



★ ★ ★ *New Community Visions* part of the  
Transforming America's Communities Through the Arts Initiative

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# Arts & Inter-Community Connection

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Excerpted from *Arts & America: Arts, Culture, and the Future  
of America's Communities*

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ESSAY BY

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# An Introduction

*Dear Reader,*

**F**or the last 30 years here at Americans for the Arts, I have had the privilege of visiting and learning about a different community almost every week.

In multiple places in every state, I have witnessed firsthand the magic and majesty of the arts themselves and also their transformative power in helping to tackle social and community issues. Whether in a small town or a major population center, the same breadth of value is present. Magnificent, awe-inspiring performances and museum exhibits exist side by side with arts programs designed to accelerate healing in hospitals; musical performances with the homeless to bring comfort and perhaps new inspiration; hands-on visual and performing arts programs in military facilities to aid returning wounded service men and women in coping with PTSD or recovering from physical injury; or the myriad of other ways that the arts are a part of people's lives.

During my travels, I usually have the honor of meeting hard working local leaders from the government, business, and

education sectors as well as from the arts. When a mayor or county commissioner proudly talks about her home-grown arts treasures—while in the same breath explaining the economic and employment benefits of the arts to her community or the attractiveness of the arts offerings there as a cultural tourism destination—it is clear that the arts are valued as a source of pride and identity and as a positive contributor to growth.

Although the arts have delivered this spectrum of entertainment, inspiration, and transformative value for as long as humankind has existed, they have faced a roller coaster of recognition and marginalization in our country since even before our founding. We are now, however, at a moment where there seems to be an increased recognition of the broad value of the arts. That provides us with an inflection point at which to explore, discuss, and recalibrate what it takes to advance the arts and arts education in America. This book of 10 essays provides an opportunity to look at ideas that might help a community invent or reinvent how the arts fit into it. Our guest authors take a look at the kinds of thinking and mechanisms decision-makers, leaders, and citizens need in order to make the arts more fully part of the quality of experience that every child and every community member gets from living in a particular place.

Americans for the Arts is in the business of helping leaders build capacity for the advancement of the arts and arts education. We work toward a vision that all of the arts and their power can be made available and accessible to every American. The leaders that we help are generating positive change for and through the arts at the local, state, or national levels and across all sectors. Since our founding 55 years ago, we have created materials, management tools, case-making research and data, along with professional and leadership development training to help leaders carry out this important work. About 25 years ago, our publication, *Community Vision*, along with a series of companion pieces, was created to guide the process of expanding capacity for community development through the arts. But a great

deal has changed since then, so we have embarked on the three-year journey to update those tools, look anew at what the arts are doing in communities, and create materials that will help community leaders advance that work today.

In this book, 10 authors focus on just a few of the issue areas that the arts are working in today. These essay topics do not illustrate the only way the arts are working in communities. We are continually looking at other topics in other publications, tools, and discussions to help communities customize their unique approach to involving the arts in addressing their particular needs and goals. Such additional issue areas include: the re-entry of active military service members, veterans, youth at risk, crime prevention, immigration, technology, disease, drug abuse, housing, aging, faith and religion, and perhaps most importantly cross-cultural understanding and equity. This is a partial list of the challenges and opportunities where the arts are playing an important role.

To set some context for the future, we have also included an essay that lays out some thoughts on the history of art in community. My friend, Maryo Gard Ewell, has done more to document the history and sea changes of the last century of arts-based community development than anyone else I can think of. She says that she does it because a field isn't a field if it doesn't know its history. I thank her for her extensive contributions to our database of field knowledge, which Clayton Lord has been able to draw upon for his comprehensive history piece in this book. Maryo is also fond of saying that a field isn't a field without a few heroes in the mix. I count both her and her father, Robert Gard, mentioned in that history, to be among those heroes.

Our field of nonprofit arts organizations and individuals working to advance the arts and to create better communities through the arts is constantly evolving, constantly reinventing an understanding of itself and its role in this great American experiment. But the field

should never waver on the deeply rooted belief in its essential necessity to the world. We are in a period of evolving understanding right now. The broad transformative power of the arts as a means to help create solutions to a broad array of social and economic issues is a big part of the value of the arts in today's American Community.

