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## Maine Arts Commission Five Year Strategic Plan Executive Summary 2007-2012

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# MAINE ARTS COMMISSION

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*building Maine communities through the arts*

## Five-Year Strategic Plan EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2007-2012

Approved October 5, 2007

# MAINE ARTS COMMISSION

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### **Mission**

**The Maine Arts Commission shall encourage and stimulate public interest and participation in the cultural heritage and programs of our state; shall expand the state's cultural resources; and shall encourage and assist freedom of artistic expression for the well being of the arts, to meet the legitimate needs and aspirations of persons in all parts of the state.**

## **Enabling Legislation**

The Maine Arts Commission consists of not less than 15 nor more than 21 members, each of whom shall have a "continuing interest in the fields of art and culture in the State, to be appointed by the Governor from among citizens of Maine." In making such appointments, due consideration is given to the recommendations made by representative civic, education and professional associations and groups concerned with or engaged in artistic and cultural fields generally.

The term of office of each member shall be three years. Other than the chair, no member of the Maine Arts Commission who serves two full three-year terms is eligible for reappointment during the one-year period following the expiration of his second such term. The Governor designates a chair and vice-chair from the members of the Maine Arts Commission, to serve as such at the pleasure of the Governor. The chair is the presiding officer of the Maine Arts Commission.

The Director of the Maine Arts Commission must be qualified by training or experience and is appointed by the Maine Arts Commission. The Director serves for an indefinite term; the Maine Arts Commission fixes compensation for the Director within salary range 88. The duties of the Maine Arts Commission are:

1. "Encouragement. To take such steps as may be necessary and appropriate to encourage and stimulate public interest and participation in the cultural heritage and programs of our State and to expand the State's cultural resources; and
2. Freedom. To encourage and assist freedom of artistic expression essential for the well-being of the arts; and
3. Surveys. To make such surveys as may be deemed advisable of public and private institutions engaged within the State in artistic and cultural activities, including, but not limited to, music, theater, dance, painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, history and allied studies and pursuits, and to make recommendations concerning appropriate methods of encouraging participation in and appreciation of the foregoing to meet the legitimate needs and aspirations of persons in all parts of the State; and
4. Works of art. To act in an advisory capacity relative to the creation, acquisition, construction or erection by the State of any work of art, to file with the Governor, within 30 days, its opinion of such proposed work of art together with such suggestions and recommendations as it may deem proper."

The Maine Arts Commission is authorized and empowered to hold public and private hearings, to enter into contracts, within the limit of funds available, with individuals or organizations, and institutions for services furthering the educational objectives of the Maine Arts Commission's programs; to enter into contracts, within the limit of funds available, with local and regional associations for cooperative endeavors furthering the educational objectives of the Maine Arts Commission's programs; to establish an endowment fund; to accept gifts, contributions and bequests of funds from individuals, foundations, corporations and other organizations or institutions for the purpose of furthering the educational objectives of the Maine Arts Commission's programs; to make and sign any agreements and to do and perform any acts that are necessary to carry out the purposes of the enabling legislation. Any funds, if given as an endowment, must be invested by the Treasurer of the State according to the laws governing the investment of trust funds. The Maine Arts Commission may request and receive from any department, division, board, bureau, Maine Arts Commission or agency of the State such assistance and data as necessary to carry out its powers and duties.

The Maine Arts Commission is the official agency of the State to receive and disburse any funds made available by the Federal Government for programs related to the purposes of the Maine Arts Commission.

## Priorities

The Maine Arts Commission supports artists, arts organizations, arts in education and community development through arts and culture in all its programs. The Maine Arts Commission is charged by the Maine Legislature to serve all the citizens of the state and to expand support for the arts. The agency carries out these priorities through six interdependent goals.

## Planning and Evaluation

**Planning overview** The Maine Arts Commission's policies, plans, and programs are informed by ongoing planning and evaluation. The executive committee, executive director, and deputy director oversee evaluation and evaluation, assisted by staff, commissioners, program committees, constituent partners, and contracted professionals. The Maine Arts Commission engages constituents and seeks public comments through surveys, constituent meetings, public meetings throughout the state, and interviews.

