

# Arts Action News

THE NEWSLETTER OF  
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS ACTION FUND

Vol. I 2008

## The Arts—Making an Impact in the Presidential Primaries



Photos by Ted Conner  
Jazz trombonist and arts advocate Delfeayo Marsalis at the ArtsVote2008 Forum in Concord, NH.

ArtsVote2008, the Arts Action Fund's national initiative to raise the arts as a vital issue during the presidential campaign, is having a major impact. Thanks to our work, many candidates have made extensive policy statements in support of the arts and arts education. As we go to press, strong arts candidates Sen. Barack Obama and Sen. Hillary Clinton continue to compete for the democratic nomination. You can read candidates' statements and get additional news from the campaign trail at [www.ArtsVote.org](http://www.ArtsVote.org).



Arts Action Fund President Bert L. Lynch with arts educator Deshaun Brown, who spoke on behalf of Sen. Obama at the November forum.

Through ArtsVote2008, and in partnership with ArtsVoteNH, we've played a significant role in securing early support for the arts from many candidates. In November 2007, we organized a statewide Arts Policy Forum in New Hampshire. The forum brought representatives from five of the presidential campaigns to Concord to outline their positions on the arts and arts education. You can watch video from the presidential forum at: [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Information\\_Services/Video\\_Audio](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Information_Services/Video_Audio).

The rise of the arts as a campaign topic has been noted by the press. In a recent *Newsweek* article, columnist Jonathan Alter mentioned Gov. Huckabee (R), Gov. Bill Richardson (D), and Sen. Obama's campaign discussions of the importance of arts and music education in schools. Alter noted that he sees arts education as a rising issue in the 2008 campaign: "Don't be surprised if a lot more money for art and music turns up in an education bill a couple of years from now." Read the rest of the article at [www.newsweek.com/id/81596](http://www.newsweek.com/id/81596).

It all goes to show that our hard work is paying off, and our movement is having an impact. With your support, you can count on Americans for the Arts Action Fund to continue to make the arts and arts education a top priority throughout this election year.

## Art. Ask for More. New Ads Released to Media Outlets

The newest ads in our National Arts Education Public Awareness Campaign have been popping up in some very exciting places, including *The New York Times*, *The New York Post*, *W Magazine*, *People*, *Newsweek*, and *Los Angeles Magazine*, among others. Created in partnership with the Ad Council and the International Music Products Association's NAMM Foundation, these latest print ads include Spanish-language formats for Hispanic publications. With your

support, we are raising awareness and framing arts as a core community priority. To become a partner in the Art. Ask for More. PSA campaign, or to view all of the ads and download them for use in your publications, please visit [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Public\\_Awareness](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Public_Awareness). You can also request a free Art. Ask for More. decal at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Public\\_Awareness/Free\\_Stuff/Decal\\_Request](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/Public_Awareness/Free_Stuff/Decal_Request).



One of the print ads from the Americans for the Arts 2008 Public Service Advertising Campaign, Art. Ask for More.

Additional ads displayed on page 2.



# Message from the President

We've all been hearing about it, and no doubt many of us are feeling it—our nation's economy is taking a downturn. My experience tells me to be worried about what this might mean for the arts. History has shown us that when times get tough, it's the arts and arts education programs that are often first to be cut. So what can we do about it?

Together, we've been growing our movement of advocates for the arts, and we've seen the impact of our combined efforts. State and local arts budgets are increasing, and in 2008 the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) saw its largest budget increase

in 30 years. However, President Bush has recommended an 11.5 percent cut to the NEA's budget next year. In the months ahead, we will need to flex our collective muscles, and thanks to strong support from members like you our growing arts movement has proven to be a power to be reckoned with. The Arts Action Fund is making sure elected officials see strong civic support for the arts during this critical period as the budget process begins. Your continued support and active participation matters now more than ever.



Americans for the Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch met with Shirley Sagawa, former Clinton administration official speaking on behalf of Sen. Hillary Clinton at the November ArtsVote2008 Forum.