The rising demand for deeper accountability for what the arts bring to the table in terms of social welfare along with the advent of new sources of data, technology, and processing power to make previously invisible connections visible brings us to a pivotal moment. The arts are poised to be fully integrated into a nuanced, deep, and powerful conversation about who and what is needed to create healthy, equitable communities for everyone.

The arts are valuable. Artists are essential. Arts education is critical to keeping America creative and competitive in order to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The arts are a strong partner in the solution to these challenges and can be even stronger in the future. The arts help transform American communities and the result can be a better child, a better town, a better nation, and perhaps a better world. My hope is that this book of ideas can help in that transformative journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Lynch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert L. Lynch  
*President and CEO*  
*Americans for the Arts*



# Arts & Inter-Community Connection

— by *Laura Zabel* —

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This essay looks at America’s changing communities and how they have and will interact with each other, as well as the role that the arts may play in positively impacting those changes over the next 10–15 years. In particular, this paper proposes the following trends and associated arts interventions:

- As debunked theories and practices—such as the Broken Windows theory, which pit different communities against each other and allow prejudice and privilege to override common goals—become untenable, an opportunity will open up for a new, more equitable way of ensuring safe and healthy

communities. Creative deployment of the arts and artists will increase connections and understandings across disparate and historically unequal groups; provide opportunities for a more even-footed conversation; and build agency for marginalized communities to create, maintain, and share their own narratives.

- With a stronger and more sustained lens being trained on issues of gentrification and economic and cultural displacement, a movement to find ways of encouraging neighborhood investment and population growth without displacing indigenous residents or dismantling long-held cultural beliefs will arise.
- The arts and artists will need to recognize their historic role in displacement, deliberate or not, and to deploy their skills as stewards of cultural traditions and points of intersection among new and existing residents.

— *C. Lord*

**I**n 2015, it is easy to only read the opinions of people who are just like us, to only consume culture and news that an algorithm has determined we will like, and to send our children to schools where they won't have to confront realities that are different from their own. This ability to self-segregate based on class, race, income, geography, opinion, and values is at the root of some of the United States' most pressing problems. It's not that meeting people different from oneself will, on its own, solve the biases and privileges that drive income inequality and political division, nor is it that simply encouraging cross-cultural relationships will change the racist, classist, and sexist systems that surround us. Without

work to develop the relationships and empathy necessary to understand and truly listen across differences, however, it seems unlikely that anything at all will change.

The PolicyLink report, *America's Tomorrow: Equity is the Superior Growth Model*,<sup>1</sup> provides an excellent survey and in-depth look at the growing racial and economic opportunity gaps and the changing demographics of the United States.

“By the end of this decade,” the report’s authors note, “the majority of youth will be people of color. By 2030, the majority of workers under age 25 will be people of color. And by 2042, the majority overall will be people of color.”

The country’s future depends on inter-community connection: the promise of increased understanding between people who may have little in common on the surface. There is an emerging recognition across the nation that the existing tools for bridging and honoring differences are ineffective at best. This recognition creates an opportunity for the arts and artists to be seen by their communities as necessary and relevant in new ways, and an urgent need for those in the arts sector to step up, as citizens and artists, to build the bridges between disparate groups that are necessary for the country to move forward. The arts have a long history of bringing people together across boundaries and this is work that artists and art sector leaders know how to do.

