



# Arts Build Communities

*Report on the 2001 Grants Program*



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Meagan Atiyeh, Visual Arts Coordinator  
Bill Flood, Community Development Coordinator  
Lisa Platt, Education Coordinator  
Leslie Roth, Assistant to the Executive Director

*Arts Build Communities Publication*

Leigh Hancock, Editor  
Bill Flood, Arts Build Communities Program

*For information about Arts Build Communities programs, contact:*

Bill Flood, Community Development Coordinator  
(503) 986-0083  
bill.flood@state.or.us



OREGON ARTS  
COMMISSION

775 Summer Street NE, Suite 200  
Salem, Oregon 97301-1284  
(503) 986-0082 Voice  
(503) 986-0260 Fax  
(503) 986-0123 TDD  
(800) 233-3306 toll free in Oregon  
[www.oregonartscommission.org](http://www.oregonartscommission.org)  
[oregon.artscomm@state.or.us](mailto:oregon.artscomm@state.or.us)



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# *Arts Build Communities*

## Report on the 2001 Grants Program

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## *Program Summary*

The Oregon Arts Commission's *Arts Build Communities* (ABC) grants provide support to strengthen communities through the arts. ABC-funded projects are specific to the critical issues and opportunities facing each community and the ways in which local organizers seek to connect local arts resources with these issues and opportunities. This program supports organizations and communities isolated by geography and communities, both urban and rural, with a history of social, cultural, or economic barriers.

The increasing demand for *Arts Build Communities* grant funds and the variety of approaches to projects appear connected to a wider realization that arts have been under-utilized resources in community development. As both rural and urban communities continue to struggle with how to build stronger and more diverse economies, healthy and sustainable schools and other services, and approaches to caring for all people in a community, it becomes clear that arts are part of the solution. Projects profiled in this document illustrate a variety of creative approaches to program development. Some common approaches within these include:

- festivals focusing on community heritage and ethnic diversity
- public art created locally that reflects community history and values
- business and job development
- facility development
- support for youth and families, especially for those most at-risk
- approaches to supporting minority communities
- approaches to documenting arts and cultural assets, community stories, and preserving valuable traditions

All projects build either human or physical community, or both. Human community is built through generating dialogue on issues, strengthening relationships and partnerships, increasing inter-cultural understanding, and clarifying the place of arts, culture, and history in communities. Physical community is built through the development of public gathering spaces, facilities, and other amenities such as public art.

The projects profiled in this report were funded during the 2001 grant period. Grants range up to \$7,000 and grantees are private, non-profit organizations or units of local government. Funding partners with the Oregon Arts Commission were the National Endowment for the Arts and the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service.

The Oregon Arts Commission also supports the *Arts Build Communities* Technical Assistance Program. Through this program, consultants provide assistance to community groups seeking to better utilize local arts resources in community development efforts. Services, if deemed appropriate by the Team Manager, are provided at no cost to communities. A publication similar to this one which illustrates the work of the *Arts Build Communities* Technical Assistance Program can be obtained from the Oregon Arts Commission.

For more information on *Arts Build Communities* grants or technical assistance, contact Bill Flood, Community Development Coordinator, at the Oregon Arts Commission. Information on specific projects also can be obtained by contacting the program coordinators listed in the following profiles.

# 2001 Grant Awards

## Arts Build Communities Grants

The Arts Build Communities Initiative is designed to broaden the impact of the arts in community and foster community partnerships. In fiscal year 2001, 22 grants totaling \$ 109,435 were awarded to applicants whose proposals met the program's funding criteria.

\$4,900	Adelante Si Hispanic Organization of Lane County Fiesta Latina, Eugene	\$5,250	Maude Kerns Art Center IDEA Project, Eugene
\$6,020	CART'M Recycling New facility planning, Manzanita	\$4,150	MediaRites The Grief Project, Portland
\$5,220	Chiloquin Visions in Progress Chiloquin: Past to Present Mural, Chiloquin	\$4,900	Miracle Theater Group/Teatro Milagro BRIDGES Residencies, Portland with statewide outreach
\$5,250	CoArts Gilliam County Fairgrounds Relief Sculpture, Condon	\$2,250	Monday Musical Club of Tillamook Oregon Symphony Performance and Outreach, Tillamook
\$4,800	Cove Community Association Cove Arts Festival and Cherry Fair, Cove	\$7,000	Neighborhood Pride Team Chair-ity Project, Portland
\$6,020	Crossroads Center for the Creative and Performing Arts Carnegie Library Renovation Feasibility Study, Baker City	\$7,000	Northwest Native American Basketweavers 7th Annual Basketweavers Gathering, Olympia, WA (headquarters)
\$2,030	Drexel H. Foundation Art Camp and Talent Show, Vale	\$5,250	Portland Taiko ArtExplosion: Asian Pacific American Performing Arts Festival, Portland
\$4,300	City of Echo/Millennium Art Committee Cultural Inventory, Echo	\$4,900	Portland State University/PIPfest African American Audience Development Project, Portland
\$6,020	Estacada Together/Est. Arts Commission Estacada Summer Celebration, Estacada	\$5,205	Rogue Community College Galleries Disabilities Awareness Art Exhibits, Grants Pass
\$6,020	Ethos, Inc. At-risk Educational Outreach Program, Portland	\$5,250	Rogue Valley Foundation Art In Bloom, Medford
\$4,700	Granada Theater Foundation Season of Art, The Dalles		
\$3,000	Joint Forces Dance Company DanceAbility Workshops and Performance, Eugene		



## *Adelante Si Hispanic Organization of Lane County*

### **Fiesta Latina**

Begun in 1992, Fiesta Latina is a spring celebration of the best of Hispanic/Latino arts and culture in the Whiteaker neighborhood in Eugene. Held on the first weekend of May at the Washington-Jefferson Park, Fiesta Latina is a three-day, community-oriented free event that attracts over 15,000 local residents and visitors from throughout Lane County. The primary goal of the Fiesta is to offer an alcohol-free event that actively supports and honors Hispanic/Latino culture.

From the beginning, the centerpiece of Fiesta Latina has been an art exhibit featuring local Hispanic artists, many of whom have never had the opportunity to display their work. The inclusion of student work offers the general public a more positive view of these young people, who are often stereotyped as drug users and dealers. Other offerings of Fiesta 2001 included music and entertainment from many Latin American cultures, presentations by the Buena Vista Spanish Immersion, bilingual shows for children and adults and the traditional breaking of 150 surprise-filled piñatas.

In 2000, Fiesta Latina brought one of Mexico's top 100 artisans, Mauricio Hernandez Colmenero, to local schools for two weeks prior to the festival. Colmenero provided workshops to students and demonstrated his paper mache techniques during the Fiesta. The success of Colmenero's residency, measured by the quality of student work and increased attendance at the Fiesta, convinced event organizers to make such residencies a permanent part of future Fiestas.

Fiesta 2001's featured artist was Martin Guevara-Luna, a potter from Guanajuato who has revived the art of pre-Hispanic clay working. Guevara spent two weeks giving workshops at the University of Oregon, Club Mud and



three local high schools. Hundreds of students, including local artists, created clay masks using Guevara's techniques. Media coverage of these workshops generated widespread curiosity about Guevara's work and helped draw large crowds to the Fiesta, whose attendance topped 22,000 people. Many were first-time attendees, and approximately half were of Hispanic descent.

## **How did Fiesta Latina build community?**

Fiesta Latina evolved from the desire of the Adelante Si Committee and city staff to reclaim Washington-Jefferson Park from local drug dealers. Although the event has become increasingly popular and well-attended over the years, many people throughout Lane County have remained reluctant to attend the Fiesta due to the park's bad reputation. Guevara's workshops provided a new, positive way to connect with local communities and encourage residents outside the Whiteaker neighborhood to visit the park and experience the richness of Latino/Hispanic culture.

Many partnerships with schools, arts organizations and other local groups have evolved out of work on Fiesta Latina. These include the annual celebration of Dia de los Muertos and Fiesta Navidad at the Hult Center and, in 2000, a collaboration with the Oregon Bach Festival which brought the twenty-member Cuban choir Entrevoces to the region.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

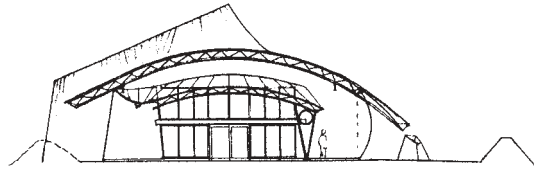
It took a great deal of time and effort to schedule Guevara's many workshops and to transport him to the various sites. Partners also had to convince the local media of the importance of this project. These efforts were well-rewarded, however, with excellent workshop participation and increased attendance at Fiesta Latina.

## **What's ahead?**

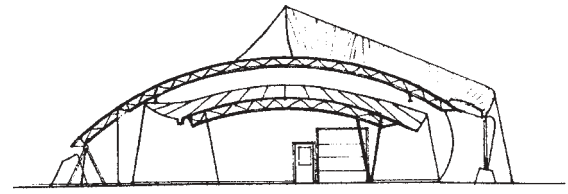
The Fiesta Latina Committee and the Adelante Si Committee evaluate each year's Fiesta in a debriefing meeting shortly after the event. Committee members look at attendance numbers, the number and quality of art pieces in the art exhibit and the enthusiasm of the attending public. These evaluations shape planning for the next year's Fiesta, which continues to be an alcohol-free, community-oriented event bringing together people of all ages and cultures in celebration of Latino/Hispanic culture.

### *Contact*

Rebeca Urhausen  
P.O. Box 10704  
Eugene, Oregon 97405  
541-344-5070  
541-688-9511 (fax)  
NickUrh@aol.com



West Elevation



East Elevation

Building elevations for CART'M Recycling's proposed new facility.

