

City of Santa Clarita
Arts Commission

Arts Blueprint

Phase I



February 28, 2012

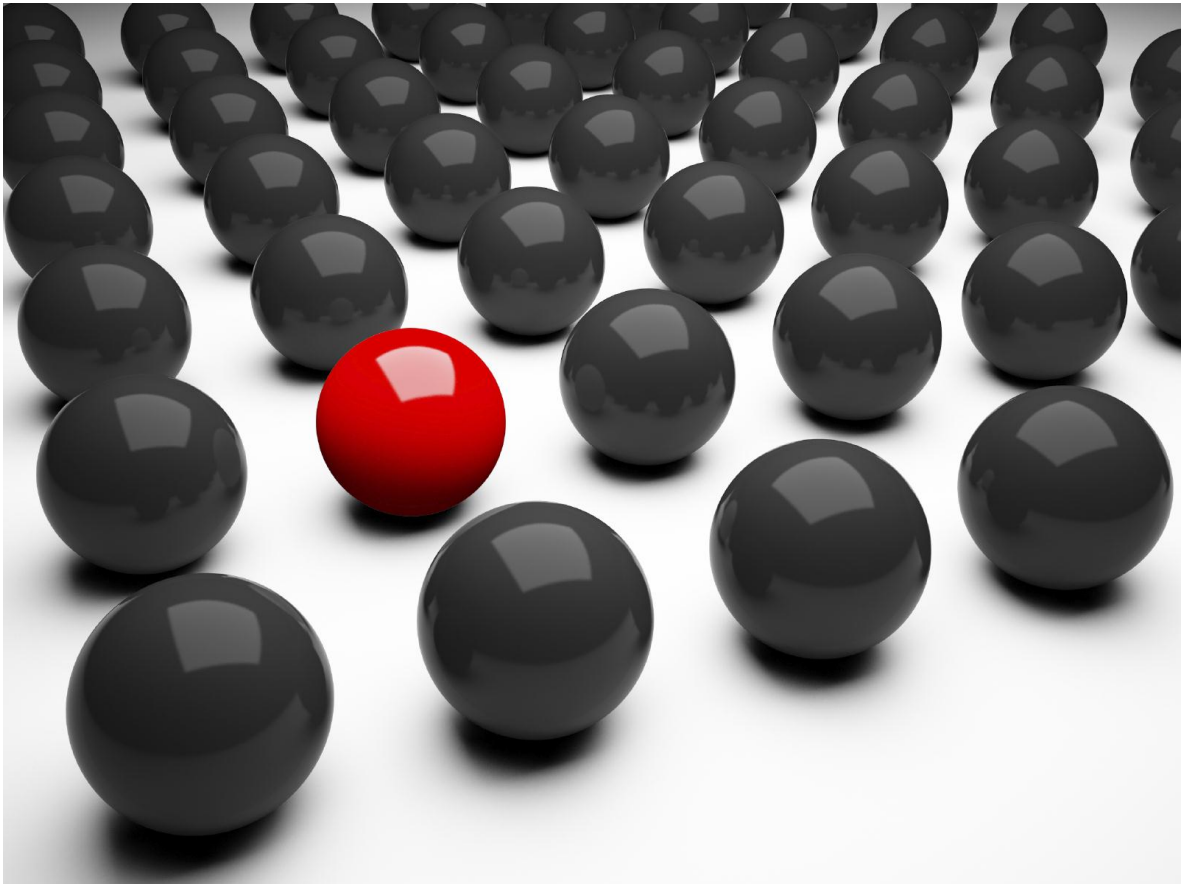
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MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Section VI



6.1 Introduction

In order to determine how to improve communications and better market the arts within the Santa Clarita Valley and to the surrounding communities, the Marketing and Communications Initiative relied on two primary methods. The first method was a thorough assessment of existing marketing and communications efforts, including on-line, print, and media. The second method was through multiple conversations with leaders in the arts community, experts in the communications and marketing field, business leaders, and local media contacts. The result identified three areas of focus to inform the broader community and the region about the arts in Santa Clarita:

- 1) Arts Website.
- 2) Santa Clarita Arts Identity.
- 3) Community Engagement.