Inter-community connectedness can be defined as bridging and linking social capital:

- Bridging social capital reflects more intermediate relationships, such as among coworkers or community residents. This type of social capital can result in like-minded people from different social networks working together to address common concerns or achieve shared goals.<sup>2</sup>
- Linking social capital refers to networks formed among people with very different social backgrounds or levels of power, such as policymakers and their constituents.<sup>3</sup>



Communities that know how to bridge their differences are not only healthier, individually and collectively, but they are also able to affect policy change as advocates on their own behalf. Research indicates that such communities are more politically powerful and are “better positioned to influence policies,” particularly when the community’s network includes socioeconomic and demographic diversity.<sup>4</sup>

This is a place where the arts and culture can play a unique role. Culture is a unique tool for, as demographer Manuel Pastor says, “making the ‘other’ human.”<sup>5</sup> By bringing people together and building new understanding across differences, art can provide the pathway for increased empathy in an imaginative and effective way. Artists can help us tell a new story “about why inclusion matters for the U.S. economy as well as for our democracy and our moral constitution.”<sup>6</sup> Now, more than ever, American society needs to embrace understanding across differences to ensure the health, safety, and future of communities, neighborhoods, and cities.

Big changes are in motion in community development that challenge long-held beliefs and our most embedded systemic biases and inequities. In the next 10 years, artists have the opportunity and responsibility to demonstrate their value, to see the hidden connections between strategies and people, to tell the stories of people and communities in ways that push us to new understanding, and to illuminate the paths for powerful and productive action.

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CONNECTION ACROSS POWER  
AND REPLACING BROKEN WINDOWS

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The Broken Windows theory of community safety was popularized by George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson in a 1982 article in *The Atlantic Monthly*.<sup>7</sup> The theory says that when people see broken windows, litter, or other petty crime, it creates a self-fulfilling narrative of neglect, which leads to more serious crime. By aggressively

preventing the small problems, the theory goes, you're preventing the whole system from spiraling out of control.

In practice however, the theory that targeting low-level crimes reduces major crime has not been applied equally and often supports stereotypes and unacknowledged prejudices. The horrifying impact of the Broken Windows theory applied unequally is exemplified by the recent high profile deaths of unarmed people of color at the hands of white police officers and in the huge racial disparities in American prison populations.<sup>8</sup>

*“People of color, and others within marginalized communities, have been made to be the broken windows themselves.”*

Writing for the *Boston Globe*, Derrick Z. Jackson<sup>9</sup> supports the idea that the failing of the Broken Windows theory isn't so much a problem with the original theory, but rather with its application. People of color, and others within marginalized communities, have been made to be the broken windows themselves. Rather than looking for actual broken windows to fix, as was the original proposal, the norm has been to look for people who look like they *might* break a window, and prevent them.

As Jackson, citing a recent Justice Department finding in Maricopa County, Arizona, notes: “The government said many unjustified stops and detentions occurred after police received ‘bias-infected’ reports complaining not of criminal activity but of ‘individuals with dark skin’ congregating in one area, or individuals speaking Spanish at a local business.”<sup>10</sup>

Research like this, along with organized, widespread grassroots movements like #blacklivesmatter<sup>11</sup> will make the continued support of the Broken Windows theory, as it is currently implemented, untenable for politicians and communities alike.

The Broken Windows theory (and, arguably, most policing) places those *outside* the community in charge of the safety and destiny of that community's residents. This "outside the community" factor is enough to be problematic on its own, but when combined with differences of race, class, gender, and power—with little to no effort to build the social capital to bridge these differences—it is disastrous.

Even the authors of the Broken Windows theory cautioned against this in their original article, asking, "How do we ensure, in short, that the police do not become the agents of neighborhood bigotry?"<sup>12</sup> More than 30 years later, that question has taken on a central urgency, as cities and towns seek to address what is no longer a hypothetical issue, and mounting pressure to rethink broken windows forces them to look for new solutions for community safety.

The arts can and should be part of this answer to their question. There is an opportunity for the arts to play a role in helping to ensure better, more equitable implementation of the police and judicial systems, particularly in creating inter-community connection between the implementers of these systems and the communities they aim to serve. The arts can provide powerful ways for people to build the linking social capital necessary to develop new empathy and understanding. Programs such as the Thin Blue Lines project created by Art at Work<sup>13</sup> with the police force of Portland, Maine are already doing this work. In this project, police and poets work together annually to create the Police Poetry Calendar, and in the process build important inter-community relationships between citizens and police.

