

**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 measures of a society's greatness. They are an expression of our humanity and deserve continued advocacy and support by elected officials and the citizenry. Arts and culture are effective tools used to engage students and ultimately ensure their cultural development as well as their academic success. They are an economic engine for communities and a major source of income for San Diego. Additionally, I view them as an integral quality of life issue in our neighborhoods. Often it is arts and culture that help us to define our communities that help attract and retain businesses and talented employees who enjoy the creative community that has developed here. For all of these reasons, arts and culture are important components of any city, especially San Diego.

**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)**

How the Grinch Stole Christmas (Old Globe) – 12/22/07  
Visited the Ringling Museum of Art (Sarasota, FL) – 11/24/07  
iN+GraIN Public Exhibition (AJA Project) – 11/14/07

**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**

Given that tourists are attracted to San Diego by the wonderful arts and culture institutions in our region, it seems wise to reinvest the income generated by visitors back into these institutions so they can expand, renew, and diversify their offerings to attract new tourists and retain existing visitors. I will work to do this on the City Council by trying to hold the line when it comes to arts and culture funding and with the goal of developing a plan to and ultimately achieving the higher funding level.

**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 believe that San Diego's ability to attract visitors to our region is as much a result of our cultural attractions as our climate and natural resources. As such, I would expect to see this reflected in our city's marketing and economic development plans. If I am asked to serve on the Natural Resources and Culture Committee, I would use that opportunity to increase the committee's focus and prioritization of cultural issues, like the Balboa Park centennial celebration in 2015.

**6. Did you participate in visual or performing arts classes in school? Yes  No  Did/do your children? Yes  No  N/A  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'd like to see the arts and culture community take an active role in filling the void left by the lack of resources public schools have when it comes to arts education. Working collaboratively with schools and teachers, I believe that the community can be certain that young San Diegans grow up with an appreciation of the arts. Additionally, I know that the arts can be a powerful learning tool and a means of assuring student success by teaching such valuable skills as collaboration and creative thinking. I have seen first hand how the AJA Project's works with refugee youth help them to acclimate to their new surroundings in my own neighborhood of City Heights. Non profit groups that focus on arts and culture often fill the public education gaps in teaching students about music, art, dance and theatre. It remains important for elected officials to assist these nonprofits with funding support and public awareness in order to help them expand their success and achievements.

**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?**

Balboa Park's Centennial Celebration will be a central focus of my tenure on the City Council. I rarely give a campaign speech without emphasizing the need for the community and public officials to support, promote and plan for this nationally significant and important milestone. I hope to use the anniversary as an opportunity to focus all San Diegans including SANDAG, the County and all of our surrounding municipalities on the importance of this event and ultimately to invest in the park to ensure its success and that of its cultural institutions for another one hundred years. This event should be used as the trigger to start to effectively implement the Balboa Park Master Plan, which is currently lagging in funding and priority.

**8. Have you been involved in efforts to rebuild and sustain museums and cultural institutions the city? Yes X 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?**

I think it is important to provide funding to publicly supported museums and cultural institutions in San Diego. I will be a leader when it comes to supporting those organizations located in Balboa Park and will work diligently to secure additional funding to preserve, maintain, and promote the park. There are a variety of funding vehicles provided by the City, which I will strive to maintain and increase in order to sustain and protect our cultural heritage and diversity. These means include Mission Bay Park lease contributions to Balboa Park, continued TOT funding of the arts and sustaining public art development fees. The arts community can count on me to be an active member of the community as an elected official, with participation at important events and fundraisers. Finally, my door will always be open to discuss issues and seek solutions to problems and challenges faced by the arts and culture community.

**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 20<sup>th</sup> century to contemporary. Name three pieces of public art that you like in the City of San Diego.**

Niki de Saint Phalle sculptures at the Mingei Museum in Balboa Park  
 Vermont Street Bridge over Washington Street in Hillcrest  
 Painted Utility Boxes at various locations in San Diego  
*(Although not in San Diego, I think Coronado's Alfredo Ramos Martinez's "El Dia de los Mercado" is an amazing restoration and reuse of a wonderful piece of public art.)*

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

Yes X 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 X No \_\_\_** District 3 is a hub for arts and culture activity, so it has been a priority for me to meet with the many talented people in the district that make these institutions come alive. During this campaign, I have specifically met with executives from the Old Globe, the Natural

History Museum, the Diversionary Theater, the AjA Project, North Park Mainstreet which produces the monthly Ray at Night event, and the NTC Foundation.

**Which organizations do you or members of your family support? (As an audience member, volunteer, donor, subscriber and/or patron, staff member, board member)** My partner and I are often audience members at local venues like the La Jolla Playhouse, the Old Globe, [the Museum of Man](#), and Diversionary Theatre. Additionally, in my position as the District Director to Congresswoman Susan Davis, I have been able to support local organizations like the Children's Museum and the Natural History Museum with federal funding and grants.

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or

Mail hard copy to:

Young Audiences of San Diego

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***San Diego Regional Arts & Culture Coalition: Mission and Purpose***

- To lobby and advocate for appropriate funding levels for Arts and Culture to support new and ongoing projects throughout San Diego County
- To lobby, advocate and promote the awareness and importance of Arts and Culture throughout San Diego.
- To serve as an information resource entity to benefit all Arts and Culture institutions in San Diego County.