

ALAMEDA COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION

Belief Statement in Support of the Arts



Brian Laczko

Alameda County Arts Commissioner

Representing Alameda County
Board of Supervisors, District Five
Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland,
and Piedmont

Belief Statement

As an architect and public art advocate, I find the arts have always provided me with contexts and vocabularies for examining and understanding the deepest aspects of our existence. And from that perspective, life is never, ever boring. I am a longtime subscriber to local theaters, and I enjoy attending museums and gallery openings throughout the East Bay and San Francisco. In fact, as a means of more directly satisfying my love of art in our communities, I have added public art to my list of architectural services. The reflection and dialogue that ensues from this gives me great joy.

It is said that art saves lives. Though I would agree that it is a powerful energy in our lives, there are many energies that can be harnessed. I would counter that art doesn't "save" lives, art is life. I strongly believe that art is a vehicle for positive discussion in and of our lives, something that is sorely lacking in our communities. In this respect, art is a powerful means of engagement for diverse peoples, a way to exchange ideas and build cultural understanding and connections.

As an example, when I was working with the renowned landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, we had a change of receptionist in our office. The new receptionist did not seem to have the same creative turn of mind as the previous one; she did not seem to fit into our busy and highly creative environment. But over the years of working in our studio, she took up photography. She fell in love with it, and today is a commercial photographer of considerable skill with a thriving business and a beautiful portfolio.

At annual office reunions I am always pleased at how much we can engage with one another at this creative level.

Alameda County Alliance *for* Arts Learning Leadership