

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: Over the last forty years, there is has been a drastic decline in the inclusion of artistic expressions within the architectural designs of nearly all new major construction projects in San Diego. Nearly every major skyscraper in San Diego is void of creativity and color. This is part of the overall negative attitude towards arts in the construction industry. In turn, this attitude has worked its way into the civic psyche in San Diego. We need political leaders who deem the creativity of our arts community to be worthy of inclusion in the discussions for approving new major construction projects in San Diego. This inclusion must be part of a larger vision for San Diego where we create a new city that is broad in its artistry and creative scope. Once the foundation for this new city vision is laid in the hearts of our citizens than we can build upon it the expansion of our art community in new ways and news avenues yet unseen before in any major American city.

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) *To be honest with you, the last few years, I have gotten so busy, that I don't make the time I used to go to events. About three years ago, I stopped going to the theater. At that time, I went to plays downtown at least four times per year. And the symphony as well. I do regularly go to the museums in Balboa Park, as well as art galleries in the Gaslamp. I recently went to an art show with a dozen artists at the San Diego Hospice. My friend was in the art show and she won first place for work. I am also a big supporter of granting free tickets to those with disabilities and we need to continue expanding these gifts. That is very, very important to me. I also volunteered at our Church's October event called Halleluhah Hoedown where we provided thousands of kids with food, games, artistic contests and rides at Qualcomm right after the terrible October fire.*

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 *I do not approve of increasing taxes in this time of near bankruptcy in our city. To do so, is to further destroy our city's ability to function and will only further destroy any future increases in city budgets for the arts community. The last thing that the arts community needs in this time of budget cuts is to further anger the taxpayers by requesting that taxes be increased for programs that the public is not considering to be urgent in their nature. I believe that the corporations and redevelopers who feed off of our city and do not invest in such things as local arts and culture, must be persuaded to change their attitudes. If these corporations want to do business with me and our city, then they must invest in our art programs through grants, gifts and partnerships. I believe that increased private partnerships is the way to go to increase funding for our arts programs.*

5. Do you consider San Diego a cultural destination? Yes Absolutely 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? *The Bible says that where there is no vision, the people perish. There is simply no overall vision in San Diego. Thus, you have a tremendous talent pool in San Diego, but no vision from which this talent pool can be tapped and used to better our city. We need new political leaders with vision. We need a new vision. And we need the talent brought into partnership with the city and its new vision to create a constant festival in San Diego. This 365 day festival with daily artistic events will cause a constant river of excitement and growth in our city that all students, families, parents, grandparents and friends can constantly look forward to each new day with a new event to enjoy in our city everyday. Currently, there are great periods of civic drought in our city where many people have nothing to look forward to and nowhere to go. With this new vision, we will always have something wonderful going on for all of our people. And the best part is that there will be something for people to do even if they are disabled or have little money.*

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? *I disagree with you. The public system as the money to spend on arts and culture in they decide to budget it. The public school system has more money than it*

has ever had before, yet there is constant decline in arts programs. Why? Because the schools do not mandate such programs for student participation. I believe that all students k-12 should have mandated physical education and art classes as a part of their yearly curriculum. 40 years ago, this was the case and there was always money for these programs. When they started eliminated the requirements for these programs the money went elsewhere. I also believe that the public schools must open up their classrooms for partnerships with private corporations, organizations, art and music projects that are embraced outside of the schools in the civic arena.

7. Do you agree that Balboa Park is an important cultural center for the city?

Yes X 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?

We should present the event just like we did when the park first opened itself up: As the World's Fair. We should have another World's Fair as the main component of the Centennial. That is the reason that the park was established in the first place. Today, Balboa Park is not treated by many as the primary civic jewel of our city that it is. The park is full of homeless people under the influence of drugs. There are male prostitutes controlling an entire area of the park called the "fruit loop" where many families do not feel safe walking around. At night it is not safe. Our city is really degrading our people by not considering the lighting of our streets and our parks at night in a manner where all of our people, after they get off work, can enjoy in safety and in brightness Balboa Park and all of our cultural areas. And, if our city can have a SuperBowl and a World Series, than there is absolutely no reason why the Centennial of Balboa Park shouldn't be treated in the same fashion with the same respect. Our current city council gives so much time and money to redevelopers and corporate interests, but little, if any time, to our parks, our parking problem at the Zoo and the development of the long term financial stability of Balboa Park. The City Council can fix what they choose to. We will fix these problems under my watch!

8. Have you been involved in efforts to rebuild and sustain museums and cultural institutions the city? Yes ___ No X 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?

Firstly, there are too many people in the wealthy areas of San Diego who come to Balboa Park and the Museums, but provide no financial help to these areas. There is too much wealth in our city for Balboa Park and our Museums to be neglected. There must be a long term educational program for all of our citizens to understand the importance of these institutions to our heritage. With this increased education, we can then move our people into increased financial partnerships with our cultural institutions. if we can build new ball parks, then we can find the funding to create a long term financial solution to preserving our city jewels. More educational institutions should be partnering with our museums. UCSD has billions of dollars in its

financial portfolios. UCSD makes billions of dollars being located in San Diego. If these educational institutions are benefiting from being in San Diego, then they should partner with our cultural programs. The same with the billion-dollar biotech industry. They are moving here and taking up a wealth in land to build their corporate empires. They city council, in dealing with these corporations, must make it clear, to these corporations and redevelopers that they must partner with our civic interests, cultural institutions and art community projects if they want to stay in our city to make their billions of dollars in profits. On my watch, this will be a standard of normal practice on the city council.

**9. Are you aware of the City's Public Art Master Plan and what it does? Yes X
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. *To be honest with you I don't see much public art in San Diego worth commenting on. The artistic work on the Balboa Park buildings is not anything new and mostly all of the same theme. There are the sculptures around the theater in Balboa park. Now, I do love the Spanish Village because it allows the artists and the public to interact with each other in a great and unique way. Some of the very old homes have great artistic constructs to them and are better art than alot of the current public art that is dry and boring.*

10. Do you consider yourself a supporter of arts and culture both personally and publicly?

Yes No X

**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 X
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 cannot speak for my family, but I donate my contributions to the Voice of the Martyrs which is an organization to help persecuted Christians in foreign countries. And I give 10% of my income to religious organizations.***