**Planning and evaluation cycle** The Maine Arts Commission undertakes a thorough constituent assessment and comprehensive planning process in a three-year cycle. In the current cycle, the Maine Arts Commission decided to approach planning through the lens of outcome-based evaluation. In 2006 the Maine Arts Commission asked Dreeszen & Associates to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of programs and operations. The evaluation, two years into the current, three-year planning cycle, evaluated progress on strategic plan outcomes, identified new strategic priorities, and addressed the Commission's specific planning and evaluation questions. This year, planning and evaluation were closely integrated as one comprehensive process.

**Methods** The comprehensive evaluation commenced in September 2006 and concluded in May 2007 with a report of findings and recommendations. Dr. Dreeszen worked with Maine Arts Commission staff and existing Maine data reports, comparable national data, recent program evaluations and studies. We surveyed constituents, staff convened ten *artME* public meetings around the state, and the evaluator interviewed and met with staff and Commissioners. The evaluation was coordinated with the Commission's Strategic Plan, previous program evaluations, other recent studies, constituent meetings, and public meetings.

**Constituent input** The 2006-07 evaluation and planning engaged over 1,360 Maine citizens including: 652 responses to a constituent survey, 346 participants in ten public *artME* meetings; and approximately 363 constituents in 15 staff and committee member meetings with constituents.

**Coordination with other state agencies** Maine uniquely organizes seven public and private cultural organizations in the Maine Cultural Affairs Council (Maine Arts Commission, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Maine State Library, Maine State Museum, Maine Historical Society, and Maine Humanities Council) The Maine Arts Commission's leadership in the Cultural Affairs Council assures that arts plans are coordinated with other state cultural plans and policies. Similarly, the new Creative Economy Council, coordinated by the Maine Arts Commission helps translate the creative economy objectives of the strategic plan into broader statewide impact.

**Artist research** The Creative Capital Foundation State Research Project examined Maine's innovative work with artists in 2006. Kathie deNobriga and Barbara Schaffer Bacon conducted re research through Internet investigation, face-to-face interviews, phone interviews and focus groups. Researchers visited Maine to discover artists' needs and initiatives and explore the nature of artistic innovation in the state.

**Survey research** Dreeszen & Associates conducted survey research, sending November 2006 invitations to the web-based survey to 5,500 valid constituent email addresses. We also sent announcements to 2,800 *MaineArtsMag* subscribers and to 8,000 listserv subscribers with weekly reminders. We sent a third set of announcements to partner agencies, which forwarded the survey invitation to 1,000 additional constituents. As lists are redundant, we estimate 11,000 unique addresses. With 652 respondents, the response rate was a respectable 13.5%.

**Public meetings** The Maine Arts Commission convened ten *artME* Constituent Meetings in 2005 in Augusta, Rockport, Portland, South Berwick, Norway, Lille, Orono, and Eastport. In 2006-07, staff convened another ten *artME* meetings throughout Maine: in Portland, Waterville, Farmington, Dover-Foxcroft, Kennebunk, Ellsworth, Caribou, and Houlton. In all 346 Maine citizens attended the ten 2006-07 meetings. Evaluations (33% of participants completed evaluations) found attendees were most interested in marketing and public relations, grants and development, and *MaineArts.com*. The least interest was shown in community and traditional arts, and accessibility in the arts. Of 87 evaluation respondents, 26 had asked for help from the Maine Arts Commission, of those 73% were at least reasonably satisfied with the help they received. Thirty-nine had sought information on *MaineArts.com*, of those, 85% were satisfied with the information received from the web and none dissatisfied.

**Writing the Strategic Plan** Every Maine Arts Commission staff member reviewed the sections of the strategic plan for which they were responsible in light of evaluation findings. Staff examined the extent to which each objective had been achieved. They revised the plan, retiring completed objectives, and adding new ones. Under Donna McNeil's leadership, the staff reordered the strategic plan to realign goals with the Maine Arts Commission program and staffing. In the new plan a goal describes long-term results intended for each program area. To aid in accountability, a professional staff member is assigned primary responsibility for each goal.

