



Contact:

Corynne Randel/ Jenn Quader

[Brower, Miller & Cole](#)

(949) 955-7940

CRandel@browermillercole.com

**RYMAN ARTS EXPANDS ITS YOUTH ART EDUCATION PROGRAM
TO ORANGE COUNTY IN COLLABORATION WITH CALIFORNIA STATE
UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON**

**Selection of high school students in tuition-free program is based on
talent, passion and motivation**

Orange County, Calif., (December 11, 2012) – [Ryman Arts](#), an arts education program that fosters the development of talented young artists throughout Southern California, has announced it is collaborating with California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) to expand its Los Angeles-based program into the Orange County region, according to Diane Brigham, Executive Director of Ryman Arts.

Ryman Arts offers free advanced studio art instruction to artistic high school age youth who are serious about a future in art. In addition to the rigorous drawing and painting classes taught by professional artists, students explore career paths, share



their work in the community, and are inspired to build the skills, discipline and confidence for college and beyond.

“Ryman Arts provides high school students with 12-week courses, completely free of charge, on weekends. Students attend in addition to their regular high school classes,” Brigham noted.

“Approximately 10 percent of our current students come from Orange County to our existing classes at the Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles. With this initiative, we double our capacity from 300 to 600 a year, and can serve young artists from a much wider geographic area, making the program more accessible to many more talented high school artists across Southern California,” Brigham said.

“We know how powerful the creative learning environment has been for our teens at Otis College of Art and Design, and we are delighted that we now can offer classes at both an independent college of art and design, and at a public university with a major art school,” she added.

The first Orange County Ryman Arts classes at the arts studios of CSUF College of the Arts will begin in January, 2013.

According to Dr. Joe Arnold, Dean of the College of the Arts at CSUF, “The partnership CSUF has created with Ryman Arts adds a new important layer to the University’s commitment to community outreach in the arts. This experience will also build a pathway to higher education for participating Ryman Arts students, some of whom may wish to continue their studies at CSUF when they reach the college level.”

“The partnership with CSUF will also allow Ryman Arts students to take advantage of CSUF’s dynamic Grand Central Art Center, which provides opportunities for community arts engagement and outreach,” Arnold added. “Ryman Arts is a strong



partner, as we can provide them with the benefits of our offerings, while the Ryman Arts students simultaneously add a layer to the rich arts community we are creating here.”

Ryman Arts President, Marty Sklar, retired creative leader of Walt Disney Imagineering and one of six founders of the program, noted how pleased their namesake would be at the expansion into Orange County.

“Herb Ryman drew the first overall illustration of Disneyland for Walt Disney. Herb mentored many young artists, stressing the need to develop fundamental drawing and painting skills. That’s what we stress at Ryman Arts,” Sklar said.

Because Ryman Arts is focused on providing education to the most talented, regardless of their economic situation, the program is offered tuition-free. Outreach activities to students in lower-income communities help ensure access for students with the greatest need.

The Ryman Arts Board of Directors and other donors have raised nearly half of the organization’s current \$1.5 million funding campaign, including a challenge pledge of \$500,000.

“We are reaching out to members of the Southern California community, and particularly to those in Orange County, who may be able to assist us with this vital program for gifted teens,” Brigham noted.

“Based on the generosity of our donors, we will be able to fill the gap left by the decline in high school art programs,” she said. “Further, we produce a stunning success in which more than 80 percent of our students come from low-income families, and more than 98 percent of them go on to higher education. For many of these students, they are the first in their family to do so.”

With this expansion, Ryman Arts creates a college-going atmosphere with its weekend classes now offered on the campuses of two esteemed institutions of higher



education: the new location at Cal State Fullerton on Saturdays, and the continuing location at Otis College of Art & Design in Los Angeles on Sundays. The same program is offered at both sites; students choose the location and weekend day best for them. Admission to this free program is competitive, based on merit, and any high school student may apply. The next deadline is December 14, 2012; applications available at www.rymanarts.org.

Since its inception in 1990, Ryman Arts has engaged over 4,000 Southern California teens in its core 18-month studio program. This vibrant community of culturally diverse teens comes from over 100 neighborhoods across the region. Ryman Arts also spearheads the public drawing initiative, *The Big Draw LA* to engage the community in participatory drawing activities every October. In its two decades, Ryman Arts has evolved into a national model for transforming the lives and futures of young artists. A non-profit organization, Ryman Arts is funded by individuals, foundations, corporate supporters, and government agencies including the National Endowment for the Arts. More information is available at www.ryman.org or 213-629-2787.

A comprehensive, regional university with a global outlook, Cal State Fullerton enrolls more than 37,000 students and offers 107 degree programs in eight colleges. Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Cal State Fullerton is among the largest universities in the 23-campus California State University system.

It is No. 1 in California and fourth in the nation for the number of bachelor's degrees awarded to Hispanics and eighth nationally for the number of bachelor's degrees awarded to Hispanics minority students. Learn more about the university on the CSUF website: www.fullerton.edu.

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