



Lewiston Auburn
METROPOLITAN
CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE

For Immediate Release

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LA Public Art Working Group Announces Three Noontime Presentations on Public Art

Yarrow Thorne, Founder and Executive Director, The Avenue Concept, Providence, RI, launches the series on Thursday, October 24 at Callahan Hall, Lewiston Public Library

LEWISTON, ME, October 10, 2019 - The LA Public Art Working Group announces three noontime presentations to raise awareness of the benefit of public art plans and ordinances for communities. The events are free and open to the public and lunch is provided. Each event begins at 11:45AM and ends at 1PM.

The first two talks focus on New England communities with successful public art programs and the third addresses public art process and how to set up strong plans. Anyone who is interested in learning how public art enhances a community's economy, tourism, and overall civic engagement, as well as gaining practical information on municipal ordinances that address funding, site and art selection, installation, and maintenance should attend.

On Thursday, October 24 at Callahan Hall, Lewiston Public Library, 200 Lisbon Street, 11:45AM-1PM, Yarrow Thorne, Founder and Executive Director, The Avenue Concept, Providence, RI, shares insights on how his organization nurtures and supports public art ecosystems by investing in permanent infrastructure, funding public art projects, documenting and promoting the work of artists, using art as a tool for education, and advocating for policies, processes, and partnerships that develop sustainable avenues for public art. Founded in 2012, The Avenue Concept was Providence's first privately administered public art program. Since then it has installed or exhibited more than 150 works of public art, and invested \$1.1 million in both artwork and infrastructure.



Yarrow Thorne

On Tuesday, October 29 at LA Arts Gallery, 221 Lisbon Street, Lewiston, 11:45AM-1PM, Maine artist and Auburn native Andy Rosen and Bill Needleman, Waterfront Coordinator, Economic Development Department, City of Portland, ME, will discuss the installation of Rosen's work atop pilings on the Portland waterfront and emerging from the rising sea near the Ocean Gateway marine facility. The artist will explain how temporary public art captures the community's attention on specific topics and grows support for permanent installations. Needleman coordinated the installations and will provide observations from the municipal perspective.



Andy Rosen

The third and final 2019 presentation on **Friday, November 15 at the Androscoggin Community Room at the Auburn Public Library, 49 Spring Street, Auburn, 11:45AM-1PM**, features Julie Horn, Visual Arts Director for the Maine Arts Commission. Julie manages the State's Percent for Art program that installs public art in all state and federal buildings in Maine. Maine's percent for art program was established by a law in 1979 that decrees 1% minimum of the budget for construction or renovation costs of buildings funded through taxpayer dollars is appropriated for acquiring works of art. Each project is developed in cooperation with professionals in the local community. Since 1982, this program has generated approximately \$7,824,373 in funds for public art in Maine.

This three-part presentation series is part of the LA Public Art Working Group's management of a Maine Arts Commission (MAC) grant awarded to transform the Twin Cities into a vibrant public art community. The group formed in February 2019 after the Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce with LA Arts was awarded a \$75,000 MAC Creative Communities = Economic Development Phase 2 Grant for implementation of Cultural Plan LA. The working group is drafting a public art plan and ordinance and encourages attendance at the events on October 24, 29 and November 15 to learn more about how public art will have a positive impact on the Lewiston Auburn community.

Appointees to the working group were made by the Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, LA Arts, Arts and Culture LA, and the municipalities of Lewiston and Auburn -- all partners in the implementation of Cultural Plan LA. Working group members include:

- Sabrina Best, Recreation Director, City of Auburn
- Shoshona Currier, Director, Bates Dance Festival
- Jody Dube, Art Teacher, Lewiston High School
- William Low, Curator, Bates Museum of Art and LA Arts Board Member
- Heidi McCarthy, Economic Development Specialist, City of Lewiston
- Tom Platz, AIA, Principal, Platz Associates
- Darby Ray, Director of the Harvard Center for Community Partnerships at Bates College and LA Arts Board Clerk (group co-chair)
- Shawn Rice, Art Teacher, Edward Little High School
- Rebecca Swanson Conrad, Cultural Plan LA Advisor, LA Metro Chamber of Commerce member (group co-chair)
- Sheri Withers Hollenbeck, Owner, The Curio and Founder, Sunday Indie Market

In 2015, LA Arts was awarded the MAC Creative Communities = Economic Development Phase I Grant to develop a cultural plan. That project was sponsored by The City of Lewiston, The City of Auburn, LA Arts, and ACLA. Cultural Plan LA outlines priorities and recommendations for action which, coupled with cross-sector partnerships, will catalyze LA's potential as a creative metropolis.

Since 1973, LA Arts, the arts agency for the cities of Lewiston and Auburn Maine, has pursued a mission to engage and inspire a vibrant community through arts and culture. The agency works

with government arts agencies, city governments, businesses, and local arts and cultural organizations to create opportunities for community members across the generations to experience, learn, and participate in the arts. LA Arts organizes arts and culture programs and initiatives, supports the work of local artists and art organizations, and highlights the essential role the arts play in shaping an economically vital, socially integrated, and forward-looking future for its community. Learn more at www.laarts.org.

The membership of the Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce represents more than 900 area businesses. The staff and board of the Chamber have put arts and culture at the center of many of its programs to attract businesses to the area, to support the development of a community of young professionals, and to promote Lewiston and Auburn as a tourist destination. More information is available at www.lametrochamber.com.

Photos attached: Andy Rosen, Yarrow Thorne

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