*“Using recycled materials to create art and sculpture... captures the imagination of many who would never consider making art for exhibition or attending an art opening.”*

—Lorraine Ortiz,  
The Art Ranch

## *CART'M Recycling*

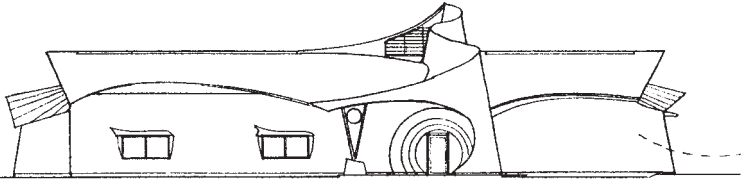
### **Planning Process for New Facility**

CART'M Recycling first received an Arts Build Communities grant in 1999 to develop a Trash Art Program at the Manzanita Transfer Station (otherwise known as The Dump). This grant supported four trash art workshops, a community exhibit of art made from recycled materials, and creation of a trash art installation on the entrance gate to the station. The success of these programs encouraged CART'M to continue the workshops and to host an annual Trash Art Bash art show and celebration. These programs have helped this innovative trash, recycle and resale operation become an eco-tourist attraction, illustrating how art can help address environmental issues within a community.

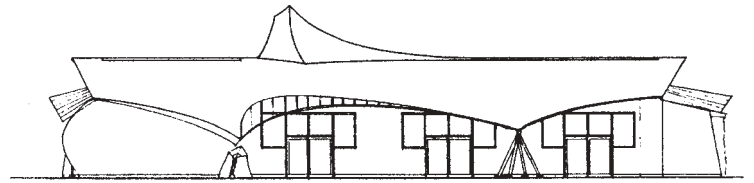
All Trash Art programs have traditionally taken place in the midst of the Manzanita recycling processing area. But with the growth in programs and popularity, this has become increasingly difficult. In 2001, using Arts Build Community funds, CART'M Recycling began the planning process for a new building and equipment that will be used for Trash Art programs and exhibits.

A committee comprised of CART'M board and staff members and local artists who have been involved with the Trash Art program over the years met in September 2001 with local architect Tom Bender to brainstorm a list of program considerations and design possibilities. In addition to providing space for Trash Art workshops and exhibits, the new building will be used as an incubator for micro-industries that create salable products from recycled glass, plastic and wood.

Toward the end of the year, Bender presented a formal preliminary design for a state of the art “green” building that will include low levels of insulation, passive solar and in-floor radiant heating, solar hot water heating and waterless toilets and urinals. Interior partitions will be made of recycled materials and micro-industry products such as crushed glass that are produced at the station. The design has inspired committee members to begin the process of raising funds for the new building.



North Elevation



South Elevation

In the meantime, a local gift shop donated a 600 square foot pole building to CART'M Recycling in exchange for tearing it down. This building will be reassembled adjacent to existing CART'M buildings in time for the May 2002 Trash Art Bash.

### **How did the planning process build community?**

Local residents are proud of the CART'M facility, which they have helped fund, decorate and market; many refer to it as the local mall. The annual Trash Art Bash brings people from all facets of the community together to celebrate recycling and community pride. The facility has also become a tourist destination for out-of-town visitors, and the recent topic of a University of Oregon graduate thesis, which called it the “integral center for the community.”

### **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Project partners learned that Trash Art is a permanent fixture of life in Manzanita. It has become an integral part of the recycling and reuse program. The process of creating plans for a new space has generated positive energy for the overall program.

### **What's ahead?**

Trash Art Workshops were scheduled for April 2002, with the fourth annual Trash Art Bash following in May. CART'M hopes to hold all events in the newly erected pole building. Once the architect completes cost estimates for the preliminary design, CART'M staff and volunteers will begin the task of raising funds to make the new building a reality.

Other plans for the Manzanita Transfer Station include a Miniature Golf Course with a trash art theme. Built by volunteers, the golf course will demonstrate the use of crushed glass on its paths, to stimulate sales of this eco-friendly material.

*Contact*  
Lane deMoll  
P.O. Box 122  
Manzanita, Oregon 97130  
503-368-7764  
503-368-7754 (fax)  
cartm@nehalem.tel.net



## *Chiloquin Visions in Progress*

### **Chiloquin, Past to Present Mural**

With 790 residents, the town of Chiloquin in central Klamath County has the lowest per capita income of any incorporated town in Oregon. Originally a timber and ranching community, Chiloquin is seeking to diversify its economy through tourism and other industries. The town serves as the seat of the Klamath Tribes.

Chiloquin Visions in Progress, a non-profit organization, was founded in 1995 to organize a community revitalization effort for Chiloquin and the surrounding Klamath County area. Since that time, Chiloquin Visions in Progress has been working with Friends of the Chiloquin Library and Two Rivers Village Arts to build a library and arts center for the community.

One of the first steps in this process was the demolition of a condemned tavern, which exposed the south wall of the adjoining Lions Club building. Using Arts Build Communities funds, local high schools students and teachers worked with a local Native American artist to research, design and create *Chiloquin, Past to Present*, a 2,000 square foot mural on the bare wall. Their goals were to beautify and individualize Chiloquin's downtown area, to enhance community pride and to provide a noteworthy sight for travelers through the area.

Native American artist Len Wilder worked with students to develop the theme of "Chiloquin, Past to Present" and to create a cohesive mural design. Students learned basic skills and techniques in color choice, shading, outlining and graphing the design. Although weather prevented completion of the mural by the end of 2001, it was completed in Spring, 2002.



Chiloquin Visions in Progress worked with high school students and teachers to develop the content, message and design of a 20' by 100' mural completed on the south side of the local Lions Club Building.

## How did the Chiloquin mural build community?

“Chiloquin, Past to Present” was a true community project, with contributions and input from a variety of individuals and organizations. Students talked to tribal elders, retired ranchers and other “old-timers” in an effort to incorporate their knowledge and stories into the mural design. The Lions Club donated the use of the building, while downtown businesses lent students everything from ladders to scaffolding. The local grocery stores and Friends of the Library provided snacks and beverages for the mural painters.

## What did the partners learn from the project?

Although it was initially difficult to get students involved in the mural project, in the end it was very gratifying to work with these young people. It was crucial to have Len Wilder’s help and expertise in doing such a large-scale mural; without him the project would not have been possible.

## What’s ahead?

The Lions Club would like the artist and students to continue the theme to the north side of the building. A local developer has enlisted the artist to develop a thematic color scheme for another downtown city block. Finally, a bookstore in Chiloquin would now like to have a mural map of central and northern Klamath County painted on its outside wall.

*Contact*  
Joy Harris  
Project Coordinator  
P.O. Box 204  
Chiloquin, Oregon 97624  
541-783-3220  
trva@cvc.net  
www.chiloquin.com



*“The Silhouette  
in History project  
brought together  
some 250 people  
with diverse lives  
to share in a  
common creative  
experience.”*

—Boyd Harris,  
project participant and  
former mayor of Condon

## **CoArts**

### ***Silhouette in History***

CoArts has served as the community arts provider for Gilliam County since 1973 and has very strong experience in organizing high-quality community arts events. In April 2000, in partnership with Laura Barnett Arts, the Gilliam County School District, Gilliam County Historical Society, and other local groups, CoArts began planning an exterior relief sculpture to represent the formative history of Gilliam County. The 128' by 12' relief sculpture, named “Silhouette in History,” is to be completed and installed by September 1, 2002, and dedicated at the Gilliam County Fair.

The Gilliam County Fair Board initiated the project by issuing a public request for art to make the stadium wall aesthetically more appealing. A committee of artists responded to the challenge, and developed the idea of a historical sculptural piece using steel relief. This concept was then presented to all community partners to encourage their participation. Partners responded by contributing to the historical validity of the images.

For the following six months the artists met weekly to work on integrating the community partners' contributions into a thematic whole. They created the images on a miniature scale that was later taken to full scale and color coded for position in the relief. Volunteers and artists drew the images to scale and positioned them on the walls of the grade school gymnasium in order to confirm the size and position of the modular pieces of the relief.

The Gilliam County road crew designed, engineered, and built a welding table for cutting out the modular pieces. Volunteers and artists drew patterns on the 6' by 20' steel sheets, which were cut out with plasma cutters by the artists,

students, volunteers and Gilliam County road crew. The road crew also designed a wood template from the structural support plan, installed the structural support system, developed a system for securely welding the pieces to the structure and replaced the old siding on the fairground grandstand.

## **How did *Silhouette in History* build community?**

*Silhouette in History* involved a wide array of community organizations, partners and individuals, all working toward a central goal. The project strengthened the communal vision for the arts in Gilliam County. The final relief will honor the historical, political and social aspects of this rural community.

At least 250 people have participated in developing the artwork - from initial planning to submission of ideas and images to creating the work to final installation. Many people, including youth, are very proud of seeing the images they submitted in the final piece. Images represent all communities in the county. The project has brought together a diverse group of people who would not have come together for any other reason.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

The many participating individuals learned how to work as a group. Some images had to be rejected, and artists had to accept changes and criticism. During the 2 1/2-year development process of the artwork, at least six persons emerged as project leaders, yet there was never a designated chair or project point person. No single person will take credit for this project; it is truly a collective effort.

Through this process the individual skills of people also became evident. People learned much about the technical elements of creating public artwork to be integrated with a facility. As a result of the artwork, the grandstand was rebuilt.

## **What's ahead?**

The installed artwork will be dedicated at a public celebration on September 1, 2002. Plans also exist to create additional sculptures specific to sites such as the poultry barn, rabbit barn and cow barn at the Fairgrounds, as well as in Gilliam County communities.

