



Advisory Body: **Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County**

Meeting Time: **Second Wednesday of the Month**, conference room, Office of Communications and Media, **10 Douglas Drive, Suite 210, Martinez**

Chair: **Commissioner Teresa Snook O’Riva**

Staff person: **Roger Renn, Managing Director**

Reporting Period: **January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016**

I. Activity

Increased funding from the County and the California Arts Council in 2016 has allowed the Arts and Culture Commission (AC5) to advance the arts and culture in Contra Costa County. AC5 developed a new program utilizing the Veterans Initiative in the Arts grant, continued to increase high school participation in the Poetry Out Loud Competition, drew in county partners to co-create Art Passages exhibits, and expanded the Arts Recognition Awards and program to reach a broader Contra Costa Arts community.

The Commission obtained a quorum for all but one meeting called during the year, filled every Commission seat in all five districts, participated in many seminars and conferences and increased work hours for the Managing Director.

II. Accomplishments

With county funding of \$14,000, and \$29,030 grant funding from the State*, the Commission was able to accomplish its mission of *“advancing the arts in a way that promotes communication, education, appreciation and collaboration throughout Contra Costa County so that we may grow creatively as a community that preserves and celebrates our diverse cultural expression.”*



ABOUTFACE: Building Self-understanding through Self-

expression: AC5 has been awarded a Veterans Initiative in the Arts grant for a second year. Working with our Veterans Services Office, AC5 was able to engage veterans in painting self-portraits during the months of February and March, 2016. The workshops offered veterans an opportunity to explore portrait painting as a way of self-expression. Fifteen portraits were exhibited in libraries throughout the county allowing us to extend our Art Passages exhibition

program. ABOUTFACE was well received and considered an exemplary program by the California Arts Council.

* These figures represent amounts for the County’s fiscal year 2015-16, State grant cycles dates differ.



Poetry Out Loud has been a well-received program in the Contra Costa high schools for the past ten years. Our Poetry Out Loud (POL) program coordinator, Robin Moore, not only started the program, but continues to champion the POL program as Coordinator. Her dedication has expanded the program to 16 schools, our largest participation of schools to date. It was rewarding to have Delta Vista High School, at the Orin Allen Youth Rehabilitation Facility in Byron, participating for their third year.

Kiara Chatman, a junior at Deer Valley High in Antioch, took first place in Contra Costa Poetry Out Loud County finals. The competition emphasizes language skills and public speaking. In a close race, the runner-up position went to junior Chloe Dichoso from Salesian College Preparatory in Richmond, and third place to senior Madeline Zeiger from Las Lomas High in Walnut Creek. Our county is the third largest program of the 40 participating counties in California.



Arts Cafés were offered in conjunction with other arts groups throughout the county. In February American folk artist Howard Finster was featured, drawing over 300 visitors. Works were drawn from the Pattie Family Collection of American Folk Art.

The Café was part of a monthly art walk event in Martinez. AC5 hosted a talk by Steven Pattie, Executive Producer and Program Creator of the film *I Can Feel another Planet in My Soul: Strange Visions. Wondrous Art, the Remarkable World of Howard Finster*. The documentary was shown during the talk.

Art Passages offered five exhibits this year as we expanded our partnership with both the art community and county committees and departments. The 19th Annual Art of Living Black featured 60 artists and continued a long term partnership with the Richmond Art Center to bring a richness and diversity of creative expression to the Bay Area. The exhibit ran from Jan 15 through February 29th.



Another exhibit, Rock Posters from the 60's, included archival prints from two private collections in Contra Costa County. The exhibit showcased many folk-rock festival posters where the concert took place in the East Bay.



AC5 worked with groups like the Cesar E. Chavez Celebration committee, the Elections Division, and the Food Bank to bring understanding of cultural and civic minded events to the community. Visual displays were created for the County Administration Building hallway on the main floor.



Arts Recognition Awards were awarded to five outstanding artists in 2016. The commissioners worked hard to coordinate the nomination process, find outside judges, and present hand-made glass awards to an increased number of artists who have advanced the appreciation of arts and culture in Contra Costa County.

