Call for Nominations: Americans for the Arts Annual Awards

November 28, 2006—Americans for the Arts Annual Awards recognizes the achievements of individuals committed to enriching their communities through the arts. Presented each year in conjunction with Americans for the Arts Annual Convention, the following awards are open for nominations: Arts Education Award; Alene Valkanas State Arts Advocacy Award; Emerging Leader Award; Michael Newton Award for United Arts Funds Leadership; Public Art Network Award; and Selina Roberts Ottum Award for Arts Leadership.

100% of Arts Ballot Measures Pass Overwhelmingly Across the Country

November 08, 2006—This was a successful election year for the arts. Americans showed their overwhelming support for the arts and arts education by approving local and state ballot measures and by electing pro-arts candidates at the local, state, and federal levels. Eleven out of 11 local ballot measures, as did a state ballot measure on the arts in Louisiana passed overwhelmingly in the following cities and counties: Akron (OH); Alameda County (CA) (San Leandro and Berkeley); Austin (TX); Cuyahoga County (OH); Dallas, (TX); Louisiana; Marin County, (CA); Portland, OR; Salt Lake County (UT); San Francisco (CA); and Santa Clara County (CA). The state measure was passed in Louisiana.

These local and state measures will infuse millions of dollars for arts education programs in local schools and increased funding for cultural facilities and general operating support for nonprofit arts organizations.

National Arts Policy Roundtable Held October 26-28 at Sundance

November 03, 2006—The inaugural National Arts Policy Roundtable (NAPR) took place on October 26 – 28, co-convened by AFTA and the Sundance Preserve, in Sundance, UT. The NAPR brought together 28 national leaders in business, government, philanthropy, education, and the arts to discuss the topic “The Future of Private Sector Giving to the Arts in America.” Focus areas included building messages about the public value of the arts, and arts education- including the role the arts play in workforce development- as well as future private sector giving research needs.

In preparation for this meeting, Americans for the Arts conducted original scholarly research, gathered existing data, and conducted focus groups of industry professionals on this topic. Look for a comprehensive report on the findings and recommendations in early 2007.
Call for Session Proposals released for the 2007 Annual Convention

October 16, 2006—Americans for the Arts seeks session proposals for our upcoming annual convention *Risk & Reward: Balancing Acts in Arts and Community* in Las Vegas, NV June 1-3, 2007. The annual convention draws more than 1,000 creative leaders from the arts and creative business, as well as our partners in education, community building, and economic development at the local, state, and national levels. As a national forum for creativity and innovation in our field, the annual convention highlights the work of leading thinkers and savvy practitioners who translate their expertise into actionable knowledge. The submission deadline is December 1, 2006. Detailed information and submission requirements are available on our website.

Americans for the Arts Auctions Unique Signed Guitar

October 16, 2006—Starting on Monday, October 16, you can now bid on a Gibson/Epiphone acoustic guitar signed by more than 20 celebrity arts supporters, including Alec Baldwin, Jamie Lee Curtis, Melissa Etheridge, and Lisa Marie Presley. All proceeds from this auction will benefit Americans for the Arts and our advocacy efforts on behalf of the arts and arts education.

October is National Arts and Humanities Month

October 02, 2006—October is National Arts and Humanities Month (NAHM)—our shared opportunity to show how the arts bring cultural richness and vitality to communities nationwide. We hope you’ll join Americans for the Arts and arts leaders across the country in this month long celebration by planning activities to showcase the arts in your area. The NAHM website is your source for tips and ideas on how to demonstrate the impact of the arts and humanities in your community.

Throughout October, Americans for the Arts is holding creative conversations (ccs) for emerging arts leaders across the country. Now in its third year, more than 1,000 emerging arts leaders have participated in locally hosted ccs that have fostered ongoing dialogue and networking. Register for a cc in your city today.