Those of you who attended Arts Advocacy Day 2008 in March here in Washington, DC, got a good start on the year, learning about the latest economic and workforce trends, demonstrating your support for the arts, and meeting with your representatives in Congress. But whether you attended Arts Advocacy Day this year or not, you can count on the Arts Action Fund to keep you up-to-date on the latest federal, state, and local legislative news and what you can do.

## In the News

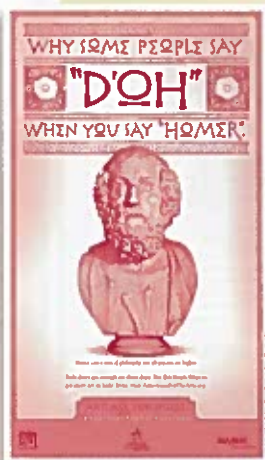
**POLITICO** In the November 5, 2007, article in *The Politico* titled "Arts Educators Battle No Child Left Behind," Erika Lovley wrote about efforts by Americans for the Arts and other groups to make the arts a bigger priority in the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind legislation. You can read the full article at [www.politico.com/news/stories/1107/6715.html](http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1107/6715.html).



Americans for the Arts Action Fund President and CEO Robert L. Lynch was interviewed on XM Radio's POTUS '08—the first national radio channel dedicated to a presidential election campaign—on November 29, 2007. Lynch discussed the ArtsVote2008 Forum in New Hampshire and outlined additional ways the Arts Action Fund is working to promote the arts as an important policy issue for the presidential candidates.

Nationally, the economic impact of the arts is \$166 billion. It's much bigger than anyone would think. We did a national arts economic impact study to come up with that figure. It supports almost six million jobs. Six million jobs is a big figure for any presidential candidate to keep an eye on.

—Robert L. Lynch on XM Radio's POTUS '08



Additional print ads from the Americans for the Arts 2008 Public Service Advertising Campaign, Art. Ask for More.



# Shaping Federal Arts Policy

The Arts Action Fund monitors arts policy at the federal level and helps bring citizens' voices to the table when important arts issues are debated. For detailed legislative updates on this item and more, please visit [www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LegislativeNews](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/LegislativeNews).

## Largest Increase for the National Endowment for the Arts in 30 Years

After years of advocacy efforts, we are finally beginning to see funding levels for the National Endowment for the Arts restored to their mid-1990s levels. FY 2008 federal appropriations include a \$20.3 million increase over last year's funding, a more than 16 percent rise.

Other federal arts programs saw modest increases, including a \$3.75 million increase for the National

Endowment for the Humanities and \$2.23 million more for the Arts in Education programs at the U.S. Department of Education.

A large number of advocates attending Arts Advocacy Day over the past several years have made visits to their members of Congress. These advocates can take credit for helping to secure such important increases in federal arts funding and for fighting back the FY 2009 budget cuts proposed by the White House.



Members of Congress and arts advocates on Capitol Hill on National Arts Advocacy Day 2007.

## Supporting Arts Advocacy in States and Cities



Photos by Erin Enton

The city of Phoenix is known for its array of public art, including this quarter-mile-long, eight-foot-high steel fence sculpture titled *Sine Waves* by Al Price that was made to look like the pattern of sine waves.

### Phoenix Advocates Save Public Art in Downtown Park

Plans for a new downtown park in Phoenix had included a public art piece, when in December 2007 Deputy City Manager Ed Zuercher abruptly announced that the city was dropping the art. Internationally known artist Janet Echelman's work had been chosen by a city-appointed panel and work had already begun to place the iconic piece.

Arts advocates came to the rescue, organizing a public meeting where residents demanded the city reinstate plans for the

sculpture. Echelman thinks the controversy was ultimately a good thing. "It's good for art to make us think," she said, "to give us a shared experience that creates a dialogue and makes us talk to each other."

### Action Fund Helps Cities Spark Economic Development through the Arts

Americans for the Arts participated on the panel "Finding the Gems in Your Own Backyard: Using Cultural and Culinary Tourism to Spark Economic Development" at the National League of Cities' Annual Conference in New Orleans in November 2007. The conference represented thousands of elected and appointed city leaders. Americans for the Arts presented findings from its *Arts & Economic Prosperity III* study, helping city leaders consider options for improving their economies through investment in the arts.