### *Contact*

Boyd Harris  
P.O. Box 165  
Condon, OR 97823  
541-384-5114  
541-384-5114 (fax)  
bharris@orednet.org



Children in newly made tie-dyed clothes parade at the Cove Arts Festival and Cherry Fair sponsored by the Cove Community Association. Photo by Kelly Skovlin.

## *Cove Community Association*

### **Cove Arts Festival and Cherry Fair**

The Cove Arts Festival and Cherry Fair is a four-day community event that combines contemporary arts and traditional Cherry Fair activities. Begun in 2000, the Festival strives to bring together diverse segments of Cove's community in an atmosphere of creativity, understanding and appreciation. Held August 15-18th, Festival 2001 featured thirteen different workshops in the visual and performing arts. Both children and adults participated in the Festival, which drew people from eastern Oregon and beyond.

The first three days of the Festival were devoted to a wide range of art classes and experiences, including workshops in songwriting, bookmaking, polyester plate lithograph printing and creative dance. Open sessions were available, and a less structured Kids Korral provided additional activities for children of all ages. Arts activities extended into the fourth day, with students performing and displaying their work for other Festival attendees.

The Cherry Fair, held on the fourth day of the Festival, was a revival of the original Cherry Fairs held between 1911 and 1917. Complete with a pancake breakfast, fun run, community parade, farmers' market, horseshoe tournament and hayride, the Cherry Fair provided a taste of Cove's history for old-timers, newcomers and visitors.

### **How did the Cove Arts Festival and Cherry Fair build community?**

The community of Cove has undergone substantial change in recent years, primarily due to immigration from urban and suburban centers. This influx, combined with the busy schedules of families and students, has threatened the cohesiveness that was once a hallmark of this community. The Festival and Fair were organized as a way to rebuild a sense of community among all Cove residents.



## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Cove relied on a well-articulated organizational chart to keep the project moving from vision to reality. Recognition and involvement of a wide array of local human resources were critical to project success. Partners used evaluations from the previous year's Festival to refine rather than recreate this year's program.

## **What's ahead?**

The Festival and Fair will continue to be an annual event, whose character will be somewhat determined by availability of financial support. Local fundraising, while increasing, has not yet reached the level to support free art activities for area youth. Project partners will continue to seek foundation and organizational support beyond what is available in eastern Oregon.

The Fair and Festival have generated other community projects including the expansion of school and community arts activities through visiting artists and the establishment of a community chorus. Partners are planning a human resource inventory, which will identify the skills and interest of community members.

### *Contact*

John Van Schoonhoven  
61155 Love Road  
Cove, Oregon 97824  
541-568-4482  
541-568-4482 (fax)  
jvanscho@excite.com



*“Our work is just beginning. It will take time and the continuation of strong community support and partnering to restore this unique community resource.”*

—Mary Ann Szymoniak,  
President of Crossroads Board  
of Directors

## *Crossroads Center for the Creative and Performing Arts*

### **Carnegie Library Renovation Feasibility Study**

With only 16,000 residents, Baker County is a small region isolated from many cultural opportunities and limited in financial resources. The Crossroads Center for the Creative and Performing Arts is a primary provider of arts opportunities for Baker County residents. Established in 1972, the Crossroads Center has been housed in a number of temporary facilities, including its most recent home which is currently up for sale. The Center has long felt the need of a permanent facility for its programs and services.

In 2000 the Baker City manager approached the director of Crossroads about the possibility of renovating the old Carnegie Library as a permanent performing arts center and home for Crossroads. Both parties agreed that an in-depth feasibility study that would assess the cost and functional viability of renovating the building was the first logical step. Particular issues to be researched included use adaptability, ADA compliance retrofitting and historic preservation.

The community became very involved with the project, voicing support as well as concerns about using the building in this way. Public forums drew participation from Crossroads members as well as from people new to the organization, all of whom reaffirmed the importance of arts opportunities in the community.

Using Arts Build Communities funds, Crossroads hired architect Larry Nicholson to assist with the feasibility study. Members of Crossroads, Baker City residents, local engineers and journey professionals also participated in various assessments of the building, all of which resulted in a bound feasibility study presented to the public and approved by the Crossroads Board of Directors.

## **How did the Carnegie Library feasibility study build community?**

Many community members who had never been involved with the Crossroads Center attended the community forums, which sparked a great deal of discussion about the importance of community arts. The local newspaper followed the story throughout the year with many positive articles, and in November 2001 the Crossroads Board of Directors voted unanimously to proceed toward renovating the historic Carnegie Library into the new Center for the Creative and Performing Arts.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners were extremely pleased with the success of the feasibility study. They were particularly surprised by the level and quality of community support and interest. There is very little they would change about the project's implementation and results.

## **What's ahead?**

With Board approval to pursue funding for the renovation, the Carnegie Project is underway. The Crossroads Executive Committee is currently refining project goals, guidelines and policies, and looking to hire a project manager and grant writer to coordinate fundraising and other activities. The committee plans to seek funding from major grantors such as the Murdock Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation and the Kresge Foundation. The Committee is also creating plans for maintaining and operating the building once it is completed.

### *Contact*

Sandra Hofferber  
1901 Main Street  
Baker City, Oregon 97814  
541-523-5369  
crossroads@webcom.com



## *Drexel H. Foundation*

### **Art Camp and Talent Show**

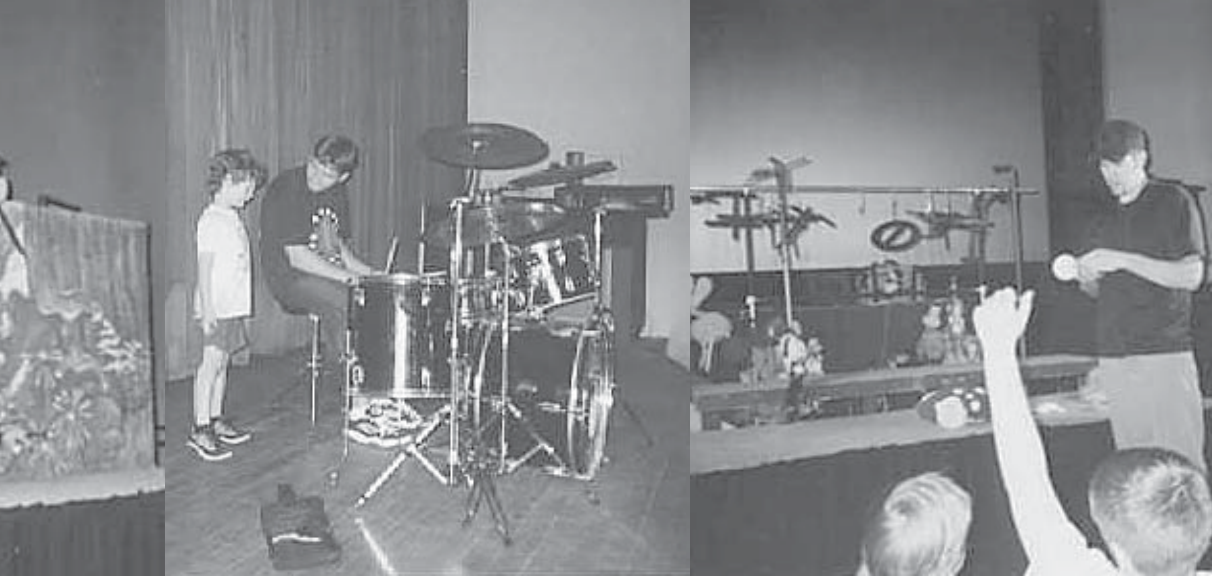
Originally created to help preserve the historic Vale Hotel and Grand Opera House, the Drexel H. Foundation expanded its mission in 1995 to provide arts opportunities to area children. Since that time the Foundation has produced numerous educational outreach programs, including after school family workshops, a summer art camp and talent show. The Foundation serves children and families from Vale, Harper, Nyssa, Adrian, Jamison, Willow Creek and Ontario.

Using 2001 Arts Build Communities funds, the Drexel H. Foundation purchased a new sound system consisting of a microphone and public address system for playing tapes and compact discs. Prior to this expenditure, the Foundation had to borrow stereos and amplification systems from other organizations, a fact which often compromised the professional quality of the performance. With the new sound system, the Foundation is able to offer a high quality experience to all participants.

The sound system was put to good use this first year in several Foundation-sponsored events. Chief among these was the annual Art Camp and Talent Show, which served over 360 participants from rural communities. The sound system was also utilized in the after school workshops, as well as at the Art in the Park event on Flag Day. Best of all, the sound system will provide high quality, flexible service to a variety of events for years to come.

### **How did the Art Camp and Talent Show build community?**

Because Foundation programs are free and open to all children and families, they offer residents of diverse backgrounds and communities an opportunity to interact in a safe, healthy environment. Workshops provide activities that



Children from Vale, Ontario, Nyssa, Adrian, Jamison, Willow Creek and Harper participated in the annual Art Camp and Talent Show funded by the Drexel H. Foundation.

help build self-esteem and confidence in children, and the Talent Show offers all individuals the chance to learn from and appreciate the wealth of talent in their community.

Improving the quality of its programs has helped the Drexel H. Foundation sustain and deepen existing partnerships with such diverse organizations as the Mural Society, the Historic Society, public schools, local artists and local businesses.

### **What did the partners learn from the project?**

The Drexel H. Foundation greatly appreciates the assistance it has received from the local schools, which help support a wide variety of activities for area students. By using a wide range of formats, the Foundation has been very successful in reaching a broad audience in these rural communities.

In light of the success of this project, the Foundation's only regret is that they did not request assistance sooner for the purchase of sound and lighting systems. The amount of time it took to research and purchase the most suitable type of system was a good investment of resources.

### **What's ahead?**

The Art Camp and Talent Show has become a community tradition and will continue to serve residents throughout the region. Thanks to the new sound system, the Drexel Foundation is looking at sponsoring several new events, including a "battle of the bands" concert and a staged musical for a local private school.