6.2 Arts Website

The web continues to be one of the most vital and cost effective tools for information sharing. The first project of the Marketing and Communication Initiative was to utilize an existing website resource that the arts community had started to developed by. By maximizing the site's effectiveness, the Initiative can begin to address the multiple marketing needs of the arts. The website, 661Arts.com, was created by the 661Arts group to be the hub of arts information for the Santa Clarita Valley.

661Arts is an alliance of artists and arts organizations working together to create and to promote an awareness of culture in Santa Clarita. 661Arts meets once a month to address arts-related issues, network, and develop arts within the community. Originally working under the name "Arts Alliance," the group was formed in 1996 when the City of Santa Clarita invited arts organizations and individual artists to a meeting to discuss community arts needs. Out of this effort, the Arts Alliance was formed to identify and address the cultural needs of the Santa Clarita Valley.

A team was created to review and redesign the 661Arts.com website. Led by the Commission liaison for the Marketing and Communications Initiative, web developers, and City staff, this effort took many months. It entailed the creation of an entirely new site with multiple functions, and the capacity to address the communication and marketing needs of the arts community. There are two primary goals for the website:

- To build an information exchange between the various members of the arts community and create a stronger sense of connection between artists, students, teachers, and school administrators.
- To share information about the multitude of arts offerings in the Santa Clarita Valley, as no single on-line source currently details what events, programs, and initiatives are taking place locally.

RECOMMENDATION 24 – Continue to develop and evolve the 661Arts.com website to improve communications between the arts community and to better inform the broader community about the arts.

As part of the development of 661Arts.com, a group of potential ongoing contributors to the site were identified. One of the most important aspects of making the 661Arts.com site engaging is to have consistent new information and comments added to the site. This team of contributors will cover the broad spectrum of the arts community, focusing on areas, such as arts education, music, theatre, fashion, film, visual art, poetry, etc.

RECOMMENDATION 25 – Finalize the team members of the 661Arts.com contributors group and have them begin writing postings for the website.

Once the 661Arts.com site has completed the design phase, a marketing campaign is needed to inform the Santa Clarita community about the resource. This campaign should include elements such as a launch party, traditional marketing and public relations efforts, and social media.

RECOMMENDATION 26 – Develop a marketing campaign for the 661Arts.com website and implement the campaign at the conclusion of the design phase.

6.3 Santa Clarita Arts Identity

The assessment of the current marketing and communications efforts for the arts in the Santa Clarita Valley was a vital information gathering tool. It demonstrated that there is much work needed to increase the identity of the arts as a valuable part of the Santa Clarita community. Work needs to be done at every level, starting from within the arts community to regional and national branding efforts.

In terms of marketing, each artist and arts organization in Santa Clarita operates somewhat in isolation, with very little mention of their role in the wider arts community on websites, printed materials, and other marketing materials. While multiple partnerships and collaborations do occur between various arts groups for productions, events, and programs, this is not reflected in the marketing materials of the individual organizations. The 661Arts group has made several efforts over the years to address this issue, but these efforts have not yet been successful.

RECOMMENDATION 27 – Work with the 661Arts members to create a unified marketing campaign for the Santa Clarita arts community.

The assessment also revealed that the Santa Clarita community does not often include the arts as a part of the community's identity. This is seen in printed publications, on-line websites and e-newsletters, and radio and television media. There are pockets of arts information being shared through the existing marketing resources, but these efforts are primarily about individual events. A concerted effort needs go into reaching out to local marketing community leaders to share with them the value of expanding their coverage of the arts and including information about the arts

community. This effort should teach the benefits of including the arts in publications, websites, etc., particularly as it relates to expanding their audiences as a result of including arts information.

