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LOWER MANHATTAN CULTURAL COUNCIL AWARDS \$500,000 IN GRANTS TO OVER 170 ARTISTS AND ARTS GROUPS IN MANHATTAN

Grants fund community-oriented arts programs, performances and exhibitions

(New York, NY – March 1, 2011) – Providing crucial financial support at a challenging time for arts organizations, today **Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC)** announces more than \$500,000 in grants to over 170 artists and art groups based throughout Manhattan.

Grants were awarded through the LMCC's two core grant programs, The Fund for Creative Communities (The Fund) and the Manhattan Community Arts Fund (MCAF). The Fund and MCAF support a wide range of community-oriented art projects in neighborhoods throughout Manhattan, enabling concerts, performances, public art, exhibitions, screenings, festivals, and readings. Grants are awarded to projects across disciplines, including dance, literature, media/new media, music, theater and visual art, as well as multidisciplinary projects.

Highlights of the 2011 grant recipients range from visual artist Olek, who deploys individuals and objects in crocheted camouflage skin as interactive beings in public spaces throughout Manhattan, to the People's Theatre Project, which presents bilingual interactive plays about immigration and discrimination in Washington Heights and Inwood. Other grant recipients include Pan American Musical Art Research, presenter of the annual Latin American Culture Week, and NY Bard Wo Association, which stages Cantonese Opera classics in Manhattan's Chinatown.

"LMCC has always been a champion of art projects that reflect and celebrate the rich cultural diversity of Manhattan," said Sam Miller, President of Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. "It is especially vital in these tough economic times that we support artists and arts groups that engage and reinvigorate local communities."

The funds have benefited many artists over the years. “Support from LMCC over the last three years has enabled Underworld Productions Opera to do our part to keep the art form evolving: introducing text-messaging to Mozart; twisting Baroque pearls with performance art; and recreating the Thomas Hill hearings in music and aerial dance,” said Gina Crusco, Artistic Director of Underworld Productions, a grant recipient since 2008. “With LMCC funding and the leverage it provides, UP has grown from church basement shows to the Thalia Theatre complete with an orchestra - and we got our first *New York Times* review.”

The Fund awards grants ranging from \$750 to \$5,000 to small and midsized non-profit organizations that provide high-quality local arts programs. The program seeks to increase access to arts and cultural activities in neighborhoods throughout Manhattan and to encourage new arts activities in communities where the need exists. Individual artists can access this grant by working with a Manhattan-based non-profit organization. The Fund is part of New York State Council on the Arts’ (NYSCA) statewide Decentralization program (DEC).

MCAF awards grants ranging from \$750 to \$5,000 to local arts organizations and artists that have little access to government funding sources. The grants are awarded directly to individual artists or non-profit organizations serving Manhattan communities. An MCAF grant is often one of the first grants an artist or group receives, and can help grant recipients to eventually leverage financial support from other sources. The program is made possible by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) in partnership with the City Council.

To see a full list of The Fund grantees, please visit:

http://www.lmcc.net/grants/thefund/2011_grantees

To see the full list of MCAF grantees, please visit:

http://www.lmcc.net/grants/mcaf/2011_grantees

About Lower Manhattan Cultural Council

For nearly 40 years, LMCC has been the leading voice for arts and culture in Downtown New York City, producing cultural events and promoting the arts through grants, services, advocacy, and cultural development programs. LMCC offers a range of funding opportunities and support services for artists working in all artistic disciplines across Manhattan, and a broad range of free programs in the visual, performing and media arts that help cultivate new arts audiences and improve the quality of urban life. LMCC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization supported by a range of foundations, corporations, individuals and government entities. For more information visit www.LMCC.net