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For Immediate Release

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Contact: Eric Wallner, 667-3911

Richard Newsham, 658-4706

501 Poli Street
Ventura, CA 93001

Cultural Funding Program awards \$174,000 in annual grants to artists & arts organizations

The City of Ventura recently awarded \$135,000 in grants to nineteen local arts organizations providing cultural programs to the community. In addition, twelve local artists representing the visual arts received \$39,000 in Artist Fellowship awards. The awards are made annually through the Cultural Funding Program, a competitive grant process overseen by the Community Services Department's Cultural Affairs Division.

Each year the City solicits applications from non-profit arts organizations located in, or providing special programs for the City of Ventura. A panel of arts professionals and community representatives evaluate the applications in a public meeting on the basis of artistic excellence, organizational capacity, community impact, collaboration, and program accessibility. A separate panel is convened to review the applications for Artist Fellowships, for which eligibility rotates annually between performing and literary artists and visual and media artists. After ranking the applications the panels' funding recommendations are forwarded to the Cultural Affairs Commission for final review and approval.

Created in 1993, the Cultural Funding Program has grown over the past decade to support the goals of the 2005 Cultural Plan. Among its goals are to: increase access to arts education programs for youth; increase the number of programs that celebrate Ventura's diverse community and rich history; and make the arts a major component of the community's fabric.

One example of grantee impact comes from the Kids' Art program at the Westside Cultural Center that provides dynamic arts education programs for traditionally underserved populations since 1992. Many of the center's clients are referred through the foster care system and represent a diverse spectrum of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The upcoming \$8,500 grant award will go towards the non-profit's goal of serving over 450 youth per year through their after-school and Saturday programming. Other grantees produce events celebrating our community's rich cultural diversity such as Lucha, Inc.'s Día de los Muertos event and the Seaside Highland Games.

In addition to the arts education and cultural enrichment goals of the City, the Cultural Funding Program supports many economic

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development goals for the downtown core. The Downtown Cultural District was established by the City Council in 1998 to increase tourism and economic activity in the area. With support from City grants, total budgetary outlays by non-profit arts organizations in the Downtown area has grown from \$175,000 in 1995 to more than \$3.2 million in 2006.

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The \$135,000 investment the City made in our cultural infrastructure this year represents only 4% of this \$3.2 million figure, yet this small outlay brings a large return in cultural and financial assets to the community.

What makes the investment by the City more significant, and the economic impact of the arts even greater than direct spending by the arts organizations is that cultural events induce large amounts of collateral spending by audiences. Once spending on dining, transportation, souvenirs, accommodations, childcare and refreshments are calculated, the average Ventura resident attending a cultural event spends an additional \$15.62 per person outside of the ticket price of the event. The amount is even greater for out of area visitors: \$41.32 per person. A 2003 study conducted by AMS Planning and Research found that arts audiences in Ventura spent \$8.2 million on collateral expenses while attending events, representing \$466,000 in local tax revenue.

Recipients of the Artist Fellowship Awards also have an impact on the community through their contributions to educational programs and community events and through on-going collaborations with local arts organizations.

2007/08 Cultural Funding Program Arts Organization Recipients

Project Grants	Amount Awarded
New West Symphony Association	\$ 5,000
Kingsman Shakespeare Co/CLU	\$ 3,500
Bell Arts Factory	\$ 3,000
Ventura County Arts Council	\$ 2,000
Lucha, Inc./Danza Mexica Cuauhtemoc	\$ 2,000
Performances to Grow On	\$ 2,000
Teatro de las Americas, Inc.	\$ 2,000
Upfront Gallery	\$ 1,500

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Total Awarded \$21,000

Small Organizations	Amount Awarded
San Buenaventura Artists Union	\$ 4,000
All American Ballet	\$ 3,000
Master Chorale of Ventura County	\$ 2,000
Total Awarded	\$ 9,000

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Medium Organizations	Amount Awarded
San Buenaventura Foundation for the Arts	\$ 8,000
Kids' Art/Westside Cultural Center	\$ 8,000
Buenaventura Art Association	\$ 8,000
Ventura County Ballet	\$ 6,000
Seaside Highland Games	\$ 1,000
Total Awarded	\$31,000

Large Organizations	Amount Awarded
Focus on the Masters	\$ 25,000
Rubicon Theatre	\$ 25,000
Ventura Music Festival	\$ 25,000
Total Awarded	\$75,000

Total Awarded All Categories \$135,000

Facility Use Grant – Ventura Impromptu Players \$2000 (in-kind)

2007/2008 Artist Fellowship Recipients

Emerging Artists	Discipline	Amount Awarded
Brad Barron	Sculpture	\$ 2,000
Amy Maloney	Painting	\$ 2,000
Ralph Silerio	Painting	\$ 2,000
Alison Casson	illustration	\$ 2,000
Larissa Strauss	mosiac	\$ 2,000
Jeanne LaRocco	assemblage	\$ 2,000
Hilda Kilpatrick	painting	\$ 2,000
		\$ 14,000

Established Artists	Discipline	Amount Awarded
Donna Granata	photography	\$ 5,000

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Stephen Schafer	photography	\$ 5,000
Paul Lindhard	sculpture	\$ 5,000
Teal Rowe	glass	\$ 5,000
Zivana Gojanovic	painting	\$ 5,000
		\$ 25,000

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For more information contact Community Cultural Affairs Supervisor Eric Wallner at 667-3911 or ewallner@ci.ventura.ca.us. This release is available at www.cityofventura.net under the pressroom link. --###--