



City of Ventura
Cultural Funding
Program Recipients
2006



Cultural Funding Program 2006

Established by the City of Ventura in 1993, the Cultural Funding Program continues a strong tradition of recognizing the artistic contributions to our community by artists and local arts organizations and of supporting the ongoing artistic achievement of these individuals and groups by awarding \$207,000 in grants to artists and arts organizations in the 2005-2006 fiscal year. The Cultural Funding Program is authorized annually by the City Council and administered by the Cultural Affairs Division under direction of the Cultural Affairs Commission.

Through this contribution of public funds the City of Ventura helps sustain the growth of the cultural assets that play a role in strengthening our economic vitality, contributing to our civic pride and creating social unity. The Cultural Funding Program assists these grantees in creating access to artistic programming for over 100,000 people each year. Many of the supported groups and artists also contribute significantly to the education and socialization of our youth by providing low or no cost in- and after-school opportunities for children to participate in cultural programs.

Artist Fellowships

Each summer the Cultural Affairs Division makes \$41,000 available on a competitive basis to artists living or working in the City of Ventura. The awards rotate annually between visual and media artists one year and performing and literary artists the next. In the 2005-2006 fiscal year visual and media artists were invited to apply for the Artist Fellowships and nine artists were selected to receive awards.

The Artist Fellowships recognize significant artistic achievement by professional artists in both emerging and established stages of their careers. The awards allow these individuals to continue their artistic practices and help to ease the burden of expenses related to their work such as studio rents, marketing, continued education or a special project. One of the criteria for the awards is a demonstrated commitment to community involvement within the City of Ventura and the current group of Fellows exemplifies this. Many are involved with arts education initiatives in local schools while others are active members of local arts organizations that produce events and programs for the community.

Daniela Arriaga

Established Artist



Beads of Paradise, Still Life

Seed beads, beeswax on masonite, 10" x 8"

crumbs are "tamed" from "manic behavior" into "art contexts" through the meticulous, traditional practices of life drawing and cross-hatching in such series as Staples Still Life that exhibit "my obsessive fixation with thousands of metal staples."

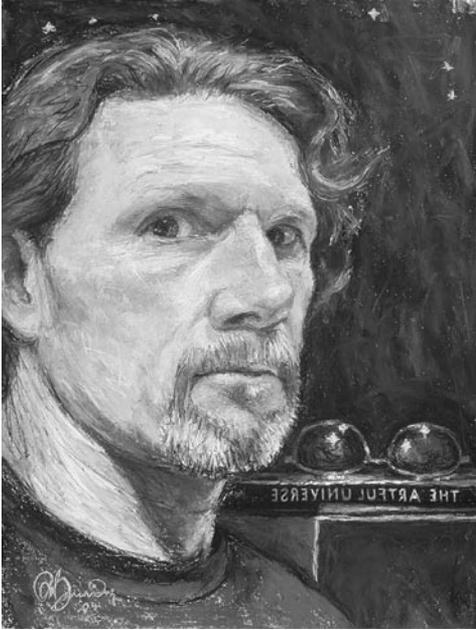
Outside her studio work, Arriaga recently completed a mural at Will Rogers Elementary School, part of an active involvement with arts education programs in the Ventura Unified School District. She plans to use the fellowship for further school efforts as well as for temporary installations using perishable materials, because "it is difficult to receive commissions for non-archival work" even though "ethereality is actually a major component of my works' content." A 2004 Artist Fellow and 2005 Ventura County Museum of History and Art Endowment Recipient, she recently exhibited at the Post Gallery and Basement Gallery in Los Angeles.

Daniela Arriaga's sculpture, painting and installations employ traditional and folk-art forms such as flower arrangement, beading, ceramics, and life drawing "to investigate the desires and sustenance of suburban life." She uses "low-craft materials and ephemeral, abject and mundane content" to express a "longing for poetics within the mediocrity of domestic life." She states, "The overly handcrafted quality of my work results from the compulsive manner by which I fabricate household materials into makeshift representations of the home and nature."