### Nation's Mayors Make Arts a Top Priority in 2008 Elections

A senior delegation from the United States Conference of Mayors stressed the importance of the arts by participating in the *ArtsVote2008* Arts Policy Forum in New Hampshire. The mayors issued a press release about their involvement in the event, emphasizing their position that, "The arts are an integral part of the development, strength, and education of every community." Additionally, their "Strong Cities, Strong Families, for a Strong America" 10-point plan calls on the next president to promote the arts and culture and to create a cabinet-level position of Secretary of Culture and Tourism.



Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann—Chair of the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Tourism, Arts, Parks, Entertainment, and Sports Committee—announced the arts component of its 10-point plan for a strong America.

### The Arts Are on the Agenda in State Legislatures

Together, our advocacy efforts are keeping the arts front and center. Many state legislators went back to work in January with the arts on their minds. We are literally combing through thousands of new bills introduced in state houses on a weekly basis for their potential impact on the arts. One piece of legislation the Arts Action Fund is actively watching is in Virginia, where a bill was introduced that would exempt works sold in art districts for less than \$500 from the state sales tax. Meanwhile, legislatures in Arizona, Florida, and New Jersey, among others, have already begun grappling with potential budget shortfalls that may impact state funding for the arts in the coming year.



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## PAC Update



### Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars and come out to support the Arts Action Fund PAC at these upcoming Arts Action Fund Members' Receptions and PAC Fundraisers:

**Saturday, June 21, 2008**

8:00 a.m.

Members' Breakfast Reception & PAC Fundraiser  
Americans for the Arts Annual Convention  
Sheraton Philadelphia City Center  
Philadelphia, PA

**Monday, August 25–Thursday, August 28, 2008**

Democratic National Convention  
Denver, CO

**Monday, September 1–Thursday,  
September 4, 2008**

Republican National Convention  
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN

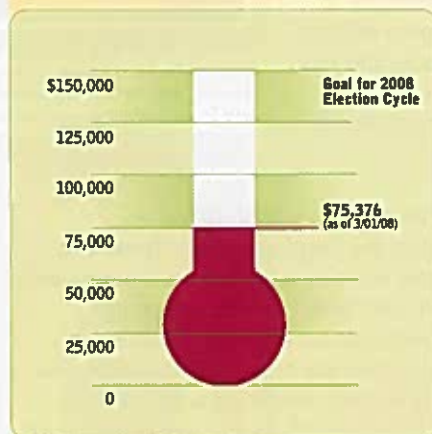
For more information, please visit our website:  
[www.ArtsActionFund.org/PAC](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org/PAC).

### Help Support Arts-Friendly Candidates

To elect candidates with strong arts voting records and pro-arts positions, Americans for the Arts Action Fund PAC has set a goal of raising \$150,000 for the 2008 elections. Now is the time to make the most of your political dollars by contributing to the Arts Action Fund PAC. We are not allowed to raise donations from the general public, so every dollar we raise for the PAC must come from members like you. Please help us reach our goal by making a generous contribution today.

Become a member of the Arts Action Fund PAC, or if you are already a member, make a new gift at [www.ArtsActionFund.org/PAC](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org/PAC).

With your support, the arts can have an impact on the 2008 elections and beyond. Thank you.



ArtsVote2008 Campaign Fundraising Goal

Americans for the Arts Action Fund is the political advocacy arm of Americans for the Arts. We are the nation's leading advocate for coordinating national grassroots actions, tracking and alerting arts advocates to key policy issues, and directly advocating for the arts on Capitol Hill. We engage citizens to ensure that all Americans have an opportunity to participate in the arts and that every child has access to arts education. Arts Action Fund members are citizen activists who are committed to helping make certain that arts-friendly public policies are adopted at every level of government and in the private sector. Arts Action News is delivered four times a year to supporters of the Arts Action Fund. Executive Director: Nina Ozlu Tunceli. [www.ArtsActionFund.org](http://www.ArtsActionFund.org).