



CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, GOVERNOR

MURIEL JOHNSON, DIRECTOR



August 22, 2011

John Bilezikjian
 P.O. Box 2434
 Laguna Hills, CA 92654

Dear John:

Congratulations on a stellar performance yesterday at the La Mirada Performing Arts Center. The scope of music performed was remarkable to say nothing of the musicianship on the stage. You are truly a master of the oud and gave the audience a wonderful opportunity to learn about the possibilities that instrument offers – when in the right hands (and fingers!!) – performing music in the classical western tradition and in a myriad of folk traditions.

It was great to see so many friends and colleagues both on the stage and in the audience. And to realize that, aside from your family and a few community friends, I may have known you the longest dating back to our first encounter in Mr. Pontrelli's class in 1960 at Mt. Vernon Junior High School. I knew then that I was in the presence of a remarkable artist and Sunday proved, once again, the quality of musicianship that you bring to your work.

I wish that the California Arts Council still had a vibrant Folk and Traditional Arts Program and other programs that could honor individual artists with support funds. Your work would certainly be worthy of recognition and support as you continue, what is clearly a life's passion, to share the music of your community and the music of so many other communities with audiences of all sorts. Knowing that your grandsons are now involved in the tradition as well is encouraging to those of us concerned with keeping art forms and cultural traditions alive.

Again, my heartiest congratulation to you and all your colleagues for a wonderful afternoon.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael".

Michael Alexander
 Immediate Past Chair