

## Top Regional Arts Councils

by Ligaya Figueras

From financial support and educational programming, to marketing and career-building opportunities, arts councils across the country work tirelessly to support artists and the arts. Four arts councils – Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition, Regional Arts Commission, Florida Keys Council of the Arts and Dutchess County Arts Council – as recommended by *Art Calendar* readers in a recent survey, are going the extra mile to nurture artists and promote the arts in their communities. Find out what made them special enough to make our “tops” list.

### Dutchess County Arts Council (Poughkeepsie, NY)

#### *Treating every artist as an individual*

A caring staff, such as the people at Dutchess County Arts Council in Poughkeepsie, New York, makes a tremendous difference in the lives of artists in the community. Artist Cara Wood describes her first encounter with DCAC President Benjamin Krevolin: “He was so interested in hearing from me and asking me to describe my artwork ... and a few months later he had remembered me and asked me to participate in a show they were sponsoring in a space in a local winery. Since meeting him, I have realized that his infectious enthusiasm is guiding the Dutchess County Arts Council.”

For more information about the Dutchess County Arts Council and our programs for artists, organizations and schools, visit [www.artsmidhudson.org](http://www.artsmidhudson.org) or call 845-454-3222

Providing encouragement is one important aspect of the mission of the Dutchess County Arts Council. “I love that encouragement part of our mission,” states Krevolin. “We see individual artists as mom-and-pop manufacturing and that helps us to communicate the value of artists to the business community. We want to identify how those individuals artists can be better businesses, how they can manufacture more, and bring more money in or bring more attention to arts in the Hudson River Valley.”

The council was established in 1964 to promote and coordinate cultural activity and development in Dutchess County. The council offers an individual artist fellowship program that rotates disciplines annually. Programming includes arts management workshops with a panel discussion and practical session; a recent career development workshop topic addressed how artists can utilize social networking websites to market themselves and their work. In addition, the council is available for portfolio review.

The Dutchess County Arts Council educates the public about the importance of the arts through a variety of methods. The council publishes an arts directory and *ArtScene*, a listing of area artists and art organizations. And the DCAC sponsors an annual juried exhibition and sale of fine crafts, as well as Art in the Loft at area wineries. Also, the organization works with local businesses to coordinate art exhibits in those spaces.

In 2009, the region will celebrate the quarto-centennial of Henry Hudson’s voyage. The Dutchess County Arts Council plans to assist artists so that they become a part of that celebration through their artwork.

“We work very hard to educate the wider public about the importance of buying art—and buying art by the local public — to support local artists and local galleries,” says Krevolin. “We want to see artists be self-sustaining.” **AC**