



Arts Orange County Honors California Arts Council Chair Malissa Feruzzi Shriver



Richard Stein, Malissa Shriver, Darrel Anderson.

SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA, April 13, 2009 – Arts Orange County, the arts council serving the nation’s fifth largest county, held a reception honoring the newly-elected Chair of the California Arts Council, Malissa Feruzzi Shriver, on April 9th at Muldoon’s Dublin Pub and Restaurant in Newport Beach. It was attended by more than 40 community leaders.

Shriver was first appointed to the California Arts Council, the volunteer commission which oversees the state’s arts agency, in 2005 by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, and re-appointed in January 2009 for a second term at which time she was elected by the Council to serve as its Chair. Shriver grew up in Orange County, attended UCLA and is an artist whose medium is painting. She is the mother of two daughters and is married to Bobby Shriver, member of the City Council in Santa Monica, where they reside.

Shriver was introduced by Arts Orange County Executive Director Richard Stein, who prefaced his introduction by talking about the need for a more diverse portfolio of funding for the arts: “The arts organizations in Orange County are grateful for the generous private support we receive, but philanthropy alone is not enough to sustain our arts community. Public funding must be part of the mix.” Reminding everyone that California ranks dead last in state funding for the arts, he urged attendees to support AB700, a bill currently in the California State Assembly that will allocate a small portion of existing sales tax collected from arts-related businesses to be directed to fund creative endeavors.

Malissa Shriver spoke fondly about spending much of her childhood in Newport Beach, then attending Huntington Beach High School, and her utter delight over the evolution of Orange County’s arts community since the time she lived here. “What a tremendous job you all have done in Orange County,” she said. She expressed enormous passion for the importance of the arts to California’s business community and to the lives of its citizens, but also her great dismay over the inadequate financial commitment of the state to the arts. She encouraged the attendees to purchase the arts license plate, as that is presently the primary source of funds for

the California Arts Council, but she also spoke of the need for greater advocacy by the arts community to press for increased funding.

Attendees included major arts organization leaders such as: Terry Dwyer, President of the Orange County Performing Arts Center; Dean Corey, President & Artistic Director of the Philharmonic Society of Orange County; Doug Rankin, President of the Irvine Barclay Theatre; Paula Tomei, Managing Director of South Coast Repertory Theatre; Melanie Rios Glaser, Artistic Director of Saint Joseph Ballet; Dennis Power, President of the Laguna College of Art and Design; John Forsythe, President of the Pacific Symphony Orchestra; Zoot Velasco, Director of The Muckenthaler Cultural Center, and Karen Wood, Managing Director of the Laguna Playhouse.

Board members of organizations in attendance included Darrel Anderson, Sophie Cripe, and Mary Lyons of Arts Orange County; Al Beimfohr of the Philharmonic Society of Orange County; Janet Ray of the Balboa Theatre for the Performing Arts; and Mary Ann Gaido of the Irvine Barclay Theatre.

Newport Beach City Council Member Nancy Gardner was in attendance as were two leaders of Orange County's philanthropic community, Shelley Hoss, President of the Orange County Community Foundation and Marcos Ramirez, Program Officer of the Fieldstone Foundation.

The reception was hosted by Sindi & Ron Schwartz, owners of Muldoon's and trustees of the Laguna Playhouse.