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Arts Orange County Announces 19th Annual OC Arts Awards Honorees

APRIL 18, 2018 – IRVINE, CALIFORNIA – The Orange County arts community will gather on Tuesday, October 16, 2018 in the Samueli Theater, Segerstrom Center for the Arts in Costa Mesa, to honor its arts stars at the 19th Annual Orange County Arts Awards, hosted by the county's non-profit arts agency, Arts Orange County.

This year's ***Helena Modjeska Cultural Legacy Award for lifetime contributions*** to the Orange County arts community will recognize: **Mark and Janet Hilbert**, the art collectors and philanthropists who created the new Hilbert Museum of California Art at Chapman University; Orange County's oldest arts organization, the **Laguna Art Museum**, now celebrating its 100th anniversary; Newport Beach artist **Carol Saindon**, known for her abstract photomontages, sculptures and art installations; and South Coast Repertory Managing Director **Paula Tomei**, whose career with SCR has spanned nearly 40 years.

An ***Achievement Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Built Environment*** will be given to the visionary public art project "**Brea: Blackstone, 2017**," consisting of eight distinct large-scale sculptures created by Laguna Beach artist **Marlo Bartels**, situated throughout a new home development **built by Shea Homes** and situated **within the City of Brea**, a community which already houses Orange County's oldest and largest public art collection.

The ***Emerging Artist Awards*** will be given to: writer, publisher, multi-disciplinary artist and community activist **Sarah Rafael Garcia**, who founded Barrio Writers, which empowers teens in underserved communities through writing, and is currently an Artist-in-Residence at California State University, Fullerton's Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana; and to artist **Brian Peterson**, a car designer for Kia Motors in Irvine, who founded Faces of Santa Ana, an organization that befriends and paints portraits of homeless members of our community, and helps rehabilitate his homeless subjects with the proceeds from the sale of these works.

This is the tenth consecutive year that the Orange County Arts Awards will take place at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. Preceding the ceremonies, honorees, sponsors and VIP guests will enjoy a pre-event reception and dinner at the elegant Leatherby's Café Rouge before joining ceremony guests for dessert and the evening's program in the Samueli Theater. Emcees for this year's event are **Debora Wondercheck**, Founder and CEO of the Arts & Learning Conservatory in Costa Mesa, and **Richard Stein**, President & CEO of Arts Orange County.

"Since 2000, Arts Orange County has honored the people and organizations that have enriched the artistic life of our community," commented Richard Stein. "Each year, we look forward to recognizing those who have made an indelible mark on Orange County over the course of a lifetime and those who have sprung up recently in our fertile creative community. And then we plan a great big party for everyone to enjoy where we can celebrate those accomplishments!"

[A list of honorees with descriptions follows.](http://artsoc.org/awards.htm) Information on sponsorships and reservations may be found at <http://artsoc.org/awards.htm>

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Helena Modjeska Cultural Legacy Awards

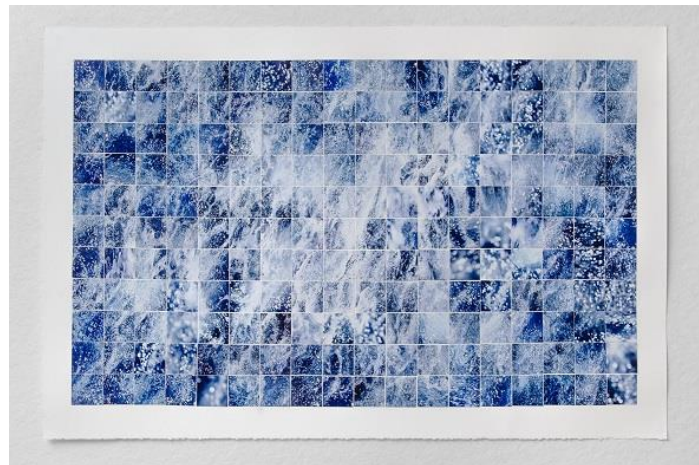


Mark and Janet Hilbert – As devoted art collectors, Mark and Jan Hilbert amassed one of the largest and most important collections of California Scene Painting, a genre that arose in the early 1900s, and went through a golden age in the 1930s, when it documented the catalysts of cultural change of the time, like the Great Depression and the growth of Hollywood. Among the best-known artists in the genre are Millard Sheets, Rex Brandt, Phil Dike, and Emil Kosa, Jr., to name just a few. Today, contemporary California artists continue to create work in this style. In 2014, the Hilberts gifted \$7 million in art and \$3 million in funds to Chapman University to create The Hilbert Museum of California Art, which opened its doors in 2016. The museum, located directly across the street from the Orange train station, has attracted large numbers of visitors and considerable media attention, which has resulted in plans its expansion, already under way. New York City born Mark Hilbert arrived with his family in Pasadena at the age of three months and has been a proud Californian ever since. He graduated from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in 1966 with a degree in engineering, and immediately went to work for the Trane Company as an air conditioning engineer, a job he worked at for two decades. Over the course of that time, he began buying residential properties in Southern California. In 1985, he invented the “Chiller Optimizer,” a new product that reduced the energy consumption of air conditioning units. In 1988, he founded Hilbert Property Management, a Newport Beach-based company in which he still serves as managing partner. Mark married his wife, Janet, in 1994. Janet received her master’s degree and teaching credential from the University of Southern California, and served as professor of business at Santa Ana College for 35 years. Mark and Janet, who have three children and six grandchildren, reside in Newport Beach.