*Contact*  
Sandijean Fuson  
301 A Street  
Vale, Oregon 97918  
541-473-3470  
541-473-2380 (fax)



## *City of Echo*

### **Cultural Inventory and Logo Development**

With only 640 residents, the City of Echo has a surprisingly rich and varied history, involving Native Americans, shepherders, Portuguese settlers and pioneers on the Oregon Trail. Located near the fast-growing towns of Hermiston and Boardman, the community has long felt the need to actively preserve its identity and uniqueness. To this end, the City of Echo worked with the Oregon Arts Commission's Technical Assistance Team in 2000 to develop a public art project. In a report entitled "Echo, Oregon Thoughts on Public Art," consultant Paul Sutinen recommended that the city develop a logo out of a photograph of Echo Koontz, the town's namesake.

In 2001, using Arts Build Communities funds the City of Echo formed the Millennium Arts Committee and, through a competitive process, hired Oregon Public Affairs Research Consultants and Design Point, Inc. to develop the Echo Koontz image and to prepare a comprehensive cultural inventory for the community. The primary goal of the cultural inventory was to compile a list of artists, living and deceased, as well as a list of historical buildings and sites as the first step toward establishing historical plaques and markers using the Echo image throughout the town.

Committee members provided historical materials from the library and city files to consultant Bob Irvine, who prepared a project outline and request for information. This document, along with an invitation to attend a public forum, was mailed to long-term Echo residents, the city newsletter and the local school. Response was sparse, with only four individuals attending the public forum, although several people did mail or call in information over the next three months.

Design Point, Inc. submitted six logo designs to the Millennium Arts Committee who, with public input, narrowed the selection to three. With help from the Oregon Arts Commission, these were further refined for use in the public art project.

## **How did the Cultural Inventory and Logo Development build community?**

The logo selection process sparked a great deal of public interest, although the final impact will not be fully realized until the logos are widely distributed around the community. While the cultural inventory did not solicit as much public input as partners anticipated, it did spark public interest in the cultural history of the town. It gave long-term residents a new appreciation for the wealth of public art and architecture they had previously taken for granted. Those individuals who have read the cultural inventory are excited about sharing it with schoolchildren, the library and other communities.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners budgeted thirty administrative hours for the cultural inventory, but in reality over two weeks were spent researching, writing and editing the final inventory, which is now accessible to the general public. In retrospect, partners wish they had budgeted more consultant hours for the project.

Soliciting public input also proved harder than expected. Most individuals had to be contacted personally, rather than through letters or meetings. This meant a great deal of work for a handful of committed individuals.

## **What's ahead?**

The Millennium Arts Committee will be printing copies of the inventory for free distribution to area public libraries, the Blue Mountain Community College, Echo schools and organizations. University libraries and other individuals will be invited to purchase the inventory for a nominal fee. The committee is seeking funding to create and install interpretative panels with the Echo logo around the town. The logo will also be used to create new stationary, souvenirs and other publicity pieces for sale to town visitors, to generate funds for other public arts projects.

*Contact*  
Diane Berry  
P.O. Box 9  
Echo, Oregon 97826  
541-376-8411  
541-376-8218 (fax)  
ecpl@oregonvos.net



## *Estacada Arts Commission*

### **Estacada Summer Celebration**

The community of Estacada is geographically isolated and economically depressed, with no movie theatre, museum or arts center. A recent capacity-building process identified a critical need for healthy, drug-free activities for youth and families, as well as events that bridge existing language and cultural barriers. In response to these findings, the Estacada Arts Commission, in partnership with Estacada Together, hosted the first Estacada Summer Celebration on July 20-21st, 2001.

Held in the downtown area, the two-day event celebrated the best of Estacada arts and culture. A gallery exhibit of work by local artists was an aesthetic and financial success, with large attendance and constant sales. Four ongoing, hands-on activities allowed local children to experiment with new media to create work that was exciting for them and their parents. Performing artists Obo Addy and Kukrudu, Tears of Joy Theatre, Ballet Folklórico de Woodburn, Bayou Cadillac and others provided two solid days of music and dance performances, the first multicultural event of this magnitude in Estacada. Altogether, over seventy artists participated in the Summer Celebration.

The local Artback muralist guild celebrated their seventh anniversary by painting a sixty-by- thirty foot mural on the wall of the local Thriftway. The *Longhouse Mural* provided instant enhancement for the downtown area, and guild artists were pleased to have public recognition of their community work. They sold an unprecedented number of postcards depicting previous murals.

Public response to the celebration was overwhelmingly positive, with many attendees expressing a desire for more events of this nature. Many community members stated through written evaluations how much this experience enriched their appreciation of Estacada's talent and culture. Local businesses were also pleased with the increased foot traffic and sales from over 500 weekend participants.



## **How did the Estacada Summer Celebration build community?**

As the first multicultural celebration in the city, the Summer Celebration brought together residents from various age groups, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds in the Estacada and Eagle Creek areas. Hands-on arts activities and musical performances strengthened the community by providing positive, drug-free experiences for the entire family. The development and implementation of the festival strengthened the Arts Commission's relationship with the City Council, Department of Parks and Recreation and the Estacada Development Association.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners learned that creating a community-building project requires establishing strong relationships between local groups and volunteers. Starting early and keeping to a well-defined timeline was critical to the Celebration's success. Partners also effectively utilized subcommittees and volunteers to accomplish the myriad of necessary tasks. The support of the local business community was essential to project success.

In future projects, partners plan to involve community groups earlier in the process, and to improve communications through clearer job descriptions and a better chain of command. They plan to hire a graphic artist as well as a project coordinator to help facilitate the process from beginning to end.

## **What's ahead?**

Public demand for an annual celebration was unanimous and plans have proceeded for the Summer Celebration 2002. The Oregon Arts Commission is once again a major funder, with support anticipated from Key Bank, the Estacada Public Library, the Regional Arts and Culture Council and the National Endowment for the Arts. Plans for the next Celebration include seven music and dance performances ranging from Big Band to Japanese Taiko, a full day of hands-on arts activities for children and a gallery exhibit of over thirty area artists. The Artback will create another mural during the Celebration, and the Chamber of Commerce has promised to organize a farmers' market during the weekend.

Other ideas generated by the Summer Celebration include creating a small downtown park, establishing a cooperative art gallery and creating a mosaic sign for the highway entrance to the town. The Estacada Development Association has asked the Arts Commission to facilitate the design and installation of small banners to enhance the downtown area.

*Contact*  
Jane Reid  
P.O. Box 556  
Estacada, Oregon 97023  
503-630-4013  
503-630-8282 (fax)  
janereid@msn.com



Ethos' Music Mobile, a converted double decker bus, takes music education back to Oregon's underserved youth.

## *Ethos, Inc.*

### **At-Risk Educational Outreach Project**

Recent budget cuts have severely limited music education in the Portland Public Schools, with only two teachers funded for every 1,000 students studying music and the arts. This shortage of music resources comes at a time when numerous studies demonstrate the tremendous benefits of music education. Ethos, Inc. is a community-driven, grassroots organization committed to bringing music education to underserved youth in the Portland metropolitan area and beyond.

Through its At-Risk Educational Outreach Project, the organization provided four different learning opportunities for over 12,000 low-income youth in 2001. These included Music Lessons for Kids, Musiccorps, Sound School Assemblies and Instruments Drives. Two of the programs, Music Lessons and Musiccorps, provided individual and group music lessons for underserved and at-risk youth through Portland schools and community centers. They served a combined 1,000 students in 2001.

Through its Sound School Assemblies program, Ethos, Inc. brought professional musicians into area schools for free music assemblies. Each presentation included a live performance followed by a talk on the history and style of each genre of music. Ethos, Inc. gave 38 assemblies last year to a total of 11,400 students.

Finally, the organization's Instrument Drive collects and repairs used musical instruments for redistribution to Oregon's underserved youth. This program provides instruments to children who are not able to buy or rent ones of their own. Last year's drive involved over 200 volunteers, donors and student beneficiaries.



## How did the At-Risk Educational Outreach Project build community?

This project built community at every level by directly engaging local schools, artists, volunteers and organizations in the effort to bring music back into the schools and communities. The project created a number of strong partnerships with the Salvation Army, the University of Portland, Portland State University and the Corporation for National Service. It also helped Ethos, Inc. maintain its own music center in northeast Portland.

## What did the partners learn from the project?

The biggest thing partners learned is that the need for music education is even greater than anticipated. Schools throughout Oregon continue to cut music education programs in response to recent budget shortfalls. Ethos, Inc. has been successful in helping mobilize community resources to revive music education, and it hopes to build off that success to help other communities start and maintain their own music education programs.

## What's ahead?

Ethos, Inc.'s Outreach Program has grown tremendously over the past year, and is looking forward to expanding both in Portland and throughout Oregon. The organization has recently established the "Music Across Oregon" program, which will help establish music education programs in small rural communities around the state. A recently purchased 1977 Bristol double decker bus, outfitted as a mobile music classroom, will bring music and music-based education to some of Oregon's most underserved communities.

*Contact*  
Charles Lewis  
27 N. Killingsworth Street  
Portland, Oregon 97211  
503-241-8824  
503-210-0280 (fax)  
charles@ethos-inc.com  
www.ethos-inc.com



Participants in *Season of Art*, a collaboration between the Granada Theatre Foundation and the Columbia Gorge Arts and Culture Council wore t-shirts designed for the special year-long program.

## *The Granada Theatre Foundation*

### **Season of Art**

Housed in the historic Granada Theatre (circa 1926), the Granada Theatre Foundation is committed to providing arts opportunities and education to children and adults in rural Wasco and Sherman Counties. Through numerous partnerships with local organizations and businesses, the Foundation manages the Theatre as a community performing arts center, providing low cost, high quality cultural programming to residents of the Columbia Gorge.

