

## The arts are alive and well

The arts are thriving in Vermont, providing a source of community and an important element in Vermont tourism. In combination with the state's natural attractions, arts and heritage factored largely into the National Geographic Society's decision to proclaim Vermont the number one U.S. destination.

### the FACTS

- In a study identifying the most creative regions in the country, the Vermont city of Burlington was rated number one in the category of communities with populations below 250,000. Among U.S. metro areas of all sizes it ranked fourth.<sup>149</sup>
- Hardwick, Windsor, Rutland and St. Albans are designated "Creative Communities." Bellows Falls and Vergennes have also experienced extensive arts-driven revitalization. In 2006, the State Division of Historic Preservation allocated \$230,000 through its Downtown Designation program to three arts facilities with plans to support four more in 2007.<sup>150</sup>
- In recent years, the Vermont Arts Council has awarded nearly \$200,000 toward the improvement of cultural facilities, including restorations and renovations.<sup>151</sup>
- The Vermont State Department of Education holds some of the nation's strictest requirements for arts education. All art teachers must be licensed. Minimum art requirements and assessments apply to every grade or grade cluster.<sup>152</sup>
- More than 70 Vermont cultural organizations provide a variety of arts programs in schools.<sup>153</sup>
- Vermont is home to dozens of organizations dedicated to making the arts accessible to traditionally underserved residents. Each year the Vermont Arts Council receives financial recognition from the National Endowment for the Arts for its extensive programs reaching rural communities, the disabled, seniors, low-income residents and the very young.<sup>154</sup>
- As individuals, Vermonters value the arts. In a 2006 poll, 42% said that it is "very important" for the state government to provide funding to support arts programs. Another 37% qualified government arts support as "important."<sup>155</sup>



#### CREATIVE COMMUNITY

# 42%

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