



## NEWS AND INFORMATION

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Americans for the Arts and Sundance Preserve Host Second Annual National Arts Policy Roundtable**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Robert Redford, Chairman of Sundance Preserve, and Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, led the second annual National Arts Policy Roundtable entitled, *Thinking Creatively and Competing Globally—The Role of the Arts in Building the 21st American Workforce*. Over thirty leaders from business, government, philanthropy, education, and the arts convened in Sundance, Utah from October 4 – 6 to address how the arts can help foster students' creative and innovative skills in order to compete in the 21st Century global workplace.

"It is critical that we re-examine how we prepare students to succeed, and indeed thrive, in the workplace and society of the future," said Robert Redford. "We believe that the arts are a key component of meeting this challenge."

For the 2007 event, Americans for the Arts commissioned three original opinion essays written by distinguished and noteworthy authors with policy expertise in creativity and innovation, education, and business. Sir Ken Robinson, Dr. Paul Houston, and Dr. Hamsa Thota offered distinct viewpoints on the topic to help launch the discussion. Adding to the commentary, Sundance commissioned an original performance piece on the topic, composed and performed by Broadway veteran and National Poetry Slam Champion, Marc Bamuthi Joseph. To better understand the definitions of creative and innovative employees currently used by senior corporate executives and top-level school leaders, attendees were also given a summary of Americans for the Arts' investigation into existing data and research and findings of focus groups of industry professionals conducted throughout the year. Mary Wright, Program Director of The Conference Board provided a snapshot of the preliminary results of a new research initiative being conducted in partnership with Americans for the Arts, the Conference Board, and the American Association of School Administrators. Results of this research are scheduled for release in December 2007.

Roundtable participants were charged with generating actionable policy recommendations

that will be offered to leaders in both the public and private, as well as educational and cultural, sectors. Policy recommendations and key action items determined at the recent National Arts Policy Roundtable will be announced later this year. A list of participants, the opinion essays, and a multimedia presentation documenting the roundtable is available at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).

“The roundtable discussions established that knowledge and creativity yield leaders,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “Learning in the arts—music, dance, theatre, literary and visual arts—including media and design—is one of the most powerful means by which we can help develop creative skills in young people—and as such, they must be part of every student’s fundamental building blocks.”

The power of the arts to hone workplace skills was demonstrated at the Roundtable, by a team of students from the critically acclaimed Spy Hop Productions, Inc.—a nonprofit youth filmmaking program located in Salt Lake City. The students were commissioned to create a short film that explored how the digital arts creative process prepared them for either higher education or the workplace. Students wrote the script, conducted interviews with their peers, produced and edited a ten-minute documentary, which was premiered to the participants on the opening day. The students also participated in the Roundtable meeting in break out groups, and in interviewing participants and documenting the event.

The Americans for the Arts National Arts Policy Roundtable is an annual forum of national leaders who share a commitment to the arts and a willingness to meet and recommend policies critical to the advancement of American culture. The Roundtable is composed of distinguished individuals who serve at the highest levels of business, government, philanthropy, education and the arts. Americans for the Arts and Sundance Preserve are co-conveners of the Roundtable—teaming the two preeminent national organizations dedicated to advancing the arts and creative industries in the United States.

**Americans for the Arts** is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).

The Sundance Preserve is dedicated to maintaining the balance of art, nature, and community as well as the cultivation of independent, innovative thought amongst artists, scholars, scientists, public policy, and business leaders. Residing within the protected splendor of its own preserved lands, it is the mission of the Sundance Preserve to inspire action for the benefit of civil society.