



SOMARTS
cultural center

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lex Leifheit, Executive Director
415-863-1414 x113 • lex@somarts.org

San Francisco, CA, May 12, 2011— SOMArts Cultural Center has appointed Jess Young as Director of Communications & Community Engagement. Young will build awareness of SOMArts exhibitions, events, support services and classes by stimulating interaction on and off-line. In addition, she will provide outreach assistance to the 80+ nonprofits who use SOMArts support services, and generate a range of written and media content to showcase the work of San Francisco's artists and cultural communities.

SOMArts Executive Director Lex Leifheit said, "We are thrilled to welcome Jess to the SOMArts team. Her combination of professional experience and her passion for starting up community-based, hands-on projects fits perfectly with the SOMArts ethos of 'Insurrection, Connection and Community through the Arts.' "

Young's professional background spans several industries, including e-commerce and recruiting. Young comes to SOMArts from U.C. Hastings College of the Law where she managed the online presence of the Career Office, including a web-based recruiting platform and multiple social media portals, as well as a Graduate Fellowship Program providing more than 60 recent law school graduates valuable experience working with public interest organizations.

While working at Hastings, Young simultaneously enjoyed a year as Media & Communications Intern for the San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, where she enhanced the Gallery's web presence, honed her skills as a digital crackerjack, promoted events, augmented the Gallery's communications strategy, and independently managed THE LIST, an online opportunity sharing program for Bay Area artists, writers, critics and curators.

SFAC Gallery Manager Aimee LeDuc said, "Jess Young embodies the energy and fast-paced mobility present at SOMArts. She is constantly searching out new strategies of communication and she is thrilled to share her discoveries with others."

In her spare time, Young contributes in multifarious ways to *Aorta*, a collectively created and independently published radical

934 Brannan Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

t. 415.863.1414
f. 415.522.0136
www.somarts.org



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arts magazine. *Aorta* delivers diverse perspectives to a broader community, not only in print, but also through educational outreach, exhibitions and active participation in and organizing of community forums.

Young is also involved in a number of creative endeavors, including the creation of a zine and photo series exploring issues around body-positivity. She enjoys creating small metal sculpture and jewelry in collaboration with her partner, sculptor Sharon Ratton, and organizes and co-moderates the queer literary series *Tales of the Sissy* hosted by Million Fishes Collective. Young holds a B.A. in English from the University of Texas at Austin.

About SOMArts Cultural Center Insurrection, Connection and Community through the Arts

SOMArts Cultural Center (South of Market Arts, Resources, Technology and Services) was founded in 1979 and operates the South of Market Cultural Center, one of four city-owned cultural facilities in San Francisco. SOMArts supports exhibitions, performances, classes and other collaborations that serve its mission: to promote and nurture art on the community level and to foster an appreciation of and respect for all cultures.

For more information about upcoming events, space rentals and technical services, visit www.somarts.org or call 415-863-1414 x111. SOMArts programs are supported by the San Francisco Arts Commission's Community arts an Education Program, with funding from Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

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