



# GRANTMAKERS IN THE ARTS

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## Cultural Policy

Cultural policy and the federal role in the arts were subjects of three events in a single month, June 1993: a conference titled "The Public Patron: Drafting a Mandate for a Federal Policy" sponsored by MIT (see page 15 of this issue); an invitational conference at the Wingspread Conference Center designed to explore "the role of the arts endowment" as well as "the larger role of the federal government in support of the arts" (page 15); and a paper titled "The Federal Role in the Arts" issued by the Alliance for the Arts in New York City (page 18).

The 1993 annual conference of Grantmakers in the Arts will provide an opportunity to talk about related concerns, such as whether private grantmakers need to discover new ways to support culture in the United States. Information about the conference, "Alternative Futures: Challenging Designs for Arts Philanthropy," appears on page 24.

These are among many activities that demonstrate a growing interest in cultural policy — conferences, retreats, papers, informal meetings, and plans for longer-term efforts like a research center, a "cultural summit," and "think tanks." (See page 16 for a description of plans for a National Arts Policy Center.)

Both government support and private philanthropy clearly are appropriate subjects for discussions of cultural policy. However, restricting the discussion to questions of funding and financing would be simplistic and wrong headed. Can we imagine a vibrant cultural life for everyone living in the United States? What kind of cultural policy might promote this vision? Can cultural policy embrace the full range of creative activity from independent artists to arts institutions, from "amateur" to "professional" and obscure to popular?

We are encouraged that serious thinking about cultural policy is going on in many different circumstances. A single, over-arching effort could hardly reflect the

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complex and energetic culture of this country. In this and future issues, we hope to contribute to this thinking by publishing reports and viewpoints on cultural policy.

We begin in this issue with the following set of writings. The sequence was initiated by a "call" that was faxed to artists and others around the U.S. We discovered the "call" when it was posted on Arts Wire (a national online telecommunications system). We tracked down two of the original authors and invited them to tell us more.

Anne Focke and Sarah Lutman, Editors

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# The Idea of a Culture

## A Call to Re-invent Policy

In the first spring of a new administration, on the lip of the millennium, in the midst of unprecedented social and technological change, it is appropriate that the citizens, humanists, and artists of America – painters, sculptors, writers, actors, musicians, dancers, filmmakers, performers, videomakers, designers, architects – work together to revive and re-create the nation's exhausted cultural policy.

*We fax this first draft of a Call to invite you to join in framing its content. We fax rather than mail or call meetings to emphasize our deep desire to create not another institution or lobby but instead an instantaneous network of minds, linked by the fax and by computer networking, as the times permit and demand.*

Clearly most of us agree that our cultural institutions and practices can now be reformed to resemble the America that is, not the America often painted by strident moralists. The real America is vigorous, creative, teeming with an unparalleled diversity of beliefs, life-styles, and cultural production. We are more diversified than ever before. We are no longer passive witnesses to forms of hierarchical culture handed down from above from an elite to an elite. Mass education and abundant media have made each of us active participants, if not creators, in the high, the fine, the low and the popular arts. These qualities have also fused us with the entire world. We are creators and consumers of an international culture, as well as hosts to an unprecedented stream of distinct cultures that have re-established themselves after arrival here from other lands.

But our institutions and our policies, as they now stand, are based on the past, on chimeras and nostalgia. Our encrusted nonprofit organizational infra-structure is often a protectorate for inequality, exclusion, and inflexibility. Our private sector often wants to graft profit-making values onto a human impulse that has proven its value by denying this imperative, by challenging conventional wisdom, in the manner of advanced science, mathematics, and invention. /Example: while our foundations and endowments insist on funding categories like "painting," "sculpture," "major institutions," they almost never reward the most vital activity of all: pure, wide-ranging "research," divorced from specific production/.

The very word, "culture," needs to be re-imagined and re-defined. Given impressive platforms, the neoconservative minority and their allies in the fundamentalist religious right wing defame this word daily, from think tanks, pulpits, editorials, and TV forums. The word "Culture" in the oft-quoted phrase "Culture Wars" resembles a righteous sword, not the open, free-spirited, and populist phenomenon it is. By not contesting this

metaphor, we tempt and encourage the censors. We need to speak out, aggressively, against the vocal minority that opposes us. In the 1990s, we will need our own "War Room," an equivalent to the team of researchers and spokespersons assembled by the Democrats in the last campaign.

Why is "cultural policy" so crucial in this decade? Because in a well-educated post-industrial society, the arts generate jobs, invigorate education, stimulate our imagination. They serve an astonishingly large market: more visits are paid by Americans to museums, for example, than attend professional sports. In cities like New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles they generate more income than many basic industries. In an era when nations compete in brainpower, the arts are as crucial to our survival as science, the military, and industry. Art and life are no longer separate, if they ever were. Art is not the decoration of life, but its visceral center. We do not ask for society to support the arts as charity but to invest in them as a necessity.

How we nourish this new "industry" is the proper province of policy. We do not agree with those who allege that thinking or researching or planning our action is un-American or impractical. No one denies the need for defense, health, or economic policy. Our federal, state, and local arts councils and agencies are based right now on a carefully prepared and organized system bequeathed by the past. We cannot counter this invisible policy with non-policy. We must invent policy anew, along with a new administration that is clearly more sympathetic to the arts and to intellectual achievement than its predecessor.

### A NEW CULTURE AND POLICY MUST GROW FROM THE GROUND UP, NOURISHED BY MANY MINDS

*Please fax to us any changes you wish to make in this Call. Suggest questions that ought to be asked and answered as this national creation of a new policy evolves. If this small group of individuals spread across the nation can agree on the basic language of this call, we might all go further, forming a larger community of interest around national policy re-formation, aided and abetted by the democratization of telecommunication that makes this joint writing and thinking economically possible, for a non-funded group. Later, we may agree to frame a public statement urging the establishment of a reform policy with real practical consequences. Most of us engaged in preparing and distributing this first draft hold that an ad hoc linkage of thinking people can exert great power and influence without forming either as a lobby or as a permanent organization. The most we might want to become is a national task force for cultural policy. Please give us your thoughts on this and all the issues raised above as soon as possible.*

FAX TO: FRANKLIN FURNACE 212-925-0903

# Birth, Life, and Future of the Call

Douglas Davis

## The Call: When?

I would date it back to the moment in 1992 when a number of us, in several parts of the nation, began to feel at once threatened and ready. For the first time in twelve years, it appeared as though a change might be possible. Impotence seemed nostalgic. The causes stretched beyond politics. To a steady series of legal victories in 1990-1992, proving that the first amendment is still alive. To continuing public support for art works, particularly performance works, that had been subjected to severe social, political, and media defamation. To certain forms of aesthetic defiance. More art began to be made that was driven by something other than marketing values. In New York and in Los Angeles, I recall attending a series of meetings, some large, some as small as two persons, all of which groped after *What to do?* Among the organizers and collaborators were artists, writers, curators, arts managers, thinkers, and scholars.<sup>1</sup> One result was an early position paper on the arts that I wrote for Barbara Handman and Melanne Verveer (both with People for the American Way at the time). They later submitted it to then-Governor Bill Clinton, during his primary campaign in New York. It resolutely opposed censorship, as did the later Clinton-Gore plank on the arts, thanks to nationwide collective of artists, writers, actors, filmmakers, videomakers, and more who supported and advised the Democratic ticket.

## The Call: How?

After the election, a void followed. Though a transition team for the arts and humanities was in place, few of us could detect a clear direction or healthy passion. Rather, we began to feel that some advisors in the administration might be *afraid* of that very sector of U.S. society that had rallied early to its cause – a sector teeming with ideas, energy, and a commitment to reform on several levels, social, economic, and technological, as well as cultural. We believed the urgent need was not for a brilliant appointment, event, or speech but a *vision* – of what a thoroughly progressive cultural *policy* might be. Some of us called for such a policy, in talks, debates, Op Eds. We needed an overall plan of action based in premises different from those that drove the Republicans from 1980 to fall, 1992; even different from those that motivated the Democrats in the 1960s when Kennedy and Johnson created both the NEA and the NEH for a society quite unlike the one we now inhabit. But muscular, special interest groups and lobbies had already formed around us, each driving on specific goals ≈ artists' health care, White House celebrations, more funding for the NEA. How were we to wring

a general vision out of so many specific interests?