In discussing the program, Portland Acting Police Chief Joe Louglin notes, "We had no idea the outcome would be this outstanding. The photographs in the hallways, reading poems at roll calls—it's brought us a different sense of who we are and

what we do. It's changed a lot of minds about the police and about poetry.”<sup>14</sup>

It is also possible for art to play a role in alternative community-led strategies for safety. Using the basic premise of the Broken Windows theory—that neglect of the aesthetics of a neighborhood leads to further harm—one could instead create a kind of “creative windows theory.” Instead of cracking down on petty crimes, or people who fit a stereotype of those who are likely to commit crimes, community members could use art to create neighborhood signals of joy and care, provide tools for people to build agency and productive power in their places, and create humanizing bridging social capital within communities and linking social capital between police and citizens.

When people see that others have taken the time and care to tend a neighborhood, through sanctioned projects like community murals or sidewalk paintings or small, creative acts, like yarn bombing, it can change the perception of neighborhood value and safety both inside and outside the community. These small signals can change an individual's idea of their agency and responsibility to take care of something that needs tending. Over time they can change the stories that people inside and outside the place tell and believe about its value.

Springboard for the Arts' Irrigate<sup>15</sup> project in St. Paul, Minnesota engaged more than 600 artists to create hundreds of small projects in their own neighborhoods in response to the disruption of major transit development and other neighborhood challenges and opportunities. These small projects effectively created a new media narrative about the neighborhoods, sparking more than 51 million positive media impressions<sup>16</sup> of neighborhoods that had primarily been in the news because of construction, crime, or blight before. This new narrative provides people both inside and outside the community a new perspective on the value of the businesses and people who reside there.

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CONNECTION AND THE INVITATION  
TO INVEST WITHOUT DISPLACING

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Of course, the fear, and sometimes reality, of successfully changing the narrative of neighborhoods so that they become safe and inviting to new residents—particularly residents that bring possibilities of development and wealth—is that the people already in the neighborhood will be pushed out.

Are such progressions inevitable? After decades of repeated displacement, it is easy to dismiss that this cycle could ever change. Increasingly organized social justice movements, however, many of which articulate powerfully why such “slash and burn” development and displacement is inequitable, may be making displacement impossible for politicians to ignore.

Just as with the Broken Windows theory, a combination of new research and grassroots organizing will make it untenable for mayors and city council members to support such disruptive development, particularly as mayors stay in office longer and must live with both the practical and electoral consequences of their policies.<sup>17</sup>

It is important to note, too, the mounting evidence that development that leads to displacement is neither inevitable, nor, in fact, a sound economic strategy. The urban affairs publication *Next City* asserts, “For all the attention paid to gentrification, the process has not lifted the urban poor out of poverty and has only lessened the concentration of poverty in a select very few urban neighborhoods.”<sup>18</sup>

One has only to look at Zappo’s founder Tony Hsieh’s troubled “Downtown Project” in Las Vegas to see the tide turning against engineered gentrification without meaningful community engagement. Hsieh has attempted to invest more than \$30 million to remake downtown Las Vegas in the image of a hip, attractive city. Instead of being greeted as a benefactor or savior, he has been

roundly challenged by the press, residents, and community leaders because of the project's lack of engagement with current residents and stakeholders.<sup>19</sup>

*“Cultural displacement is where the arts can and must play a critical role.”*

And yet, most people would agree that the solution is not to ignore underinvested or high-poverty neighborhoods. Neighborhoods need investment and change in order to improve the lives of the people who live there. So, the billion-dollar question becomes, “How can communities invite development without encouraging displacement?”

Cities are already experimenting with policy solutions<sup>20</sup> to this challenge. For example, Philadelphia recently launched the Longtime Owner Occupant Program (LOOP) tax credit to provide tax relief to homeowners in neighborhoods at risk for displacement.<sup>21</sup> These promising policy interventions provide evidence that there is a political will to break the cycle of financial displacement when neighborhood transformation and development occurs. This, however, is only half the problem. The other side of displacement—cultural displacement—is where the arts can and must play a critical role.

