



## **Brattleboro Museum & Art Center**

10 Vernon Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301

[www.brattleboromuseum.org](http://www.brattleboromuseum.org)

802-257-0124

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 30, 2010

Contact: Margaret Shipman

[gallery@brattleboromuseum.org](mailto:gallery@brattleboromuseum.org)

802-257-0124, ext. 103

### **MUSEUM & CAFÉ TEAM UP TO SUPPORT BRATTLEBORO ARTISTS**

*“BEAN Micro-Grant Dinners” Empower Community to Get Involved in Arts Funding*

Brattleboro, Vt.—The Brattleboro Museum & Art Center and the Elliot Street Café are teaming up to enable residents of Brattleboro and the surrounding area to take arts philanthropy into their own hands. With a new collaborative program called “BEAN Micro-Grant Dinners” the partners aim to enhance the vitality of art in the community by providing artists with much-needed financial support and encouraging dialogue and collaborative decision-making between artists and the general public. Based on similar programs happening around the world, BEAN, which stands for “Brattleboro Essential Arts Network,” also aims to change the face of arts funding—from a top-down model with limited interaction between funders and recipients to one that features direct, personal contact between donors and their beneficiaries, allowing virtually anyone to become a philanthropist.

#### **HOW IT WORKS, PART 1: Eat, Discuss, Vote**

For only \$10 anyone can attend a light dinner at BMAC provided by the Elliot Street Cafe. Over dinner, guests will review and discuss funding requests for local art-related projects. At the end of the night, guests will vote for the proposal that deserves to

receive the proceeds from dinner. Anyone interested in attending the first BEAN Micro-Grant Dinner and casting a vote should simply show up at BMAC on Sunday, September 19 at 6 p.m.

## **HOW IT WORKS, PART 2: Artists and others apply for micro-grants**

Any individual, group, team, business, school, or non-profit organization may apply for a grant, which will probably be no more than \$300, depending on how many people show up for dinner. Funds are intended to support projects that contribute to the vitality of art and artists in the community, particularly projects where a grant of just a few hundred dollars would make a real difference.

The three-question application is deliberately simple, says BMAC Director Danny Lichtenfeld: "Dinner guests are going to have to process these requests in a relatively short period of time, and it's not as though we're talking about huge sums of money, so we don't want the application itself to feel like a burden." Application forms are available online at [www.brattleboromuseum.org](http://www.brattleboromuseum.org) or in hard copy at the Elliot Street Café (open Wed-Sun, 8:30-2:30) and BMAC front desk (open Thu-Mon, 11-5). The next application deadline is September 10 at 2:30 p.m. for requests to be considered at the September 19 dinner.

BMAC Events Manager Margaret Shipman, coordinator of the BEAN Micro-Grant Dinners, says she hopes applicants will make a point of attending the dinner at which their application will be considered, and that they will bring friends along to cast votes. And to those who have concerns about the menu, Shipman says, "We love the food-related acronym, but the Elliot Street Café will definitely provide much more than beans for dinner!"

Major support for the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center's 2010-2011 season is provided by BMAC members and Entergy Vermont Yankee, Foard Panel, C&S

Wholesale Grocers, Sam's Outdoor Outfitters, and Chittenden Bank. The Museum's exhibits and gift shop are open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., except Tuesday and Wednesday. Regular admission is \$6 for adults, \$4 for seniors, and \$3 for students. Members and children 5 and under are admitted free of charge.

Founded in 1972, the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center presents art and ideas in ways that inspire, educate, and engage people of all ages. Each season features compelling new exhibits of contemporary artwork by regional and internationally acclaimed artists, complemented by lectures, artist talks, film screenings, and other public programs. Located in historic Union Station in downtown Brattleboro, at the intersection of Main Street (Route 5) and Routes 119 and 142, the Museum is wheelchair accessible. For more information call 802-257-0124 or visit [www.brattleboromuseum.org](http://www.brattleboromuseum.org).

# # #