



**Massachusetts Artists
Leaders Coalition**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Massachusetts Artists of All Disciplines Unite to Form Leaders Coalition

Boston, MA, July 31, 2008 — Artists and Artist Leaders throughout Massachusetts have announced today the formation of the Massachusetts Artists Leaders Coalition (MALC). MALC will help ensure that Massachusetts artists of all disciplines have a voice in current dialogs and decisions that are shaping the creative economy, as well as other key public policy initiatives that impact the artists community.

"There is nothing like this out there," says Ja-Nae Duane, opera singer and president/founder of Wild Women Entrepreneurs. "MALC is setting a precedent for the nation to follow and is innovating how artists and artist leaders work together on key issues. It is extremely exciting!"

MALC's initiatives and connected working groups are designed to bring artist leaders and artists run organizations together around key statewide issues facing Massachusetts artists creating and working in all disciplines. Though participants may have different perspectives on how best to address the issues facing the artists community, MALC members are all committed to improving the social and economic position of Massachusetts artists. MALC's goal is to empower the artists' community, support existing artist leaders, and to mentor new artist leaders. MALC wants to ensure that artists permanently have a place at the policy making table.

"There have been several instances in the past year where I've seen that it's essential to have working artists consult on policy decisions that pertain to artists. Working artists are in their own way some of the most passionate community activists; we often have to be if we want to get our work noticed." said Jeff Carpenter, visual artist, co-founder & president of Arts United/Fall River.

MALC does not intend to replicate or duplicate existing organizations and their efforts. Instead the coalition will address the issues that directly impact artists' livelihoods. MALC members will share models/policy/methods with each other that can be implemented on local levels (city/town), as well as, on a state level. The coalition encourages artist leaders who are interested key issues, such as arts education reform and increasing funding to the state arts council, to join/work with those organizations already doing that work on a statewide level.

MALC has debuted supporting the current effort of the Artists Foundation's statewide survey **STAND UP AND BE COUNTED**. This is the first survey of its kind in the state and its goal is to collect much needed information from the artists of all disciplines living and creating in Massachusetts. Presently 1700 artists have filled out the survey. The information gathered from **STAND UP AND BE COUNTED** will help guide MALC's work as well as the work of the Artists Foundation and other advocacy, policy, and nonprofit organizations.

“It became very apparent after last year’s Artists Under the Dome event at the State House, its connected artists conference at the Boston Public Library, as well as the numerous Artists Town Meetings the Artists Foundation held across the state, that there was a clear need to create a structure to empower artists of all disciplines to engage with each other and to also engage with policy makers on all levels. My hope is the MALC will do just that,” said Kathleen Bitetti — Boston-based visual artist and executive director of the Artists Foundation.

More information and to learn more about the MALC see:

www.artistsunderthedome.org

To fill out the STAND UP AND BE COUNTED questionnaire and for more information on the AF — www.artistsfoundation.org

* artists of all disciplines includes visual artists, writers, poets, storytellers, dancers, musicians, moving image makers, performers, and more...

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