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**LA COUNTY ARTS COMMISSION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LAURA ZUCKER ANNOUNCES THE START OF HER NEXT ACT**

***Longtime Arts Innovator and Thought Leader
Will Leave Current Role in July***

LOS ANGELES - Laura Zucker announced her plans to leave her position as Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Arts Commission on July 31, 2017. Ms. Zucker has been a driving force in the development and support of the arts and culture ecosystem of Los Angeles County over the last 25 years. Her leadership has led to a number of significant policy changes, programs and initiatives that influence not only the region but the field-at-large nationally.

"The last 25 years have been filled with wonderful opportunities to grow the arts in Los Angeles in so many ways," says Ms. Zucker. "I've been continually inspired by the resiliency and ingenuity of the artists, organizations, educators, advocates and arts and culture supporters who shape our region. The Arts Commission is terrifically positioned to move into its next phase and I'm ready for new challenges."

Under Ms. Zucker's guidance, the County's organizational grant program grew eight-fold and now funds almost 400 nonprofit arts organizations through a two-year \$9 million grant program. Ms. Zucker was instrumental in the adoption of Los Angeles County's civic art policy in 2005, and since then more than 40 civic art projects have been completed and another 40 commissions ranging in size from \$10,000 to \$1 million are underway. She led the creation of Arts for All, the region's initiative dedicated to restoring arts education for all public school students, which is now working with 65 out of the County's 81 school districts. She also spearheaded the creation of the largest paid summer arts internship program in the country, which employs 132 undergraduates each summer to work in performing arts organizations.

Building on her experience as a theatrical producer, she served as executive producer of the LA County Holiday Celebration broadcast on public television, which was awarded an Emmy® during her period of oversight, and led the revitalization of the John Anson Ford Theatres over more than two decades. At the Ford, she developed the partnership program that brought diverse local performing arts organizations and their audiences to the historic facility. She also oversaw its renovation, bringing it up to state-of-the-art performance standards.

Under Ms. Zucker's guidance, the Arts Commission recently completed a major initiative to develop actionable strategies to improve the participation and leadership of underrepresented communities in the arts. Exploring diversity, equity and inclusion in arts and culture, the initiative was an 18-month long public process that culminated in a report delivered to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in April.

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Cross-sector collaboration has been a hallmark of Ms. Zucker's career and she led the Arts Commission to utilize the arts to address regional challenges and opportunities in many forums. Most recently, she developed a new grant program to fund non-arts organizations that use the arts to further their mission, helping to ensure the arts are available to everyone across LA County. Ms. Zucker was also a national leader in expanding the use of rigorous data collection and analysis methods in the field of public arts management.

In 2013, Ms. Zucker spearheaded the addition of Los Angeles County to the World Cities Culture Forum, bringing an LA voice to a global report that features cultural trends in 23 major world urban centers. Her leadership helped shape the regional cultural calendar on ExperienceLA.com, which is now part of DiscoverLA.com managed by the Los Angeles Convention and Tourism Board. Ms. Zucker also headed the California Cultural Tourism Initiative, which marketed the arts of California's three urban regions domestically and internationally and was the author of a regional study of individual artists as part of the California Arts Council's economic impact study on the arts.

"Anyone who has ever come across Laura Zucker knows she is a tireless and unstoppable force for the arts in LA County," said Supervisor and Board Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas. "Under her leadership, the Arts Commission has become a model of collaboration, adaptability and innovation for local arts agencies across the country. On behalf of my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors, I am grateful for her 25 years of service to our residents."

In addition to her role as executive director of the Arts Commission, she directed the Masters in Arts Management Program at Claremont Graduate University for six years and continues to serve as a senior fellow in the program.

The County will announce shortly the process to find Ms. Zucker's replacement.

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