## The Call: Again, how?

Avoid all groups! Fax to a network of *individuals*! Find a grass-roots core that does not resemble the shrewdly distorted stereotype of our small group that fled the special-interest melee. Among those who fled to find this core were Keller, Pozzi, Wilson, and myself. From the first draft of "the call," the objective always was to attack, not defend, and certainly not apologize (for one of the few tax-supported government programs that has paid off, in every sense). After writing the Call, we collectively and individually put our fax machines to work, contacting a broad, healthy percentage of the arts and humanities community in the U.S. Franklin Furnace served as the central switchboard for this effort.

## The Call: What then?

Slowly at first, then like a roar the replies came pouring in. Miraculously, this ad hoc network of strong, distinct egos *agreed* on nearly all the major themes enunciated in the Call. A collective agreement on cultural policy – at this moment – exists within the creative community!

## The Call: What next?

We must extend the Call's invitation in new directions. We must now find ways to translate its vision into a form of reality – at the precise moment when those on the other side, who launched the "Culture War," are in full cry, with considerable financial and ideological support. The months and years ahead are perilous. The new administration, despite its good intentions, is just beginning to study the issues, just beginning to think and to move, thanks to the nominations of Jane Alexander and Sheldon Hackney at the NEA and the NEH. The four authors of the Call believe we face a five-year-long struggle, requiring much dedication, thought, and action. To that end we are slowly, painstakingly creating a study/seminar/publication site for meetings and planning. We are working with the Center for National Policy in Washington D.C., which has served for more than a decade as an incubator for progressive thinking in matters of social, economic, and international policy. The Creative Coalition in New York has also lent space and assistance, as have colleagues in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and beyond. We ask your blessing, help, and joy as we proceed to implement the call of the Call. Add your voice, noble reader of this newsletter. Fax your thoughts to the number listed on the Call. Act out of urgency, yes, but no long faces, please. Let our century end not with a whimper but a roar of joy.

*Douglas Davis is an artist who works in many media, a published critic/author, and a political activist.*

[Footnote on page 12]

# A Letter to Grantmakers in the Arts

Martha Wilson

As many of you know, I am a performance artist and founding director of Franklin Furnace in Lower Manhattan, an organization that has gotten in trouble from time to time for showing work selected by peer panel review, without regard for the extra-artworld consequences. This has made me a sounding-board for artists – and a symbol of “degenerate” culture for some individuals and groups.

Consequently, as you might imagine, I have a bean up my nose about how the avant-garde is viewed by the public in this country – I love the historical references evoked by the term “avant-garde” and see myself in this tradition. Turning the tide of public opinion is a personal and political goal that has led me to write, at the invitation of the editors, this letter to you.

Art provides the closest thing we have, in a skeptical age, to religious experience. You all know what I’m talking about: When one is deeply involved in the process of making something new, whether it is an article on cultural policy for a newsletter or a performance art work, time stops; and the veil lifts that separates us from bliss.

When “terrorists” try to harm a society, they bomb MUSEUMS – ancient cultures are often reconstructed from potshards, houses start out as strings, i.e. – art, form, poetry, are the sort of blue prints for societies. That is why politicians fight to NAME which artists/art are acceptable. I’m for the multiple voice – the power of the personal & intimate versus commodity experience. I think the edge should always/open into life.

- Lon

To support a class of artists who do this more often than the rest of us is analogous to supporting a priestly class. It’s just that with religious fundamentalism lined up on the other side at present, there is no forceful argument for what artists do and can teach.

Interspersed throughout this letter are letters from among the 2 ½ pounds of faxes, phone messages, and letters that I received in response to a Call sent to Franklin Furnace’s list of artists and the NAAO members list. I believe they express, albeit indirectly, the need for recognition of the life of the spirit.

June 3, 1993

Dear Martha,

I support your Call in regard to cultural policy and you have drafted a vigorous statement.

However, I disagree with the statement in some respects. In the second paragraph you state “Our private sector often wants to graft profit-making values onto a human impulse.” Paragraph 4 states why “cultural policy” is so crucial in this decade [and] you speak about jobs, markets, income, etc. This looks to me like connecting the private sector to profit making. I understand there are all kinds of nuances and varying interpretations in such definitions, however, the distinction needs clarification.

I don’t think there is enough said about art as an ultimately autonomous, individual expression even if I don’t believe there is such a thing! We live and die with notions of art as an ultimately free gesture and this autonomy has to be emphasized over private sector or market considerations.

All best wishes,

Leon Golub  
New York City

Now what? Unlike fundamentalist groups, artists never agree on anything because their first and foremost commitment is to their individual expression. This has to be; art comes out of the body and soul of the artist to become a work of art that only then may be experienced by others. Artists’ understanding of the mechanics of the creative process may explain why freedom of expression is an issue that has galvanized the community of artists like no other in this century.

Dear Martha,

I would most certainly agree that it is a long overdue undertaking to create a new cultural policy and a new definition of what culture is, but what a formidable task!

Speaking as one far removed from the mainstream cultural hubs of the country, culture as it is now perceived, seems equated primarily with entertainment. It is seen as an event or thing meant to amuse or consume the time of the public and if at all possible to add in some way to the cycle of the consumer economy. Little attention is given to cultural activities as a way of enriching people’s lives beyond that of entertainment or material gains. I believe that in redefining cultural activities an emphasis should be put on the many benefits of culture that go beyond

these surface levels; that we look at culture as a means for expanding our intellectual capabilities and emotional well-being. We need to look at cultural activities as a way of making this country a more humane, caring, and sustainable society.

Through much of the 1980s most of the thinking component of the cultural community was put on the defensive, reacting to the attacks and injustices of the Reagan-Bush era. While I realize that fight is still ongoing, I believe we in the cultural community must move beyond the defensive and begin a more proactive strategy. We must present the possibilities of a more meaningful cultural existence in a positive way rather than from the reactive, defensive position we have so often been forced into.

In the ongoing defense of freedom of expression, I believe there must be no compromise to those who would impose their way of thinking on others, but I also believe there needs to be a new discussion of responsibilities as well as freedoms. I believe those of us in education are particularly liable for the lack of dialogue in this area. Students and artists of all media need to be in a continuing discourse regarding the responsibilities of the artist in this culture. How are we and should we be shaping the cultural form of this society? I know this is not a comfortable area of inquiry, but I feel it extremely important in shaping cultural policy and becoming a more meaningful part of the country's future.

I don't know if these few rambling thoughts will be of assistance, but I did want to make an attempt. If I can be of any help in this effort please let me know. I hope all is well with you.

From the Wheat and Soybean Fields,

Mark W. McGinnis, Artist/Professor,  
Northern State University  
Aberdeen, South Dakota

Sigh. "Freedom of Expression" has been successfully marketed by conservative elements as license to create works of art that do not measure up to "general standards of decency." How can we market what we have to offer so that it appeals to the broadest sectors of American society?

Perhaps art needs to be connected to Enterprise, the process through which businesspeople go as they perceive a vacuum and invent a new product or service to fill it. What could be dearer to the Capitalist spirit? I think the other good thing about the notion of "enterprise" is that the word suggests the primacy of process over product. Focussing on the fact that Karen Finley spread chocolate syrup on her breasts to embody the degradation of women ignores the process through which she went to invent this powerful metaphor.

28 June 1993

Dear Martha,

This is in response to your recent broadside, *The Idea of a Culture*, which was dated May 12 but only arrived here in our offices last week. Ever since we lost our fax machine, we've been somewhat harder to reach with emergency communiques, but it was good to receive your message nevertheless.

We fully concur with your ideas regarding the value of culture in the present society. Yes, the fundamentalist religious right has made the word "culture" into a dirty word, not recognizing that the arts "generate jobs, invigorate education, and stimulate our imaginations." Moreover, it needs to be noted that artists are responsible for the design of graphics, advertising, video-editing, and all the other facets of advertising, thereby having a direct impact on the forceful development of our capitalist society. Without the arts, the economy would grind to a sluggish halt.

