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**LOWER MANHATTAN CULTURAL COUNCIL ANNOUNCES
A CHANGE IN EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP**

New York, November 7, 2003 – **Liz Thompson** will be ending her tenure as the Executive Director of the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) at the end of the year. **Cherrie Nanninga**, chairperson of LMCC's Board of Directors, commented that "Liz Thompson has been a visionary leader of the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council since 1997, during which time she has overseen the development of new and innovative programming concepts in the areas of visual, media, performing and community arts." As a result of LMCC's expanded programs and services, the organization has grown from 4 to 17 full-time staff and the budget has increased from \$750,000 to \$3.5 million. The new LMCC space at One Wall Street Court houses a gallery for visual art and a space for public programs as well as LMCC's administrative offices and is fast becoming a gathering place for the community. **Tricia Mire**, who has been deputy director of LMCC for the past two years has been designated Acting Executive Director while the Board conducts an executive search. Mire praised Thompson's legacy saying, "Liz Thompson built on a proud history of innovative leadership at LMCC, and we will continue to do our work with the underlying motivation to give equal weight to the artists we serve and the neighborhoods we are developing through the arts."

As she steps aside as Executive Director, Liz Thompson is pleased with LMCC's accomplishments and has worked tirelessly since 9/11—to reconstruct LMCC, to find new space after losing artist studios and performing spaces located in the World Trade Center, and to supplement past programs with additional activities that address the needs of artists and the downtown community. In February 2003, C. Carr from the *Village Voice* applauded LMCC under Thompson's leadership saying, "they didn't just survive—they bounced back, stronger and more necessary than ever. Founded 30 years ago to help revitalize a moribund downtown, they face that challenge anew, but this time with a long track record of arts advocacy behind them."

As an advocacy leader, Thompson worked to ensure the arts not only help drive recovery, but that they also ultimately have a place within the space developed in and around the new World Trade Center site. "And, most importantly, that the interests of artists and audiences are balanced with that of commercial partners," adds Thompson.

Thompson is satisfied that issues addressed by LMCC in the months following the disaster of 9/11 have been integrated into dialogues among all relevant parts of the community, arts community, community boards, and government agencies. She feels she can now leave LMCC “confident that with its very active Board of Directors and remarkable staff, LMCC will remain a major force in the revitalization of Lower Manhattan while continuing its outstanding services to artists and the cultural community of the City.”

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LMCC was founded 30 years ago as the World Trade Center was being built to develop the area’s cultural life. LMCC’s mission has since evolved to provide support for individual artists and arts organizations while fostering public participation in the arts through free events in the performing, visual and new media arts. One of Manhattan’s oldest and largest arts councils, LMCC is committed to serving artists and audiences in the financial district and throughout the diverse neighborhoods and cultural communities of Manhattan. Its immediate and mission-driven goals include:

- Downtown Cultural Real Estate Initiative—launched to locate affordable real estate options for individual artists and arts groups below Canal Street
- Continue to build on its 20-year tradition of workspace projects that give up-and-coming artists unique and inspiring studio environments to create and share their work with new audiences in Downtown skyscrapers
- Provide more opportunities for Downtown residents, workers and visitors to experience and deepen their appreciation of the arts through free public art projects in the performing, visual and new media arts, outdoors and in Lower Manhattan’s many unique architectural environments, both historic and contemporary
- Develop LMCC’s One Wall Street Court headquarters as a Downtown cultural space and resource center for artists
- Ensure a place for free-to-the-public performing, visual and new media art at the new World Trade Center site
- Expand commitment to ensuring the city’s diverse global cultures are well represented in LMCC’s artists, audiences, Board and staff
- Continue to explore the role of new media in the creation and presentation of art, its integration into urban environments, and its relationship to modern society
- Expand portfolio of grants and services that support thousands of artists of all backgrounds in creating and sharing their work in every part of Manhattan

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Photographs of Liz Thompson and LMCC events are available digitally—please e-mail mvevle@lmcc.net