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## **Ryman Arts and The Walt Disney Company Establish Sklar Legacy Fund Honoring Disney Legend Marty Sklar**

### ***Nearly \$400,000 in Contributions from Disney and Individual Donors Will Endow Entire Class of Art Student Scholars at Ryman Arts***

Los Angeles, CA (June 22, 2010) Ryman Arts, together with The Walt Disney Company, today announced the completion of a major grant that creates the Marty Sklar Legacy Fund, honoring the 54-year career and retirement of Disney legend, Marty Sklar. Amid a tough economic climate prompting closure of a number of art programs in public schools across Los Angeles, the Fund will help ensure a quality arts education for a new class of Ryman Arts scholars.

Last fall, The Walt Disney Company launched the Marty Sklar Legacy Fund with a \$250,000 challenge grant to Ryman Arts, which in turn raised more than \$100,000 in contributions from individual donors required triggering receipt of the full grant. The \$380,000 total amount will endow an entire class of Disney Sklar Art Student Scholars at Ryman Arts. In addition, Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, and The Walt Disney Studios will each host a Ryman Sklar Intern every year, who will be selected from graduates of the program.

"Creativity and the arts are at the heart of everything Disney stands for, and thanks to Ryman Arts, thousands of teens throughout Southern California have developed their extraordinary talents into meaningful careers," said Jay Rasulo, Sr. Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for The Walt Disney Company. "In honor of our colleague, friend and living Disney legend, Marty, we are proud to help support the top-notch Ryman Arts program so that it can be experienced by a new generation."

Marty Sklar and his wife Leah co-founded Ryman Arts in 1990, in memory of Disney artist Herbert D. Ryman, and he serves as President of the Board. Sklar began his career working for

Walt Disney in 1955, writing for *The Disneyland News*, a themed newspaper that appeared at the park during its early days. He went on to fill numerous creative and leadership roles at Disney in the decades that followed, culminating in his senior leadership of Walt Disney Imagineering. Sklar worked closely with numerous Disney Legends, most notably Herb Ryman, who himself worked with Walt Disney on the original sketch for Disneyland Park. The challenge grant was announced during Sklar's retirement ceremony last summer.

"We are enormously grateful to The Walt Disney Company for making the lead challenge gift to the Marty Sklar Legacy Fund. And we are inspired by the generosity of the many others who stepped forward to help us exceed the goal," said Diane Brigham, Executive Director of Ryman Arts. "This will ensure that more incredibly talented young people can pursue their artistic dreams with quality studio art instruction and internships for years to come. It's just in time, as the demand for Ryman Arts has jumped with the cuts to art programs in the schools. We salute The Walt Disney Company for its support of young artists in the critical early stages of their artistic journeys."

### **About Ryman Arts**

Ryman Arts provides gifted teens the opportunity to reach their artistic potential through free high-level arts education in a rigorous and nurturing studio environment. In addition to artistic training, Ryman Arts students also build self-discipline and confidence, and receive college and career guidance that helps position them for success in their careers and lives. Ryman currently teaches talented high school students from more than 200 schools in Southern California, 80 percent of who reside in low-income communities and have no other opportunities to develop their artistic gifts.

The program began in 1990 to honor the memory of legendary Disney artist and mentor Herbert D. Ryman to encourage young artists to reach their potential. The core program includes free out-of-school sequential studio courses that emphasize advanced drawing and painting skills. Courses, taught by professional teaching artists, foster students' artistic development and provide the knowledge they need to pursue higher education and careers in the arts. Ryman Arts aims to inspire, nurture, and challenge the next generation of artists to reach their potential.

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