People leave a neighborhood for many reasons, both practical and emotional. When community development professionals talk about displacement they usually mean people who leave, not by choice, but because they feel they have to—because they simply can no longer afford to rent a home, because they cannot keep up with the rising property taxes on the home they own, or, perhaps hardest to combat, because they no longer feel welcome in a neighborhood.

When longtime residents see the neighborhood barber shop turn into a high-end coffee shop, when the other parents at the park all suddenly seem both new and to know each other, or when the

multi-lingual street signs get replaced with English-only signs—these can provide powerful signals that current residents should look elsewhere for a sense of community and belonging. Even if they can afford to stay, it's no longer “their place.”

This is where art and culture can intervene to provide the other half to policy solutions like the Philadelphia LOOP program.<sup>22</sup> Artists know how to design projects that honor and preserve the existing culture of a place, so that new residents in a place understand and appreciate the culture that already resides there. Art can bring new and longtime residents together to discover their commonalities and shared interest.

Arts and culture can help provide public space and public activity that honor existing residents and makes their contributions to the place tangible and visible, and therefore less likely to be lost.

The Wing Luke Museum in Seattle, a museum dedicated to the Asian Pacific American experience, creates exhibits and shows that make historic and contemporary experiences of Asian-Americans more visible to a wide variety of audiences. Beyond the exhibits, the Wing Luke made the intentional decision to forgo a restaurant inside the museum and to instead encourage their patrons to support the local restaurants that surround their Chinatown-International district location. They describe this as fulfilling their role as a “neighborhood concierge.”<sup>23</sup>

The trend of neighborhood displacement is one that arts and culture have been associated with for many years. Many communities have come to suspect artists as harbingers of displacement and are justifiably cautious about inviting participation from arts organizations. This is, in part, because artists have been used as a straw man to deflect blame away from developers and others who have much to gain economically from contested real estate markets. It is also, however, because arts organizations have been complicit in strategies to build cultural districts and

remake neighborhoods without doing sufficient work to build the inter-community connections that would make these efforts inclusive or reflective of existing residents.

If the arts sector is to truly engage in a meaningful way and be effective in helping to build the inter-community connections needed to mitigate cultural displacement, it will require rethinking some of our own long-held beliefs. A more expansive definition of “art” and “artist” will be necessary. Arts organizations will need to reach more deeply into the neighborhoods of which they are a part and understand the needs and opportunities within them.

What if the arts sector expanded the definition of “cultural anchors” to include the barber shop or the iconic neighborhood bar and worked fervently to preserve these cultural assets for future generations? What if these cultural anchors were acknowledged as equally important to the museum or the concert hall and invited and included in arts sector advocacy and policy?

Project Row Houses in Houston now includes 39 properties in one of the city’s oldest African-American neighborhoods. The project’s goal is to address and mitigate issues of both financial and cultural displacement while also increasing the understanding and connection between longtime residents, new residents, and those outside the neighborhood. Project Row Houses’ combination of exhibition space for artists, office spaces, a community gallery, a park, affordable residential and commercial spaces, and the Young Mother’s Residential program that supports young, single mothers’ ability to pursue education and careers is a testament to a long-term, responsive commitment to co-creating relevant community assets among neighbors through arts and culture.<sup>24</sup>

Inviting development and prosperity for neighborhoods without displacing the people who are already in that neighborhood will require that the narratives of culture bearers and longtime residents are not lost, that narratives of new Americans and transplants are



heard, and that new stories are told—stories that can hold the diversity and dimension and beautiful nuance of the combined narrative.

★ ★ ★

Art gives us a place to start.

Art gives us something in common.

Art helps us tell a new story.

The sharing of stories about ourselves, our differences, and our similarities is perhaps the most important challenge and opportunity of the next 10 years. Artists have a vital role to play in helping to shape these narratives. Art can be the missing ingredient to build elusive, evermore necessary connections between disparate people.

