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

*Roxbury Artists Show Off Their Talents as Part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Summer Street Solstice*

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) today announced the unveiling of its latest art installation at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. "Capturing the Spirit of Roxbury," on display from March 29 through July 15, is the second exhibit of the MCCA's Neighborhood Art Program, which showcases the work of Boston's local artists to its national and international conventioners. As part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Summer Street Solstice in June, the exhibit will feature artwork from Roxbury Open Studio artists and other artists from the greater Roxbury area.

"Just as we envisioned this program to be, the Neighborhood Art Program continues to be a catalyst for raising cultural awareness and local support for the art community in our city," said James E. Rooney, Executive Director of the MCCA. "I am excited to have a new neighborhood show off its work in our facility and give the artists from Roxbury the chance to illustrate the culture of Boston to all of our visitors."

"Capturing the Spirit of Roxbury" 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 total, 41 pieces from 16 artists make up the exhibit and reflect the culture and lifestyle of the Roxbury neighborhood through various personal depictions.

Artists with pieces on display include: Derek Lumpkins, Chandra Dieppa Ortiz, Cynthia Scott, Daniel Dougherty, Diane Zimbabwe, Ekua Holmes, James de Crescentis, Jameel Parker, Reginald Jackson, Johnetta Tinker, Laura Palmer Edwards, Lolita Parker, Paul Goodnight, Theodore Green, Wendy Ellertson and Larry Pierce.

"Any opportunity to showcase the vibrant talents of artists from Roxbury is one that we welcome, as it gives the artists a chance to broaden their constituency and publicize their art," said Candelaria Silva Collins, who oversees Roxbury Open Studios and helped select the pieces in this exhibit from over 60 submissions. "It means a lot that the MCCA is recognizing Roxbury as a vital community of Boston and extended the invitation to be one of the first neighborhoods to participate in such an exhibit."

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Summer Street Solstice, a celebration highlighting the featured artwork at the BCEC, is scheduled to open on June 21. In addition to "Capturing the Spirit of Roxbury," the

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celebration will include “Greetings from MY Boston,” a gallery of postcards created by Boston youths depicting the city through their eyes, which launched the Neighborhood Art Program in December 2006. Artwork from the Dorchester Community Center for the Visual Arts, South Boston’s Young at Arts program, Artists for Humanity, Boston Sculptors Gallery and Massachusetts College of Art will also be on display.

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 2006, the MCCA hosted at the BCEC and the Hynes 276 events with 579,370 attendees that generated 513,000 hotel roomnights and \$435 million in economic impact for Greater Boston.

Large upcoming events at the BCEC include: New England Foodservice, which will be in the building April 1 through April 3 with 15,000 attendees; AIIM & OnDemand, the world’s largest event for enterprise content and information management, expecting 35,000 attendees from April 17 through April 19; 2007 BIO International Convention, the premier global event for members of the biotechnology industry, which will draw in 15,000 attendees from May 6 through May 9; and, eBay Live! Community Conference, which comes to Boston June 14 through June 16 with 11,000 attendees.

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