Industry has told the government that current educational systems are not addressing the needs of the business community, because they fail to teach creativity, independent thinking, and the ability to collaborate as a "team" player. What no one points out is that the arts teach precisely those skills, and the elimination of the arts from the curriculum is causing the "brain drain" that the business community is experiencing. As your broadside notes, the arts represent an investment in the future of our society, not a self-serving charitable organization.

Thank you for promoting this discussion on the need for a cultural policy, and add our names to the list.

Sincerely,

Arlene Rakoncay, Executive Director,  
Chicago Artists' Coalition  
Jeff Abell, Editor, CAC News

Speaking of powerful metaphors, I have a hunger that won't quit for an act of theater to get the importance of art across. This is another parallel we have with another sector of society: the political world. Alfonse D'Amato knew that politics was theater when he ripped up a Mapplethorpe catalogue on the floor of the Senate. We need to stage an equally powerful work of theater in the political arena to turn the tide of American public opinion in favor of the arts. Such a work will need writers, directors, actors, audiences ... and timing - all the same parts that the creative community pulls together into wholes every day.

June 1, 1993

Dear Martha:

As usual, it was nice speaking to you over the phone yesterday. Sign me up! I think the concept for "The Idea of a Culture" project, is great. I have submitted some thoughts on the subject for your review.

Martha, as I mentioned on the phone, I think it is very important to define our own description. For too long, the description of who we are, and what we do, has been defined by the "media," politicians, businessmen, preachers and everyone else, except ourselves. Just as you're doing, if we do not define who we are and what we do, we stand the risk of being misunderstood. Also, it is important to educate the opposition. They are the way they are for a reason, let's not give them any more excuses. This way we can be better prepared for the next battle.

Other ideas:

- Artists/Organizations collaborations for the community
- Tools for better Arts organizational skills (networking, technology, P.R....)
- Overall, polishing of the "image" of the Arts

Well Martha, if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

See you soon.

PEACE

Danny Tisdale  
Harlem, USA

The creative community needs new thinking about challenging works of art. We need to replace the sentiments expressed, for example, in Mr. Andrew Heiskell's generally friendly Op Ed piece (*The New York Times*, 9/15/93), that "There should be clear standards of artistic merit." Though stated in reverse, this is the familiar "rotten apple" argument - the argument that, of the 85,000 grants awarded in the NEA's history, only a few are questionable. This point has divided big institutions from small groups, live artists from dead ones, individual artists from the rest of "decent" society. Since I am one of the "rotten apples" myself, I suggest that the way to handle many people's perennial inability to keep up with reasoning avant-garde artists is to EMBRACE CONTROVERSY as the normal, welcome, healthy outgrowth of life in a diverse, democratic society. If artists can bravely be positioned as our greatest spiritual strength, instead of our Achilles' heel, we might all get along better.

June 10, 1993

Dear Martha,

I received A Call to Re-invent Policy in yesterday's mail and find myself in agreement. However, there is one issue, which I feel is central to any cultural policy, which is only touched on: the role of art education and the de-marginalization of children back into the cultural mainstream.

Where I live and work children no longer receive even a superficial education in the arts. They have no official exposure to *any* cultural tradition, and their knowledge of art is limited to what they can glean on their own. No wonder contemporary art can be sold by Donald Wildmon as suspect and the product of a dangerous cultural elite - the average person doesn't have enough knowledge or information to refute what is being said. How can we expect the product of our education system to understand any but the surface issues at play in the little art that they see?

Your fax recognizes that we are creators and consumers of a global culture, but most people are just consumers, not creators. And this global culture they are consuming is a popular culture that mostly encourages more consumption, more technology and more individual isolation.

Hopefully a national cultural policy will recognize the role/need of community in the arts. Art is the "visceral center" of life, but if people merely see it as another entertainment commodity or industry, disconnected from *their* reality, it becomes nothing more than decoration. We must (as the art makers) be connected with people in the greater community. We are them and they are us. Art and artists must become a recognized part of daily life. The best we can do is to have young people grow up as practitioners of the arts, producers with an appreciation of quality, innovation and importance that comes only from exposure. This cannot happen without acknowledging the necessity of art education.

Sincerely,

Susan Purves  
Executive Director, Kirkland Arts Center  
Kirkland, Washington

If I may close by speaking directly to the community of grantmakers in the arts, I hope we can join in concert - funders of the arts, artists, educators, politicians and business folk - to devise a work of theater that will collate the many separate efforts already underway, and coalesce the energy in each, now separate, community.

Very truly yours,

Martha Wilson

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# The EcoMuseum

## An Organic Organizational Structure for First Nations Cultural Centers

Carla A. Roberts

From the tundra of southwest Alaska to the bayous of Louisiana, from the desert and pueblo communities of the southwest to the Eastern Woodlands, a new museum movement has taken hold. Across the First Nations of America, communities are planning, renovating, and building new or replacement facilities to function as community or tribal museums. Perhaps sparked by Public Law 101-601, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act which became law on November 16, 1990, America's First People are preparing for the return of funerary and sacred objects that have here-to-fore been housed in museums far from their place of origin.

The Repatriation Act does not require that a standard museum facility be available before designated objects are returned, and it does not require that the objects be made available for public display. All it requires is that the community establish "cultural patrimony," that is, the objects in question must have "ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Native American group or culture itself, rather than [being] property owned by an individual."<sup>1</sup>

The act covers funerary objects, which are part of rites or ceremonies honoring the departed, whether or not associated with a particular burial site; and it also covers sacred objects, which are required by contemporary practitioners of traditional healing and ceremonial rites. Human remains will be handled in different ways: many communities will not accept them, some will re-inter them along with associated funerary objects, and in some cases it will be difficult to identify where the remains properly belong. Some items, however, will be appropriate for public display and will become the cornerstone of the collections in the First Nations museums.

Although the Smithsonian is exempt, all other museums, both tribal and mainstream, are now required to complete inventories of their holdings in preparation for the arduous task of repatriating this wealth of objects to their proper homelands. Some enlightened museums, such as the Stanford University Museum and Art Gallery, the Eiteljorg Museum in Indianapolis, the Heard Museum in Phoenix, the Denver Art Museum, and the Art Institute of Chicago, are leading the way by quickly repatriating items as they are identified rather than waiting for federal directives. The National Museum of the American Indian, a part of the Smithsonian, has established a repatriation policy that provides for the return of materials meeting the intent of the Repatriation Act in instances where the Museum's title or claim is invalid.

As these objects find their way home, the local community is faced with the task of determining their future. Each community will decide, based on local custom and practice, whether the objects are returned to sacred use, re-interred, kept for internal study and knowledge, or made available for public display. Many of these functions will require new organizational structures and, in some cases, new facilities in the local community.

An organizational structure with its roots in France has emerged as a popular model for the evolving tribal museum movement in America's First Nations. Georges Henri Rivière (1897-1985), a French museologist, first defined a new museum movement and termed it the "ecomuseum." This movement was paralleled in the international community under other names and with slight variations in structure and philosophy.

The emergence of this new organizational form came on the heels of the social unrest of the 1960s. The tenor of the movement is marked by more openness and interaction with the community in which the museum is located. In the United States, the main manifestations are neighborhood and community museums as well as some historic sites operated by the National Park Service, state agencies, and other entities. Among the most well-known is the Anacostia Museum in Washington DC, the Smithsonian's experimental neighborhood museum begun in 1967. Similar manifestations have appeared throughout the international community, with museums in Sweden, Portugal, Venezuela, West Africa, and Brazil.

