



State of the Arts

GRAND JUNCTION COMMISSION ON ARTS AND CULTURE

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2000 Annual Report

State of the Arts

Grand Junction Commission
on Arts and Culture
1340 Gunnison Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: (970) 254-3865
Fax: (970) 242-1637
E-mail: allisons@ci.grandjct.co.us

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

LeRoy Donegan, Chair
Pamela Blythe
Seth Brown
Beth Buys
Peter Ivanov
Priscilla Mangnall
Janet Prell
Bill Reidy
Bill Whaley
Allison Sarmo, Cultural
Arts Coordinator

*Established in 1990, the
Commission on Arts and
Culture is dedicated to
developing and improving the
quality, quantity,
accessibility and*

*affordability of arts and
culture for the citizens of
Grand Junction.*

City Hall Art

The new City Hall opened officially in August, 2000, with sculpture purchased through the 1% for the Arts program, as well as past Commission painting acquisitions, and two temporary exhibits. "Cloud Round-up" by Boulder artists George Peters and Melanie Walker hangs in the main entrance lobby and includes an etching of the confluence of two rivers on the glass panels over the front doors. The most dramatic view of the clouds is through the front windows lit at night.

"Contemplation", a bronze which resembles carved stone, by Denver sculptor Dennis Sohocki, stands in the elevator atrium lobby, along with the recently installed "Ouray and Chipeta" by Grand Junction artist Pat Olson. Olson's sculpture includes forty two-dimensional layers of stainless steel cut-outs assembled to create a three-dimensional portrait. The artwork was the result of a long, involved process of carefully separating the layers using computer imaging and manual techniques, then fabricating each steel plate, and welding the pieces together with spacers to create depth.

In addition to the 1% for the arts program acquisitions, the Commission also decorated the City Hall with paintings by local artists Tricia Berg and Gary Ogara, framed posters from the Visitors and Convention Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce, a series of photographs on loan from the Museum of western Colorado, and two abstract paintings loaned by artist Dave Davis. The Commission assisted the Human Resources Department in selecting and framing a series of posters done by the Western Colorado Botanical Society and featuring paintings by local artists. A new committee has just been formed to handle rotating art exhibits in the public areas of City Hall, and they are working on a new exhibit.

1% for the Arts Projects Abound

In April, 2000 Eagle Rim Park was dedicated, the centerpiece of which is "The Spirit of Pioneer Women", a bronze by Paonia sculptor Lincoln Fox, donated to the City by the Mt. Garfield Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution's Coalition for a Historical Marker. The Commission has been working very closely with the DAR Coalition for several years to accomplish this project. One Percent for the Arts funding paid for the

amenities which surround the statue, including lights, benches, unengraved pavers, and concrete work.

In November the Arts Commission worked with the Police Department to purchase a watercolor by Grand Junction artist Shirley Dickinson for a renovation of that building.

The Public Works Department and the Commission have

Arts & Cultural Event Support

The Commission invests in community cultural development by helping underwrite art and cultural projects. Over 30,000 people attended or participated in events and programs sponsored in part by Commission grants. Last year the Commission gave \$23,500 (\$20,000 from the City and \$3,500 from the Colorado Council on the Arts) to nineteen arts organizations. This helped leverage over \$50,000 in private donations.

Commission funding supported four major festivals: The *Art & Jazz Festival* downtown, the second annual *Pride of the Valley Arts Festival* at Cross Orchards History Farm, the second annual *Festival Italiano* concerts by the Italian Cultural Society, and the *Celtic Festival & Highland Games*. The Commission was also instrumental in securing a title sponsor and major donor for the Museum's "Pride" festival.

The grant program supported a diverse mix of activities, including the "Senior Follies", Mesa County Public Library ethnic programs, the Brush & Palette Club annual exhibit, the Grand Valley Community Theatre, and the Grand Junction Symphony. The Institute of Dancing Arts was able to provide dance performances for nursing homes, Very Special Arts did its Adult Art Festival for the disadvantaged population, the Grand Valley Blacksmith Guild expanded its programming, and the Western

discussed possible sites and sculptures for the newly constructed traffic building and artwork will be solicited during 2001.

Other projects the Commission will undertake this year include artwork for the Two Rivers Convention Center renovation and for Westlake Park. Colorado Botanical Society purchased a portable TV-VCR.

Four programs specifically for children were funded: Summer Art Camp at the Art Center, the Advocates for Children's Enrichment Creede Repertory play, student tickets for the Bookcliff Barbershop Harmony Chorus regional show, and the Valley Wide PTA "Reflections" program.