Season of Art, a collaboration between the Granada Theatre Foundation and the Columbia Gorge Arts and Culture Council, presented four interactive arts opportunities to local children and adults in 2001. These programs included My Favorite Poem, Tears of Joy Puppetry, World Beat Marimba Camp and a Lewis and Clark presentation. Over 775 individuals were served through this year-long program.

My Favorite Poem brought community members together in the historic theatre for an evening of poetry reading and recitation. Readers ranged in age from first-graders to grandparents, with each participant reading one or more favorite poems. Although attendance was low, the positive response from participants convinced the Foundation staff to make this an annual event.

In early April, Tears of Joy Theatre presented a two-week puppet camp for twenty-seven at-risk students from the Mid-Columbia region. Through this workshop students learned how to create a dramatic story complete with dialogue and stage directions. Next they created bottleneck and sock puppets, as well as a stage for each separate story. All twenty-seven plays were presented in an afternoon matinee that left audience members and young artists feeling very proud of their accomplishments.

Season of Art's third program was a film and speaking presentation by Mark Hamilton, the only living person to have retraced the entire original trail of the

Lewis and Clark Expedition. An English professor and poet, Mr. Hamilton shared his adventures via foot, sea kayak and pack mule with a captivated audience of elementary students.

The World Beat Camp offered area children the rare opportunity to experience the music and culture of Zimbabwe through a weeklong marimba camp. Response was so great to initial announcements that the Foundation had to add a second week to accommodate the children who wanted to attend. Thanks to the creative genius of marimba instructor Michael Breez, each student learned a minimum of two traditional songs, with some students playing up to four songs. Two students were selected to play solos in the Friday evening performance, which earned all participants a standing ovation from the packed house.

### **How did Season of Art build community?**

Season of Art brought together children from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities, in celebration of the creative process. Several organizations, including the Mid-Columbia Health Foundation and the Art Corps of Engineers, helped sponsor these programs, which made each performance a true community event. Parents of participating children were very enthusiastic about the programs and expressed willingness to help the series continue.

### **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners were disappointed by the lack of attendance at My Favorite Poem reading. Future events of this kind will be promoted more aggressively, drawing on the positive experience of those who attended. There were also some initial challenges working with at-risk students, many of whom began the program with more interest in disrupting than engaging in the creative process. But consistent, positive interaction with parents, schools and the artists brought participants together as a successful team. The main thing project partners learned was never to underestimate one's value to a child.

### **What's ahead?**

Due to staff illness, the Granada Theatre Foundation missed the funding deadline for 2002 Arts Build Communities grants. Thus, the 2002 Season of Art will not occur in the same fashion as the previous year. Through local partnerships, however, the Foundation will continue to provide arts and cultural opportunities to local children.

#### *Contact*

Tina Cady  
223 E 2nd Street  
The Dalles, Oregon 97058  
541-298-4710  
541-298-2929 (fax)  
tina@thegranada.com  
www.thegranada.com



Joint Forces Dance Company's DanceAbility Workshop "Performance Parade" assisted Mobility USA with its 20th anniversary celebrations. Photo by Roberto Lund.

## *Joint Forces Dance Company*

### **DanceAbility Workshops and Performance**

Joint Forces Dance Company is a nonprofit organization dedicated to using artistic exploration to bring together differently-abled people, able-bodied people and individuals from different cultures. Based in Eugene, Joint Forces provides "DanceAbility" workshops and performances, which integrate able-bodied people and people who are differently-abled. DanceAbility events challenge participants and audience members to rethink their perception of persons with physical or other limitations.

In the fall of 2000 Joint Forces was approached by Mobility International USA to assist with its twentieth anniversary celebration. Mobility International provides cross-cultural exchanges for people who are differently-abled worldwide. Joint Forces agreed to host a DanceAbility workshop and performance, as well as an evening performance by the Portland Theatre for the Deaf, for Mobility International participants. They also agreed to distribute copies of their recently published DanceAbility Manual for all participants to share with their home communities.

Forty Mobility International participants, including individuals from Kenya, Korea, Zimbabwe and Switzerland, took part in a DanceAbility workshop during their ten-day stay in Eugene. Several, including individuals from Korea and Kenya, expressed interest in bringing DanceAbility events to their local community. All participants received the DanceAbility Manual, which was published in print, large print and Braille. Over 150 individuals attended the performances by the Joint Forces Dance Company and the Portland Theatre for the Deaf.

## **How did the DanceAbility Workshop and Performance build community?**

This project could not have succeeded without the collaboration of many local and regional organizations; the University of Oregon, the Portland Theatre for the Deaf, the City of Eugene Specialized Recreation Department and events producer Carol Horne. The local community was greatly expanded by the introduction of Mobility International's staff and participants, who provided translation services and publicity through their website and newsletter. By distributing the DanceAbility Manual to all participants, Joint Forces helped other communities start their own mixed ability dance program.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Joint Forces learned a great deal about the intricacies of publishing in alternative formats with the successful publication of the DanceAbility Manual. The organization also benefited greatly from collaborating with a professional event coordinator.

## **What's ahead**

Joint Forces will continue providing DanceAbility workshops and performances to local and statewide communities. Future collaborations with Mobility International and the Portland Theatre for the Deaf are also being planned.

### *Contact*

Alito Alessi/Lynne McKinney  
P.O. Box 3686  
Eugene, Oregon 97403  
541-461-4057  
alito22@yahoo.com  
www.streamcommunication.com/  
danceability



*“The program is a wonderful opportunity for our area’s at-risk youth to take advantage of art classes, a luxury they would otherwise be unable to afford.”*

—Susan Montana,  
Program Coordinator for the  
Center for Family Development

## *Maude Kerns Art Center*

### **Improve Development through Expressive Arts (IDEA)**

The IDEA (Improve Development through Expressive Arts) Program, an offering of the Maude Kerns Art Center in Eugene, uses the fine arts to teach children and teens how to express negative emotions within a safe and creative context instead of resorting to substance abuse and violence. The program’s mission is “to nurture artistic expression and creativity in the individual and to cultivate an appreciation and understanding of art and culture in our community.” Children and teens in the community of Eugene benefit from this program.

The IDEA program has many outreach components that deliver specialized artistic opportunities to various schools and facilities throughout Eugene. These include in-school artist residencies, after school classes and workshops, teen art exhibits and daily programs through local parks. The Art Center’s Youth Arts Commission, a.k.a. “The Maude Squad,” gives teens the opportunity to create exhibits of youth art and to give presentations about the IDEA program to primary schools.

In 2001 the Maude Kerns Art Center used Arts Build Communities funding to strengthen existing programs and to create new partnerships within the community. Its teen art exhibits were significantly increased through “Fast Forward: The Mayor’s Show of Teen Art,” an annual exhibit in which teens use the Art Center to mat, frame and present their work. Youth representatives gave presentations and skits to area schools with the goal of generating more interest for Art Center classes. Local artist Craig Lasha provided several special mentorships free of charge to underprivileged area youth. The Center also extended its art education programming to the rural community of Sweet Home in Lane County.

The STARTS (Sentenced to the Arts) Program, which was envisioned as a diversion program for first-time youth offenders, did not draw the anticipated number of students this first year. The program was initiated, however, and the



Art Center has revised its approach to at-risk youth by encouraging mentors and arts instructors to work with them on a one-to-one basis at the Center.

## **How did the IDEA Program build community?**

Through this program the Art Center deepened its partnership with the Center for Family Development and the Community Resource Bank. The Art Center now provides full or part-time scholarships for at-risk youth who are unable to afford arts instruction. In addition, a new partnership with the Sweet Home Community Learning Center and School District now allows the Art Center to provide after school instruction to 150 students who have no other access to the fine arts.

Student work produced at the Art Center has been exhibited at the Eugene Public Library, the Art Center, the Temporarily Maude Gallery and in Sweet Home. In addition, a collaborative partnership with high school art teacher Carolyn Wayland has resulted in promotion of a “Fast Forward” exhibit within the 4-J school district. Finally, in response to program need, the onsite printmaking studio was completely reorganized and enlarged to accommodate more students.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners learned the importance of an extended support system, consisting of parents, caseworkers, probation officers and mentors, in working with at-risk youth. They also observed that younger children were more likely to express themselves artistically, while older teens tended to need more encouragement and support.

## **What’s ahead?**

With the help of grants and private funding, the Maude Kerns Art Center will continue to offer certain components of the IDEA program, including the Fast Forward exhibit, after school art classes and the roving artist program. The Art Center will also continue to provide after school arts instruction in the rural community of Sweet Home. Art Center staff is currently exploring the development of a mentorship program in the arts.

*Contact*  
Karen Pavelec  
1910 E. 15th Avenue  
Eugene, Oregon 97403  
541-345-1571  
541-345-6842 (fax)  
mkart@efn.net  
www.mkartcenter.org

*“This was a beautiful production, pushing many buttons in a tender way, so as to remind us to feel and embrace our common humanity.”*

—Susan Banyas,  
artist

*“Works of art such as these have the power to open the doors of communication on the issue of grief and loss. The Time Between provides a starting place for which so many of us have been looking.”*

—Becky Sander,  
audience member



Media Rites' Grief Project explored death and loss through theatre, creative writing and radio. A new play, *Tongue of a Bird*, was produced, providing an artistic outlet for understanding and talking about grief. Photos by Julie Keefe.

## *MediaRites*

### **The Grief Project**

The Grief Project was a year-long exploration of death and loss through theatre, creative writing and radio arts. Through collaboration with Grief Watch and the Dougy Center for Grieving Children, MediaRites produced two plays and a series of creative audio pieces that dealt with issues of grief and loss.

