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**NEWEST NEIGHBORHOOD ART PROGRAM EXHIBIT ON DISPLAY AT BCEC**

*Roslindale and West Roxbury Artists Show Off Their Talents*

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) today unveiled its latest art installation at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center as part of its world-class community art program.

The Community Neighborhood Exhibit features work by artists with ties to Roslindale and West Roxbury and will be on display through April 24 to thousands of national and international conventioners gathering at the BCEC.

“This latest Community Neighborhood Exhibit is an admirable addition to the convention center,” said James E. Rooney, Executive Director of the MCCA. “Our building is an international gathering place. By displaying and celebrating local artists and promoting the local arts scene, we hope to build a fuller and richer impression of all that Boston has to offer.”

The exhibit includes large scale paintings, large format photography and mixed media compositions, which incorporate more than one medium, such as pastel, pencil and acrylic paint. In all, 26 pieces from 17 artists make up the exhibit and reflect the culture and lifestyle of the two neighborhoods through their use of the local landscape, local subjects and personal interpretations of various ideas and concepts.

Artists with pieces on display include: Michael Berger, Gloria Carrigg, Erik Gehring, Emily Harris, Janet Harrold, Ian Kennelly, Gary Koeppel, Oscar Lazo, William Mahan, Donna Maloney, Silvina Mizrahi, Cindy Mootz, Karen Owens, Robert Sawtelle, Robert Ward, Amy West and Janice Williams.

One of the exhibit’s entries, a 6-by-12-foot abstract piece titled “Requiem for Our Young Heroes,” deals with the emotional fallout and moral questions of the men and women in uniform that have given their lives to the war in Iraq. The painting’s creator, Oscar Lazo of Roslindale, said he based the piece on actual patterns of camouflaged uniform fatigues from the branches of the military to illustrate a transition from their intended use in war to their commercial use at home. The artist said the piece was intended to bring the ongoing conflict to the attention of the viewer.

“In one way, the painting is a way to honor and to salute our young heroes, but at the same time it is symbolic so that it can make people aware of the war,” Lazo said. “The whole process of this painting was very dramatic to me because my feelings on the war have been strong, very emotional and very rich from a human point of view.”

Large upcoming events at the BCEC include the New England Boat Show, bringing in over 71,000 attendees February 14 to 22, the International Boston Seafood Show, attracting over 29,000 attendees March 15 to 17 and the Sports and Fitness Expo, drawing over 60,000 attendees April 17 to 19.

***About the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority***

*The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority owns and oversees the operations of the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, the MassMutual Center in Springfield, MA and the Boston Common Parking Garage. In fiscal year 2008, the MCCA hosted 239 events at the BCEC and the Hynes with 914,549 attendees generating 627,544 hotel room nights and \$522 million in economic impact for Greater Boston.*

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