Shakespeare in the Park Performances

The major event sponsored through the Commission's arts and cultural events program was the first annual "Shakespeare in the Park" production. The Commission, the Parks & Recreation Department, and the El Pomar Foundation together brought the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs' TheatreWorks production of "Twelfth Night" to Lincoln Park for four nights in August.

The play was offered to the public at no charge and all the free tickets were "sold out" almost a full week prior to the show. The performances were enthusiastically received by everyone who attended. This year the Commission is encouraging Mesa State College to produce the second annual "Shakespeare in the Park".

Arts Expo Includes a Cultural Tour

A major grant from Qwest helped the Commission expand the third annual November Arts Expo into the *Qwest Arts Expo & Cultural Tour*



Harold Elam of Elam Construction receives the Business in the Arts Award from Mayor Gene Kinsey and Coordinator Allison Sarmo. Award sculpture by artist Terry Bridgman.

of Grand Junction. Qwest's support made the Expo free of charge and, in addition, everyone received free admission to the Museum of Western Colorado, the Western Colorado Botanical Garden Greenhouse/Butterfly House, the Art Center, and the Doo Zoo Children's Museum that same day.

Approximately 1700 people attended the Expo, including almost 500 participants and entertainers. Of those attending, 560 people took advantage of the cultural tour and visited other cultural facilities that Saturday.

The Expo again featured forty booths by local arts and cultural organizations and artists, with hands-on exhibits, demonstrations, displays, and two stages of live performances throughout the day. The event showcases many of the groups and artists who make up Grand Junction's ever expanding cultural community.

2000 Business in the Arts Awards

Congratulations to this year's winners of the Commission's annual Business in the Arts Awards: Elam Construction, Inc. in the corporate category, and Working Artists Studio in the small business category. Harold Elam was nominated by both the Italian Cultural Society and the Grand Junction Musical Arts Association for being the major sponsor of Festival Italiano 2000 and the first annual Elam Symphony Classic, plus providing symphony concert underwriting. Local

artist Lynda Rybak nominated Working Artists Studio at 520 Main Street.

The Commission recognizes not only outstanding businesses with these awards but artists as well, by presenting artwork by local artists to each business as their award. A batik painting by Susan Metzger and a sculpture by Terry Bridgman were selected as the awards for the two business winners.

Also nominated for the award in the corporate category were Grand Villa (Carolyn Gerhard), nominated by Palisade Art Lovers, and Comet Cleaners (Roger King), nominated by Colorado West Dance. Nominees in the small business category included Hang Ups (Cookie and Jerry Amundsen), nominated by artist Judy Harer, and Remarque Fine Art (Michael Harshman), nominated by the Art Center. Business in the Arts Award winners are honored for their ongoing commitment to Grand Junction's arts and cultural development and their financial and in-kind support and promotion of local arts organizations and artists.

State & Local Collaborations

Commission member Priscilla Mangnall was elected to serve on the board of the Colorado Arts Consortium, along with former Commission member Karen Kiefer. CAC is a statewide association of art councils and commissions.

Cultural Arts Coordinator Allison Sarmo continues to be a Peer Assistance Network advisor for the Colorado Council on the Arts. Last year she assisted with strategic planning for the Grand Junction Musical Arts Association, the Art Center, and a coalition of numerous Delta/Montrose area arts organizations through the PAN program.

The Commission and the Art Center hosted the Colorado Lawyers for the Arts "Art Mind/ Business Mind" training seminar for local artists last April. We will be doing another



Arts Commission board members Beth Buys and Jeanne Killgore help with the annual Art on the Corner sculpture change in May, 2000.

COLA artists seminar in September, 2001.

Publications & Plans

Because of the increase in cultural events happening throughout the community, the Commission began publishing its quarterly *Cultural Events Calendar* every two months instead of every three, in order to adequately accommodate all activities.

As a service to local artists and cultural organizations, the Commission updated and printed the sixth edition of *The Sourcebook: A Directory of Grand Junction Area Artists and Arts Organizations* in 2000. The directory lists 360 artists, 70 art and cultural organizations and 65 arts related businesses.

Plans are underway to update the *Grand Junction Strategic Cultural Plan* developed by the Commission and adopted by the City in 1991. The Commission will be working with community members, civic leaders, artists, and organizations on this project.