MediaRites's theatre organization, Theatre Imagine, produced the Portland premier of *Tongue of a Bird*, an Ellen McLaughlin play which explores issues of denial, anger, grief and, finally, acceptance. Held at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, the play included a discussion facilitated by artists and grief consultants after the Saturday matinee. MediaRites offered reduced and free tickets to North Portland high school students and project partner clients.

With the support of Grief Watch and the Dougy Center, several local writers and director, Carmela Lanza-Weil, created an original play and a series of audio pieces based on interviews and writing workshops with people who have experienced grief and loss. These stories were crafted into a script entitled *The Time Between*, which was read at a public performance on September 19, 2001. Produced in November, the play drew sold-out houses for eight days.

The primary goal of the Grief Project was to use a theatre experience to encourage discussion around the topic of grief. By using the experiences of real people who have suffered loss, the Grief Project helped diffuse the mystery and discomfort that surrounds death and grieving people.

### **How did the Grief Project build community?**

The Grief Project brought together people through the theatre experience. MediaRites formed lasting partnerships with the Dougy Center and Grief Watch, which will be invaluable to future projects. The use of real stories in



“The Time Between” seemed to offer audiences comfort through realizing that grief is a universal, albeit under-acknowledged experience.

### **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners did not allow enough time for the creative process in the production of *The Time Between*, an element that will be changed in future projects. Nonetheless, the play was well received with audiences and the press, primarily due to careful selection of workshop participants. Partners would recommend to others organizing similar work to carefully choose individuals who truly want to be involved with theatre pieces that deal with difficult issues. Although the work was intense and demanding, most participants stated that it helped them process their grief.

### **What’s ahead?**

Judging from audience feedback for the two plays, people are hungry for a way to explore grief with others. MediaRites will continue to make that opportunity available.

*The Time Between* attracted the attention of Last Acts, a national coalition that works to improve care near the end of life. They have agreed to fund part of a new project modeled on the Grief Project that will reach an even larger audience and that may serve as a template for similar projects. MediaRites also plans to produce another play, *Hannah Free*, about the challenges of end-of-life issues in the gay community.

#### *Contact*

Carmela Lanza-Weil  
104 SE 57th Street  
Portland, Oregon 97215  
503-750-1439  
carmela@hevanet.com  
www.mediarites.org

*“Teatro Milagro  
is so important  
for our town.  
It provides a  
little cultural  
diversity and  
reaffirmation of  
the real world  
we live in.”*

—William Grami,  
Coquille High School

*“The exchange  
of information  
and trust  
between the  
actors and  
students in such  
a short time  
is amazing.”*

—Julia Garcia,  
Phoenix High School



Miracle Theatre's  
Danel Malan works  
with students at  
Phoenix High School  
during a BRIDGES  
residency.

## *Miracle Theatre Group*

### **BRIDGES Residencies**

Since the 1999 census, Hispanics continue to represent the largest minority in Oregon. While many counties have experienced rapid growth in the Hispanic population in recent years, the transition toward cultural integration has not always been smooth. Educators in rural communities have frequently turned to Teatro Milagro, a Portland-based nonprofit whose mission is to advocate for global unity through bilingual educational theatre. Teatro Milagro's bilingual programs, which include residencies and performances, are designed to entertain and to stimulate social awareness about a variety of topics ranging from tobacco use to environmental concerns.

In 1994 Teatro Milagro implemented a new program called BRIDGES, which was designed to increase Hispanic participation in the arts as a way of encouraging tolerance and appreciation for cultural differences. BRIDGES residencies are conducted in rural communities that demonstrate a great need for multicultural awareness and education. Each program is tailored to the culturally specific needs of each community, so that a wide variety of people, minorities and non-minorities, can work together and find a common ground of shared beliefs. Through theatre, racial barriers are dissolved and new alliances formed.

The main activity of BRIDGES is to integrate culturally diverse community members into a play, which is performed for the entire community. For two or three days, Milagro actors rehearse with groups of fifteen to twenty local residents to create new scenes to add to the current touring production. These scenes are created through improvisation, during which participants are encouraged to express their individual perspectives on the issues presented in the play, bilingually or in their native language, whatever it may be.

For the 2001 touring season, BRIDGES residencies were conducted in Coos, Marion and Wallowa Counties. The season's play, *Profecia*, educated audiences about the finite nature of the earth and the importance of everyone's efforts toward sustainability. In the smaller communities of Coos and Wallowa Counties, diverse people came together to address the issues of the play. It was more difficult to create a sense of community in the larger cities of Marion County, but a handful of committed teachers using cell phones and email helped fill the Elsinore Theatre for the final performance there.

## **How did BRIDGES build community?**

*Profecia*, with its Earth-saving message, united the talents of drama teachers and science teachers. In each community, local citizens' groups brought efforts in recycling and watershed restoration to the forefront of the issues. In communities of Coos County, where Teatro Milagro has had a long-term presence, this project helped broaden awareness and form new alliances for local environment efforts. In Salem the diversity of the project enhanced its appeal to a difficult market, and in Wallowa County the project brought together people on all sides of environmental issues.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Using theatre to address social change does not always make you the most popular kid on the block, but those willing to take on the task are usually greatly rewarded for their effort. In many communities where Teatro Milagro works, students are so engaged by the process that they plan to create their own plays. Teachers and students are always grateful when Teatro Milagro returns to inspire them and encourage their talents to grow.

## **What's ahead?**

Despite a poor economic year, the BRIDGES program has been able to continue through funding from Wells Fargo and the Allen Foundation for the Arts. Like many arts organizations, Teatro Milagro will continue to seek such funding for future programs.

### *Contact*

Danel Malan  
425 SE 6th Avenue  
Portland, Oregon 97214  
503-236-7253  
503-236-4174 (fax)  
malan@milagro.org  
www.milagro.org



The Monday Musical Club of Tillamook presented the Oregon Symphony in concert and in a series of outreach performances.

*“I have never been to a concert before. I didn’t realize until tonight what I have been missing all these years.”*

—Margie Tiegs,  
Rockaway Beach resident

## *Monday Musical Club of Tillamook*

### **The Oregon Symphony Performance and Outreach**

For the past six years the Monday Musical Club of Tillamook has been presenting a concert series to residents of rural Tillamook County. The Club first brought the Oregon Symphony to Tillamook in 1994, and again in 1998. Prior to these events, nationally known musical performers were virtually unavailable in this region. With the nearest metropolitan area over seventy miles away, many residents had never experienced a professional symphony, opera or ballet.

Since the first visit by the Symphony in 1994, the Monday Musical Club has created a small concert series with a financially and culturally diverse audience. Each season has built on the previous season, exposing audiences to music ranging from easy listening to jazz, trios to tribal drummers. With the start of a new millennium, the Monday Musical Club felt it was time to invite the Oregon Symphony back for a third visit.

This year’s visit included an evening performance at the Don Whitney Auditorium, a “Celebrating the Arts” pre-concert dinner, extensive outreach to local schools and two free concerts for children. Oregon Symphony performers provided master classes and band clinics for students, as well as a teaching clinic for music educators. They also made presentations to local service organizations as a way of deepening appreciation for the arts. Over 2000 people were served through various programs and performances.

The “Celebrating the Arts” dinner brought together local, county and state leaders to emphasize the importance of the arts in building healthy communities. Dinner attendees included county commissioners, state representatives, public school music teachers and school superintendents. The Oregon Symphony provided the speaker, who encouraged the audience to

consider the arts as an integral part of a thriving, sustainable community. Dinner guests were invited to attend the concert to anchor the conversation in a high quality cultural event.

## **How did the Oregon Symphony’s visit build community?**

Networking with schools helped deepen the role that art partners such as the Monday Musical Club can play in subsidizing ever-dwindling school arts programs. The conducting clinic held at the high school inspired both music teachers and students to increase their efforts in concert competitions and group musical projects. Since the Symphony performance, talk of a performing arts facility has been re-ignited, along with the realization that the arts are integral to community health and development.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

After six seasons of presenting concerts, the Monday Musical Club of Tillamook has a deep understanding of the formula for a successful event in Tillamook County. Challenges include the lack of consistent, countywide media and the need to appeal to an inexperienced audience for whom a classical symphony may be an intimidating event. Partners used posters, press releases and radio announcement to spread the word around the region. By making presentations to schools, service organizations and churches, the Symphony helped demystify their art form and attracted many newcomers to their performance. The Oregon Symphony’s assistance in making this project a success was immeasurable.

## **What’s ahead?**

Inspired and encouraged by the Symphony visit, the Monday Musical Club is already preparing for its seventh season of cultural events. They hope that the high profile of this concert will bring new audience members to the Don Whitney Auditorium, and will encourage many occasional concert-goers to become sustainable subscribers of this and other cultural events in Tillamook County.

*Contact*  
Marianne Gienger  
3030 Fitzpatrick Road  
Tillamook, Oregon 97141  
503-842-2078  
503-842-2078 (fax)



*“If you saw a glow over outer southeast Portland last Saturday night, that was from the Neighborhood Pride Team’s Chair-ity Auction.”*

—Auction participant

## *Neighborhood Pride Team*

### **Chair-ity Project**

The Neighborhood Pride Team is a community development organization that works with lower income families in the neighborhoods of Lents, Brentwood-Darlington, Foster/Powell and Mt. Scott/Arleta in Portland. Through its Trillium Artisans Program, the Neighborhood Pride Team helps empower women and their families through earth-friendly enterprises that create meaningful work. This program is based on the belief that the residents of these communities lack resources, not creativity.

In 2001 the Neighborhood Pride Team partnered with Cracked Pots, an all-volunteer organization devoted to creating unique garden art from recycled materials, to host a series of community art workshops. The goal of these workshops was to build relationships among participants and programs, to create and celebrate art and to give new life to recycled materials.