Home "compulsions" with crumbling erasers, cottage cheese ceilings and even

Paul M. Benavidez

Established Artist



Life, Self Portrait, II of II

Dry chalk over pen & ink on paper, 25" x 20"

artistic vision, whether the piece is conceptual, video, installation or new genre."

He strives to "hone his sense of perception" by questioning, "Can an objective interpretation of simple reality improve upon an artist's cache of tools? I realize these portraits by organizing information objectively with economical means beginning with pen & ink and completing the drawing with dry chalk. I will work the subject in natural light and purposely shift to artificial light then back to natural. The interplay of the two sources creates a curious presence. Slight animation by the sitter is welcome. While spending lengthy time with my subject, subtle forms, light, and other nuances emerge. This is what I try to capture. I prefer to work with life subjects because I was taught to see around and within the form."

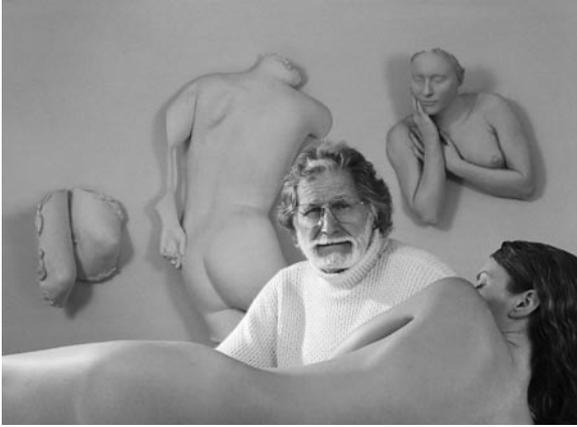
With the grant covering studio rent, supplies and sitter fees, Benavidez plans to continue his arresting portrait studies.

"At a certain age, I knew that I would study drawing because, in my mind, drawing is fundamental," says Benavidez, renowned for his chalk-finished pen & ink portraits. "When I embarked upon this path, art education was in turmoil. The old guard was being pushed out to make way for fresh ideas. This movement both excited me and filled me with conflict as a student artist."

Direction came from Rico Lebrun protégé Howard Warshaw's drawing program at UC Santa Barbara. "I developed a better understanding of my persona as an artist, as well as a keen appreciation of the principles of drawing, which continues to be the foundation upon which I build my artistic vision, whether the piece is conceptual, video, installation or new genre."

Donna Granata

Established Artist



Portrait of Orazio Fumagalli

Photograph

"I have always been surrounded by artists," says this photographer, whose unique archive of oversized portraits has documented over one hundred of Ventura County's leading artists. A Brooks Institute of Photography honors graduate, Granata embarked on a journey 12 years ago "to capture in images and in words the lives and accomplish-

ments of the area's master artists and bring them to the forefront of the community" by founding Focus On The Masters, a non-profit arts education organization that received in 2005 the inaugural City of Ventura Mayor's Arts Award for Arts Education.

"It is said that those artists who survive the test of time are those who write or who are written about," continues Granata. "As a professional photographer, I had the opportunity and ability to assist my fellow artists by assembling a path for historians to follow. Each of the photographic portraits included within the collection is my personal view of these extraordinary people. In most cases, I photograph the artists after extensive study of their life and work. My goal is to create a narrative reflective of that artist's moment in time. Dictated by the artist's work and life, some images are very traditional; some are avant-garde. I try to incorporate symbolism and metaphor to further emphasize the narrative whenever possible."

Granata intends to use the fellowship to enhance her technical expertise by allowing for further experimentation and advanced training in digital photography and to cover expenses of creating and exhibiting more master portraits.

Lee Hodges

Established Artist



Approved

Mixed Media, 15" x 19"

"I collage and paint Biblically-themed paintings designed to intrigue the viewer and cause them to reflect on eternal truths while enjoying the beauty of the artwork," says Hodges, recently retired from heading the Buena-ventura Gallery for 14 years. "I often recycle paper, metals, and plastics that are castoff by our throw-away society, making a redemptive statement with the very materials I choose."