<http://www.hilbertmuseum.com/>



Laguna Art Museum – Now celebrating its 100th Anniversary as Orange County’s oldest arts institution, Laguna Art Museum is devoted exclusively to California art. The museum traces its origins to the Laguna Beach Art Association (LBAA), formed by local artists in 1918 and incorporated in 1920 with artist Edgar Payne as president. At first the members met and showed their works in a converted board-and-batten cottage. But in 1929, following a successful fundraising drive headed by another early Laguna Beach painter, Anna Hills, they opened a grand, custom-built gallery designed by the well-known Los Angeles architect Myron Hunt. This survives as the Steele Gallery within the present museum building. The LBAA used the gallery essentially as a way of showing and selling the members’ own works. With the growth of a permanent collection of donated works and the beginnings of a program of loan exhibitions, however, the gallery took on some of the characteristics of a museum. In 1972 it became the Laguna Beach Museum of Art. It changed its name to Laguna Art Museum in 1986 with the physical expansion that completed the building as it now stands. Today the museum showcases works from its collection, special exhibitions, and an array of events, including artist talks, concerts, family days, and more. <http://lagunaartmuseum.org/>



“Suite of Four, 2016”

Carol Saindon – Having lived near the Pacific Ocean for thirty years, Carol Saindon is an artist inspired by the observation and contemplation of the forces that move the seas: “From what is known of the observable universe, the massive turbulence taking place in galaxies and supernovas is witnessed in part on Earth in the push and pull of tides and strong weather patterns affecting the oceans.” In addition to a long career as an artist, Saindon has taught art at Scripps College, California State University, Fullerton, Orange Coast College and Chapman University. Saindon’s work is in the collections of the Palm Springs Art Museum, Chapman University and Scripps College, as well as many private collections. Solo exhibitions of her work have been presented in Los Angeles and Orange County, and have appeared in many group exhibitions, including in New York City. <http://www.carolsaindonartist.com/>



Paula Tomei – For nearly 40 years, Paula Tomei has been one of the driving forces behind South Coast Repertory (SCR), one of America’s most respected and successful resident professional theatre companies. She is responsible for the overall administration of SCR, where she has been managing director since 1994 and a member of the staff since 1979. She is a past president of the board of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for theatre. In addition, she served as treasurer of TCG, vice president of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and as a member of the LORT Negotiating Committee for industry-wide union agreements. She represents SCR at national conferences of TCG and LORT and served as a theatre panelist and site visitor for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the California Arts Council. Her teaching background includes a graduate class in nonprofit management at UC Irvine (UCI) and as a guest lecturer in the graduate school of business at Stanford. She was appointed by the chancellor to UCI’s Community Arts Council, serves on the Dean’s Leadership Society Executive Committee for the School of Social Sciences at UCI and is a member of the College of Arts Dean’s Task Force for California State University, Fullerton. She is also on the board of Arts Orange County, the county-wide arts council, and the board of the Nicholas Endowment. She graduated from UCI with a degree in economics and pursued an additional course of study in theatre and dance. In March 2017, she received the Mayor’s Award from the City of Costa Mesa for her contributions to the arts community. <https://www.scr.org/>

Achievement Award for Contribution to the Built Environment



“Brea, Blackstone 2017”

Artist: Marlo Bartels

Developer: Shea Homes

Community: City of Brea

It is rare that an artist gets to consider a large-scale commission such as “Brea, Blackstone 2017”. “Brea, Blackstone, 2017,” created by Laguna Beach artist Marlo Bartels for Shea Homes, consists of eight site-specific sculptural installations, spanning a half-mile, that lace a major road traversing a new bedroom community. The sites are embedded in a park-like setting with a multiuse trail connecting them. As one climbs Tonner Ridge, the taller installations can be seen rising up in the distance. Marlo Bartels’ monumental installations are also easily seen from the adjacent road. Discovery, exploration, and play fuel the motivation to move from site to site. Huge seven-foot prongs of Opuntia cactus, magnified diatoms, giant California king snakes, oil derricks, water drops and crystals, etc., draw on prominent characteristics of the area. The scale of the sculptural installations at Blackstone shift with each site. Up close, the monumental forms reveal surfaces covered with individual handmade tile bursting with detail, color, and energetic shapes.