To accomplish this, three Cracked Pots artists first trained with Mike Barber, creator of the original Chair Project, which transformed cast-off chairs into unique art. These artists then taught a similar workshop to twelve women from the Trillium Artisans Program, who agreed to facilitate several open community art workshops in their neighborhoods. These workshops, which challenged participants to seek new definitions for old materials, culminated in the creation of over fifty unique pieces of art that were sold at the “Chair-ity” auction on June 9th, 2001.

The initial twelve women created chairs that deeply reflected their personal experiences and inspired other community members to attend the workshops. Each participant created his or her chair as a personal expression, with the knowledge that he/she would give the chair as a gift to the Neighborhood Pride Team. Chair-ity provided the opportunity for low-income individuals to contribute to an organization that works to improve their community.



Artist-participants in the community workshops seeking new uses for old materials created uniquely-decorated chairs that were sold at a “chair-ity” auction.

Chair-ity also allowed residents to consider new ways to use materials discarded and devalued by society. These women who live and raise their families in neighborhoods that are largely underserved and undervalued by the greater community recognized a parallel for their own experience: finding beauty and meaning in that which others do not value or understand.

## **How did the Chair-ity Project build community?**

Many organizations came forward in support of this project. Grand Central Bakery donated loaves of bread while Green Thumb, a facility of the Portland Public Schools, donated workshop space.

Many of the created chairs were displayed publicly through Portland in the weeks prior to the Auction. As a result, fifty Portland homes now have an art chair created through Chair-ity.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

It was difficult contacting and convincing the original twelve women to participate in the project. Some lacked confidence and others worried that the time commitment would make their lives as single parents even more strained. The Trillium Artisans, a program under the Neighborhood Pride team, used the strong relationships it has developed with local women to recruit a core of creative and committed participants and teachers. Providing childcare assistance allayed the concerns of the single parents in the group.

Partners also underestimated the amount of staff time necessary for this project, and wished they had budgeted for more staff hours and/or recruited volunteers. Partners recommend anyone considering a similar project clearly define the roles and tasks of each participant, project these onto a timeline and have each participant sign an agreement that outlines what is expected. Partners also encourage a consensus-based approach to decision-making, which creates a greater sense of investment from all participants and partners.

## **What’s ahead?**

Contacts and partnerships established through the Chair-ity Project continue to enhance the Neighborhood Pride Team and communities within outer southeast Portland.

The Neighborhood Pride team’s relationship with Cracked Pots was also deepened by the Chair-ity collaboration. In addition, two women who participated in the event have become board members of the Neighborhood Pride Team.

### *Contact*

Rebecca Slak  
7455 SE 52nd Avenue  
Portland, Oregon 97206  
503-774-4880  
503-774-4832 (fax)  
rebecca@trilliumartisans.org  
www.neighborhoodpride.org  
www.trilliumartisans.org



## *Northwest Native American Basketweavers Association*

### **Seventh Annual Basketweavers Gathering**

Founded in 1996, the Northwest Native American Basketweavers Association supports the dynamic, traditional art of basketry through annual Gatherings, special exhibits and classes taught throughout the year. For the first six years Gatherings were held in various communities around the state of Washington. In 2001 the Gathering came to Oregon for the first time, in the Pendleton/ Umatilla area where it was hosted by the Umatilla Tribe.

This two-day Basketweavers Gathering featured thirty-five Native American master weavers, who demonstrated and taught various techniques to Gathering attendees. Weavers included renowned artists Pat Courtney Gold, Maynard Lavadour, Joey Lavadour and Nettie Jackson, each of whom represents a distinct form of traditional basketry. Partners for this event included the Tamastslikt Cultural Center, Crow's Shadow Art Institute, Maryhill Museum of Art, Pendleton Mill and the Umatilla, Yakama, Nez Perce and Warm Springs Tribes.

The primary goal of this project was to educate both local and visiting participants about the different types of basketweaving for this region. The Gathering also provided an opportunity for local weavers to join the Association and to become master weavers themselves. Training in the business of basketry was another component of this year's event.

The Gathering brought together artists and representatives from the Department of Natural Resources and the Bureau of Land Management to discuss issues around the gathering of native materials. These include access to traditional sites, the use of herbicides and pesticides on public lands and the threatened extinction of many traditional plants.



The annual gathering of the Northwest Native American Basketweavers Association was first held in Oregon in 2001.

## **How did the Basketweavers Gathering build community?**

The Basketweavers Gathering brought together weavers from diverse regions and traditions in support and celebration of this traditional art. It provided the local reservation and surrounding communities an opportunity to look at various issues involved with basketweaving, and to develop methods of working together to resolve these issues. Community involvement was very strong, and many local weavers joined the Association after attending the Gathering.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Because the panel discussion was held in the same room as the master demonstrations, it was difficult for many participants to hear the important discussions that were taking place. In the future, project partners will conduct a site review prior to the Gathering to ensure that there is adequate space and separation of activities. Panel discussions will be scheduled during a break in the master demonstrations, so participants can attend both activities.

## **What's ahead?**

The 2002 Gathering will be held in Colville, Washington, and will involve the Idaho tribes. The board of directors is already making plans for this event, and seeking funding through the National Endowment for the Arts, the Oregon Arts Commission, the Washington State Arts Commission and tribal initiatives.

*Contact*  
Bernadine Phillips  
6835 Zangle Road NE  
Olympia, Washington 98506



*“If cultures are like separate river currents, we stand now at a confluence of cultures and time. See what we become.”*

—ArtExplosion concert program

*“The drummers of Portland Taiko are serious musicians... they’re dedicated and talented, but the energy and exuberance with which they play dispels all gravitas.”*

—James McQuillen, Music Critic, Willamette Week

## *Portland Taiko*

### **ArtExplosion: Asian Pacific American Performing Arts Festival**

Culminating on June 22nd and 23rd, ArtExplosion: Asian American Performing Arts Festival brought the finest of Portland’s Asian American performing artists to over 1,200 community members at the Parkrose High School Theatre in outer northeast Portland. Project organizers Portland Taiko used extensive research and outreach to involve more than 100 Asian Pacific American performing groups and artists in this event. Described by the *Oregonian* as “an exceptional program...with a stunning roster of artists,” ArtExplosion reached an even broader audience through six showings on Portland Cable Access.

In addition to Portland Taiko, evening performers included Elvian Kawalusan and the Lewis and Clark gamelan group, Nisha Joshi on sitar and vocals, Prajwal Vajracharya (Nepalese sacred dance) and Lani Hawkins on Hawaiian slack key guitar. A family matinee performance highlighted many youth and youth-oriented performing groups including Citizens Alliance Lion Dance Team, Sunflower Hmong American Unity and Malama Productions Tahitian Dance. Dragon Art Studio used puppetry to give insights into Chinese folklore and culture.

Several gatherings prior to the culminating weekend provided excellent opportunities for the artists to learn more about each other’s work and to dialogue about tradition and innovation as Asian Americans. Portland Taiko provided rehearsal space at their studio and helped groups connect with each other while preparing their performances. A brown bag lunch at the Multnomah Library on June 18th offered the public a more in-depth look at the artists and their traditional art forms. Television and radio coverage in the week preceding the performance enhanced the event’s visibility.

This project exceeded all goals by showcasing the artistic excellence and diversity of the local Asian Pacific American community. It helped build a long-



Participants in Portland Taiko's ArtExplosion: Asian Pacific American Performing Arts Festival gather for a rehearsal.

term network between artists in this community, and provided greater access to these traditional arts. The high level of involvement by young Asian Pacific Americans strengthened cultural pride in the younger generation.

### **How did ArtExplosion build community?**

Many Asian Pacific American organizations helped promote the event to their constituents through mailings, posters, newsletters and ticket sales. Each sponsoring organization was given a table at the Festival where they could share information about their programs with a broad audience. This event connected artists to organizations and brought diverse Asian artists together across many historical and cultural divides. It offered the non-Asian public a very positive exploration of these unique cultures and secured Portland's reputation as a place of high quality Asian Pacific American arts.

### **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners were astounded by the caliber, range and sheer quantity of Asian American arts in this area. Bringing together the finest of these artists created a synergy far beyond the sum of its individual parts.

The quality of the emcees varied greatly from one night to the next. Polo Catalani, who emceed the Saturday concert, did an excellent job of connecting one performance to another and providing a cohesive narrative to the program. He spent time talking to each artist prior to the performance, attended rehearsals and personally knew several of the artists. This is the type of involvement partners would seek for future programs.

### **What's ahead?**

Portland Taiko hopes to present ArtExplosion again in two years, as the cost and amount of work involved are too great to sustain on an annual basis. They will seek grant support to provide money to pay all involved artists, while still keeping ticket prices low enough to serve the targeted community.

#### *Contact*

Ann Ishimaru  
3230 NE Columbia Blvd.  
Portland, Oregon 97211  
503-288-2456  
503-288-2460 (fax)  
ann@portlandtaiko.org  
www.portlandtaiko.org



## *Portland State University / PIPfest*

### **The African American Audience Development Project**

In an effort to increase African American participation in its annual events, the Portland International Performance Festival partnered with the Urban League and Reflections Café and Bookstore to facilitate a nine-month planning and development project. With the help of African American storyteller Lorraine Johnson-Coleman, project partners organized three public events in support of a more extensive artist residency and audience development program showcasing African American theatre arts.

The first event, a Community Forum, was held in early April at Reflections Café and Bookstore. Project organizers used a performance by storyteller Lorraine Johnson-Coleman to draw more than eighty predominantly African American audience members to the meeting, where the project was described and discussed. More than thirty people signed up for future involvement thanks to Johnson-Coleman's skillful demonstration of the art of audience involvement and development. A subsequent theatre workshop attracted another twenty people to the project.