With this powerful possibility comes responsibility. We must look outside the boundaries of our own work, sector, and comfort zone. The future will require arts organizations and artists to be one part of a whole set of community needs, working together to create healthy, safe, and vibrant environments; this is not work that can be done alone, on a pedestal, or in a silo.

The arts sector must listen to the community around it, partner deeply and intentionally across sectors and movements, and align its interest boldly with values of equity, justice, and prosperity for all. It is time to fulfill our promise and responsibility as artists and as change agents: to help people see and understand each other in new ways, connect their common humanity, and to tell the story of a bright and prosperous future available to all.

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2. Adapted from H. Bhandari & K. Yasunobu, "What is Social Capital? A Comprehensive Review of the Concept," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 37, (2009): 480-510 as published in Melanie Ferris, *Social Connectedness and Health* (Saint Paul, MN: Wilder Research, 2012).
3. Melanie Ferris, *Social Connectedness and Health* (Saint Paul, MN: Wilder Research, 2012) adapted from H. Bhandari & K. Yasunobu, "What is Social Capital? A Comprehensive Review of the Concept," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 37, (2009): 480-510.
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5. Manuel Pastor, "People and Place, People in Place" (presented at ArtPlace Creative Placemaking Grantee Summit. Los Angeles, California, February 2014).
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## Arts in Healthy Communities: Additional Discussion and Resources

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The Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts initiative, of which New Community Visions is a part, is an effort by Americans for the Arts and our partners to explore more deeply the important, symbiotic structure of America’s modern communities and to better understand the role that the arts can play in amplifying the positive impacts of the many sectors that exist inside every community.

This book has focused on 10 sectors, but Americans for the Arts generally has identified 30 sectors that we believe need to be considered when talking about creating and maintaining a healthy community, many of which can be aided by arts and culture.

In the efforts encompassed by Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts, as well as in the day-to-day work of Americans for the Arts going back nearly 60 years, we continue to pursue an expanded, better appreciated, and better understood role for the arts in healthy community development and maintenance.

For more resources related to the varied role of arts in community development, we recommend exploring the following Americans for the Arts resources—as well as the Americans for the Arts website in general—and the many great resources outlined in the endnotes of each essay.

### **New Community Visions**

Keep track of the progress of New Community Visions by visiting [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions)

### **Arts and the Military**

Americans for the Arts is a founding partner of the National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military, and hosts the partnership’s website, [www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org](http://www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org), where you can

review full text of reports related to the role of arts in the lives of active military, veterans, and their families along with a list of upcoming events, a national network directory, and more.

### **Arts and the Economy**

For more than 20 years, Americans for the Arts has been at the forefront of measuring the economic impact of the arts on American communities and the United States, most visibly through the Arts and Economic Prosperity reports ([www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AEP](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AEP)). Americans for the Arts also generates bi-annual Creative Industries reports on all U.S. counties, and is working to launch a new program called the Institute for the Creative Economy as part of the Transforming America's Communities Through the Arts initiative. Find out more about both at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).

### **Arts and Business**

Americans for the Arts has a robust set of programs and trainings around the role of the arts in the private sector, most notably the pARTnership Movement, which showcases the role that the arts can play in bettering businesses and other private sector organizations ([www.pARTnershipmovement.org](http://www.pARTnershipmovement.org)).

### **Arts and Civic Engagement**

For more than a decade, the Animating Democracy Initiative of Americans for the Arts has been exploring and developing the academic literature, case studies, and general knowledge and vocabulary around arts and civic engagement, social justice, and community health ([www.AnimatingDemocracy.org](http://www.AnimatingDemocracy.org)).

## Arts and Education

Americans for the Arts' arts education programming is a cornerstone of our belief in the role of arts in developing the communities of the future ([www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEd](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEd)). We work with more than 30 other arts education organizations across the country on advocacy, research, policy, and capacity-building. We also implement large-scale programs and partnerships like the Arts Education State Public Policy Pilot Initiative ([www.AmericansForTheArts.org/SPPP](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/SPPP)), which seeks to encourage innovation around the adoption or adaptation of core arts standards in education at a state level, and the Arts Education Navigator series ([www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEdNavigator](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEdNavigator)), which creates easy-to-use advocacy plans and tools for parents, students, and teachers, as well.

