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Contact: Christine D'Arcy, Oregon Arts Commission, (503) 986-0087
Cynthia Kirk, (503) 986-0081

Oregon's Creative Vitality Index Continues to Exceed National Average

Oregon's creative health continues to grow and become more robust, according to a updated report commissioned by the Oregon Arts Commission. Oregon is only the second state in the nation to measure its Creative Vitality Index, or CVI. Oregon's 2007 CVI ranks 1.12 against the national average of 1; in 2006, it ranked 1.05. 2007's statewide index represents a growth of more than 6% over 2006, with five county clusters or workforce development areas at 1 or above:

	2006 Index	2007 Index
Benton, Lincoln, Linn	1.0	1.07
Gilliam, Hood River, Sherman, Wheeler, Wasco	1.07	1.06
Lane	1.11	1.17
Jackson, Josephine	1.22	1.28
Multnomah, Washington	2.16	2.27

The full report is available online at www.oregonartscommission.org, and a summary report, "Creative Vitality in Oregon," is available both online and in print. Copies of the summary may be requested by calling 503-986-0082 or emailing oregon.artscomm@state.or.us.

The Creative Vitality Index, or CVI, drawn from existing census, employment and other available data, measures public participation in the arts as well as arts-related employment. It includes data from the profit and not-for-profit sectors to map the impact of creative pursuits in a local economy. The summary, "Creative Vitality in Oregon," includes portraits from around the state that plot the intersection of private and public creative enterprises. They include:

- Second Story Interactive Studios in **Portland**, part of Workforce Development Area 2, which has the highest arts occupational index in the state;
- The photographers of **Eugene's Register Guard**, where outstanding photojournalism is a tradition;
- Michael Curry Design, where nearly 60 people at a 50,000 square foot facility in **Scappoose** create work for clients like Disney, Cirque du Soleil and the Olympics;
- **Shaniko's Imperial Stock Ranch**, established in 1871, which uses Oregon artisans to develop high-end garments using naturally milled wool and lambskin;
- **Portland's** thriving animation community, which attracted a major international festival in 2007 that will return in 2009;
- The vitality of artists working across the state with a profile of artist open studio tours in **Portland, the Gorge** and **Yamhill County**.

The Creative Vitality Index is a departure from traditional arts economic impact studies. By extracting data from the profit and not-or-profit sectors, it provides a more complete picture of how creative work affects the broader economy. The CVI not only looks at the people who earn a creative wage outside the nonprofit arts world -- visual artists, graphic designers, writers, and architects - it also measures participation beyond performing arts ticket sales and museum entry fees. Its indicators include book and music sales, photographic and art supplies receipts, and the purchase of musical instruments.

The Creative Vitality Index concept was pioneered by the Washington State Arts Commission in partnership with the Western States Arts Federation. By using existing data, the CVI offers a faster - and less expensive - way to track changes, year by year.

Across the country, civic leaders, economists, philanthropists, business leaders and arts and community leaders are engaged in lively dialogue about how to define and build the creative economy. The Creative Vitality Index contributes broad, systems-oriented thinking to the discussion and demonstrates the interdependency of nonprofit arts organizations with local businesses, chambers of commerce with public arts agencies. The CVI makes explicit what has long been implicit: culture and commerce nurture each other. Together, they bring economic health, energy and progress to civic life.

Christine D'Arcy, executive director of the Arts Commission, said, "Oregon's Creative Vitality Index is an important new voice in our state's conversation about the creative economy. Its inclusion of data on arts-related employment as well as participation in the arts makes it a relevant and powerful tool. It is great to see the growth in Oregon's creative jobs sector."

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The Oregon Arts Commission provides leadership, funding and arts programs through its grants, special initiatives and services. Nine commissioners, appointed by the Governor, determine arts needs and establish policies for public support of the arts. The Arts Commission became part of the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department in 1993, in recognition of the expanding role the arts play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities. In 2003, the Oregon legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission's expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development. The Arts Commission is supported with general funds appropriated by the Oregon legislature and with federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust.