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HRC 2009 GALA PREVEWS ART AUCTION DONATIONS DURING PHOENIX'S MARCH FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK AND ART DETOUR WEEKEND

PHOENIX, ARIZONA—February 10, 2009— The 5th Annual HRC Arizona Gala Dinner committee will unveil artist's donations for the annual fundraiser event during the March Downtown Phoenix First Friday Art Walk and Annual Art Detour Weekend. Artist and owner of The Chocolate Factory, Hector Ruiz has generously donated studio space to display the distinctive art auction collection that will help raise funds for Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Arizona, the local committee of the nation's largest LGBT civil rights organization. The donated works will be on display March 6 - 8 at Hector's studio located at 1105 NW Grand Avenue in Phoenix.

Lara Taubman, eminent freelance international curator and art critic, is creating the exhibition of prized works donated to HRC Arizona for the 2009 fundraiser. The annual black-tie gala takes place on Saturday, March 21, 2009 and features renowned speakers, honorable guests and entertainers to help raise critical funds necessary to continue HRC Arizona's efforts to end discrimination against the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) community and achieve fundamental fairness and equality for all. Tickets for the gala dinner and silent art auction are available www.boxofficetickets.com/hrc.

"This year's HRC event will feature downtown Phoenix artists, a small but vibrant community of diversity and fearlessness whose art work reflects the complexity of the social and political situation of the city while engaging the distinctive design and architectural communities, downtown development and the visual art that is made many times in these renovated, historic buildings," said Lara Taubman, Honorable Curator for HRC Arizona Gala. "For individuals, who support development through the arts or the support of their local businesses, the HRC event is more than a silent auction to support the worthy HRC cause, it also supports the downtown Phoenix community by spreading the word and giving exposure to artists who similarly believe that art is a tool that can create communities."

Ms. Taubman is the Southwestern correspondent for internationally acclaimed art journals such as Artnews, Contemporary, Modern Painters and Sculpture magazines and has written for numerous others. She has curated exhibits at the Heard Museum for Native American Art, the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art and also creates exhibits worldwide. She recently closed a three-year exhibit of Abstract Expressionist Art curated through the Art in Embassies Program in the United States Embassy residence in Bucharest, Romania.

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HRC 2009 GALA PREVIEWS ART AUCTION DONATIONS... PAGE 2/2

Assisting Ms. Taubman are Honorary Auction Co-Chairs for the 2009 HRC Arizona "Believe" Gala Dinner Claudine Sanchez and Jon Westbrook. In addition to the artwork, there are various items in the silent auction including exciting travel, healthy, beauty and various services packages that will be showcased online at <http://hrcazdinner.org/index.php/auctions> prior to the dinner. To make donations, contact the Co-Chairs for information at auction@hrcarizona.org. Corporate sponsorships are also available.

HRC contributed over \$150,000 in Arizona in 2008 to its advocacy of equal rights. This included funding the NO to Prop 102 campaign in addition to providing dedicated, experienced staff to work with the campaigns of local candidates supportive of equality and with allied organizations.

To attend the 5th Annual HRC Arizona Gala Dinner, visit www.boxofficetickets.com/hrc for tickets or call 800- 494-8497. Individual tickets are \$200 if purchased before February 14, 2009 and \$250 if purchased after this date. Student tickets are available for \$100 with a school ID. Visit phoenix.hrc.org for more information about HRC Arizona and www.hrcazdinner.org for updates about the dinner.

ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN - The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality. By inspiring and engaging all Americans, HRC strives to end discrimination against GLBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all. HRC seeks to improve the lives of GLBT Americans by advocating for equal rights and benefits in the workplace, ensuring families are treated equally under the law and increasing public support among all Americans through innovative advocacy, education and outreach programs. HRC works to secure equal rights for GLBT individuals and families at the federal and state levels by lobbying elected officials, mobilizing grassroots supporters, educating Americans, investing strategically to elect fair-minded officials and partnering with other GLBT organizations.

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