The French ecomuseum concept was imported to this continent through the French-speaking province of Quebec, and has recently emerged in the tribal communities of Canada's southern neighbor. The first museum in the United States to study the Canadian examples and to openly declare itself to be an ecomuseum is the Ak-Chin Him Dak, located in Maricopa, Arizona, approximately forty miles southeast of Phoenix. The name of the museum means "the way of the people" or "our way." Ak-Chin Him Dak serves the people who live between the Tohono O'odham (formerly known as Papago) and the Akimel O'odham (sometimes still referred to as Pima) and who are descendents of both tribes. The term "Ak-Chin" refers to the irrigation methods practiced by sedentary farmers who raised melons, beans, and squash. Literally meaning a place where water spreads out, Ak-Chin has come to describe the descendents of the Hohokam who have continuously occupied and farmed near this area for at least 15,000 years.<sup>2</sup>

The Ak-Chin Him Dak has been developed for the benefit of the tribal community and serves the visitor to the community as a secondary rather than a primary audience. The museum does no advertising to attract the tourist to its community, which is only some 15-20 miles from Interstate Highway 10. This does not imply, however, that the ecomuseum concept cannot promote the objectives of cultural tourism. On the contrary, an ecomuseum can be a very positive force in smoothing

conflict between the objectives of visitors and the desires of the local community.

Observing their neighbors in Arizona, the Zuni in New Mexico have also embraced the ecomuseum concept and are planning to build a museum that will serve as a portal into their pueblo. As the passageway through which the traveler must journey, the museum will become a means not only to introduce the visitor to an educational overview of the community, but also to teach proper protocol and respect while within the pueblo.<sup>3</sup>

While these are the only two declared ecomuseums, many other cultural organizations within tribal communities have unconsciously embraced one or more elements of the ecomuseum model in their organizational structures. Among these are the Tunica-Biloxi Museum in Marksville, Louisiana, where local community members have been trained in conservation methods as well as exhibition design and preparation. And at Canyon de Chelly, a National Monument run by the Park Service, members of the Navajo nation are actively engaged in management and interpretation of the ancient ruins even though they are not descendents of the Anasazi. Other tribal leaders and museum planners become quite enthusiastic about the ecomuseum concept when they learn it is so in tune with their traditional way of life while providing potential solutions for the many conflicting concerns that the museum must address within the community.

What exactly, then, is an ecomuseum and why have the First Nations found it so inviting? The third and final definition of the ecomuseum put forward by Georges Henri Rivière in January 1980 includes the following:

An ecomuseum ... is a mirror in which the local population views itself to discover its own image, in which it seeks an explanation of the territory to which it is attached and of the populations that have preceded it, seen either as circumscribed in time or in terms of the continuity of generations. It is a mirror that the local population holds up to its visitors so that it may be better understood and so that its industry, customs, and identity may command respect.<sup>4</sup>

While the ecomuseum is not to be confused with the subject of ecology, the two do share certain basic tenets: the importance of place, the inter-relatedness of people living within a defined territory, and a concern for the ways people interact with their environments, both physical and social. Unlike the 19th century museum with its emphasis on the collection and preservation of objects, the ecomuseum may or may not have a collection per se. The ecomuseum is far more concerned with social process, with how the material culture relates to the customs and practices of the people. And, while the ecomuseum may preserve historical objects, it will do so not for the sake of the object in and of itself, but for its role and place within the society. A key concept of the ecomuseum is that its holdings reside in the collective memory of the population, not in a storage facility in the basement or attic.

In an ecomuseum the emphasis may be shifted from antiquities to more contemporary objects, such as the soft drink bottle currently on display at the Ak-Chin Him Dak, and the interpretive materials will deal with the impact of that object upon community life. In the case of the Ak-Chin, the bottle symbolizes modern encroachment on traditional ways of life, including diet, subsistence practices, and so on.

The collection of an ecomuseum may be found in the homes of community members rather than in the museum's displays or its storage facilities. The ecomuseum collection may be inventoried for purposes of identifying the community resources, and even gathered from time to time for public display. But the inherent role of the family or clan structure as the caretakers of particular objects is respected and reinforced. The focus is on training community members in proper conservation methods, rather than on spiriting objects away for safekeeping.

The collection of an ecomuseum need not be objects at all, but can be oral traditions, practices, rituals, or community festivals. These events may or may not have been electronically recorded to be part of the ecomuseum. All of the cultural heritage that transpires within the defined community can become part of the ecomuseum. Although its holdings will probably elucidate and honor the history of the community, the ecomuseum is not so much concerned with the past as it is concerned with the present and the future of the community.

A standard museum consists of objects housed in a building, and the objects are selected, cared for, and interpreted by experts for the education of visitors. In an ecomuseum, the collective memory becomes the central focus of the museum, which may include a building, but also includes special sites within a defined territory. Ecomuseum experts may be developed from within the population, and their role is to help the community to re-image the collective memory. On equal footing with the museum experts are the people in the particular community who are its cultural experts. The primary visitor is usually from the local population, and secondarily from the outside. Contrary to the scholarly community's respect for the unbridled pursuit of knowledge, the ecomuseum will respect the desire of a community for limited public disclosure.

Examining the essential characteristics of the ecomuseum and considering the relationship of these characteristics to traditional communities reveal why the ecomuseum concept has been embraced by tribal communities.

**Regional Character.** The ecomuseum generally encompasses a defined geographic territory with a shared cultural heritage. The model is easily adapted to isolated native communities such as the Tunica-Biloxi in Marksville, Louisiana, and to vast areas of land such as the Yu'pik villages along the Kuskokwim River of Alaska. It also could have a practical advantage in areas such as the Hopi Reservation with its twelve independent villages. While most elements of the Hopi cultural heritage are

shared, each village is distinct in its celebrations and its accessibility to the public. Since many of the villages frequently receive non-Indian visitors, the ecomuseum concept could mediate between the visitor and the collective community by providing visitors with the basic understanding they need in order to behave appropriately and respectfully while a guest of the community.

**Interdisciplinary.** The ecomuseum combines many disciplines. It is not only concerned with the material culture but also with the flora and fauna of the defined area. The ecomuseum is a natural vehicle for revealing the interrelationship of culture and environment that is found in indigenous communities. The subject matter becomes not just the objects that are fabricated from the environment, but the ways the land is managed, harvested, and renewed. Native cultures, with their stewardship of the natural environment, cannot be understood without looking at the culture holistically. The ecomuseum, then, might examine the relationships of local cultures to the environment = how the populace lives within the local habitat, what land forms mean in ritual and ceremony, and how natural or cultivated plants are harvested and utilized, among many others. While related, each of these subjects has been examined, historically, through quite different disciplines; the ecomuseum can mesh them into a coherent whole. Since the ecomuseum structure allows for internal community dialogue, each community would determine for itself a level of public disclosure on any of these subjects that it finds appropriate.

**Collaborative.** The ecomuseum invites community participation and even requires it to be successful. Success depends on a collective decision-making process that respects the community standards as well as individual standards. In Native American communities, community values and desires are often more important than individual values and desires. While respecting individual expression, traditional communities have operated for millennia with unique decision-making structures. In many communities, the power to make decisions for the common good derives from positions established by spiritual tradition. The ecomuseum concept allows for a collaborative process that respects these inherent, internal community structures. In its formal structure, the ecomuseum often includes a committee of technical experts who facilitate the process, a community committee within whom the collective memory resides, and a management committee charged with ensuring administrative controls. Representatives from each of these are chosen to sit on the Board of Directors.

**Collective Memory.** The concept of *collective memory*, first introduced by Rivi re, is a key characteristic of the ecomuseum. The essence of the "holdings" of an ecomuseum are intangibles that are often termed myth, legend, tradition, or folklore. Such intangibles are the non-material property or phenomena that comprise a cultural heritage. These resources are often the greatest wealth of native communities. Some communities practice crema-

tory rites that leave little of the material culture behind, and the concept of a building to store personal objects is anathema to these traditional practices. An ecomuseum can draw upon the resources of the community in ways that will not impinge on the beliefs of the community. It provides honor and respect for the elders within the community who are the holders of a vast repository of knowledge. Their collective knowledge can help to build a brighter future for their descendents now and in the future.

While all these factors point toward the ecomuseum's potential sensitivity to the needs of indigenous communities in the U.S., the support structure for European ecomuseums is not likely to transfer. In Europe, the ecomuseum's community members also become a primary source of financial support through annual subscriptions and memberships. This practice is not likely to take hold in tribal communities, where many members of the population are below the poverty level. In this country, the success of ecomuseums will require a combination of public resources from national, state, and local governments (in this case, the tribal council), along with private resources from the foundation sector.

