of-the-art green community designed for creative people and businesses.

The combination of his hard work and determination with the City's twenty-year-long effort to provide live/work space for artists has resulted in the Working Artists Ventura (WAV) facility, set to open this year. Strategically located in the heart of Ventura's Downtown Cultural District, WAV will provide affordable living and work spaces for over a hundred artists and 15 units designed to provide permanent supportive housing to recently homeless families and individuals.

Along the way, Chris empowered the Ventura arts community by holding over 35 public meetings to develop WAV policies, some attended by over 350 people. He worked closely with many organizations such as Downtown Ventura Organization, the Ventura Chamber of Commerce, the Ventura County Arts Council, the Ventura Rotary, Project Understanding and the Kiwanis Club. In addition, Chris put together a complex combination of public and private funding to realize this ambitious project. A true visionary, Chris has permanently improved the cultural landscape of Ventura with this nationally recognized project.

Arts Educator

Patricia Strickland

Nominated by James Steiner, Patricia Strickland has been the Theater Arts teacher and director for Saint Bonaventure High School for over nine years in addition to teaching music and drama for grades K-8 at Our Lady of the Assumption School. A graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts West along with a B.A. from Ellis College, Patricia has directed over 65 productions and acted in over 50 productions throughout Ventura and Los Angeles counties. A two time recipient of the City of Ventura Cultural Funding Program's Artists Fellowship grant, she also has received the REP Award for Excellence in Performance and the County of Ventura Arts Commission's Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Performing Arts. A committed advocate for community theatre, Patricia served as the Artistic Director for the Elite Theater Company for eight years and is in the process of founding a new local theater company called Ventura's Impromptu Players (VIP). VIP's mission is to bring quality theatre to the community, performed by the community, while providing educational opportunities for actors of all ages. Among the many productions she has staged at Saint Bonaventure are Godspell, West Side Story, Footloose, Les Miserables, Little Women, Annie Get Your Gun, Jesus Christ Superstar, Grease, and You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown.

This past fall's production of the Dead Man Walking School Theater Project was especially poignant and educational. Based on the book by Sister Helen Prejean's experience working as a chaplain on death row, the project was designed to foster dialogue about the death penalty and involved a cross-curriculum collaboration among the school's faculty. Beloved and admired by her students, Patricia works tirelessly to recognize their unique abilities and produce high quality theater "beyond what you would expect to see in a high school production."

Emerging Artist

Veronica Valadez

Veronica Valadez was nominated by Moses Mora for her talents that extend into multiple roles in the community—as an Aztec dancer and visual artist, gallery owner, teacher and community activist. She is the owner and founder of Under the Sun gallery at the Bell Arts Factory, one of the few galleries in Ventura focusing on socially conscious, multicultural artwork. From the gallery, Veronica teaches numerous classes and workshops in traditional Mexical/Azteca dance, mask making, papel picado (paper cutting), among other culturally specific art forms, in addition to providing a venue for local artists and musicians. Under her leadership, the annual Día de Los Muertos celebration in Mission Park has grown into one of Ventura's most vibrant and cherished cultural events. Veronica graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara and has received numerous honors including a Ford Foundation scholarship and two City of Ventura Artists Fellowship awards.