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ARTS ORANGE COUNTY APPOINTS NEW VICE PRESIDENT & COO: PATRICK BRIEN JOINS ARTSOC TEAM

JUNE 2, 2022 – IRVINE, CALIFORNIA – **Arts Orange County (ArtsOC), the nonprofit countywide arts council, has announced the appointment of Patrick Brien to the position of Vice President & Chief Operating Officer. Brien joins the ArtsOC team on July 1. The position is a new one at ArtsOC, and reflects its continued growth and evolution as Orange County’s leading arts services organization.**

For nearly 17 years, Patrick Brien has served as Executive Director of the Riverside Arts Council in Riverside, California, where he helped to connect the regional arts and cultural infrastructure of the inland region. As a mixed-race child of an American father and a mother born and raised in Japan, cultural and social equity has always been at the forefront of Brien’s intent. He has spearheaded multiple programs directed toward BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) and other underserved communities, including art as therapy for dementia patients and adults with developmental disabilities, and arts in corrections within the state prison system. Much of his work has focused on building the capacity of individual artists and small arts organizations. His work as an advocate on behalf of public funding for the arts has put him in offices of elected officials at the local, state and federal levels.

Brien serves on the Board of Directors of Californians for the Arts and California Arts Advocates, as well as on the Executive Committee of the United States Urban Arts Federation. He was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the Americans for the Arts Action Fund. Grant panels on which he has served include: National Endowment for the Arts, Wyoming Arts Council, Long Beach Arts Council, and California Arts Council (multiple times). Prior to entering the arts administration field, Brien’s background was professional theatre. He has produced, acted and directed for companies from Hawaii to Europe and throughout the United States. He ran theatres in Germany and Wyoming, and more recently founded and served as Producing Artistic Director of The Gestalt Theatre Project, for which he has staged several regional and west coast premiers. Brien is a first-generation college graduate of Chapman University with a BA in Theatre and Film and Television. His arts spotlight columns have been a weekly feature of the Press Enterprise, Riverside’s primary media outlet, for nearly ten years.

“I have known Patrick as a theatre colleague for more than thirty years and our professional association grew even stronger over the past decade as we worked together in advocating to elected officials for the advancement of arts support,” **commented ArtsOC President & CEO Richard Stein.** “His deep experience as longtime chief executive of the nonprofit arts council in

neighboring Riverside County and the knowledge he possesses of Orange County from his university years and early career endeavors make him perfectly suited to help ArtsOC take on the opportunities presented by its present and future growth. This was further reinforced when ArtsOC brought on Riverside Arts Council to help develop the arts component of the City of Temecula 2020 community services master plan for which ArtsOC was contracted by Orange County-based RJM Design Group. With cultural planning playing an increasingly important role in ArtsOC's activities, our work will be strengthened by the addition of Patrick to our leadership team. And because many of the activities and programs of our two arts councils are similar, Patrick's innate understanding of and commitment to our mission will enable him to hit the ground running."

"Orange County was truly my training ground," **said Brien.** "I gained so many opportunities during and after college, as well as beyond. Between having continued to follow artists and organizations and collaborating with Rick and Arts Orange County, I've been able to witness the incredible growth the arts community has experienced. Being able to be part of that now quite honestly feels like coming home. I had my first professional opportunities here. I'm fantastically excited by what the future holds."

Arts Orange County (ArtsOC) is the leader in building appreciation of, participation in, and support for the arts and arts education in Orange County, California, a community comprised of 3.2 million residents in 34 cities. ArtsOC is designated as the official local arts agency and state-local partner by the County of Orange Board of Supervisors. In addition to traditional arts council programs and services, such as the Imagination Celebration, OC Día del Niño, Orange County Arts Awards, Creative Edge Lecture, professional development, and serving as the principal convener of arts leaders and artists in the community, ArtsOC has distinguished itself as a provider of high quality, affordable advisory services in the areas of strategic planning and public art management to local government, higher education, and arts organizations. A 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, ArtsOC is supported through earned program revenue, private philanthropy, and receives grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council. ArtsOC has, throughout its history, also served as a grantmaker in the arts—most recently, under contract with the County of Orange. Its Board of Directors is comprised of 30 individuals representing closely the rich demographic diversity of Orange County as well as various disciplines and constituencies in the arts and arts education. Established in 1995, its Founding Executive Director was Bonnie Brittain Hall. Richard Stein succeeded her as President & CEO in 2008.

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