RECOMMENDATION 28 – Develop an outreach program for marketing leaders to demonstrate the value of the arts to the community.

Numerous groups within the Santa Clarita community are charged with branding Santa Clarita outside of the valley. These efforts include both regional and national efforts. Currently, when these groups describe Santa Clarita, they do not include the arts as part of their information. For example, local hotels include many descriptions of the community in their websites or printed materials, but do not mention the wonderful cultural offerings available in Santa Clarita. While it is understandable that the arts might not be the primary element to describe the community, it does warrant inclusion, particularly as Santa Clarita is the home to the California Institute of the Arts, an internationally recognized arts college. The best solution is to engage the entities that produce these outreach materials and demonstrate to them the benefits of including information on the arts.

RECOMMENDATION 29 – Schedule individual meetings with agencies that produce regional and national marketing materials and encourage them to include the arts as part of Santa Clarita’s identity.

The final method, and perhaps most valuable in terms of a long-term approach to increase awareness of the arts in Santa Clarita, is through advocacy and word of mouth. To achieve this goal there needs to be a way to increase exposure and discussions about the arts. All of the above will be a part of this effort, but there needs to be a direct marketing push to the members of the community about the arts and what they contribute to Santa Clarita. This effort should be engaging and creative, not a simple “Support the Arts” style campaign, but one that is more playful and leads to a conversation.

RECOMMENDATION 30 – Develop and launch a creative and engaging arts marketing campaign with the goal to increase awareness and discussion about the arts.

6.4 Community Engagement

Community engagement has a great deal in common with the creating a Santa Clarita Arts Identity section. The primary focus of this section refers to how the Arts Commission and staff communicates and works with other entities, such as City leadership, the business community, the school community, and others. The goal of this area is to define how the Arts Commission shares information both within the City structure and to the outside community, and to identify processes that the Commission can implement to assist in these efforts. This area was discussed at the Arts Commission Retreat, which was held on March 19, 2011, and the creation of a Community Engagement Plan was identified as one of the three objectives for the Commission in the coming year.

RECOMMENDATION 31 – Develop a Community Engagement Plan to detail how the Commission partners and shares information with the City and the community.

6.5 Conclusion

Santa Clarita has a vibrant arts community, composed of talented individuals and successful arts organizations, from elementary school students to professional artists of all types. Tens of thousands of friends, families, teachers, administrators, and funding partners support these artists. This talent must have the opportunity to showcase itself to the entire community. If the community is not aware of local talent, it cannot grow and evolve. Marketing and communications are the tools to inform, engage, and involve the entire community in the arts. Currently there are limited opportunities to share what the arts community contributes to Santa Clarita, but with some strategic and creative approaches, the arts can become more of a part of the community identity.

6.6 Attachments

- 6A - Santa Clarita Arts On-Line Assessment
- 6B - Santa Clarita Arts Print / Publications Assessment
- 6C - Santa Clarita Arts Media Assessment

SANTA CLARITA ARTS ON-LINE ASSESSMENT

The Arts On-Line Assessment was accomplished by entering key phrases into a search engine and analyzing the results to see if there were trends that could demonstrate the current role of the arts in Santa Clarita. The key phrases were as follows:

1. Santa Clarita
2. Santa Clarita Arts
3. Santa Clarita Entertainment
4. Santa Clarita Tourism

The top fifty results for each search were reviewed.

