

Candidate's Name Eric Bidwell

**Candidate Questionnaire
San Diego Regional Arts and Culture Coalition
December 2007**

1. Do you feel that arts and culture is important to the city of San Diego and its citizens? Yes No
Please comment

Arts and culture are vital to any community. They are a wellspring of historical and social insight into contemporary problems without which we would be much less able to learn from the past and make informed decisions about current issues.

2. Are you aware of the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture and what it does? Yes No

3. Do you attend arts or cultural events? Yes No Last year over 3.9 million people attended events presented by 80 nonprofit arts and culture organizations funded by the Commission through competitive grants (including 21 music groups, 13 theatres, 10 dance companies, 12 museums, five arts education groups and 16 other cultural groups). What are the last three art or cultural events you attended? (Fundraisers and special events excluded)

North Park's gallery walk "Ray At Night"

San Diego Musical Theatre's production of Frank Loesser's "Guys and Dolls"

6th at Penn's production of Aeschylus' "The Oresteia" _____

4. Are you aware of the source of funding for the Commission? Yes No Five years ago the City of San Diego, through its Commission for Arts and Culture, invested one cent of the ten and a half cents of Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) in arts and culture. Will you support restoring and dedicating the City's allocation of one cent of TOT to arts and culture? Yes No

Although it would warrant more in depth analysis before I take an absolute stance, it seems like a very reasonable investment into our community.

5. Do you consider San Diego a cultural destination? Yes No According to a regional study, San Diego attracts 2.7 million out-of-town travelers annually who make their travel decisions primarily based on the city's broad variety of cultural attractions (organizations with budgets ranging from \$29,000 to \$18 million). Arts and culture are vital to this community and the local economy. What would you do to promote San Diego as a cultural destination?

I would use the city's website to showcase local cultural attractions and to allow travelers the ability to easily create and utilize customized itineraries of their stay in San Diego.

6. Did you participate in visual or performing arts classes in school? Yes No Did/do your children? Yes No Unfortunately, most public schools don't have the resources to provide arts education for our young people. What do you see as the role of the arts and cultural community in addressing this issue?

Although public schools may not have the resources to provide arts education themselves, I believe they are quite receptive to cooperating with outside organizations that do have those resources. Because of this I believe there are many possibilities for the arts and cultural community to engage young people in the arts both inside and outside of public schools.

7. Do you agree that Balboa Park is an important cultural center for the city? Yes No In 2015, San Diego will be celebrating the Centennial of Balboa Park. This will be an opportunity to put San Diego in the national spotlight and on the world map. What is your vision of the importance of this event?

As a native San Diegan growing up in poverty Balboa Park and its many free events was a staple of my cultural development. From free museum admission on Tuesdays to free organ concerts in the summer to free year round access to the Botanical Building, Balboa Park has truly been a cultural resource accessible to all. As Colonel D.C. Collier said about the exposition that created the park as we know it, "The purpose of the Panama-California Exposition is to illustrate the progress and possibility of the human race, not for the exposition only, but for a permanent contribution to the world's progress." I think this an inspiring sentiment that would do well to inform our treatment of the centennial celebration.

8. Have you been involved in efforts to rebuild and sustain museums and cultural institutions the city? Yes No San Diego is home to a number of very important cultural facilities. How do you plan to protect and sustain the museums and cultural institutions in Balboa Park, the NTC Promenade, Downtown and in our neighborhoods?

As a young man who has been busy spending most of his adult life rebuilding and sustaining himself I have not yet had the opportunity to focus on the city at large. However, one of the main goals of my campaign for mayor is to draw the attention of the public to important issues that face our city. Protecting and sustaining arts and culture and fostering personal development of the citizenry in all aspects of our community is of the utmost priority in my efforts. I believe that increased public attention to and participation in these matters will lead to their representatives doing more to protect and sustain these institutions on their behalf.

9. Are you aware of the City's Public Art Master Plan and what it does? Yes No Many of the world's great cities are renowned for their public art. San Diego's public art includes a range of works from early 20th century to contemporary. Name three pieces of public art that you like in the City of San Diego.

Doron Rosenthal's "Sidewalk Fossils" along University Ave in Hillcrest.

The neon "neighborhood signs" that span the main streets of many districts throughout the city, ie the "Hillcrest", "Normal Heights", "University Heights", and "The Boulevard" signs.

The many electric boxes that have been painted throughout the city, converting them from public eyesores into cultural icons.

10. Do you consider yourself a supporter of arts and culture both personally and publicly? Yes No

Have you met officials of the arts and cultural organizations located in the district(s) served by the elective office for which you are running? Yes No (Not yet ;)_

Which organizations do you or members of your family support? (As an audience member, volunteer, donor, subscriber and/or patron, staff member, board member)

I worked as a stagehand for various events for a couple years and at the Old Globe in the summer of 2002. My largest involvement in art though has been working on my own political stencil art over the last few years, some of which is currently showing at Cream Coffee Bar in University Heights.