**Plan goals** The Maine Arts Commission approved a revised plan including the following goals plus revised objectives, action steps, staff responsibility, time frame, financial resources, performance indicators, and outcomes/values.

- Goal 1 Build the capacity of Maine's creative sector
- Goal 2 Encourage and support Maine's contemporary artists
- Goal 3 Encourage and support Maine's traditional artists
- Goal 4 Develop Maine communities through arts and culture
- Goal 5 Support full access to learning in and through the arts at all stages of life for all Maine's citizens
- Goal 6 Develop art in Maine's public spaces
- Goal 7 Provide full access to the arts for all Maine people
- Goal 8 Develop technological resources that serve artists, the public and the Maine Arts Commission
- Goal 9 Maximize financial resources to support the activities of Maine's cultural community
- Goal 10 Provide Communication between the Maine Arts Commission and public

**Work plans** To assure that planned priorities are implemented, staff develops weekly work plans to accomplish planned action steps. These work plans are the basis of regular progress meetings with the senior staff and are the basis of performance appraisals.

**Plan review and approval** In June 2007, all Maine Arts Commission program committees reviewed the new strategic plan. Staff revised the plan based on committee feedback. The executive committee reviewed the draft June 15, 2007 and Commissioners considered and formally approved the strategic plan October 5, 2007.

## Principles

The Maine Arts Commission complies with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations concerning civil and human rights. Agency programs, grants and employment practices are free from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, and/or age. The Maine Arts Commission encourages Maine cultural organizations to accommodate full inclusion of all citizens and visitors to Maine.

To carry out its mission and goals, the Maine Arts Commission will support programs and partnerships that:

- engender a cooperative environment within the arts field that results in more efficient delivery of programs and services;
- further the goals of the State as articulated by its elected leadership, advancing the arts through activities in areas such as technology, education, and the economy;
- have the potential to change lives by giving people of all ages the opportunity to come into meaningful contact with artists and art-making; and
- build a broad base for the arts by increasing local capacity for arts making, arts presenting, and by increasing local advocacy.

## Guiding Principles

1. Value artistic quality and cultural diversity, which may be represented in many forms and achieved in many ways
2. Recognize and honor premier artists and arts institutions
3. Engage the public widely and deeply, recognizing that broad access to the arts and impact of the kind that changes lives are both immediate and long-term goals
4. Act locally, because it is at the local level that access and impact are most readily achieved and sustained
5. Work collaboratively and promote collaboration in order to increase the effect of the Maine Arts Commission's resources, and to foster relationships and commitments that build infrastructure beyond the Maine Arts Commission's involvement
6. Be flexible and adaptive in the way the agency functions in order to take advantage of opportunities, to respond to needs more effectively, and to incorporate what the agency learns from its experience; and
7. Demonstrate leadership in its conduct as a state agency

In acting on these principles, the Maine Arts Commission will look for evidence that the public is a clear beneficiary; that available resources (including but not limited to money) are being used efficiently; that additional resources are being leveraged to ensure success, sustainability and commitment; and that the local capacity to carry on the work begun becomes greater as a result of these efforts.



## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

<b>GOAL 1</b>	<b>BUILD THE CAPACITY OF MAINE'S CREATIVE SECTOR.</b>
Objective 1.1	Coordinate the recognition and advancement of Maine's creative sector as central to quality of place.
Objective 1.2	Assure the Maine Arts Commission is well governed.
Objective 1.3	Assure the agency is sufficiently staffed with highly competent, qualified, effective and fairly compensated personnel.
Objective 1.4	Assure the usefulness and relevance of the five-year strategic plan, work plans and visioning retreats.
Objective 1.5	Maintain agency's partnership with the Cultural Affairs Council, a state government coordinating body of seven public and private cultural agencies charged to coordinate planning among the agencies as well and budget presentations to the Governor and Legislature.
Objective 1.6	Coordinate advocacy for the arts in general and Legislature at the local, regional and state level with partners including local arts agencies, Discovery Research communities and arts service organizations.
Objective 1.7	Strengthen Maine's cultural institutions using the New England Cultural Database and other resources.
Objective 1.8	Seek legislative funding to create stabilization and working capital fund.
Objective 1.9	Develop relationships with Maine-based and regional businesses to increase resources for Maine's cultural institutions.
Objective 1.10	Represent Maine's cultural sector on behalf of cultural tourism, economic development, new business development and international relations with other state-level developmental entities.
Objective 1.11	Facilitate international, New England-wide and other cross-state border programs.
Objective 1.12	Work with the Maine International Trade Center to develop relations with international trade missions.
Objective 1.13	Help artists with information on how to tour internationally.
Objective 1.14	Explore exchange programs with Quebec and the Maritime Provinces.
Objective 1.15	Help presenters with tax and immigration questions regarding international exchanges.
Objective 1.16	Develop and/or strengthen relations with other state agencies, statewide service organizations and for profit trade association to grow the Creative Economy.
Objective 1.17	Foster First Lady Initiatives/Programs.
<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT MAINE'S CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS.</b>
Objective 2.1	Maintain a distinct and relevant Contemporary Arts Program.
Objective 2.2	Strengthen the performing arts.
Objective 2.3	Strengthen the capacity of Maine's Artists.
Objective 2.4	Maintain the Arts in the Capitol program.
Objective 2.5	Establish professional development grants and artist project grants, which enable artists to seize special professional development or creative opportunities.
Objective 2.6	Advance public visibility, understanding and recognition of Maine artists and their work.

Objective 2.7	Implement pro active creation of special opportunities for artists.
Objective 2.8	Facilitate healthcare coverage for artists.
Objective 2.9	Provide information and encouragement for private development of artist live/work spaces.
<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT MAINE'S TRADITIONAL ARTISTS.</b>
Objective 3.1	Strengthen the Traditional Arts Infrastructure in Maine.
Objective 3.2	Raise the profile of traditional arts in Maine.
Objective 3.3	Maintain the Traditional Arts Fellowship Program.
Objective 3.4	Maintain the Sustaining Traditional Arts in the Community program.
Objective 3.5	Maintain programs for traditional artists.
Objective 3.6	Research a potential conference on folk arts in Maine.
Objective 3.7	Develop a tour of Franco Musicians.
<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>DEVELOP MAINE COMMUNITIES THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE.</b>
Objective 4.1	Complete the transition from the community arts program's Discovery Research model to the Capacity Building model.
Objective 4.2	Develop Quality Places.
Objective 4.3	Expand community arts infrastructure through continuing support for local networks.
Objective 4.4	Support young artists at the community level.
Objective 4.5	Celebrate the contributions of Maine's diverse cultures.
<b>GOAL 5</b>	<b>SUPPORT FULL ACCESS TO LEARNING IN AND THROUGH THE ARTS AT ALL STAGES OF LIFE FOR ALL MAINE'S CITIZENS.</b>
Objective 5.1	Provide opportunities for schools in Maine to plan for arts access, investigation, and integration in grades pre-K through 12 based on the Visual and Performing Arts standards in the Maine Learning Results.
Objective 5.2	Develop and implement the new Arts in Education pilot program for Fiscal Year 2008.
Objective 5.3	Expand and improve learning in and through the arts within and beyond the K-12 educational process. Include early childhood and post secondary education.
Objective 5.4	Make explicit links with education programs of Maine arts producing, presenting and service organizations.
Objective 5.5	Manage special initiatives for youth at risk.
Objective 5.6	Provide funds and opportunities for professional development of teachers, administrators, school volunteers and teaching artists.
Objective 5.7	Work with state and regional organizations.
<b>GOAL 6</b>	<b>DEVELOP ART IN MAINE'S PUBLIC PLACES.</b>
Objective 6.1	Promote and facilitate the commissioning and gifting of site specific public works of art.
Objective 6.2	Advocate for art in public spaces.
Objective 6.3	Integrate the percent for art program in schools into their curricula.