SANTA CLARITA

Here are the top fifty results from a Google search on “Santa Clarita:”

1. santa-clarita.com (The City of Santa Clarita)
2. wikipedia.org
3. tripadvisor.com
4. santaclaritaguide.com
5. the-signal.com
6. city-data.com
7. dailynews.com
8. mapquest.com
9. timeanddate.com
10. marriott.com
11. apartmentguide.com
12. wunderground.com
13. santaclaritatransit.com
14. scvchamber.com
15. lasuperiorcourt.org
16. lamountains.com
17. pardeehomes.com
18. metrolinktrians.com
19. apartments.com
20. weather.gov
21. santaclaritalibrary.com
22. santaclaritasuperads.com
23. mountasiafuncenter.com
24. forrent.com
25. scvlife.net
26. dvcsantaclarita.com

27. santaclaritavelo.com
28. lq.com (La Quinta Inn & Suites)
29. valencia.hyatt.com
30. scmarathon.com
31. equityapartments.com
32. paris911.com
33. expedia.com
34. wikitravel.org
35. santaclarita.com
36. santaclaritalanes.com
37. twitter.com/santaclarita
38. cowboyfestival.org
39. apartmentratings.com
40. weather.yahoo.com
41. filmsantaclarita.com
42. santaclaritashelter.com
43. scvsheriff.com
44. venere.com (Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites)
45. santaclaritastreetfair.com
46. bankofsantaclarita.com
47. scvhs.com (Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society)
48. visitsantaclarita.com
49. arestravel.com
50. hamptoninn.hilton.com

The following quote from the Wikipedia entry for Santa Clarita is an example of the amount of time spent describing the arts community on many of the above sites:

“Santa Clarita is usually associated with the Six Flags Magic Mountain amusement park, though the park is located just outside city limits in unincorporated Los Angeles County, and the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), located in Valencia.”

This is the only mention of the arts on the site, although there is a large section describing the role the entertainment industry plays in Santa Clarita. Another example is from the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce, which has a section for arts, culture, and entertainment on their site. The one line description is as follows:

“In Santa Clarita we're very proud of our Arts, Culture and Entertainment. You will find an abundance of theater, movies, music, and other forms of enriching entertainment.”

Finally, a similar description of Santa Clarita that does include a mention of the arts as part of the community:

“Scenic Santa Clarita is just 20 minutes north of Burbank airport and a short drive from the hustle and bustle of Los Angeles. Santa Clarita offers an abundance of California

sunshine and a plethora of activities for all ages. Home to Six Flags Magic Mountain & Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Santa Clarita boasts some of the golden state's most coveted golf courses, charming wine lounges, family and fine dining, impressive retail shopping, live music events, and a rich western heritage.”

This is from Visit Santa Clarita, the site for the City of Santa Clarita Tourism Bureau. For the arts to become part of the community, the arts must be included on sites that are marketed towards local citizens, and to potential visitors. For example, CalArts recently was named the top arts school in the nation by Newsweek / Daily Beast, and yet it only receives a passing mention in a few of the sites about Santa Clarita.

SANTA CLARITA ARTS

Here are the top fifty results from a Google search on “Santa Clarita Arts:”

1. arts.santa-clarita.com (The City of Santa Clarita Arts and Events Office)
2. santa-clarita.com (The City of Santa Clarita Arts Commission)
3. santaclaritaartists.org
4. streetartfest.com (The City of Santa Clarita Festival of the Arts site)
5. canyonspac.com (Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center at College of the Canyons [PAC])
6. santaclarita.com/arts
7. scsopa.com (Santa Clarita School of Performing Arts)
8. santaclaritaguide.com
9. vponline.com (Vibe Performing Arts Studios)
10. thirdthursdayscv.org (Santa Clarita Art Walks)
11. santaclaritacitybriefs.com
12. yelp.com
13. facebook.com/pages/santa-clarita... (PAC Facebook page)
14. scvarts.com
15. scveducationfoundation.org
16. scfestivalofthearts.com (Another City of Santa Clarita Festival of the Arts site)
17. santa-clarita.com/concerts (The City of Santa Clarita Concerts in the Park site)
18. visitsantaclarita.com
19. canyons.edu
20. scvartwalk.org
21. local.yahoo.com (A listing of martial arts school in Santa Clarita)
22. santaclaritarealestateforum.com
23. santaclaritaballet.net
24. santaclaritastreetfair.com
25. shinsblackbelt.com (Martial arts site)
26. experiencela.com (PAC listing)
27. yelp.com (PAC listing)
28. santaclaritaguide.com
29. ealas.org (Albert Einstein Academy of Letters, Arts, and Sciences)
30. yellowpages.aol.com (Arts and craft suppliers)

