

*Merced County Arts Council, Inc.*



Arbor Gallery Exhibit at the Big Valley Arts & Culture Festival, 2008

Annual Report  
2008-2009





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*www.artsMerced.org*

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Multicultural Arts Center | 645 West Main Street | Merced CA 95340  
p: (209) 388-1090 | f: (209) 388-1106 | [www.artsMerced.org](http://www.artsMerced.org)



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## Director's Reflections

By Staci M. Santa, Executive Director

Thirty-one years in the making and the Arts Council continues to evolve to inspire and nurture the arts in Merced County. While much of our recent success is a part of the Arts Council's foundation, our new endeavors are the pillars, taking us to new levels, building on the strong history that we are so proud of, and exploring what might come next. It is thrilling and an honor to serve this creative, talented and diverse community.



American Institute of Architecture award recipient

Thank you to the Board of Directors, especially our Board president Kathy Hansen, the curatorial committee, the A Team, the staff, our volunteers and members, and arts advocates, for your continued support of the arts and the Arts Council.

[www.artsMerced.org](http://www.artsMerced.org)

## Our Mission in Real Life

### ARTREE

ARTREE is an arts-in-education resource for the schools and the community in Merced County. This year, ARTREE activities included native American and Mexican

dances, African folklore, the Do-Re-Mi's of music, portrait drawing and much more. We increased our roster this year with seven new visual or performing artists, and partnered with Playhouse Merced to request funding for future arts-in-education activities.



### Enrichment Center

Not only do they have an art exhibit off site, but also the Enrichment Center clients wrote, produced, directed, cast, designed sets and costumes for, and everything in between their own play, *Sacha Rose and the Magic Apple Tree Spell*. Their work in creative literacy this year helped them



EC artists and actors smile for the camera

Page 4 explore language and expand their communications skills. Also, ask them about *Stomp*, EC style!

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**Art Exhibits**

Professional artists from all over California's coast and Central Valley exhibited amazing work in our four galleries, as well as high school students, the Enrichment Center and local arts co-ops. The galleries are free and open to the public daily except Sunday.



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Carol Tikijan's *Why Abstract? Reflections on Saroyan*

**Coalition & Capacity Building**



The Art Hop and the Merced Performing Arts Presenters Coalition are both new partnerships that intend to support and promote visual and performing artists, as well as organizations who present live performances.

Staci Santa with fellow Art Hop coordinators Luis de la Cruz, Tami Davidson, Kevin Hammon, Kimberly Zamora and Irene de la Cruz

**Children & The Arts**

Visual arts classes for children\* ages 2-5 and 2nd Saturdays\*\*—monthly performances for young children are two new endeavors that young families can't get enough of! Highlight: two sold out performances of the children's opera *Little Red Riding Hood*.

\*1st year funded by First 5 mini-grant

\*\*1st year funded by United Way of Merced County



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[www.artsMerced.org](http://www.artsMerced.org)

## Real Life, continued



### Music & Dance

Performers like jazz musician Barbara Morrison, who had the audience dancing in the aisles, or Men of Worth, who are as charming as they are talented, and dances that even include night-of dance lessons\* transformed our black box theatre into a nightclub in a heartbeat...or drumbeat.

\*funded by Merced Co. Area Agency on Aging

Valentine's Day 2009, *Absinth Makes the Heart Grow Fonder*

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### Community Outreach

The annual (and free!) *Big Valley Arts & Culture Festival* showcases Merced's local talent and cultures.

*Arts Merced*, our quarterly newsletter, and our website, [www.artsMerced.org](http://www.artsMerced.org), spread news about the arts to thousands in Merced County—so people knew how support them, either by attending, donating or advocating, and simply where to go to have a good time.



Free children's art activities at AMGEN Tour of California

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### Development

Even during tough economic times, the Arts Council retained the vast majority of our members, and even won the support of a few more. Our fundraising gala was sold out, and all of our events this year broke even. We are *particularly* grateful to our Galaxy donors, to whom we cannot express our appreciation enough .



Playhouse Merced brings galleries to life during Saroyan celebration

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## Our Mission in Numbers

The Arts Council staff, board and volunteers work hard for every penny we raise and earn. In fact, nearly half of our budget is earned revenue, including ARTREE and the Enrichment Center, as well as admission to performances and class and workshop fees. Thanks to the on-going generosity of the City of Merced, we do not owe rent for the beautiful, City-owned Merced Multicultural Arts Center. Yet, our operating expenses still total about 44% of the total budget that we spend each year. Heating, cooling, lighting and cleaning this 28,000 square-foot Arts Center are major factors included in this figure.



Without contributed support from memberships, Galaxy donors, individual contributions, corporate sponsorships, and other donations, we could not maintain both our mission and the Arts

Center, as we've promised to the community. If you would like to learn more about how you can support our efforts, either by donating time, in-kind items, or monetary contributions, please contact the executive director, Staci Santa, by calling (209) 388-1090 or by emailing her at [director@artsMerced.org](mailto:director@artsMerced.org).

Thank you again for your continued support of the arts and the Arts Council!



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**2008-2009**

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