State of the Arts in the Grand Valley State of the Arts in the Grand Valley

News from Other Arts & Cultural Organizations

Western Colorado Botanical Society

The botanical gardens just keep on growing, and in November celebrated the third anniversary of the Greenhouse/Butterfly House. A major addition to the birdhouse office building now houses the new children's library and education center. A new sensory garden was planted around the outside of the greenhouse, and a new amphitheater has just been completed behind the greenhouse toward the river.

Two paved parking lots were added last year, with the help of the City of Grand Junction. The Children's Garden began to take shape with a stucco wall around the secret garden and a patio between it and the library.

The butterfly house was remodeled last fall and a GOCO grant helped continue work on the Native Garden that began three years ago. The society added classes and a summer naturalists camp for kids to their repertoire of things to do, along with the out-of-state garden tour, annual local garden tour, and other events. Volunteer Coordinator Lorna

Naegele became executive director after Jeannette Main-Goecke moved away.

Membership remains steady with 950 members. The greenhouse/butterfly house is open for free the first Sunday of every month.

News from Other Arts & Cultural Organizations (continued)

Museum of Western Colorado

As if the Museum hadn't already undertaken a major capital construction project converting the former C. D. Smith building into the new Regional History Museum and converting the former Museum/Emerson School building into the new Whitman Education Center last winter, at the same time the Dinosaur Discovery Museum in Fruita became available and the Museum stepped in to manage that facility as well. Last spring the Museum's Dinosaur Valley Museum moved from downtown Grand Junction into the former Dinomation facility in Fruita and reopened April 26. The new history museum and education center reopened May 19.

Many years in the making, the new history museum is three times larger of the old museum, with numerous new exhibits, several "immersion" exhibits--like the 1950's uranium mine--and over 2000 square feet of space for temporary and traveling exhibits. The archives, offices, and research library on the second floor are vast improvements over those at the old museum and offer ample space for the staff and for visitors doing research. The education center has three classrooms and a large conference room which seats 130 and is available for rent.

The Museum continues to offer numerous history, archaeology, and genealogy lectures, classes, and trips. The Museum's membership went down significantly toward the end of last year--undoubtedly because facilities were closed for many months--but has now rebounded to a record high of 1200. Admission to Museum facilities is free the second Wednesday of every month.

Western Colorado Center for the Arts

It was standing room only (all the way down the hallway and out the front door!) when the Art Center hosted the Tibetan Monks' Peace 2000 Millennium Tour and week-long creation of a sand mandala last March. Some other outstanding exhibits at the Center last year included a retrospective of ceramic art by renowned Colorado potters in March, the Brush & Palette Club's 53rd annual Regional Exhibit in June, the "Contemporary Colorado" abstract show in July, an extraordinary International Society of Experimental Artists Show in September, and the Western Colorado Watercolor Society's 10th annual National Juried Exhibition in October. A great new exhibit last year was "Colorado Collections" in August, an exhibit of fine art on loan from quite a few private collectors throughout Mesa County.

The Performing Arts Conservatory theater company continues to offer an excellent season of live

theatrical productions at the Art Center, plus numerous classes in dance and music theater.

A wide variety of art classes, particularly ceramics, bring many people into the Center. For the first time in recent memory, the Center sold off a number of pieces from their permanent collection last year, in an effort to focus and streamline the collection. The Art Center's membership is up from last year, from 800 to 860 members. Admission to the Center is free every Tuesday.

Future Cultural Facilities

Now that the new Museum and the Botanic Gardens facilities are up and running, and Mesa State College has broken ground on a new Humanities and Fine Arts Building and begun renovations to Robinson Theatre, other arts organizations are beginning to talk about planning new facilities as well. Mesa County Public Library just kicked off a fund raising campaign to finance land acquisition and relocation costs during construction of a new central library. The library board plans to go to the voters in 2002 for permission to raise property taxes to build the new library, construction to be completed by 2004.

The Art Center is laying the groundwork for building a new Art Center in some central location in town, and the Grand Junction Musical Arts Association is discussing the need for a new 2000 seat performing arts facility. Grand Junction Symphony Season ticket holders increased during 2000 for the second year in a row (from 1100 to 1154), and along with the single ticket sales to each concert, the 1500 seating capacity at Grand Junction High School is sometimes stretched to the limit. The Symphony would like to be part of a community-wide effort to build a new performance facility.

Realizing that the Botanic Gardens, the new Museum, and the Avalon Theater projects each took at least a decade to accomplish (from the time that serious discussions began), the Commission is interested in helping facilitate and nurture long-range planning for additional cultural facilities as part of the vision of the city and community Grand Junction hopes to be in years to come.