31. socialmartialarts.com (Martial arts)
32. losangeles.citysearch.com
33. kravmaga-santaclarita.com (Martial arts)
34. scvchamber.com
35. kristinajacob.wordpress.com
36. calarts.edu
37. gbsantaclarita.com (Martial arts)
38. martialinfo.com (Martial arts)
39. youtube.com (Santa Clarita School of Performing Arts)
40. facebook.com/pages/santa-clarita...(Santa Clarita Literacy and Arts Festival facebook page)
41. dailynews.com
42. 661-arts.com
43. local.vcstar.com
44. 661arts.com
45. yellowpages.com
46. local.stltoday.com
47. goldstar.com (PAC)
48. meetup.com (Martial arts)
49. theatermania.com (PAC)
50. westranchbeacon.com

The groups above tend to have arts specific information on their sites, except of course for the numerous martial arts and directory sites. The Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center at the College of the Canyons has done a great job of being listed on several sites, and most of the local art organizations are represented above. However, what stands out from looking at these sites is that each group describes their own activities by rarely or only briefly is there any discussion or demonstration of Santa Clarita being an arts community.

SANTA CLARITA ENTERTAINMENT

Here are the top fifty results from a Google search on “Santa Clarita Entertainment:”

1. santaclaritaguide.com
2. scvmall.com
3. visitsantaclarita.com
4. mountasiafuncenter.com
5. santaclaritamagazine.com
6. yelp.com
7. California.hometownlocator.com
8. facebook.com/pages/santa-clarita... (Santa Clarita entertainment Facebook page)
9. topix.com
10. lawyers.com (Attorneys)
11. local.yahoo.com
12. golfsantaclarita.com

13. pramikentertainment.com
14. businessattorneys.legalmatch.com (Attorneys)
15. lawyers.findlaw.com (Attorneys)
16. scvchamber.com
17. santaclaritacarealestate.org
18. local.vcstar.com
19. laweekly.com
20. awo.com (Attorneys)
21. kdfosbrookhomes.com
22. econdev.santa-clarita.com
23. santa-clarita.com (The City of Santa Clarita Arts Commission)
24. santaclarita.com/jobs
25. trulia.com
26. scvbar.org (Attorneys)
27. filmsantaclarita.com
28. joeymarmo.com
29. jnedj.com (Joyful Noise Entertainment)
30. sevedc.org (Santa Clarita Valley Economic Development Corporation)
31. santaclarita.olx.com
32. youtube.com (Santa Clarita Magician)
33. buycabletelevision.com
34. onlineeducation.net
35. valencia.hyatt.com
36. santa-clarita.jobscore.com
37. hometownstation.com
38. showmelocal.pasadenastarnews.com
39. yellowpages.turnto23.com
40. cruise-line-jobs.jobamatic.com
41. santaclaritamagician.com
42. ourweekly.com
43. punchbowl.com (S.O.S. Entertainment)
44. directory.santaclaritadirect.info
45. scvlife.net
46. la.cityvoter.com
47. variety.com
48. santaclaritacitybriefs.com
49. idish.net
50. dealery.com

The primary conclusion that can be drawn from this list is that the only arts related site that appears in the top fifty of the “Entertainment” list is the City of Santa Clarita Arts Commission at #23. Most of the above are directory sites and many are directories to entertainment attorneys. The line that exists between the arts community and the entertainment community is not unique to Santa Clarita. There are many residents in the City who make their living as artisans in the entertainment field and there is a unique opportunity for Santa Clarita to bridge the two together and describe as a “creative community”.

