Arts center opens in Gateway Arts District

A dedication and grand opening of the Gateway Arts Center in Prince George’s County was held Friday, March 19. The new visual-arts center has 2,500 sq. ft. of gallery space and 900 sq. ft. of classroom space on the first floor. The second floor has 5,500 sq. ft. of studio space for rent and a gallery that will be managed by Gateway Community Development Corporation. The center is in the Gateway Arts District, an area that spans four communities: Mount Rainier, Brentwood, North Brentwood and Hyattsville.

Attending the dedication were (L to R): Floyd Wilson, Prince George’s County Executive’s office; Samuel Dean, Prince George’s County Council; Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown; Ani Kasten, artist; Samuel J. Parker Jr., Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and Maryland Tourism Development Board; and Raymond Skinner, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.
Councilors convene in Howard County

The Maryland State Arts Council held its last regular meeting at the Howard County Center for the Arts, March 19 in Ellicott City. As part of its effort to expand outreach to the community, the Arts Council arranges their meetings at different venues across the state. Coleen West, executive director of the Howard County Arts Council, led a tour of the 27,000sq.-ft. arts center – a former elementary school that now houses galleries, a black-box theater, dance studio and individual artists' studios, in addition to classrooms.

Frederick’s A&E District wins state recognition

The Downtown Frederick Arts and Entertainment (A&E) District received a salute from the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development for its contributions to the state’s economy through art and culture. The Arts and Entertainment Outstanding Achievement Award was given during the annual A&E District managers’ meeting, March 10 at the Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts in Annapolis.

Bill Pencek, deputy assistant secretary for Tourism, Film and the Arts, presented the award to Shuan Butcher, director of the Frederick Arts Council, and Kara Norman, director of the Downtown Frederick Partnership. Pencek also read a proclamation from Gov. Martin O'Malley in honor of the occasion.

Designated as an A&E district in 2003, downtown Frederick “is home to a nationally-juried arts festival, two major film festivals, internationally-recognized public art, visual and performing arts centers, and a number of vibrant arts organizations,” Butcher said.

Md. Traditions, WYPR celebrate Persian New Year with music

Cliff Murphy, MSAC program director and co-director of Maryland Traditions, joined Aaron Henkin, host of WYPR-radio’s The Signal, for a one-hour presentation of Persian music and stories in mid-March. The program featured Ahmad Borhani, a Persian classical musician who has lived in Baltimore since 1985, when many Iranian musicians and intellectuals were forced underground. Borhani is a master of the Persian santur (hammer dulcimer) and both a teacher and performer of Persian classical music. A podcast and multi-media presentation is available online.

Arts Council’s Pamela Dunne retires April 1

Pamela Dunne, assistant director at the Maryland State Arts Council, retired last week after a 17-year career at the Arts Council. Dunne began her tenure in 1993 as a program assistant for the Arts in Education Program. She later became program director. The program – designed to advance the arts and arts education in elementary and secondary schools – thrived as Dunne demonstrated her skill in connecting with school administrators and artist-teachers.

Dunne also showed a talent for maintaining fairness in the creation of grant policies and guidelines. As assistant director for Grants and Programs, she applied her skill to a variety of programs – including Grants for Organizations and Individual Artist Awards – and to her work with county arts councils. Her meticulous and thoughtful approach to grant programs was supported by her frequent assertion that she “loves this stuff.”

During recent months, Dunne directed the Arts and Entertainment District Program – the statewide network of 18 designated districts in which arts and arts enterprises have bolstered local economies.
NEA chairman tours A&E district in Baltimore

Last month, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Chairman Rocco Landesman joined Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan in Baltimore for a visit to City Arts, an affordable residential development geared to artists in the city's Station North Arts and Entertainment District.

“At the NEA, we know that artists are placemakers,” Landesman said. “When you bring arts organizations and arts workers into a neighborhood, the ethos of that place changes: the arts are a force of social cohesion, civic engagement and economic revitalization.”

City Arts includes 69 rental units, eight townhouses for sale, visual-arts gallery and performance-arts space. It is scheduled to open in January 2011. Project financing comes through federal stimulus funds and public-private partnerships involving the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and other groups.

