

AMOCAT Arts Genius Awards

The AMOCAT arts Genius Awards recognize those in our community who provide distinctive contributions to the arts. The honorees work hard to support and build our community by innovating in artistic excellence.

The three categories for recognition are Artists, Arts Organizations and Arts Partners. Each 'think outside the box' to provide concepts, services and commitment to improvement that elevate Tacoma as an arts center. Individual artists create reality out of personal vision. Attracting and keeping a range of local artists is essential to developing a thriving community. Arts organizations exist to support these local artists but also enrich our lives by making us aware of the creative flow around us. Arts Partners are organizations which are not arts based which are still dedicated to local arts improvement.

Artists--Jared Pappas-Kelley & Michael S. Lent

Pappas-Kelley & Lent are both local artists, active in the Tacoma community. Pappas-Kelley is the editor and publisher of Toby Room, a quarterly arts magazine. Lent is the curator and vice-president of ArtRod, a non-profit dedicated to public art experience. They are being honored for their non-traditional approach to public art, specifically The Tollbooth Gallery here in Tacoma.



The Tollbooth Gallery is the World's Smallest Gallery Dedicated Exclusively to Experimental Video and Wheat-Pasted Paper Fine Arts. The remarkable Tollbooth was previously a neglected downtown TV-Tacoma information kiosk. Now the Tollbooth consists of a 24 inch flat-screened video monitor in a 10' tall concrete pillar with an aluminum roof. The opposite side of the Tollbooth provides space for artists to show paper works relating to their project, providing a 360 degree exhibit. Since the gallery sits on the busy street Broadway it is noticed by an infinite amount of passersby. Toolbooth's public exposure 24 hours a day means the structure is open to review by the general public, including vandalism. Artists are encouraged to engage the street audience, accounting for possible abuse or alterations. The gallery brings artworks away from a traditional museum/gallery setting and literally into the center of the city. This creative approach has brought accolades from Seattle, Oregon and the magazine Public Art Review. ArtRod will open a permanent space called CRITICAL LINE in April of 2006.

For more information visit www.artrod.org--for current exhibits, contact tollbooth@artrod.org

Arts Organization—Tacoma School of the Arts, Jon Ketler & Don Herbert (co-directors)

The Tacoma School of the Arts (SOTA) was created in the fall of 2001. One of a kind in the nation, it has established itself as an active part of the downtown Tacoma community. The school has integrated into the growing art community, forming



associations with UWT and Metro Parks. SOTA is a public school offering focus for high school students in both visual and performing arts. Students use local museum and theatre locations as both resources and learning spaces. Participants have the unique opportunity to experience instruction and learn from professional working artists from the area. Junior and senior students have the ability to work with community professionals; more than 50 internships are available through the school. This infusion of creative youth and opportunities for working artists to teach is invaluable to our community.

For more information visit www.tacoma.k12.wa.us/schools/hs/sota/

Arts Partner—Pierce Transit, Scott Morris receiving



Pierce Transit has worked closely with the arts over the years from including artwork on streetscape improvements such as D Street to creating unique bus shelters on Portland Avenue, employing many local artists. Over the years, they have transported innovation by sponsoring arts events that connect our citizens to the arts through walking, biking or taking the bus. Their partnership in supporting the Red Door and Suitcase Sightings provided visibility for these important projects, demonstrating the arts connection throughout the city.

For more information visit www.piercetransit.org or <http://wspdsmap.ci.tacoma.wa.us/website/Art2/viewer.htm>