Americans for the Arts Rings the NASDAQ Closing Bell

October 17, 2006—Americans for the Arts will ring the closing bell for the NASDAQ stock market at 4:00 p.m. EST today. The Americans for the Arts logo, a welcome message, and our “Art. Ask for More.” public service announcement will air on the NASDAQ MarketSite Tower in Times Square. Standing seven stories tall, the tower is the largest stationary video screen in the world. The closing bell ceremony is broadcast on CNBC, Bloomberg TV, Reuters, Business Week TV, and other financial networks.
Americans for the Arts Board Member and National Arts Awards Chair Maria Bell, Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert Lynch, and National Arts Awards honoree and artist Jeff Koons will attend the ceremony in celebration of The National Arts Awards and October’s National Arts and Humanities Month.

**Americans for the Arts leadership councils seek nominations for new members**

September 19, 2006—Four Americans for the Arts leadership councils—Public Art Council, Emerging Leaders Council, Arts Education Council, and United Arts Funds Council—are currently seeking nominations for new members. Americans for the Arts supports the work of arts professionals by providing research, professional development, advocacy, visibility, and partnerships in each of these leadership areas.

Councils at Americans for the Arts are formalized advisory bodies that work to grow the impact of community arts professionals across the country. Nominations will close in October.

**Creative Industries Reports for Nation’s 7,400 State Legislative Districts Now Available Online**

July 26, 2006—Americans for the Arts is pleased to extend its line of Creative Industries reports to include all 7,400 State House and Senate Legislative Districts in the United States. These sophisticated mapping and statistical reports specify the number of arts businesses and the people they employ in each District. Each report is three pages in length and is available in PDF format for easy downloading:

1. The first page of the report defines the creative industries, provides national trends, and features a color map of the legislative district with a dot representing each arts business. Each report includes the legislator’s name.
2. The second page details the number of arts businesses and employees in the district by 22 arts industry sectors.
3. The third page offers 2004 to 2006 trend data of those detailed arts sectors.

Americans for the Arts regularly uses these reports at the federal, state, and local levels. They are potent advocacy and visibility tools and we encourage you to copy and e-mail them, deliver to your legislators, use for testimony, and even post them to your website. The reports are current as of January 2006. The source for our data is Dun & Bradstreet—widely acknowledged as the leading source for business information in the U.S.

The state legislative research and reports are made possible by a generous grant from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation in Los Altos, California.

**Lackawanna County, PA, Receives the 2006 National Award for County Arts Leadership**

August 10, 2006—Americans for the Arts and the National Association of Counties (NACo) presented the 2006 National Award for County Arts Leadership to the Lackawanna County
Commissioners of Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania. The award was presented to the commissioners during the annual NACo meeting in Chicago on August 7, 2006. This is the first time that a county in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania has received such an award. The National Award for County Arts Leadership is part of a series of Public Leadership in the Arts Awards given annually by Americans for the Arts. The award honors an elected county board or individual leader who has significantly advanced the arts in the communities they serve. The Lackawanna County Commissioners were chosen for their dedication to supporting the arts in the area and to incorporating culture into the county’s economic development plan.

**Diane Shamash, Public Art Leader, Passed Away**

August 17, 2006—Americans for the Arts regrets the loss of Diane Shamash (51), who passed on August 13 in New York. Diane joined the Seattle Arts Commission staff in 1985, and managed Seattle’s Public Art Program from 1987 to 1993. Most recently, Shamash lead the "Floating Island" project in New York last year in conjunction with the Whitney Museum of American Art, and worked as the founding director of Minetta Brook, an organization that presents public art projects and exhibitions. While manager of Seattle’s Public Art Program, she brought the work of artists of national stature into the city’s collection, while maintaining strong advocacy and support for local artists. Diane was instrumental in developing "In Public: Seattle, 1991," a program of both temporary and permanent artworks that received wide acclaim.

**Gordon Church, founding member of Public Art Network, passes away in Albuquerque, NM**

August 04, 2006—Americans for the Arts regretfully shares the news that longtime member Gordon Church (58) passed away July 31 in Albuquerque, NM. Gordon’s career in public art spanned 25 years. He founded public art programs in the city of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, and the state of New Mexico.