<b>GOAL 7</b>	<b>PROMOTE FULL ACCESS TO THE ARTS FOR ALL MAINE PEOPLE.</b>
Objective 7.1	Ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA through out all Maine Arts Commission activities).
Objective 7.2	Partner with state and federal agencies that insure access to the arts to people with disabilities.
Objective 7.3	Maintain and build the Maine Arts Commission's Accessibility Task Force.
Objective 7.4	Develop financial resources for access programs.
Objective 7.5	Consider issues of accessibility as it relates to the agency's human resources.
Objective 7.6	Pursue collaborative arts and healthcare projects.
Objective 7.7	Support special needs audiences.
Objective 7.8	Uphold civil rights and encourage tolerance across all agency program and behavior.
<b>GOAL 8</b>	<b>DEVELOP TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES THAT SERVE ARTISTS, THE PUBLIC AND THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION.</b>
Objective 8.1	Assess and implement agency Information Technology needs to ensure smooth flow of information and communications.
Objective 8.2	Maintain adequate technology equipment to support efficiency and promote innovation.
Objective 8.3	Train staff in new technologies, or hire technology vendors, to develop new or maintain current technology initiatives.
Objective 8.4	Provide and maintain public service systems utilizing state of the art technology.
Objective 8.5	Provide technical assistance to artists, arts educators and organizations to further educate them regarding information technology and electronic communications to promote their artistry.
Objective 8.6	Develop and administer a new technology grant program.
Objective 8.7	Maintain and utilize a program committee to evolve technology program.
Objective 8.8	Utilize technology as a means to educate the public about Maine's arts and culture.
Objective 8.9	Utilize <i>MaineArts.com</i> as a clearinghouse for arts information, recognition and resources.
Objective 8.10	Provide information and training in internet applications and digital documentation.
Objective 8.11	Provide international, national and statewide program information.
Objective 8.12	Utilize electronic technologies to reduce agency costs, lessen staff time and improve services to the public.
Objective 8.13	Adhere to the State of Maine Accessibility Compliance Guidelines.
<b>GOAL 9</b>	<b>MAXIMIZE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE ACTIVITIES OF MAINE'S CULTURAL COMMUNITY.</b>
Objective 9.1	Assure an accountable system of public grantmaking.
Objective 9.2	Develop and expand a grants program to support individual artists.
Objective 9.3	Continue and grow funding support for arts in education activities across the state.
Objective 9.4	Provide funding that builds communities through the arts.
Objective 9.5	Sustain a grants program to support the work of arts organizations and institutions in collaboration with artists, schools, communities and other nonprofit organizations.
Objective 9.6	Pursue all increased funding opportunities to supplement the Maine Arts Commission budget and grow the cultural

	community.
Objective 9.7	Promote high visibility of the Maine Cultural Affairs Council (CAC)—Maine Arts Commission and the other six organizational members—to insure constant and increase appropriation from the state legislature.
Objective 9.8	Maximize private sector and federal funding.
Objective 9.9	Assist the cultural community in developing increased financial resources.
Objective 9.10	Expand the Philanthropic Base.
<b>GOAL 10</b>	<b>PROVIDE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION AND PUBLIC.</b>
Objective 10.1	Promote Maine Arts Commission programs.
Objective 10.2	Provide opportunities for public interaction with the Maine Arts Commission.
Objective 10.3	Support the 2007-11 promotion and development of Maine’s artists and art.
Objective 10.4	Develop relevant and timely agency literature and promotional materials to support the mission of the Maine Arts Commission.
Objective 10.5	Engage art service organizations and agencies to collaborate on projects.
Objective 10.6	Support agency administrative functions.
Objective 10.7	Advocate on behalf of the artists and arts organizations of Maine.