The ecomuseum concept, both the concept as a whole and any one of its several aspects, has the chance to succeed and to have a very positive impact on the cultural heritage of the First Nations. Whether undertaken for the benefit of the local community or the cultural tourist, these endeavors will ultimately benefit us all by preserving the diverse heritages that are indigenous to this land and by allowing the members of those communities to provide first voice interpretation.

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Carla A. Roberts is executive director of *Atlatl*, the national service organization for Native American arts based in Phoenix, Arizona.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Public Law 101-601, November 16, 1990; Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act; Congressional Record, 1990: Vol. 136.

<sup>2</sup>Fuller, Nancy J., "The Museum as a Vehicle for Community Empowerment: The Ak-Chin Indian Community Ecomuseum Project," in *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, edited by Ivan Karp & Christine Mullen Kreamer. (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992): 334.

<sup>3</sup>Holman, Nigel, "Objects Remembered: The Continuing Significance of the Stewart Culin Collection," symposium in conjunction with the exhibition *Objects of Myth and Memory*; The Heard Museum; January 30, 1993.

<sup>4</sup>Rivi re, Georges Henri, "The Ecomuseum—An Evolutive Definition" (French Translation), in *Museum*, No. 148. (The Netherlands: Unesco—United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1985): 182.

[Continued on page 12]

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# Toward a New Arts Order

Nello McDaniel and George Thorn

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*With the following article, Grantmakers in the Arts Newsletter continues its series about organizational structure in the nonprofit cultural community.*

*We were pleased to receive an advance draft of a new book from ARTS Action Research, Toward a New Arts Order/Process, Power, and Change. The following article is based on excerpts from the preface and second chapter of the publication, adapted for GIA Newsletter readers. ARTS Action Research is a consulting and research group founded and co-directed by Nello McDaniel and George Thorn. McDaniel previously served as executive director of FEDAPT (a not-for-profit arts consulting company based in New York City), worked at the NEA Dance Program, and was chief operating officer for the Western States Arts Foundation. Thorn divides his time between consulting with ARTS Action Research and co-directing the Arts Management Institute at Virginia Polytechnic University in Blacksburg, Virginia. McDaniel and Thorn have co-authored several books and special reports. The new book will be available from ARTS Action Issues, P.O. Box 401082, Brooklyn, New York, 11240-1082.*

*This excerpt represents only a small portion of the full publication. Other sections discuss social and political trends as they affect arts organizations, and describe in more detail the consulting work that currently engages and challenges authors McDaniel and Thorn. As many arts grantmakers have discovered, the publications of ARTS Action Research often strike a sympathetic chord in the nonprofit cultural community. This new book seems likely to be read and discussed widely in the coming months. We thank ARTS Action Research for sharing this preview with our readers.*

## From the Preface

In the winter of 1991, ARTS Action Research published the *Workpapers: A Special Report/The Quiet Crisis in the Arts*. *The Quiet Crisis* became something of a phenomenon in the arts community. More than 9,000 copies are currently in circulation. Readership of the report has been expanded through numerous reprintings in magazines and newsletters of such diverse groups as *Artpaper*, National Association of Artists' Organizations (NAAO), Dance Bay Area, and the Western Museums Conference.

No one was more surprised than we were at the interest expressed in *The Quiet Crisis*. Certainly we had no expectation that the publication would make such a strong connection with the arts community. Our initial motivation for writing the report was simple: we needed to understand what was happening to the arts community. The nature of our work had been changing dramatically over a relatively short period of time. More and more, we were responding to established arts organizations and arts

professionals who were in serious trouble. Organizations that we thought were stable were in fact experiencing extraordinary, even life-threatening, financial and organizational crises. The debts and deficits being disclosed were mind boggling. We observed staff and board burn-out that we broadly described as a "human deficit," a deficit caused by addressing financial problems with human resources above and beyond those realistically available. Unfortunately, in the foreground of all this were increasingly intense attacks being mounted against the National Endowment for the Arts and a growing nationwide economic recession.

*The Quiet Crisis* allowed us to engage in a dialogue with a wide range of arts professionals and arts organizations – from independent artists to symphony orchestras, presenting organizations, and local arts councils. Whether our interaction with these professionals and organizations was in national conferences, workshops, or telephone conversations, we found some striking similarities. First, we learned that many were eager to understand more about the complex conditions and the confluence of forces within which arts professionals and organizations were working. Second, we found that many expressed a tremendous sense of relief when they discovered that they were not the only ones experiencing stress and crisis. Countless arts professionals commented that they thought we had inside information and were describing their specific organizations and situations.

Overall, we found an eagerness to understand more about the conditions and prospects of arts organizations – not just *what* doesn't work but *why* it doesn't work. There is a genuine interest in unraveling the not-for-profit arts "mythology" that has developed over decades and has dominated the development, growth, and direction of the arts in this country. We also found an intense interest in learning how to create healthier and more productive arts organizations, structures, and approaches. It became apparent that our own exploration with *The Quiet Crisis* spoke to deep personal and professional concerns of many people in the arts.

The most frequent question posed to us as we travel around the country is, "Is the quiet crisis over yet?" To answer this, we first have to acknowledge that this crisis is not a quiet one any longer, as conference themes, workshop agendas, and private conversations show. Secondly, serious challenges remain:

- Although we have a new president, economic conditions in the country have not changed dramatically.
- The religious right lost ground in the White House, but has made gains elsewhere.
- Most arts organizations continue to operate 30 to 50 percent above the realistic floor of available and achievable human and financial resources, which results in mounting human and financial deficits.
- Growth is still the primary measure of success in the field.

- Fraying relationships and a breakdown of trust, cooperation, and partnership between arts professionals and board leaders still prevail.
- Exhausted arts professionals are giving up, leaving the field, and depleting the pool of valuable human resources.
- Organizational behavior patterns have not changed, and old solutions are inappropriately applied to new problems and conditions.

The overwhelming majority of arts professionals with whom we have talked agree that change is necessary, but their views differ as to what changes should occur. Some may acknowledge that change is needed, but believe other people and organizations must make the changes. These professionals believe they are affected only indirectly by the crisis, and that they must continue to do what they have always done. A second attitude is held by professionals who understand that change is needed but who will only go forward with roadmap in hand. Finally, there are those who both understand that changes must be made and also that they will have to lead the way. The work of assuming responsibility and becoming accountable ≈ of regaining a sense of balance, health, and power ≈ will be accomplished by arts professionals in the third group. Our work and this publication are warmly and gratefully dedicated to those of you in this group, those who are creating the future.

## Reconceptualization

What is the appropriate response to new conditions and new challenges? We believe it is *reconceptualization* – remaking arts organizations by rethinking approaches to their management structures, programs, and relationships to their communities. Reconceptualization, along with a process to implement it, is at the heart of our current work. We believe that arts professionals must reconceptualize, or reinvent, their organizations within new “givens” if they are to regain health, balance, productivity, and influence in their communities.

Reconceptualization requires that professional leaders redefine, return to, or discover a new core mission, a new center – new values and direction for the organization. Our earlier published work described our view that during the last twenty-five years, budgetary growth has been the primary measure of success for nonprofit cultural organizations. During this time, many organizations added programs and projects to respond to funders’ ever-changing priorities. As resources diminish and funding guidelines change, many organizations are off center and have lost their focus. Our current conversations with troubled arts organizations frequently center on self-examination aimed to advance the process of reconceptualization. “Why should this organization exist? What are its values? How does it truly serve the art form, artists, and its communities? Who are its appropriate constituencies? Which programs or projects truly support the core?

Which do not? Which are no longer funded? What are its own priorities, not someone else’s?”

As the leadership of a nonprofit organization defines this true center and the programs that emanate from it, the question becomes, “Can this organization be brought into balance with the floor of human and financial resources currently available to it?” In most cases, the answer is, “Yes.” However, when this is not possible, the organization must go back, reexamine priorities, and eliminate or radically change programs until the balance can be found.