**Arts Leaders Convene in Milwaukee for the Americans for the Arts Annual Convention**

June 08, 2006—Americans for the Arts held its annual convention—the largest gathering of local and state arts leaders in the nation—in Milwaukee, WI, June 3-5. The convention, entitled Living Cultural Democracy: Arts In Changing Communities, focused on the arts’ role in communities that are being transformed by shifting demographics. It was a highly successful event.

Convention attendees engaged in lively exchanges on topics such as the implications of demographic trends, funding patterns, promising practices, and expanding influence, and explored opportunities for cultural development in an ever-changing landscape. Three spoken word artists—Paul S. Flores, Kwabena Antoine Nixon, and Ishle Yi Park—performed an original work that reflected the convention’s theme and to promote positive social dialogue. Keynote speakers, Juan Williams, Senior Correspondent for NPR & Fox
Television political analyst, and Hector Cantú, award-winning journalist and co-creator/writer of Baldo, the syndicated newspaper comic strip, also addressed convention attendees. Annual awards were presented at Living Cultural Democracy to the following individuals:

- Jerry Allen, Selina Roberts Ottum Award
- Jennifer Armstrong, Emerging Leader Award
- Mark di Suvero, Public Art Network Award
- Alecia Townsend Kintner, Michael Newton Award

**Sybil Simon, founder of Arts & Business Council, passes away**

May 16, 2006—The Arts & Business Council of Americans for the Arts is sorry to share with its constituents the news that Sybil Simon, founder of Arts & Business Council, has passed away after a sustained illness. Ms. Simon worked with the New York Board of Trade to create Arts & Business Council in 1965; brought it through its own nonprofit incorporation in 1972; and served as its executive director initiating programming--now national in scope--in volunteerism and professional and leadership development until her retirement in 1988. She created the Business Volunteers for the Arts program in 1976, and a national (even international) network of arts and business partnership organizations. She will be greatly missed.

**Americans for the Arts MobiliESTes Arts Advocates for U.S. House Vote on NEA Funding Increase this Week**

May 15, 2006—The U.S. House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) as early this Thursday, May 18, 2006. As we have in the past, Americans for the Arts is undertaking a grassroots effort to mobilize arts advocates to send a message to their House members to vote for an amendment to increase funding for the NEA—and, just as important, to oppose any proposed decrease.

The bill currently being considered by Congress offers no increase in funding for the NEA in FY 2007. Instead, the bill “level-funds” NEA spending at last year’s level of $124.4 million. Thus, the only way we’ll be able to secure an increase in funding for the NEA is through an amendment that we expect to be offered by Congressional Arts Caucus co-chairs Reps. Louise Slaughter (D-NY) and Chris Shays (R-CT) during floor consideration of the bill this week. Just as important, NEA opponents will probably offer amendments to decrease funding. Please take just two minutes to visit Americans for the Arts’ E-Advocacy Center to send a message to your Representative, and urge them to support an NEA increase.

**Ray Hanley, Greater Columbus Arts Council President, Passes Away**

April 17, 2006—The arts lost a great friend this weekend when Ray Hanley, president of the Greater Columbus Arts Council (GCAC) and former Americans for the Arts board member, passed away unexpectedly. Ray was a local and national arts leader, innovator, and dear colleague, having led the Greater Columbus Arts Council for more than two decades. Ray was
also a long-standing member of the United States Urban Arts Federation, a group representing the local arts agencies in the nation’s 50 largest cities, coordinated by Americans for the Arts. He contributed so much to so many across the country and through his international work.

"This is a very sad moment," says Robert L. Lynch, Americans for the Arts president and CEO, "as Ray was enthusiastically looking forward to the next phase of his life following his retirement from Columbus. It is all the more sad since Ray was so full of life, and energy, and enthusiasm for exploration." Ray Hanley will be greatly missed.

Contributions in Ray’s memory can be made to:  
Hanley Arts Fund  
c/o Columbus Arts Endowment  
100 E. Broad St., Suite 2250  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

The Hanley Arts Fund will support individual artists.