Marlo Bartels has been producing and installing permanent ceramic and stone sculpture, mosaics, pictorial murals and functional art for cities, institutions and personal clients since 1977. He works with ceramic tile, terrazzo & stone; shaping, forming and glazing the clay elements by hand. His work includes sculpture, indoor and outdoor walls, fountains, floors and functional art and features durability and low-maintenance.

Shea Homes, a member of the J.F. Shea Co., Inc. family of companies (founded in Portland, Oregon in 1881 by John Francis Shea), is America's largest privately owned new home builder, primarily building mid-priced to high-end homes. Headquartered in Walnut, California, the company develops new home communities in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Nevada, North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington and Texas.

The City of Brea was incorporated on February 23, 1917 as the eighth official city of Orange County, and today has a population of more than 39,000. Brea also has Orange County’s oldest municipal art-in-public-places program, begun in 1975, and comprising 178 works of art—larger than any other OC city.

With this award, Arts Orange County celebrates the collaboration among Shea Homes

(<http://www.sheahomes.com/>), the City of Brea (<http://www.ci.brea.ca.us/>) and the artist Marlo Bartels

(<http://www.marlobartels.com/>). You are invited to view the following video about the artist and the project:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPi_846bhcg

Emerging Artists Awards



Photo: Juliana Rico

Sarah Rafael Garcia - Since the publication of her work, *Las Niñas, A Collection of Childhood Memories* in 2008, Sarah Rafael Garcia continued to share her writings and community outreach by founding Barrio Writers in 2009, a reading and writing program aimed to empower youth through creative writing. Since 2010, she has hosted Wild Womyn Writers, workshops that create neutral spaces which empower women to explore their creative spirits. Most recently, she founded LibroMobile and co-founded Crear Studio in Santa Ana, California. Over the last 12 years, she has taught English as a Second Language, Spanish, and Language Arts to all ages. She has also taught English Composition courses at Texas State University and obtained a M.F.A. in Creative Writing with a cognate in Media Studies in May 2015. Her poetry, creative non-fiction and fiction have appeared in *LATINO Magazine*, *Contrapuntos III*, *Outrage: A Protest Anthology For Injustice in a Post 9/11 World*, *La Tolteca Zine*, *As/Us Journal*, *The Acentos Review*, among others. She serves as an Editor for the annual Barrio Writers anthology; the 5th edition was a finalist for the “Best Educational Young Adult Book” by the International Latino Book Awards. Sarah is a member of the Macondo Writer’s Workshop founded by Sandra Cisneros and Co-editor of the *pariahs, writing from outside the margins* anthology. Most recently, she was featured in *Kirkus Reviews* and awarded for *Santana’s Fairy Tales*, which is supported in part by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, through a grant supporting the Artist-in-Residence initiative at California State University, Fullerton’s Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana, California. <https://sarahrafaelgarcia.com/>



Photo: John Hwang

Brian Peterson - Faces of Santa Ana was founded by Brian Peterson, an artist from Miami, Florida, who studied art and design at the Cleveland Institute of Art and is a car designer for Kia Motors in Irvine. He and his wife live in the Artists Village in Santa Ana, where they met neighbors who were living on the street. Faces of Santa Ana is a passion project where Brian sets out to befriend and paint portraits of the homeless community in Santa Ana. Peterson begins the Faces of Santa Ana process by getting to know his subjects, photographing them, and then painting colored versions on canvas. The artwork is then sold, and the proceeds are used to help rehabilitate his homeless subjects. The mission of Faces of Santa Ana is to help those in need while also inspiring and activating creatives and supporters of the movement. <http://www.facesofsantaana.com/>

Emcees



Debora Wondercheck (MFA) is the Founder and CEO of the Arts & Learning Conservatory, an inspirational arts education program now celebrating 10 years of influential growth in Orange County. Starting with only four performances a year and growing to over 35 county-wide, Debora expanded Arts & Learning's reach in just a decade, from 21 students to over 1,500, and its audiences now extend to 10,000 annually. Arts & Learning Conservatory received Arts Orange County's Outstanding Arts Organization Award in 2014 for the creation of effective arts and education programs to youth. Debora also currently serves as Director of Music at the Waldorf School of Orange County (unanimously superior rated orchestra of SCSBOA), and is the founding conductor of the Bellagio Strings Youth Orchestra of OC. Debora is an accomplished Master teacher of string pedagogy having taught at Vanguard University, Irvine Unified School District, and Newport Mesa Unified District. In 2014, Debora was presented the Distinguished Woman of Substance Award of Orange County. In 2012, Debora received the Links Incorporated Woman of Service Award, for Exemplary Community Service to youth for her After School Arts Programs. Debora has also received the Teacher of Excellence Award from the Newport Mesa Unified District. Debora embraces her community with participation on various arts commissions like the Cultural Arts Committee for the city of Costa Mesa, the Arts Alliance of California, and the Orange County Music and Arts Administrator Association. Debora always counts it a high privilege to serve children, their families, and our community with inspiring programs that develop confidence and creativity ...for life. <http://artsandlearning.org/>



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