The second event, an Educational Forum, brought together project partners and theatre artists from the African American community. These artists, who offered invaluable insights into their areas of theatrical expertise, also expressed an underlying distrust that the Festival was more interested in furthering its own agenda than in providing services to the African American community. Johnson-Coleman's involvement helped to allay although not completely dispel these fears, and interest in the project increased tremendously following the Forum.

The final planning session brought together project partners as well representatives from Portland Public schools, the Oregon Commission for the Blind, Passin' Art Theatre Company and the Multnomah County Library. Participants created a three-phase plan to produce a play based on the history

of north/northwest Portland's African American community, to be presented at the Portland International Performance Festival 2003.

## **How did the African American Audience Development Project build community?**

This project brought together a wide array of partners and participants, many of whom had never worked together. Partners met frequently to plan and organize the three events and to offer insights into the African American community. Most communications occurred in person at these meetings, and project organizers worked hard to give all partners a sense of equal responsibility and ownership of the process. As a result, all participants were actively engaged and excited about upcoming events.

The relationship between the Portland International Performance Festival and storyteller Johnson-Coleman continued to grow and deepen through this project. Other partners benefited from learning more about the African American artistic community.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

Partners came to understand that a partnership with the African American community is really a partnership with individuals from that community, which is very diverse. Business is conducted differently, with communication dependent on personal connections rather than general announcements. Responses to phone, mail and email messages are practically nonexistent, with word-of-mouth being the most reliable method of advertisement. Partners also realized that economic factors remain a major barrier to audiences in this community, because the arts are not viewed as a priority for meager resources.

Conversely, there is strong interest within the community to learn more about the theatrical process, and to support artists of color. Participants expressed enthusiasm for the project and its continuation.

## **What's ahead?**

The second phase of the African American Audience Development Project will occur in 2002 with the launching of two theatre clubs whose members will attend four professional productions over a six-month period. Partners will also conduct a journal-writing project in which members of the community will write about the importance of specific places in the community. These journals will form the basis for the third phase play production.

The Oregon Arts Commission and the Oregon Council for the Humanities both awarded grants for phase two of the project, but the elimination of the Portland International Performance Festival by PSU forced partners to relinquish the funding, and the project.

Contact  
Michael Griggs  
1817 NE 11th Avenue #4  
Portland, Oregon 97212  
503-288-8704  
mgriggsart@cs.com



Katy Lassen paints a self-portrait using a brush attached to her elbow during the Rogue Gallery's "No Boundaries" exhibition and demonstration in Medford. Photo: Jim Craven/Medford Mail Tribune

## *Rogue Community College Galleries*

### **Disabilities Awareness Art Exhibits**

In honor of Disabilities Awareness Month, the Galleries at Rogue Community College partnered with the Rogue Gallery and Art Center and the disabled community to present three unique art shows and a variety of high-impact educational activities focused on raising awareness about issues facing people with disabilities. Other project goals included breaking down barriers that face disabled artists and encouraging participation in the arts by people with disabilities.

In downtown Grants Pass the Firehouse Gallery hosted "Different Folks, Different Strokes," an exhibit of work by disabled artist Vince Carl. The Gallery also hosted interactive educational displays and an artist's talk with Carl and members of the Handicap Awareness and Support League. This exhibit provoked a certain degree of discomfort for many viewers who were struck by the fact that a disability could be as close as a car accident. This discomfort was expressed and eased somewhat during the artist's talk.

The Wiseman Gallery at Rogue Community College's Josephine County campus sponsored a juried exhibit that focused on disabilities. This exhibit included displays and interactive material about different disabilities. Pieces from "The Chair as Metaphor" were also shown at the Community College's newest site in Jackson County.

The Rogue Gallery and Art Center in Medford hosted a Very Special Arts exhibit entitled "No Boundaries," which featured art and written statements by disabled artists in the Northwest. Activities at the Medford Center included adaptive wheelchair games, in which nondisabled people learned how to operate a wheelchair in inaccessible areas, and other awareness activities involving the general public.



## **How did the Disability Awareness Exhibits build community?**

With a population of 170,000, Josephine and Jackson Counties have approximately 9,200 citizens with some sort of disability. Many of these people experience barriers to full participation in their community on a daily basis. The Disability Awareness Exhibits addressed this issue by raising public awareness of the challenges disabled people face and by providing models for participation in the arts by disabled artists.

Thanks to this project, Rogue Community College has a much stronger working relationship with the Handicap Awareness and Support League and the Rogue Gallery and Art Center. These exhibits also strengthened the relationship between the disabled community and the arts community in both counties.

Most of the non-disabled people who attended these events cited two key fears they encounter when dealing with people who have disabilities. The first is the fear that they themselves may end up disabled, and the second is concern about how to talk to or help someone with a disability. Both of these issues were addressed during the art talks at each exhibit. In addition, project volunteers and staff were given training in how to effectively address both issues. Written materials discussed the emotional impact of losing an integral part of oneself.

## **What did the partners learn from the project?**

It was very helpful to have the full support of the Community College's student government, who helped promote the event campus wide. Partners were pleased to see good attendance at all events, and to hear many participants state that they now see people with disabilities in an entirely new way. In future projects of this type partners would strive for greater participation from local mayors and county commissioners, who are in the position to make public policy for disabled individuals.

## **What's ahead?**

Rogue Community College is planning another disabilities exhibit and wheelchair awareness event at the College and in downtown Grants Pass for 2002. There will also be an opportunity for disabled children to exhibit their artwork in the community exhibit room at the Firehouse Gallery. Partners plan to continue partnering with the Handicap Awareness and Support League to produce these events.

### *Contact*

Tommi Drake  
3345 Redwood Highway  
Grants Pass, Oregon 97527  
541-956-7240  
541-471-3588 (fax)  
tdrake@rogue.cc.or.us  
www.rogue.cc.or.us/galleries



Art in Bloom, a community celebration organized around the Rogue Valley's abundant arts, nursery and agriculture.

## *Rogue Valley Foundation*

### **Art in Bloom**

On the second weekend in May, Medford's central downtown business district literally bloomed with artwork, flowers, entertainment and food as the first Art in Bloom festival became a reality. Several years in the planning, Art in Bloom was a three-day event which combined fine arts, horticulture and street entertainment in celebration of the city's recent downtown revitalization and the region's art and agricultural communities. An estimated 5,000 individuals attended this free festival, the first in what is planned to be an annual event.

Art in Bloom began Friday evening with a Mayor's Reception which included recognition of citizen Dunbar Carpenter, whose contributions have significantly benefited the arts community. The Mayor's Choice Purchase Award (chosen by public vote) was unveiled and added to the city's art collection at this ceremony.

On Saturday and Sunday downtown Vogel Park was filled with more than fifty booths displaying works from local and regional artists. A live entertainment stage featuring local performers was also located in the park. Around the corner more booths, flower displays, children's activities and food vendors filled Bartlett Avenue, as well as the parking lot between the Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater and the Rogue Gallery and Art Center. The theatre and gallery hosted workshops in various art forms throughout the two days.

Art in Bloom was a collaboration between the Rogue Valley Foundation, the Rogue Gallery and Art Center, the City of Medford, the Medford Visitors and Convention Bureau, Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater and the Heart of Medford Association. In addition to these partners, many local businesses and organizations made significant contributions to the festival. Over 1,100 artists participated in this year's event.

## How did Art in Bloom build community?

Art in Bloom provided the citizens of Medford a high quality, outdoor visual and performing arts festival, the first of its kind in the city. The unique mix of artists and horticulturists honored the area's agricultural heritage, while recognizing its current wealth of artists and craftspeople. Filling orchard heaters (known as smudge pots) with ikebana arrangements provided a visual link to the agricultural community and generated positive community feedback.

The Rogue Gallery, the Craterian Ginger Rogers Theater and the South Oregon Sogetsu Study Group (who provided the ikebana) all gained a great deal of prominence through the Festival, as did many local artists and horticulturists. The project raised awareness about the need and importance of downtown beautification and activity.

## What did the partners learn from the project?

Partners borrowed ideas from other successful festivals, such as offering booth space to vendors at a low fee and implementing a refund and alternate policy early in the process. Workshop participants appreciated giving a donation rather than having to pay a fee.

In an effort to develop a strong relationship with downtown businesses, festival organizers agreed to limit food vendors to snacks only; in exchange downtown restaurants agreed to stay open extended hours. This arrangement did not work well, however, as many restaurants were not open throughout both days and were not convenient to festival participants and artists. In the future, project partners will solicit a larger array of food vendors.

Several anticipated grants did not come through, which forced partners to cut the festival budget extensively and to work hard to find local cash and in-kind contributions. Many horticulturists did not participate, some due to overwork and others due to timing. Partners anticipate that the success of this first festival will encourage more participation in the future.

## What's ahead?

Partners plan to make Art in Bloom an annual event, and to form a nonprofit to oversee finances, participation, advertising and program logistics. Although foundation funding and other support will be sought for the first 3-5 years, with strong, slow growth, intelligent planning and the support of the community, this event can and should become self-sustaining.

### *Contact*

Marianne Wunch  
101 E. 8th Street  
Medford, Oregon 97501  
541-776-7874  
541-776-7874 (fax)  
mwunch@earthlink.net





Participants in Portland Taiko's ArtExplosion: Asian Pacific American Performing Arts Festival gather for a rehearsal.



OREGON ARTS  
COMMISSION

Oregon Arts Commission  
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 200  
Salem, Oregon 97301-1284  
(503) 986-0082 Voice  
(503) 986-0260 Fax  
(503) 986-0123 TDD  
(800) 233-3306 toll free in Oregon  
[www.oregonartscommission.org](http://www.oregonartscommission.org)  
[Oregon.artscomm@state.or.us](mailto:Oregon.artscomm@state.or.us)