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**2006 Year in Review Call for Entry Announced by Americans for the Arts Public Art Network (PAN)**

April 04, 2006—*Year in Review* annually highlights innovative and exciting examples of public art as selected by two reviewers. *Year in Review* is an exceptional planning tool for communities developing public art programs and projects, and an invaluable visual resource for educators, libraries, universities, art commissions, consultants, and designers. *Year in Review* CD-ROMs may be purchased in the Americans for the Arts bookstore.

This year, Americans for the Arts has partnered with the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF) to manage a digital online application. All projects will be submitted through WESTAF’s online application tool, CaFE. No hard copy materials will be accepted.

To be eligible, projects must have been completed between April 2005 and April 2006. Application Deadline: April 28, 2006

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**April is Jazz Appreciation Month**

April 03, 2006—Americans for the Arts has signed on to be a collaborator with the Smithsonian Museum of American History for Jazz Appreciation Month. Throughout the month of April celebrate the history of jazz music and its artistic achievements as part of our cultural heritage.

Arts organizations, museums, schools, and community centers throughout the country are organizing special events for Jazz Appreciation Month.
Download a Podcast of the Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy

March 15, 2006—William Safire, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and longtime political columnist for The New York Times, delivered the 19th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy to a capacity audience Monday night at The Kennedy Center in Washington, DC.

The next day, Americans for the Arts, in conjunction with the Congressional Arts Caucus and 88 national arts organizations from around the country, enlisted entertainment, arts, education, and policy leaders on Capitol Hill for Arts Advocacy Day 2006. Arts leaders and advocates fanned out across Capitol Hill. They met with more than 300 Members of Congress to encourage them to take action on several arts-related issues that, if enacted, will encourage charitable giving to arts and culture.

Arts Advocacy Day attendees also participated in the annual Congressional Arts Breakfast. Rep. Jim Leach of Iowa received the 2006 Congressional Arts Leadership Award, and Americans for the Arts Artists Committee members Alec Baldwin, Pierre Dulaine, and Brian Stokes Mitchell spoke on the importance advocating for the arts to our nation’s lawmakers.

Arts Leaders Blog on Emerging Leader Issues

March 14, 2006—From Tuesday, March 14, through Friday, March 17, a distinguished group of emerging and established arts leaders will be blogging on the topic of emerging arts leadership in the field. The HESSENIUS GROUP is a McLaughlin-style discussion of major arts issues by some of the best minds in the field; the group is part of BARRY’S BLOG. The issues being discussed are:

- What are the arts doing to nurture the next generation of arts leaders?
- What are we doing to systemically encourage bright young people to enter the field?
- How are we including them in the decision-making process?
- What are we doing to pass on learned wisdom?
- What are we doing to train, mentor, or help newer arts administrators develop skills?

Join leaders from across the country participating in this dialogue, including Andrew Taylor, Sam Miller, Paul Minicucci, Shelley Cohn, Jerry Yoshitomi, Cora Mirikitani, Marialaura Leslie, Shannon Daut, Jodi BeESTnoska, and Lisle Soukup.

Contact Congress to Take Action on Arts Issues

March 13, 2006—Arts Advocacy Day activities start today in Washington, DC. Take a moment to visit our E-Advocacy Center to contact your Members of Congress and encourage them to take action on arts and arts education issues. Increase your legislative IQ by checking out the 2006 Congressional Arts Handbook, now available online.

Be sure to check back on Tuesday and Wednesday this week for more Arts Advocacy Day updates.
Register Now for Arts Advocacy Day and the Nancy Hanks Lecture

February 22, 2006—This year Arts Advocacy Day kicks off on Monday, March 13, with a day of legislative training sessions and guest speakers. We’ll teach you everything you need to know about the current arts issues circulating on Capitol Hill and how to lobby Congress for increased public funding for the arts. Throughout the day you’ll have the chance to meet with other attendees from your state in order to make the most of your Congressional visits. On Monday evening, we’ll travel to The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for the 19th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy. Our speaker this year will be William Safire, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and longtime political columnist for the New York Times. Arts Advocacy Day continues on Tuesday morning, with the Congressional Arts Breakfast on Capitol Hill featuring brief talks by Members of Congress and celebrity guests, as well as performances by Dan Zanes, a critically acclaimed folk musician performing family music for all ages, and Nichola Kouzes, 14-year-old country music VSA arts soloist from Colleyville, TX. We will also be presenting the Congressional Arts Leadership Award to Rep. Jim Leach (R-IA).