Influenced by Byzantium to contemporary religious works, Hodges layers multi-media and photographic elements with acrylic paints "back and forth until the final desired effect is achieved, a process that can take days or months. The interplay of words and patterns is what attracts my eye. The act of com-

posing in collage is an interesting dynamic of adding and subtracting until there is an almost sensory 'clunk' of things fitting together, like a jigsaw puzzle with no guidelines but my intuition. It is fascinating to study how artists have portrayed the same Scriptural stories and messages down through the ages in terms of their own contemporary view. Music often figures in my work in the form of hymns, classical music by Mozart and Bach, Gregorian chant, and contemporary praise music. I use the music both for the visual graphic patterning, and because I am immersing myself in listening to the music as I am creating."

Hodges intends to use the grant to further her artistic production of "a sufficiently deep body of work to support myself financially" and for her fall show at the Studio Channel Islands Art Center. She was a 2005 recipient of the Arts Leader Mayor's Arts Award for her long-term work with the Buena Ventura Gallery.

Hanna Lore Hombordy

Established Artist



My Green Thumb

Stoneware & underglazes, 12" x 8" x 4"

adapts decorating techniques commonly used on paper to the ceramic process, sometimes on up to ten surfaces for one project.

Her subject matter includes the natural wonders of California, objects of fantasy and interpretations of ideas or events, leaning "toward humor rather than despair" in "both organic and geometric forms to express my feelings. I enjoy the drama of black and white but also take pleasure in the use of color." She has also taken "side trips" to other mediums, such as "polystyrene foam as a fine art material."

"Each project presents to me a unique visual problem that requires a creative solution. I make the same artistic judgments whether I am designing a commercial product, working on a sculpture, or producing a series of abstract ceramic 'houses.' The goal is to communicate ideas visually, involving both materials and methods and incorporating the elements of design. Imagination is the catalyst."

The artist plans to use her grant to purchase a smaller kiln, new display tables and sculpture stands, a digital camera to record and promote her work and studio helpers for tours and transporting works.

"A frequent comment about my work is that it's always different," says the unorthodox ceramist about her creative approach. "This was, in fact, a normal requirement when I was working in the advertising and corporate world where artwork needed to be original, distinctive, one of a kind."

Her current work combines "my earlier experience in two-dimensional art and design, my lifelong interest in architecture, and my fascination with clay as a means for three-dimensional artistic expression. The amazing versatility of clay along with the consideration of technical problems in construction, surface treatment and firing all add to the excitement of the process." She uses her own method of joining and firing clay with nails and

Paul Lindhard

Established Artist



Singing to Mars

Basalt & Travertine Marble, 6' x 2' x 36"

"My work as a sculptor has evolved from a lifetime reverence and fascination with stone," says Lindhard. "From these ancient objects a powerful sense of place and passage of time is evoked. Collecting stones from their native landscapes has given me the opportunity to compose sculptural elements with a highly authentic spirit. These elements maintain a textural scarring from the quarrying process, yet, their original nature and enduring presence is preserved. Together, artist and material form a unique language – which I hope connects us to our forgotten earthly origins."

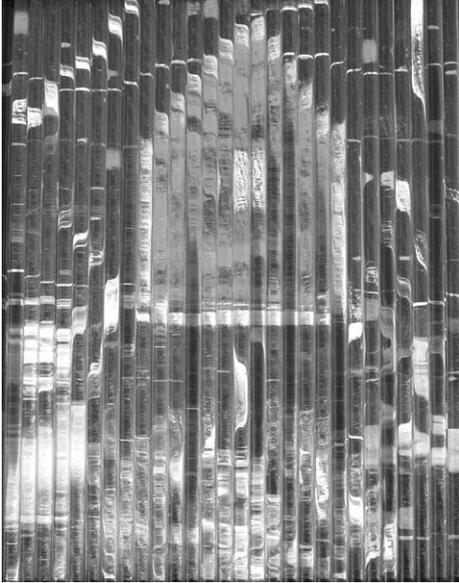
"My artistic process requires a singular focus and considerable isolation, yet I'm compelled to participate in my community," continues

Lindhard. "An important part of my artistic achievement is making art an integral part of our daily lives. Art can be a destination; i.e., a museum or retail gallery or it can be an ambient experience – accessible and inviting. What this means in regards to displaying large works in our day and age is that I am required to meet new civic requirements for public access and safety while remaining affordable to artist and community alike. Like any worthy dream, the challenge is embracing and the rewards far outweigh the work."