The process of reconceptualization may strike some arts professionals as unnecessarily severe. They may respond by saying, “We have always done this program,” or “The community expects us to do this program,” or “We will not be successful if we get smaller.” However, in most instances, the reconceptualization process is liberating because it allows the leadership and the organization to re-center and to direct all energies to achieving the core mission. Ultimately, our experience shows that if a troubled organization does not reconceptualize, the gap between its resources and commitment will continue to grow. The organization will remain out of balance and will become more and more dysfunctional and less and less healthy for the people in it. Eventually, it may close.

For reconceptualization to be successful, an organization must change its fundamental behavior. Without such change, the organization will often slip back to doing business as usual as soon as there is some relief from immediate problems. If this happens, the gap between resources and commitment will re-emerge, and the cycle will start over again.

We have found change in organizational behavior very difficult to achieve. We naively believed that acknowledging the need to change was sufficient to bring it about. We now understand how hard it is to change, how easy it is to slip back into old thinking and old habits.

## Reconceptualization Is Not “Downsizing”

When we talk about reconceptualization we are not talking about “downsizing,” a term popular in today’s for-profit sector. Downsizing in the for-profit sector has generally meant “trimming the fat.” There is simply no fat to trim in most arts organizations. They start out “downsized.” They are undercapitalized, underfinanced, and understaffed.

Over the past few years, many, if not most arts organizations have eliminated staff positions, cut marketing budgets, and reduced resources available for their programs. Most of this “downsizing” happened without eliminating any programs or projects. The result for most arts organizations is that the gap between expectations and resources has widened and the human and financial deficit has increased.

By bringing an organization's central mission into line with its resources, we have learned that the only real "fat" is in programs and projects that don't serve this core mission, or what we call "the center." The organization's center consists of its philosophical basis, its aesthetic and programmatic framework, and the people who are at the center of its work.

## Rejecting Growth as the Measure of Success

In the development of the nonprofit arts over the past several decades, budgetary growth has been the primary, if not the only, measure of success. Yet growth cannot be the measure of success any longer. In fact, growth for growth's sake is a negative measure. This does not mean there should not be growth, but it must carefully planned, controlled, and perhaps even defined in different ways. Growth may mean enriching and deepening what an organization is currently doing, rather than expanding it.

We ask arts professionals to develop new criteria to measure the success of their organizations. An organization must first reach internal understanding and agreement about its criteria, and then communicate those criteria externally. This allows outside funding sources to use the organization's criteria instead of imposing their own. As important as it is for the organization to reach understanding and agreement about its center, it is equally important to reach understanding and agreement about the criteria for measuring success.

## Closing Comments

Peter Senge, of the Sloan School of Management at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has written a book

on systems thinking called *The Fifth Discipline*.<sup>1</sup> In it he recommends taking a truthful look at one's current condition and understanding it as a resource, not a liability. Senge is not talking about the popular psychology of reframing a problem as a "challenge." Rather, he is saying that our current condition is all we have. If we view it as a resource, we then can develop realistic strategies to move forward.

It is important to understand that reconceptualization is a process. Going from one fixed state to another, from one model to another, would be repeating the worst mistakes of the past. There are no models, but there are methods – ways of thinking and ways of getting from "here" to "there" as circumstances and conditions endlessly demand. Each organization and each core of arts professionals have to discover, understand, and utilize approaches and methods that will become part of an ongoing reconceptualization process.

The balance of this publication addresses how these processes can be uncovered, understood, and applied. We believe that the future of the arts will require nothing less than a fundamentally new way of thinking and behaving. Working with arts professionals to discover and apply these new ways of thinking is at the center of our current practice.

We hope that the tools we describe in this new publication, along with the examples we present, will help arts professionals create a path toward a reimagined and revitalized cultural life in our country.

<sup>1</sup>*The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Peter M. Senge, New York: Doubleday/Currency, 1990.

## Birth, Life and the Future of the Call [Continued from page 3]

<sup>1</sup>Among the organizers and collaborators were artists and writers (Jane Bell, Steve Collins, Lauren Ewing, Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe, Sindy Greenberg, Lucio Pozzi, John Reilly, John Carl Warnecke, Tony Whitfield, Martha Wilson, and Tucker Viemeister); curators, arts managers, and thinkers (Alberta Arthurs, John Brademas, J. Carter Brown, Ronald Feldman, Leonard Fleischer, Judith Halevi, Barbara Handman, Richard Hertz, Joan Jeffri, Anthony S. Keller, Roger Mandle, Ann Murphy, Deborah Sale, Joan Shikegawa, John Walsh); scholars (Paul Dimaggio, Irving Sandler); and others, many others, whom I am surely forgetting.

## The EcoMuseum [Continued from page 9]

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# The Arts and the Information Superhighway

"A communications revolution is underway as profound as the introduction of the printing press. A new 'National Information Infrastructure' is rapidly moving into place – which will carry video, audio, and data information into homes and offices across the country. Its emergence will produce fundamental shifts in American life, transforming everything from work to education to government to culture. Because the health of our democracy is inextricably linked to the nature of our communications system, this new information infrastructure raises far-reaching questions about our country and its transition into the next century: Who will own these networks? Who will have access to them? What steps will be taken to preserve public institutions?"

So begins a policy statement drafted by a Telecommunications Policy Roundtable, recently formed to develop a "public interest vision" for the new telecommunications system. Led by such organizations as the American Library Association, the Center for Media Education (CME), Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility, and the National Coalition on Black Voter Participation, the Roundtable is a coalition of nonprofit and public interest organizations working to ensure greater public participation in the development of federal policy for this new communications infrastructure.

"The Clinton Administration is pushing for accelerated development of a National Information Infrastructure in the belief that it will revitalize the economy," report Jeffrey Chester and Kathryn Montgomery, co-directors of CME, who provided information for this article. Early this fall, the White House is expected to announce the creation of an Information Infrastructure Task Force with a mission to formulate and implement "forward-looking telecommunications and information policies that will accelerate the development of a National Information Infrastructure." The Task Force will be made up of approximately 45 government officials and will work with a 25-member citizen advisory group. The Task Force will develop policies for advanced communications networks, including a consideration of questions of intellectual property and copyright. The Task Force will also prepare Administration proposals for access to new technologies by the nonprofit community, with specific reference to education, health care, and libraries.

Chester and Montgomery also point out that new grant programs will be available. As part of President Clinton's economic stimulus package, the Commerce Department (through its National Telecommunications and Information Administration) will provide approximately \$25 million a year in grants beginning in fiscal year 1994 to help groups link up to the emerging "information

highways." Among those eligible for demonstration projects will be universities, local governments, schools, and nonprofit organizations. Funding for this grant program will probably be expanded during the remaining years of the Clinton Administration.

"The policymaking that will determine the shape and direction of 21st century communications is moving forward with great speed," say Chester and Montgomery, and they emphasize that the current push toward establishing telecommunications policy is "fueled by the frenzied efforts of media and information industries dedicated to securing a profitable place for themselves in the future." In the face of these powerful industry efforts, the Telecommunications Policy Roundtable addresses the concerns of the public interest and nonprofit sector. The Roundtable's policy statement notes that policies made in the next few years will have a long-term impact, and asks that federal policies "move beyond narrow and short-term interests and embrace a view that reflects the great diversity and richness of our country." The statement continues:

"Enlightened policies could harness the power of these new technologies to ameliorate many of our nation's most critical problems by revitalizing civic institutions, expanding educational opportunities, enhancing access to healthcare services, and improving job training. However, without a clear commitment to public goals, this promise will never be fulfilled. Instead, many of the shortcomings of our present telecommunications system will be intensified and a host of more serious problems created. There is already a growing disparity between the technologically affluent and the technologically disenfranchised that endangers our social fabric.

"Policy makers must ensure that the development of the information infrastructure reflects the public interest spirit that has long guided our country's communications policies: our commitment to a national telephone system available to all gave rise to the concept of "universal service," enabling those in the most remote parts of the nation to have access to the means of communication.