Awards went to: The Richmond RYSE Center - The center works with youth from distressed parts of the City of Richmond. Sylvia Amorino and Solo Opera - Ms. Amorino brings operas to youth and seniors through concerts and collaborates with local children's choruses. Michael and Shannon Demers - The Demers are the backbone of Contra Costa Musical Theatre and share their skills with theatre production teams throughout the county. Jay Bedecarre - Mr. Bedecarre has been involved in the County Art scene since 1974. He was the Marketing Director for the Concord Pavilion and now presents the annual KidsFest in Concord. Lawrence Kohl - Mr. Kohl was president of the Orinda Art Council, as well as music director and conductor of the Pacific Chamber Symphony. He recently led the expansion of the Orinda Art Council to become the Lamorinda Arts Council.

III. Attendance/Representation

AC5 Commission Meeting Attendance for 2016

Name	%	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
District 1													
Sylvia Ledezma	80%							✓	✓		✓		✓
District 2													
Lore Konieczny	60%	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
District 3													
P.J. Shelton	18%			✓					✓				
District 4													
Elizabeth Wood	91%		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
District 5													
Tess O'Riva	100%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
At Large													
Y'Anad Burrell	45%		✓		✓		✓	✓			✓		
Geoffrey Meredith	82%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Alternate													
Cindy McCann	55%	✓	✓		✓	✓						✓	
Managing Director													
Roger Renn	91%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
TOTAL		4	5	5	6	5	5	6	4	5	4	4	4
CANCELED	8%									CANCELED			

AC5 held eleven meetings in 2016. Meetings had been canceled 50% of the time in 2015 due to a lack of a quorum. In 2016 the Commission met every month, except September, with every seat filled for the last six months. One Commissioner had a 100% attendance record. Due to employment commitments one Commissioner only attended two Commission meeting.

The AC5 Commission represents all the art disciplines, except music. Commission Seats were filled by qualified citizens applying from all over the county. AC5 meets monthly.

Meetings had a quorum per Brown Act and the Better Government Ordinance and met eleven times during the course of 2016.

I. Training/Certification

Commissioners and staff participated in many seminars and conferences that included administrative training and professional development during the past year. Three Commissioners attended the California Arts Council Confluence 2016, a state-wide gathering of Arts Commissions. Three Commissioners attended the Stanford Arts & Health California Conference held in March. Our Chair, Snook O'Riva attended the Youth Summit sponsored by Supervisor Federal D. Glover. Several Commissioners attended the Arts Education Seminar in Napa. The Managing Director attended CREAT/CA in Fresno, a statewide Arts Education Coalition and the 2016 Philanthropy Symposium sponsored by JFK University.

New Commissioners received an orientation which included viewing *Brown Act and Better Government Ordinance, What You Need to Know* presentation and viewing of the *Ethics Orientation for County Officials* presentation. All Commissioners update their Brown Act Training annually.

II. Proposed Work Plan / Objectives for 2017

Our California Arts Council State-Local Partnership Grant application received a score of eight out of ten (up from 7 last year). AC5 sees a robust engagement with Arts and Culture providers throughout the county in 2017. As stated in our State-Local Partnership grant application, AC5 hopes to:

- Serve as a resource to local cultural organizations by partnering with them to offer Arts Cafés.
- Continue our support of Veterans by offering four ABOUT FACE painting workshops in the spring.
- Foster diversity of artistic communities and ensure equity by expanding Public Arts programs. With the success of Art Passages AC5 hopes to explore a college internship position that would make our gallery shows more professional and foster art education for our youth.
- Recognize our entire geography, embracing members of all cultural backgrounds by honoring individual artists and organizations at a special Arts Recognition Awards celebration in the fall of 2017.

The Arts and Culture Commission deeply respects and appreciates the County's desire to promote arts education, celebrate the artists in our midst, and build our community through the arts. AC5 Commissioners look forward to serving our community in 2017.

In 2016 AC5 updated its logo. With our new branding, the Commission hopes to bring about a new awareness of the importance of the Arts and culture in Contra Costa.

