

Enriching Lives



**Civic Art**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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MEDIA PLEASE NOTE:

Downloadable high resolution photos of Denis Richardson artwork and Richardson with community members who inspired the work are at: <http://www.lacountyarts.org/civkart/projectdetails/id/101>

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## **COMMUNITY CELEBRATES ARTWORK THEY HELPED CREATE AT LENNOX LIBRARY**

The story time happening at Lennox Library today echoes another story time in 2008 devoted to books about flight. That reading stirred the imagination of over 40 children of the Lennox community who drew all manner of flying objects and creatures using oil pastels, markers, and pencils. Their colorful artworks — depicting fairies, flying pigs and planes — became the basis for the stained glass art by Denis Richardson which graces the entranceway to the library. The artwork, commissioned by the L.A. County Arts Commission through its Civic Art Program, was celebrated as part of today's Dia de los Niños and Cinco de Mayo celebration at the library, located at 4359 Lennox Boulevard in Lennox. The story time starts at 4 p.m. and the artwork dedication at 4:30 p.m.

"Lennox Library is in the flight path of LAX," says Richardson. "I encouraged the children in the workshop to dream about things that fly. What they came up with was extraordinary."

The artwork, called "Portal de Ensueños" or "Portal of Dreams," has been commemorated in a book of the same name which includes not only photos of the stained glass but also the drawings that inspired it and how they were transformed into glass. The book was written by the artist and Civic Art project manager Letitia Fernandez Ivins, and designed by the Public Library Head Graphic Artist Walter Robles. Copies will be available for viewing today at the library.

"Denis has a sentence in the introduction to the book that really captures what we try to do in developing public art projects," says Greg Esser, Director of Civic Art for the Arts Commission. "It says 'Folktales about birds and flying creatures that connect the earth with the heavens offer lessons about the importance of exploring one's local community, environment and the larger world from different perspectives.' This is why involvement of residents is so important in our work."

Richardson, a resident of Redondo Beach, is owner and designer of Catalina Glass Studio and has worked in glass for over 35 years. Richardson has done commissions for private homes,

libraries, hospitals and schools including the Kaiser Permanente Hospital in Fontana and the Pacific School Library in Manhattan Beach. His predominantly stained glass pieces demonstrate a range of glass-making processes such as fused and kiln-formed glass. For “Portal de Ensueños,” Richardson used a fused glass and kiln-formed technique that requires five firings and detailed cutting and collaging.

Letitia Fernandez Ivins of the Arts Commission was project manager for the Lennox Library civic artwork. Under the County's Civic Art Policy, adopted in 2004, one percent of design and construction costs on County capital projects over \$500,000 are set aside for the incorporation of civic art.

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The **Los Angeles County Arts Commission**, Laura Zucker, Executive Director, provides leadership in cultural services of all disciplines for the largest county in the United States, encompassing 88 municipalities. The Arts Commission, in addition to overseeing the County's Civic Art Program for capital projects, provides leadership and staffing to support the regional blueprint for arts education, *Arts for All*; administers a grants program that funds more than 300 nonprofit arts organizations annually; programs the John Anson Ford Theatres; funds the largest arts internship program in the country in conjunction with the Getty Foundation; and supports the Los Angeles County Cultural Calendar on ExperienceLA.com. The Commission also produces free community programs, including the L.A. Holiday Celebration broadcast nationally, and a year-round music program that funds more than 40 free concerts each year in public sites. The 2010-11 President of the Arts Commission is Ronald D. Rosen.

For more information please consult the Arts Commission online press kit:

<http://lacountyarts.org/page/pubnewspress>