The Roundtable's statement also includes seven "public interest principles" that its endorsing organizations believe must guide policy making "to ensure that future generations inherit an information infrastructure which enhances the quality of life for everyone." In brief, the principles are:

1. Universal Access. All people should have affordable access to the information infrastructure.
2. Freedom to Communicate. The information infrastructure should enable all people to effectively exercise their fundamental right to communicate.
3. Vital Civic Sector. The information infrastructure must have a vital civic sector at its core.

4. **Diverse and Competitive Marketplace.** The information infrastructure should ensure competition among ideas and information providers.
5. **Equitable Workplace.** New technologies should be used to enhance the quality of work and to promote equity in the workplace.
6. **Privacy.** Privacy should be carefully protected and extended.
7. **Democratic Policymaking.** The public should be fully involved in policy making for the information infrastructure.

To date, about seventy organizations from science, education, media, library, and other nonprofit, public interest fields have endorsed the Roundtable's statement. CME's Chester and Montgomery are concerned that the arts community has not been much involved in the policy debate over the future of telecommunications. "The information superhighway will have profound implications for the arts in the U.S.," write Chester and Montgomery. "On the one hand, it could enable them to become a more central part of our culture, increasing the audience, impact, and support for artists and arts organizations. On the other hand, the information superhighway could bypass the arts community entirely. Arts organizations around the country could find themselves cut off from the new telecommunications networks, like the once thriving towns that withered when they were not connected to the national transportation network by highways or rail lines."

Chester and Montgomery emphasize that "in the next few years, the arts community has an excellent opportunity to participate in both the debate and the policymaking over the future of telecommunications. And it has well-placed allies such as Jane Alexander and Sheldon Hackney to represent its needs before policymakers. To take advantage of this opportunity, the arts community needs to present proposals that will ensure it a central role in the new information infrastructure." Chester and Montgomery stress that some of these proposals should address policy issues that are particularly relevant to the arts, and, as examples, they mention:

"Nonprofit rates. To guarantee that arts and other nonprofit institutions have full access to the information superhighway, spectrum space will have to be reserved and special rates created for nonprofits.

"New funding for the arts. Since private corporations will be given the privilege of building and profiting from the new telecommunications network, public policies should mandate a quid pro quo, requiring a spectrum fee or tax on telecommunications services which could help support arts and cultural programming.

"Safeguards for intellectual property. New policies need to be fashioned to assure the public's access to the broad

spectrum of information and programming, while protecting the rights of creators.

"State and local initiatives. Leaders of the arts community should work together to shape state and local policies for modernizing telecommunications services in order to ensure a central role for the arts."

Another concern, not yet addressed by CME or the Roundtable statement but certain to be a topic of discussion as more arts organizations enter the debate, is that of cultural diversity. If the full range of creative expression is to be served by the new "information highway," policies must be developed that will extend access beyond both the dominant popular culture and the nonprofit arts marketplace. Care must be taken, first, to ensure that the nonprofit cultural sector is not overwhelmed by the sheer volume of popular entertainment, and, second, to ensure that nonprofit cultural participation extends beyond the mainstream arts community to a full range of culturally specific, experimental, and socially-concerned perspectives.

Although only a few arts organizations were involved in the first phases of the Telecommunications Policy Roundtable, several arts groups have endorsed the Roundtable's policy statement, including American Arts Alliance, Arts Wire, High Performance Magazine, National Association of Artists' Organizations, National Writers Union, and Writers Guild of America, East. As groups like these begin to participate in policy discussions, it will be important to remember not only that the arts community has much to gain from this new communications system, but also that it has much to offer. Mitchel Kapor and Jerry Berman of the Electronic Frontier Foundation have described the potential: "As a means of increasing social cohesiveness, while retaining the diversity that is an American strength, the network could help revitalize this country's business and culture." Artists and cultural organizations can help reach this goal.

CME's co-directors issue a challenge to people involved in the arts:

"Arts leaders must look beyond immediate policy concerns (such as the reauthorization of the Endowments) and focus on the crucial questions that will determine the future of the arts in this country. If the arts community fails to develop new policy initiatives, build strategic alliances, and participate fully in the debate over the information superhighway, the arts will be further marginalized in the 21st century. But if arts leaders develop a persuasive vision, and work effectively to see that it is implemented, the arts could be at the heart of the information infrastructure."

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*The Center for Media Education is a Washington DC public interest organization, 1511 K Street, NW, Suite 518, Washington DC 20005, 202-628-2620.*

# News

## **"The Public Patron" A Conference at MIT**

On June 18 and 19, 1993, the Council for the Arts at Massachusetts Institute of Technology convened a conference titled, "The Public Patron: Drafting a Mandate for a Federal Agency." More of a forum for discussion than a literal drafting session, this dialogue among artists, administrators, funders, and public policy specialists from around the country launched what MIT anticipates may become an ongoing series of meetings to address issues of national arts policy.

The conference began on Friday evening, June 18, with talks by Senator Edward Kennedy and art critic, Robert Hughes. In his remarks, Senator Kennedy asserted his support for the National Endowment for the Arts and the peer panel process, and voiced his opposition to content restrictions on activities supported by the NEA. Hughes touched on many of the issues covered in his current publication, *The Culture of Complaint*, and applied his rhetorical facility with equal dexterity to gibes at Jesse Helms and attacks against the proponents of greater cultural diversity in arts funding.

The second day of the conference was divided into morning and afternoon panel sessions dedicated to "Creative Expression" and "Education in the Arts," respectively. In each session, six different panelists responded to the broad session topics from their individual perspectives. The presentations were followed by discussions among the panelists and, ultimately, by questions from the audience. The day closed with an address by Congressperson Louise Slaughter, Chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus.

The range of experience and concerns represented by conference participants was so broad that, of necessity, the discussion remained fairly general and often tended to digress. Highlights emerged none-the-less. Former NEA chairperson Frank Hodsoll gave an extremely candid analysis of the current "troubles" in federal funding for the

arts. Aldolpho Nodal, Los Angeles general manager of cultural affairs, issued provocative proposals for reimagining the role and scope of a federal funding agency. Theater director Ellen Stewart provided an impassioned reminder that artistic vision is one of a society's most precious resources, and she asserted that the NEA must be maintained and strengthened as a beacon for the United States' creative community. Other participants included Katy Kline, Robert Adams, John Paul Batiste, James Fitzpatrick, Judith Shea, Ellyn Berk, Helen Brunner, Bonnie Jo Hunt, Michael Morgan, and Allan Parachini.

Conference proceedings are being published by MIT. The general conference package also included NEA reauthorization and reappropriation flowcharts and Congressional committee information, as well as compelling statements and materials from MIT's President Charles Vest and Associate Provost for the Arts Ellen Harris discussing MIT's commitment to the arts and the role of the arts in this country's educational system. For further information contact Mark Palmgren, Director, Council for the Arts of MIT, 20 Ames Street, E15-205, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, (617) 258-8631.

- Ella King Torrey

## **Meeting on Federal Arts Policy Wingspread Conference Center**

From June 11-13, 1993, about fifty representatives of national arts service organizations met at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin to discuss federal cultural policy. Convened by the American Arts Alliance, American Association of Museums, American Council for the Arts, National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies, and National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, the purpose of the meeting was to explore areas of common interest among the organizations represented. In addition to the conference hosts, participants included the director and one or more Board members from Atlatl (the national service organization for Native American arts), the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses, The Association of American Cultures, the National Asso-

ciation of Artists' Organizations, discipline-specific organizations such as Dance/USA, OPERA America, Theater Communications Group, the American Symphony Orchestra League, and many others. Several attendees noted that this group had never met in the same place at the same time prior to the Wingspread event.

Bill Keens acted as facilitator for a flexible agenda that included both full-group sessions and small group discussion. A perfect Midwestern spring weekend, the inviting grounds of the Wingspread center, and the handsome Frank Lloyd Wright home which houses the conference facility together served as a conducive environment for the weekend's discussion.

