Dear Friends and Supporters,

It is with pride and sincere thanks that we present this report on Youth in Arts’ accomplishments over the past year. We are so grateful for the assistance and support our exceptional volunteers and generous donors have provided this year, as always. Together, we can point to some remarkable achievements!

Included in this report are highlights from our Artists in School Programs, VSA arts (formerly Very Special Arts), Performing Arts Series, Italian Street Painting Festival and “Till Dawn, our teen a cappella ensemble. Also included is a summary of our 2006-07 finances and our board and staff lists. We have many new faces in the office! We hope you will come by and meet us in person, if you haven’t already done so.

As we look back over the year, we also consider our future vision. Directed by our long-range strategic plan, we are working to build links between programs to create a richer, more cohesive overall arts experience for our community. This effort echoes findings from a recent national study by the Arts Education Partnership entitled Third Space. The study, which focused on school-based programs, found that the arts provide a unique platform for supportive exchanges between and among students, teachers, parents and community members. When the arts are truly integrated into the life of a community — on multiple levels — the result is transformative, individually and collectively.

Aiming for this kind of transformation is ambitious, but essential if we are committed to enriching our children’s (and our own) lives through the arts. As we work towards this goal, we are grateful for your partnership and support.

Sincerely,

Mimi Murphy President

Pamela Levine Fund for Arts Education

As many know, Pam Levine, Youth in Arts’ Executive Director for the past decade, passed away in April 2007. The tribute to Pam created by Cuong Nguyen and Joel Yau at this year’s Italian Street Painting Festival was a wonderful reminder of her dedication to the arts, this organization, and the community. To help sustain Pam’s vision of the arts as a vital part of life in Marin, the Ingrid D. Tauber Philanthropic Foundation generously provided seed restricted funds to establish the Pamela Levine Fund for Arts Education. Pam’s sister, Elizabeth Lundquist, and her husband Bertil generously contributed to the fund.

Photographer: Joy Phoenix
**Artists in Schools**

Artists in Schools (AIS) places professional visual, performing, and new media artists into pre-K-12 classrooms to work with students over an extended period (usually 8-10 weeks). Over the past year, we increased our AIS teaching hours and the number of children served and began a new in-depth collaboration that we believe will help shape the future direction of arts education in Marin.

In 2006-07, AIS provided 2,850 hours of arts education in 334 classrooms for nearly 8,000 students, as compared to 4,750 students in 272 classrooms the year prior. We also strengthened components that support the Third Space philosophy of arts-infused schools. For example, we added professional development workshops that support the active involvement of classroom teachers in our arts programs. Over the past year, we conducted teacher trainings at Coleman Elementary, Neil Cummins Elementary and Hall Middle School.

The training for Neil Cummins and Hall took place as part of a new ongoing collaboration through which Youth in Arts and the Larkspur School District will develop a district-wide sequential arts program known as ST (Supporting Teaching of Arts). ST will weave the arts into the curriculum and other academic standards, will work with pre-K classrooms to work with students over an extended period (usually 8-10 weeks). Over the past year, we increased our AIS teaching hours and the number of children served and began a new in-depth collaboration that we believe will help shape the future direction of arts education in Marin.

**VSA arts**

Formerly “Very Special Arts,” now “Vision, Strength and Accessibility,” VSA arts is an international program founded in 1974 by Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith to help people with disabilities learn through, participate in, and enjoy the arts. Youth in Arts is the designated Marin provider for VSA arts. Our program is one of California’s most extensive, providing in-depth arts learning for children and young adults with physical, cognitive, and developmental disabilities.

In 2006-07, we served 350 VSA arts students in 33 classes. The program involved 11 visual and performing artists. Program Director Nydia Gonzalez has been selected to serve on the state board for VSA arts and represented California at the national conference in Washington, DC in November.

This year we are building professional development into VSA arts. We have been invited by the Marin County Office of Education to provide training to all special education pre-K teachers and aides in 2008. We are also consulting with VSA arts parents to make the Italian Street Painting Festival more accessible for all families and pursuing funding for sign language interpretation for PAS performances.

**Performing Arts Series**

Youth in Arts’ Performing Arts Series (PAS) provides live theater, music and dance in matinees by national and international touring companies specifically geared towards pre-K through 8th grade students.

The 2006-07 season included 23 performances by 12 companies for a total audience of 11,400 students, teachers and parents. Youth in Arts provided 1,915 scholarship tickets for low-income students. This number has increased steadily since 2001, reflecting our commitment to make performances economically accessible.

We are currently working to connect PAS more directly to our school-linked programs by inviting selected AIS artists to perform with their professional companies and by creating professional development workshops for teachers.

**Italian Street Painting Festival**

The Festival was again a wonderful community celebration and a successful fundraising event for our school-based programs. The 2007 theme was Three Dimensions and the Festival included the world premiere of sculptural street painting by Mark Wagner and Clayton Thiel. This year’s event included 179 squares created by 280 artists including 8 school groups, and over 1,200 Children’s Avenue artists. Square and corporate sponsorship revenue increased over 23% and 10% respectively.

We celebrated the tenure of retiring Festival Director Sue Carlomagno who, with her husband Joe, created the Italian Street Painting Festival in 1988. Under Sue’s leadership, the Festival has created numerous tributes, including a mayoral proclamation.

The fifteenth annual Italian Street Painting Festival will be held June 14-15, 2008. The theme will be Youth, highlighting images of youth and childhood in art throughout the ages.

**‘Til Dawn**

Youth in Arts’ teen a cappella ensemble performs at community events, benefits and schools. ‘Til Dawn delivers positive messages about the value of the arts and about social issues relevant to youth. The group performs well-known popular songs and original songs by members.

This year, ‘Til Dawn provided 44 public, private and school performances, as compared to 32 in the year prior. We estimate a total 2006-07 audience of 82,800, including 2,800 school children, a 5% increase from 2006-06.

In 2007, ‘Til Dawn took Third Place in the International Championship of High School A Cappella. This major honor required progress through several levels of competition around the West. ‘Til Dawn’s recording of “Ain’t No Sunshine” by Bill Withers, released on the album Songs in the Key of AWESOME, was nominated for the Just Plain Folks Music Awards, the world’s largest music awards program.

In the upcoming year, ‘Til Dawn will partner with the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI), a teen group at the Marin Youth Center. YLI will train ‘Til Dawn in leadership, advocacy and local issues critical to youth. ‘Til Dawn will provide basic oratory and vocal training. The two groups will collaborate on original songs for performance and use in youth-created public service announcements.

For more information on any Youth in Arts program, contact the Program Director below at 415-457-4878.

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The training for Neil Cummins and Hall took place as part of a new ongoing collaboration through which Youth in Arts and the Larkspur School District will develop a district-wide sequential arts program known as STARS (Sequential Thematic Arts Reaching Schools). STARS will include not only professional development, but also a comprehensive curriculum developed by artists and teachers together. The overall program, linked to state Visual and Performing Arts and other academic standards, will weave the arts into both schools, creating a rich environment for learning and exchange. The project is a model designed to be replicated in other Marin districts, and we anticipate that findings from the project evaluation will help provide countywide guidance for improving arts education in school.

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