SANTA CLARITA TOURISM

Here are the top fifty results from a Google search on “Santa Clarita Tourism:”

1. visitsantaclarita.com
2. santaclaritaguide.com
3. tripadvisor.com
4. santaclarita.com
5. santa-clarita.com (The City of Santa Clarita Tourism Bureau)
6. the-signal.com
7. santaclaritacitybriefs.com
8. youtube.com (Tourism Bureau Guidebook)
9. scvchamber.com
10. travel.yahoo.com
11. planetware.com
12. whitepages.com
13. discoverlosangeles.com
14. latourist.com
15. reunionplanner.com
16. local.vcstar.com
17. California.hometownlocator.com
18. scvbj.com (Santa Clarita Valley Business Journal)
19. onlineeducation.net
20. bschool.com
21. arestravel.com
22. ca.allpages.com
23. scvttv.com
24. articles.latimes.com
25. govoutreach.com
26. sepcopublishing.com
27. uptake.com
28. searchbydegree.com
29. events.jspargo.com
30. sportseventsmagazine.com
31. publicceo.com
32. arctic-north-guides.com
33. tourism.youmagix.com
34. stevekleemann.com
35. santa-clarita-travel-and-tourism.generalanswers.org
36. directory.santaclaritadirect.info
37. santaclaritamagazine.com
38. botw.org (Best of the Web)
39. teamso-cal.com
40. wallstreet4realestate.com
41. hometownstation.com
42. jobsearch.monster.com

43. californiaforvisitors.com
44. kuuloakai.com
45. westranchbeacon.com
46. codepublishing.com
47. scvedc.org (Santa Clarita Valley Economic Development Corporation)
48. isellsantaclarita.com
49. californiatouristguide.com
50. mountasiafuncenter.com

This list is very important as these are the sites reaching beyond the borders of the Santa Clarita Valley and describing the community to people from other parts of California, other states, and even other countries. Arts and cultural tourism is such a large part of what attracts people to Los Angeles, it is crucial that Santa Clarita is able to tap into this opportunity to draw visitors to the community. Most of these sites have no reference to the arts, but occasionally there are mention of the various arts and cultural events that occur in Santa Clarita and serve to draw visitors from other areas, such as the following article in The Signal newspaper about the role of the City of Santa Clarita Tourism Bureau:

“Magic Mountain is a significant draw for tourists to Santa Clarita with 3 million visitors annually to the park. Concerts, events and Fright Fest are all features that consistently attract customers. But you don’t have to be a tourist to Santa Clarita to enjoy what the tourism office and bureau provides. There are many events each month and 14 major events throughout the year that provide entertainment for everyone. These include the Cowboy Festival, Concerts in the Park, Lexus Jazz and Blues Concert Series, Street Arts Festival, Hart of the West Powwow, the Festival of Trees and Six Flags Magic Mountain’s Fright Fest.”

Of course the above events are part of the arts community in Santa Clarita, but, the arts community cannot be fully described by the large cultural events that occur once a year. Working with the various groups represented above to alter the way the arts community is described, will help serve both the needs of the artists in Santa Clarita, and also will add another tool for those charged with attracting visitors to the Santa Clarita Valley.

Santa Clarita

Arts Print and Publications Assessment

The Arts Print and Publications Assessment was accomplished by reviewing printed documents from two primary sources, first the City of Santa Clarita with the various publications produced by different Departments and Divisions within the City structure, and second the various printed publications such as newspapers and magazines that are not produced by the City of Santa Clarita.

CITY PUBLICATIONS

The following City publications were reviewed as part of the arts print and publications assessment:

Seasons magazine (published four times a year and mailed to every home in the City)
Arts and Events Office publications
Economic Development publications

The primary publication for the City Manager's Office to communicate with the community has become the Seasons magazine. The Communications Office, which is a part of the City Manager's Office, took over the design and publication of this magazine about three years ago, and since that time it has transitioned to encompass citywide matters as opposed to being a Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department publication.

Seasons magazine has done a wonderful job describing arts and cultural events throughout the year, as well as to inform the public of the role of the Arts Commission. However, this information is limited to City produced or sponsored events and programs, and there is no space dedicated to the larger arts community, except for the occasional ad for the 661Arts.com website. At one point, the Seasons magazine included an Arts Calendar, which was published twice a year and included all of the groups that were part of the 661Arts group. The cost of this publication was determined to be too high for the value it represented for the individual groups who were listed and those funds were transitioned into the development of the 661Arts website.

The various Arts and Events Office publications, which primarily are postcards for individual events or programs, such as art exhibits, serve their purpose well, but once again they do not address the need to describe the arts community in which these events are taking place.

Finally there are various documents and publications created by the Economic Development Division, which has been very supportive of the arts through listing various arts events and including public art in its annual Santa Clarita Visitor's Guide. In an effort to better represent the multi-faceted arts community that exists in Santa Clarita, enhancing the coverage of arts within these publications has the potential to reach a diverse group of target audiences such as visitors, residents, and existing and future business owners.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

There are several publications in the Santa Clarita Valley that serve to inform the community about what is happening and to share issues that are important to Santa Clarita's citizens. The most widely used publication that covers happening around the Santa Clarita Valley is The Signal newspaper. The Signal has always done a good job in covering the individual arts events and programs that take place in Santa Clarita, but they like most of the entities assessed do not dedicate much space to a discussion of the arts community.

Some of the local magazines include the following:



Santa Clarita Media Assessment

The Media Assessment is perhaps the most interesting of the three assessments, as Santa Clarita basically has only two media outlets under the traditional description of radio and television. These are KHTS – AM1220 and SCVTV – Channel 20. And these two outlets are perhaps the closest to achieving the goal of sharing information about the arts community. It is important that what is not discussed in this assessment is the role of news media such as podcasts and YouTube postings, but at this time it is too difficult to truly assess the value that can be placed on these approaches.

KHTS - AM1220

The only hometown radio station in the Santa Clarita Valley, KHTS has demonstrated a real commitment to dedicating time to the arts community, primarily through the Thursday Matinee radio show, hosted by the current Chair of the Arts Commission Paul Strickland. This show, which had been on since 2003, focuses on the arts community in a way that newspapers and magazines are generally not able to do. While the show still often focuses on upcoming events and programs, much like the print media, because there are artists being interviewed the sense that these events are part of a larger community come through in most shows. When a guest shares their artistic background it naturally highlights the various arts groups in the area, and often includes a discussion about the schools they attended to learn their craft. This is an important part of creating an arts community, as it is important to realize that each group is made of individuals who often work with one group on one project and another group on another project. KHTS does have other shows, which often feature brief discussions about upcoming community events, but it is really Thursday Matinee that can serve as a model for other efforts to describe the arts community in other media forms.

SCVTV – Channel 20

SCVTV has experienced various changes to the way the station is run over the last few years, which has resulted in more flexibility in the programming opportunities. With this flexibility there has been an increase in the amount of time spent on arts and culture, and the recent development of various music programs focused on Santa Clarita musicians is a wonderful example of a partnership that benefits the station and local musicians. Some of these programs include Everything Local, House Blend, OutWest Concert Series, and several more. This commitment to showcase and develop local musicians is a tribute to the leadership of the station, and gives the opportunity for the viewers of the station to discover that there is lots of talent located in the Santa Clarita Valley. SCVTV also features other shows about the arts including a video version of Thursday Matinee, and shows like 60 Minutes with an Artist. Similar to KHTS above, SCVTV is demonstrating how to present an arts community. These shows are not just focused on the next event, but are sharing the artists and their passion to create; be it through music, visual arts, performance, or whatever method they use to create. The role of both of these valuable local resources in creating a community of artists is greatly appreciated and sets a fine example for others to follow.