To create more public art access, Lindhard and collaborator Bill McEwen have designed and constructed the public art pedestal at the Ventura County Government Center. Lindhard is working with the Ventura County Arts Council and personally financing a one-year schedule of semi-quarterly displays of artists' work on this pedestal with the intent of creating a model schedule and budget for future private sponsorships. He is also engaged in a similar pilot collaboration with the City of Ventura and private sponsors for other public art sites. Lindhard plans to use the fellowship to further these projects as well as complete, fabricate and install several new, large, public-art-scale pieces.

Michael Pedziwiatr

Established Artist



Red House

Mixed media, plexiglass tubes, 22" x 16"

because these two mediums overlap and inform each other," Pedziwiatr continues. "Most recently, I've successfully joined my painting and sculpture within mixed media Plexiglas structures. These combinations create a profound sense of mystery within an articulate vision, utilizing materials that reflect light, space, and the viewers themselves. The resulting work speaks to the fields of quantum theory and the essence of spirituality. The resulting work speaks to the now. My reward is the knowledge that I have created artwork that is unique, mysterious, and enjoyable. By combining unusual materials, I reveal an extraordinary glimpse into an art expressing the ephemeral core of human existence. The falling figures, butterflies, and symbols that reoccur in these compositions create expressive contemporary metaphors."

The artist plans to use his grant "to continue experimenting with unusual mixed-media materials." He has recently exhibited at the Pirate Contemporary Art Oasis in Denver, Colorado and the Don O'Melveny Gallery in West Hollywood.

"Art is putting disparate pieces together to form a unified whole. This finished product, or puzzle, should stir some response from art viewers," says Pedziwiatr. "I intend to persist with my explorations with plastics, resins, found objects, casting, light, reflection, time, and space." Influenced by "Heteronymous Bosch, John Baldessari, and a host of other fantastic artists," the artist comes to his studio daily with "a series of motivating questions — How do I combine abstraction with figurative work? How do I construct interesting art that blends painting, drawing, and sculpture?"

"Early in my career my primary concern was sculpture, but I expanded my focus to include painting

Cheryl Ann Thomas

Established Artist



Vessel 27

Stoneware, 12" x 23" x 12"

"I work within the possibilities and limitations inherent in the coiling process, combined with the potential for change occurring during the firing or over-firing of the clay," says this boundary-defying ceramist. "The coiling technique involves a succession of rhythmic movements that connect me intimately with the clay in both body and

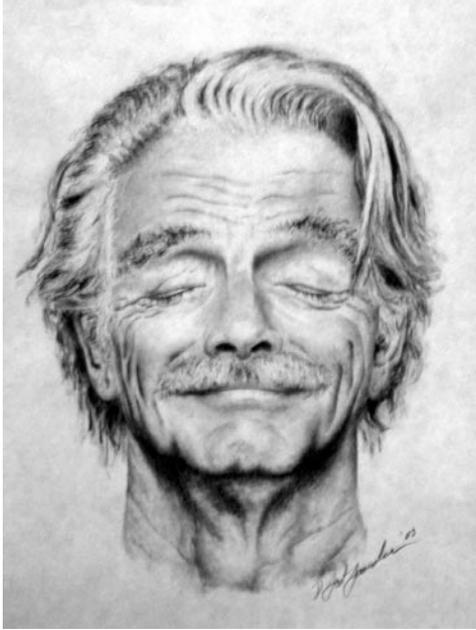
mind. My tools are my hands. My imprint causes the texture of the piece. The combined variables of climate, clay conditions and human attention/inattention create the possibility of endless results."