In addition to these specific areas of work, Americans for the Arts also houses a trove of research, policy, and practice documents for arts organizations, local arts agencies, and others in the arts sector through our website, [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org)

# **Arts and America: Arts, Culture, and the Future of America's Communities**

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ABOUT THE NEW COMMUNITY VISIONS INITIATIVE,  
PART OF TRANSFORMING AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES  
THROUGH THE ARTS

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The essays in *Arts and America* collectively form the first phase of an initiative called New Community Visions—a national visioning exercise for local arts agencies, arts organizations, artists, and those interested in better understanding the future role of arts and culture in helping American communities thrive.

New Community Visions is part of a sustained, three-year suite of large-scale initiatives from Americans for the Arts that are together called *Transforming America's Communities Through the Arts*. Through those initiatives, we hope to:

- generate dialogue on a national, state, and local level around the creation and sustainability of healthy communities;
- activate a diverse set of programming and partnerships spanning public, private, and nonprofit sectors;
- lay the groundwork for a collective movement forward over the next decade and beyond;
- and help leaders and the public better understand and celebrate arts and culture as mechanisms for creating and sustaining healthier, more vibrant, and more equitable communities in the United States.

[www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions)

This project is made possible through an ever-growing list of funders, partners, and advisors.

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FORUMS CURATOR AND DOCUMENTARIAN

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Michael Rohd and the Center for  
Performance and Civic Practice  
Margy Waller and the Topos Partnership

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FUNDING PARTNERS

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Americans for the Arts would like to thank the following  
funding partners for their significant support of the  
New Community Visions Initiative.

 **Knight Foundation**



We would also like to thank The California Wellness Foundation,  
The Saint Paul Foundation, and the Vermont Community Foundation  
for their generous support of the New Community Visions Initiative.

*Support as of April 30, 2015*



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NEW COMMUNITY VISIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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The New Community Visions Advisory Committee, which has informed the nature and trajectory of the project, includes:

- Jennifer Cole, Metro Nashville Arts Commission
- Deborah Cullinan, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
- Carla Dirlikov, opera singer
- Randy Engstrom, Seattle Office of Arts & Culture
- Tatiana Hernandez, Hemera Foundation
- Maria Rosario Jackson, The Kresge Foundation
- Michael Killoren, National Endowment for the Arts
- Ron Ragin, composer and artist
- Holly Sidford, Helicon Collaborative
- Nick Slie, performing artist, Mondo Bizzaro
- Regina R. Smith, The Kresge Foundation
- Katie Steger, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Carlton Turner, Alternate ROOTS
- Nella Vera, Serino/Coyne
- Laura Zabel, Springboard for the Arts

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## REGIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL PARTNERS

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The regional gatherings associated with New Community Visions would not have been possible without the participation of this growing list of regional, state, and local partners who have contributed thought leadership, proposed the names of participants, and assisted in crafting the regional events.

Special thanks to our national funding partners, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, for their significant support.

### **Regional**

- Arts Midwest
- Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation
- Mid-America Arts Alliance
- New England Foundation for the Arts
- SouthArts
- WESTAF

### **State**

- California Arts Council
- Georgia Council for the Arts
- Minnesota State Arts Board
- New Mexico Arts
- Oklahoma Arts Council
- Oklahomans for the Arts
- Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
- Vermont Arts Council
- West Virginia Division of Culture and History

## Local

- Allied Arts
- Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia
- Arts Council of Oklahoma City
- Burlington City Arts
- Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy
- City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs
- City of Santa Fe Arts Commission
- Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences of West Virginia
- Creative Santa Fe
- Cultural Development Corporation
- Flynn Center for the Performing Arts
- Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
- Macon Arts Alliance
- Metropolitan Regional Arts Council
- Minneapolis Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy
- Norman Arts Council
- Oklahoma City Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs