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APRIL 21, 2021

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OC ARTS COVID-19 LOSSES NOW EXCEED \$121 MILLION AND 2,700 JOBS *Arts Community Still Faces Many Months of Losses Before Recovery*

IRVINE, CALIFORNIA — Exactly one year after reporting its first survey results about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Orange County’s arts community, Arts Orange County (ArtsOC) announced today new data that documents financial losses of \$121,103,221 and a reduction of 2,727 jobs. The 38 organizations that shared their information now estimate that it will also take them, on average, at least until July 2022 before their revenue, employment and operations will return to pre-pandemic levels.

“Arts organizations were the first businesses to close and will be the last to re-open due to their social gathering nature,” commented Richard Stein, President & CEO of ArtsOC. “And while we are truly sympathetic to the many other businesses that have suffered great difficulties during the pandemic, many of them were at least able to provide goods and services on a take-out or delivery basis—unlike the arts.”

On April 21, 2020, ArtsOC announced that a survey of the Orange County arts community had reported \$16 million in losses due to the COVID-19 shutdown. Stein continued: “As shocking as that was at the time, few arts leaders believed that their venues and programs would remain closed more than a year later. And though there is much general optimism over vaccinations and the Governor’s projected re-opening of California on June 15th, the lack of guidelines and protocols, as well as the long ramp-up period necessary to resume programming has led most of them to anticipate at least six months more of near-complete closure with another six or seven months before they will be back to pre-COVID levels of operation. As such, Arts Orange County is urging elected officials at the Federal, State, County and City levels to deploy some of their American Rescue Plan Act funds to provide relief to the beleaguered arts sector and for the State to accelerate its decision-making on re-opening guidelines for arts venues.”

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Arts Orange County’s mission is to be the leader in building appreciation of, participation in and support for the arts and arts education in Orange County, California. A nonprofit organization incorporated in 1995, it is designated by the Board of Supervisors as the official local arts agency and State-Local Partner for the County of Orange. More information: <https://artsoc.org/>