"The delicate and precarious nature of the sculptures invites flirtation with collapse," she continues. "The indeterminacy of the fired result allows a dialog between purpose and accident, faith and doubt. The resulting vessels and relics are signifiers of a daily engagement with artistic process where the lines of intuition and intention blur and the fire of the kiln becomes a co-creator with the artist and the clay."

Thomas will use her fellowship for studio and promotional expenses to widen the public's exposure to her work. She has recently exhibited at the Frank Lloyd Gallery in Santa Monica, the Xiem Gallery in Pasadena and the Gallery and the Thirteen Moons Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She was selected to be a featured artist documented by Focus on the Masters in 2006.

Scot Saunders

Emerging Artist



Simple Pleasures

Graphite, 9" x 12"

"I am fascinated with people, from the diversity of individual facial expressions to the power and grace of human form," says the portrait artist as he strives to capture a subject's "hidden or true self" showing a life of character, emotion and drama. "At every moment, our faces constantly tell stories about the events of our lives, from the awe and wonder of a majestic sun rise to the pain and anguish we experience through personal tragedy."

"Throughout the day the human body is actively engaged in whatever task is set before it," continues Saunders. "Thus, my work attempts to reflect its fluidity, balance, power and grace" and avoids "traditional seated poses." He distinguishes between male "mass" and female "form" in the build and design of men – with their "chiseled cut" and "harder lines regardless of their physical condition" – and of women – "defined by smoother lines and curves."

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Saunders recently studied with Artist Fellow Paul Benavidez, and plans to use his grant to replace his aging easel and to continue offering private art classes to children ages 6 to 14. Regarding his own childhood encounters with art, he reminisces, "I grew up in Huntington Beach, where my mom, a professional artist, inspired and instructed me since childhood and continues to be my mentor to this day. My first experience with portraits was in a high school art class. We were asked to find a full-page color picture of someone, cut it half, glue one half to a piece of white paper and sketch the remainder of the face. Once I completed my assignment I was amazed at the results and knew at once that I had found my calling as a portrait artist."

Arts and Cultural Organizations

Representing the diverse mix of cultural offerings in our community, 21 local arts organizations were awarded a total of \$166,000 in grants for the 2005-2006 funding cycle. Invited to apply under a range of funding categories, the applicants were evaluated on a diverse array of criteria, including artistic excellence, organizational capacity, community impact and program accessibility.

Operating Grant Recipients

A total of \$109,500 was awarded to support the ongoing operations of small, medium and large non-profit arts organizations based in the City of Ventura.

Small Organizations—annual budget under \$50,000

Kids' Art	\$6,000	San Buenaventura Artists' Union	\$4,000
<i>Provides free, interdisciplinary creative arts programs to youth at risk in a safe, supportive environment</i>		<i>Promotes public involvement with art thorough exhibitions, demonstrations dance performances, poetry readings and music recitals</i>	

Medium Organizations— annual budget between \$50,000 - \$150,000

Buenaventura Art Association	\$2,500	<i>and contemporary vocal masterworks through performances featuring quality musicians</i>	
<i>An organization of visual artists and arts supporters whose members are united to promote Ventura County artists and to provide education and information about these artists and their work</i>		Ventura College Opera Workshop	\$1,500
Channelaire Chorus	\$4,000	<i>Offers hands on educational programs for students and the community in opera and musical theater</i>	
<i>A 120 member award winning women's chorus specializing in a capella, barber-shop style, harmony</i>		Ventura County Ballet Company	\$7,500
Master Chorale of Ventura County	\$5,500	<i>Presents ballet performances, educational outreach programs, and ballet instruction in order to increase public appreciation of the art form</i>	
<i>Promotes the growth, quality, public appreciation and access to classical</i>			

Large Organizations—annual budget over \$150,00

Focus on the Masters \$25,000

An art appreciation program that documents, preserves and presents the works and lives of accomplished Ventura County artists, emphasizing the importance of the arts to a healthy society

Rubicon Theatre Co. \$25,000

Presents innovative productions of classical and contemporary plays and outreach programs for the entertainment, enrichment and education of residents and visitors

San Buenaventura Foundation for the Arts \$3,500

An umbrella support organization that raises awareness of the vital cultural resources and environment in Ventura and is dedicated to creating a Cultural Arts Village in Downtown Ventura

Ventura Music Festival \$25,000

Presents a series of musical programs of international caliber in historic settings in the City of Ventura to enhance the cultural and economic vitality of the community

Project Grants

A total of \$25,500 was awarded to arts organizations located in Ventura County to support a specific project within the City of Ventura.

All American Ballet \$1,500

To provide free access to the company's spring performance of Fairy Doll for Ventura Unified School District students

Bell Arts Factory \$5,000

To offer free arts education classes for youth at this new facility located on the Westside

New West Symphony \$5,000

To present two Happy Birthday Mozart concerts in the Downtown Ventura Cultural District

Performances to Grow On \$5,000

To present educational performing arts programs in Ventura Unified elementary schools

Seaside Highland Games \$5,000

To present the annual Highland Games Festival celebrating Scottish culture at Seaside park in Ventura

Ventura County Arts Council \$4,000

To present a conference for arts professional in collaboration with the City of Ventura

Facility Use Grant

Facility Use Grants are in-kind contributions, up to a total value of \$2,000, available to arts organizations wishing to produce a cultural event at City Hall the Olivas Adobe or the Downtown Century Theatre. The grants allow organizations to use the facilities without having to pay the normal rental fees.

Bell Arts Factory

Ventura Music Festival

Brokenrope Foundation

Ventura New Music Festival

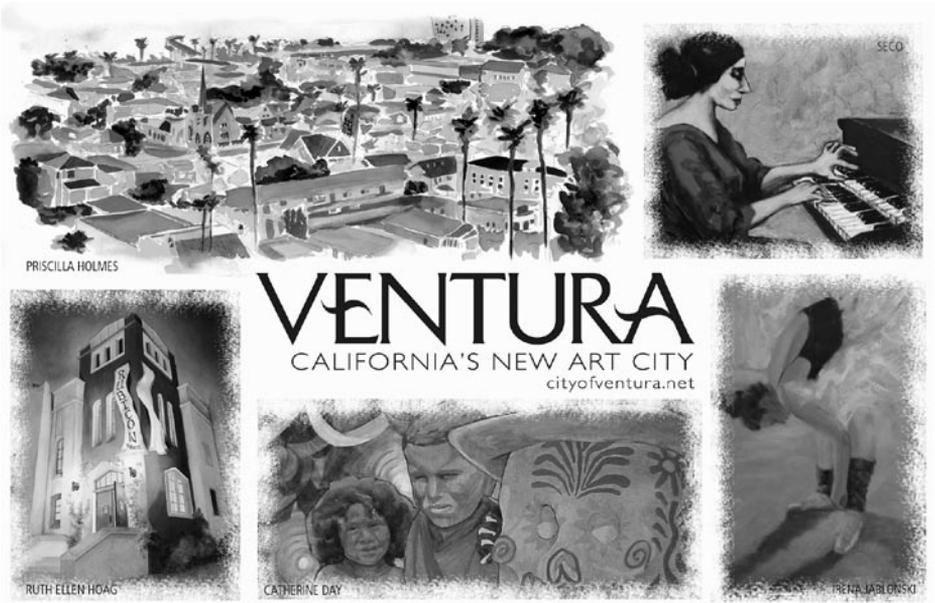
Special Initiatives

Ventura Education Partnership Grant

Over the past eighteen months the City of Ventura has awarded the Ventura Education Partnership (VEP) a total of \$8,000 to fund arts education programs in the Ventura Unified School District. VEP was required to match the funds dollar to dollar and the total pool of \$16,000 has been granted to instructors through the organization's competitive GrantSmart program.

Ventura County Museum of History and Art

Annually the City Council designates a \$25,000 award to this long-standing cultural institution. The Museum's mission is to collect and preserves artifacts and artwork related to the history of the county and its residents and the organization presents rotating exhibits along these themes.



For more information on the Cultural Funding Program visit the City of Ventura website, cityofventura.net or call 805.658.4726.

Applications for the program are generally available starting in July of each year.