Americans for the Arts Responds to FY 2007 Budget Recommendations

February 06, 2006—Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch issued a statement today following the White House release of the Administration’s FY 2007 budget recommendations. In response to the arts and culture funding recommendations, Lynch said the following:

“The Administration’s recommendations significantly underfund the arts, with the welcome exception of an increase in museum grants. Rather than zeroing out the Department of Education’s arts education programs, President Bush should ask for an increase. His State of the Union address recognized that we need to prepare a 21st-century workforce by fostering talent and creativity …. The President should also increase funding for the National Endowment for the Arts to strengthen the creation, preservation, and presentation of the arts in America through the NEA’s core grants programs. I am especially concerned that his budget substantially reduces dedicated funding for the NEA’s Challenge America program, which provides access to the arts in underserved areas and reaches communities not previously served by the NEA.”

2006 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards Presented

January 25, 2006—Americans for the Arts and The U.S. Conference of Mayors today presented the 2006 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards to Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell, Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack and New Orleans’ premier arts training center for high school students, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts | Riverfront (NOCCA). The awards honor elected officials and artists for arts organizations that have demonstrated outstanding leadership in advancement of the arts.
“Today we honor Governor Vilsack and Mayor Purcell for their dedication to building and expanding arts programs in their areas and helping to make the arts accessible to all Americans,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “We are also proud to recognize the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts | Riverfront as one of the nation’s top arts training institutions and leader in developing programs that help youngsters realize their creative and artistic potential.”

Seattle’s Percent for Art Program Continues

January 19, 2006—Americans for the Arts, the nation’s leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America, has learned that the deadline for appealing the Washington State Court of Appeals decision upholding Seattle’s One Percent for Art ordinance expired yesterday without an appeal being filed. According to the Office of Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, Seattle’s 32-year-old One Percent for Art Ordinance, as applied to Seattle City Light, the public electric utility, has, therefore, been reinstated as law.

In that regard, Robert L. Lynch, President and CEO of Americans for the Arts, issued the following statement:

“The City of Seattle is renowned for its leadership in public art, and I am delighted that its One Percent for Art Ordinance has been affirmed and issues of its applicability to public utilities have been finally put to rest. This was the key issue that concerned Americans for the Arts in filing its amicus curiae brief to reinstate the application of the ordinance to the municipal electric utility. We wanted to avoid bad legal precedence from negatively influencing other communities. And now, with neither party filing further appeals to the recent higher court decision, Seattle’s Percent for Art Ordinance is retroactively reinstated, making its municipal public art program one of the longest continuously running programs in the country. Percent-for-art programs play a crucial role in funding public art, and their popularity over many decades is evident in the fact that more than 300 communities throughout the country now have such ordinances in place. Those programs have literally changed the civic landscape, and this ruling will help ensure that they continue to do so for years to come.”

Findings from Animating Democracy reviewed on Community Arts Network

January 04, 2006—Community Arts Network, community arts scholar Kate Collins reviews Civic Dialogue, Arts & Culture: Findings from Animating Democracy by Pam Korza, Barbara Schaffer Bacon and Andrea Assaf, one of seven new volumes to come out of the Animating Democracy Initiative. This book reports on the 35 cultural institutions from across the U.S. that were participants in the Animating Democracy Lab, which provided funding and advisory support for “projects that experimented with or deepened existing approaches to arts—humanities—based civic dialogue.” Calling it “an excellent balance between theory and practice,” Collins says, “We read about the danger of polar opposites, the idea that true dialogue necessitates change, the permeability between private and public, personal and
civic, and the 'sin of certainty.'