

## **Artists' Census FAQ**

### **Who can fill out the census?**

Anyone who resides and/or practices his or her art in Washtenaw County.

### **Who is an artist?**

That's the million-dollar question, isn't it? The word "artist" can have many different meanings depending on who provides the definition. The Arts Alliance's census is intended to be as inclusive as possible. It's open to visual, performing and literary artists, regardless of age, formal training, the number of shows you've been in, or the number of pieces you've sold. (After all, Van Gogh only sold one painting during his lifetime and most people would agree he's an artist!)

Painters, sculptors, filmmakers, dancers, actors, choreographers, musicians, poets, writers, and anyone else who creates as a way to communicate is welcome to fill out the census.

### **Why should I fill out the Artists' Census?**

There are several good reasons!

1) You're building yourself a stronger creative community to work with and connect with in Washtenaw County. The census is a first step in finding out what types of artists are here and what types of art they're creating.

2) Even if you don't want to connect with others, by filling the census out you're helping to make artists "visible" to the rest of the world. For example, we could have more writers in Washtenaw County than any other place in the country, but nobody knows that. With concrete count, artists become more "real" to everyone else.

3) As the Arts Alliance gains a better understanding of who's here, it may be able to offer better services to artists.

4) You may win a prize! Several area organizations have contributed goods or services of value to those who are creative. If you answer the Census "bonus" question correctly, you may be a winner!

### **Why is the Arts Alliance conducting this census?**

Artists are the creative DNA of Washtenaw County, and provide the spark that makes our region such a great place to live. Yet artists are often overlooked. It's easy to know how many arts organizations are in the county – you can easily point to the Michigan Theater or the Chelsea Center for the Arts, but you can't search for "Artist" in the Yellow Pages.

This census will begin to give the artists in our region visibility and credibility. The results may help the Arts Alliance have a better sense of the kinds of services that are needed to keep the arts community healthy.

**What will the Arts Alliance do with the Artists' Census?**

The findings will be reported widely to the media to build better awareness of and appreciation for artists of all types. The results will also be included in the Arts Alliance's cultural plan for the county. Our goal is to repeat the census every 3-5 years so we can report that the health of the arts community and have solid numbers to back up our assertions.

**I already filled out a survey from the Arts Alliance – do I need to fill this one out, too?**

If you filled out a survey recently, it probably was the "Community & Culture" survey that's a part of the Arts Alliance's countywide cultural planning project. Thank you so much for doing so!

This questionnaire is different. It's *much* shorter (only 9 questions) and we're not asking for your opinions, just for some very simple info about you that we can use to build a picture of how many artists are here and what sorts of art they create.

**I'm a student and not a year-round resident of Washtenaw County. Can I fill out the census?**

Yes. We have a question that asks if you're a student, so we can track the extent to which students contribute to the creative vitality of our community.

**Can I forward this census to friends and colleagues?**

Yes! Please do forward this census onto your contacts. The more people that get involved, the better our results will be!

**What's the timeline for the Artists' Census?**

The census will run from April 1 to May 17, 2008. After that, the Arts Alliance and its team of experts will analyze the results. A full report will be available in early Fall 2008.

**Who developed the census questions?**

The census was developed by a team of artists and arts managers from the area, among them actors, dancers, writers, and visual artists of all types. The census questions were also reviewed by survey professionals.

**How do I win a prize?**

Fill out the census and guess how many artists you think live and work in Washtenaw County. Prizes will be awarded to those who come closest to guessing the correct number of artists (based on the census results). Prizes have been donated by:



**Still have questions?**

Contact Angela at the Arts Alliance. She can be reached at [angela@annarborchamber.org](mailto:angela@annarborchamber.org).