Survey shows appetite for the arts in rural areas

Urban and rural residents tend to participate in “informal-arts” activities at similar rates, according to the 2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, a study released by the National Endowment for the Arts in March. In both urban and rural communities: 25 percent of residents visited historical parks or arts and crafts fairs; 20 percent went to an outdoor performing-arts festival; 20 percent attended a performing-arts event at a place of worship; 13 percent played a musical instrument; and 9 percent created paintings, drawings or sculpture.

The rate of participation in “formal-arts” activities favors urban dwellers, primarily because 88 percent of nonprofit performing-arts organizations and art museums are located in urban areas.

IN THE NEWS

- In memoriam: Donora 'Donni' Dingman-Willemain, arts leader and artist
- Thomas A. Wisner, 79: 'Bard of the Chesapeake' sang about the bay he loved
- Maryland Art Place's exhibition features work of 12 emerging female artists
- Poet receives Maryland Author Award
- Love of art and teaching guided Patti Battaglia
- Assessing the future of modern dance, a fragile American art form
- Maryland Film Festival offerings compared to French New Wave
- BSO salaries take another hit

EVENTS

- Creativity and the Law Conference
  April 10
  American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM)
  Baltimore
  Presented by Maryland Lawyers for the Arts and AVAM

- National Arts Advocacy Day
  April 12-13
  Washington, D.C.
  Sponsored by Americans for the Arts

- CityLit Festival
  April 17
  Enoch Pratt Free Library, Cathedral Street
  Baltimore
  Includes reading by Stanley Plumly, Maryland's poet laureate

- Amnesty International Human Rights Art Festival
April 23-25
Silver Spring
Montgomery
Traditions presents program on Saturday, April 24

- **Mark Twain celebration**
  April 24
  St. Mary’s College of Maryland
  St. Mary’s City
  Learn about Twain’s connections to Southern Md.

- **National Arts Education Association Conference**
  April 14-16
  Baltimore
  Online registration available

- **Baltimore Kinetic Sculpture Race**
  May 1
  Inner Harbor, Baltimore
  Presented by American Visionary Art Museum

- **Washington International Fine Arts Festival**
  May 1-2
  National Harbor
  Prince George’s County
  Features artwork of 135 international artists. Free admission.

- **MSAC Celebration of Individual Artist Awards**
  May 20
  American Visionary Art Museum
  Baltimore

- **MSAC Maryland Traditions Showcase**
  June 10
  Creative Alliance
  Baltimore

- **Dance Beyond Borders**
  Dance/USA 2010 annual conference
  June 16-19
  Washington, D.C.

- **Americans for the Arts Half-Century Summit**
  June 25-27
  Baltimore
  Online registration available
OPPORTUNITIES & DEADLINES

- **Application for Program Director position at Maryland State Arts Council** due April 12. Check online for job details.

- **Maryland CDP offers training webinars**
  Learn how to best use the Cultural Data Project (CDP)'s online management tool for arts and cultural organizations. After entering required data, organizations can generate a variety of reports that will identify strengths and compare development to comparable groups in other areas.
  Sign up for online training at these webinars:
  - New-user training, April 15, 10 a.m.
  - New-user training for small arts groups, April 29, 10 a.m.
  - Reports training, May 18, 1 p.m.
  - New-user training for small arts groups, June 10, 10:00 am

- **MSAC Arts in Communities FY2011** application deadlines: April 21, July 14, Sept. 15, 2010 and Jan. 19, 2011. Projects should begin or take place after July 1, 2010. For more information, e-mail or call Shirley Howard, program director, 410-767-6542.

- **Maryland Artist/Teacher Institute** application deadline is April 23. Conference – which focuses on designing and implementing an arts-integrated curriculum – runs July 11-17 at University of Maryland University College in Adelphi. Created through joint efforts of Maryland State Department of Education, University System of Maryland, Maryland State Arts Council and Arts Education in Maryland Schools Alliance.

- **Community Arts Education Leadership Institute**, a five-day seminar for current and aspiring arts education executives, runs July 14-18 at Drexel University in Philadelphia. Deadline for applications (available online) is March 15.

- **Save America’s Treasures** grant applications are due May 21. Grants are awarded for preservation, conservation work on nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts, and nationally significant historic structures and sites. Awards range from $25,000 to $700,000. Applicants must register on Grants.gov to apply.