



## VIRINIANS FOR THE ARTS

Summer 2010

### The Case for Arts Funding

#### WHAT WE ASK

- We are asking that members of the General Assembly commit to support funding to reach the one dollar per capita goal **when the economy improves**. In order to achieve the \$1 per capita goal, an additional annual appropriation of \$4.5 million will be required.
- In these difficult economic times **the arts has shared in the state budget cuts**, which have reduced per capita funding of the arts from nearly 80 cents per capita, in FY2006, to just 43 cents per capita in the current biennial budget. The current state appropriation for arts grant funding of \$3,362,374 through the Virginia Commission for the Arts is \$2.6 million less than the FY2006 appropriation of just under \$6 million.
- More than 40 percent of all arts grant funding has been lost since 2005 that would have been spent in every city and county of the Commonwealth.
- Arts organizations depend upon a wide base of funding sources to survive - ticket sales, memberships, contributions from individuals and businesses, and support from local and state government. In the current economy the financial underpinnings are being cut from beneath the arts.
- Over the past two years there has been much bad news in the arts, as in the rest of the economy, with reports of staff layoffs, large spending cuts, cancellations of performances, and galleries closing. Minimizing the cuts in state arts funding is essential to the survival of cultural infrastructure.
- **Continued state support is vital** to the survival of our cherished arts institutions and to keeping highly talented artists working in Virginia.

#### WHY FUND THE ARTS?

##### Jobs, Economic and Community Development

- Across the Commonwealth are hundreds of arts organizations that are small businesses contributing to the overall economic health of their communities. They provide jobs. They purchase goods and services.
- Arts organizations help to revitalize both urban downtowns and small town Main Streets.
- The growth of arts and cultural districts and of public art programs across Virginia demonstrates that local officials understand the connection of the arts with economic development and community revitalizations.
- Talented young professionals are attracted to communities with a lively arts and cultural scene.

##### Cultural Tourism

- Cultural tourism is an important part of the tourism promotion efforts of Virginia. Art museums, music, theatre, and dance venues are key components of the Virginia tourism industry.

##### Education

- Last year the Commission helped to make possible 39,943 arts events with a combined attendance of over 7.7 million people, including 1.9 million school children.
- Artists and arts organizations provide learning opportunities for young people that enhance the work of the schools. Research has shown that students who study the arts have higher overall academic achievement and are more likely to be involved in school activities, such as class offices and math and science fairs.
- Arts organizations are increasingly rising to the challenge of filling in the gaps in cultural education increasingly found in Virginia schools.
- Arts studies are important in developing creativity needed for a workforce that can compete in a global economy. Eighty-five percent of surveyed business executives indicated that they are currently having difficulty recruiting individuals who possess creative ability; the demand for creative people will increase as U.S. firms pursue innovation (U.S. Conference Board, 2008).



### **ABOUT THE DOLLAR PER CAPITA GOAL FOR ARTS FUNDING**

- Many years ago the General Assembly and former Governors agreed that an appropriate level of funding for the arts through the Virginia Commission for the Arts grant programs would be one dollar per citizen of the Commonwealth.
- Every dollar the state invests in the arts through the Virginia Commission for the Arts returns \$7 in investment by corporations, in ticket and event sales, and in local government funding. The state investment also leverages federal matching funds - \$1 million last year from the National Endowment for the Arts.