Taking place at the state fairgrounds across town on the same weekend, the 90th Anniversary of the Harley-Davidson Company also brought an interesting contingent to the conference hotel. While conference participants discussed the largely high-brow culture proffered by the nonprofit cultural community, thousands of Harley celebrants provided an ironic counterpoint demonstrating the vitality of popular culture. More than one Wingspread participant remarked that the real stuff was going on in another part of town!

Nonetheless, the Wingspread conference seemed like an important step toward the discovery of mutual goals for the NEA's next reauthorization. At the conclusion of the two and a half day "retreat," it was evident that broad areas of common interest exist among those present. (Certainly, fissures between them also were evident.) During the 1990 NEA reauthorization, some of those present at Wingspread had appeared to work *against* instead of *with* each other. After taking the time to build a greater sense of community with each other and realizing that common ground exists, participants in the Wingspread meeting seem less likely to engage in the trade-offs and under-handedness that has marked previous lobbying at the federal level.

The conference sponsors recently announced their intention to distribute a summary of the Wingspread meeting.

As a conference participant, Grant-makers in the Arts will receive that report. Look for an excerpt in the Spring 1994 GIA Newsletter.

- Sarah Lutman

### National Arts Policy Center Planned

The American Council for the Arts (ACA) described to the GIA Newsletter the current status of the National Arts Policy Center. "The Center has been about three years in planning," said Bob Porter, ACA's director of policy, planning, and publishing. The concept for it began with discussions among ACA trustees and continued through the work of an ad hoc committee. A document was presented to and adopted by the ACA Board in the fall 1991. At present, ACA has raised \$2 million toward a total fundraising campaign goal of \$7 million to endow and begin operation of the Center.

The Center will have two primary functions, one that actually undertakes research - "one or two things at a time, so we can do them well," according to Porter - and a second that will serve as a clearinghouse and archive for information about arts policy research. The purpose of the Center is "to make the arts central to American life by determining the role and relationship of the arts to American society and by promoting an understanding of this relationship among artists, arts institutions, policymakers, and the American public."

"The National Arts Policy Center will be a program of ACA, but will be substantially independent," said Porter. A twelve-person Advisory Committee will guide the activities of the Center and will determine what research will be supported. Only three of these people serve on the ACA Board. "The Center is designed to function 'at arm's length' from ACA," explained Porter. "We want a mechanism to assure the credibility of the research the Center undertakes." At a meeting in late September, the Advisory Committee concentrated on narrowing the central focus of the Center's research and on launching the search for a director.

Advisory Committee members include, Willard Boyd, president of the

Field Museum in Chicago and chair of the Advisory Committee; Henry Louis Gates, Jr., chairman, African American Studies Department at Harvard; Marian A. Godfrey, program director for culture, The Pew Charitable Trusts; Ronne Hartfield, executive director for museum education, Art Institute of Chicago; Stanley Katz, historian and president, American Council for Learned Studies; Steven Lavine, president, California Institute of the Arts; Tim McClimon, vice president, AT&T Foundation; Bernice Johnson Reagon, ethnomusicologist and curator, National Museum of American History; Lloyd Richards, theater director; Cesar Trasobares, artist and executive director, Metro Dade County Art in Public Places; Gerald Yoshitomi, Japanese American Cultural and Community Center; and Lindy Zesch, deputy director, Theater Communications Group.

In addition to undertaking specific research projects, the Center will operate a National Information Clearinghouse and Archive for Arts Policy Research. "The Clearinghouse will build on the ACA's existing core collection of research, policy, and formative documents from the 60s, 70s, and 80s," said Porter. Supported by The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Clearinghouse will proceed in three phases. First, ACA will develop an annotated bibliography of existing research that has been done already, based on both its own and others' collections. The second step will be to automate this information. Porter reported that by the end of the year, ACA expects to have 1,000-1,500 annotated entries that can be searched. "The third phase will be to set up a communication network and reporting mechanism so we can regularly track research that is under way."

For more information, contact ACA, 1 East 53rd Street, New York, New York, 10022.

### The Politics of Culture

"The Politics of Culture" was a conference sponsored by the Nathan Cummings Foundation and held in New York City in June 1992. A report from the conference, prepared by the Keens Company of Falls Church, Virginia, was provided to the GIA Newsletter Committee. The fifty-page report

describes conference sessions and includes a list of people in attendance. Among the participants were: Jill Bond, People for the American Way; Jeffrey Chester, Center for Media Education; Gara LaMarche, Fund for Free Expression; David Mendoza, National Campaign for Freedom of Expression; Herbert Chao Gunther, Public Media Center; Marjorie Heins, ACLU Arts Censorship Project; Judith Krug, Office of Intellectual Freedom, American Library Association; Olive Mosier, National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies; Andre Schiffrin, *The New Press*; and Kathy Dwyer Southern, National Cultural Alliance.

The following is excerpted from notes from a talk by James Davison Hunter:

"It was long assumed that tolerance was a function of enlightenment - the more education one had, the more tolerant one would become. Now it is evident that there are structural preconditions to tolerance. Tolerance is not so much a function of enlightenment as of the relative sharpness of the moral boundaries separating groups. Over the past century, the moral boundaries dividing people in American public culture have changed. Some boundaries have become less distinct, others have become more assertive. Consequently, new intolerances have emerged on both sides of the cultural divide. One can find elements not only of religious fundamentalism but also of enlightenment fundamentalism."

The full report may be obtained by writing to the Nathan Cummings Foundation, 1926 Broadway, Suite 600, New York City, New York 10023.

### CultureWatch

The DataCenter announces *CultureWatch*, a monthly annotated bibliography on culture, art, and political affairs. Editor Bill Berkowitz and his staff scan numerous magazines and newspapers for articles about arts and censorship, politics and culture, as well as key organizations and individuals. Publications reviewed include *The New Republic*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Village Voice*, *Mother Jones*, several city newspapers, and many other publications. Hard-copy monthly summaries are available by subscription; an

online version is available free to Arts Wire subscribers in the DataCenter's "dcculturewatch" conference.

For further information, contact The DataCenter at 464 19th Street, Oakland, California 94612.

### **Institute for Arts Reporters**

The controversy over the NEA ... striking symphony orchestras ... state legislatures cutting arts programs ... school systems eliminating arts classes ... these, and many similar stories have brought the arts from the entertainment section to the front page of newspapers in this country. As a result, many newspapers are finding it necessary to establish a new beat that covers arts stories not as reviews or critiques, but as news.

That's what a recent conference at the University of Maryland's Knight Center for Specialized Journalism in College Park recently explored. Established with a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation in 1987, the Knight Center provides mid-career training for journalists through intense institutes ranging in length from four days to six weeks. Over the years, the program has awarded 541 fellowships for programs focusing on science writers, court reporters, medical writers, business writers, and other specialized reporting. An institute in late May 1993 marked the first time that the Center addressed arts reporters.

Eighteen journalists from all over the country studied the financial aspects of local arts activities. The fellows looked at such issues as arts funding, labor and management, cultural diversity, nonprofit structures, and censorship. GIA board members Holly Sidford, Tim McClimon, and Penny McPhee were among the panelists discussing funding for arts organizations. The journalists also heard from management consultant George Thorn and from Robert McNulty, executive director of Partners for Livable Places. They met with Representative Louise Slaughter, chairperson of the Congressional Arts Caucus, and saw a production at Washington's Arena Stage.

The institute was such a success that the participants have decided to estab-

lish an affinity group of arts reporters to share information and experience and to work together to make editors understand the importance of the subjects they cover.

- Penny McPhee

### **Custom Searches of Arts Grants Available**

The Foundation Center offers a variety of custom research services to individual grantmakers or groups of funders interested in answering specific questions on arts funding or broader grantmaking trends. Staff members of the Foundation Center can provide assistance that ranges from performing online searches of the Center's grants and grantmaker databases which are maintained on DIALOG Information Services, to producing statistical tables based on customized searches of the Center's internal database. A Center staff member will consult with interested grantmakers on the most cost-effective way to perform the research. For more information call the Foundation Center at 212-620-4230 and ask for "Grantmaker Services."

### **Community Development and the Arts**

The Philadelphia Funders' Working Committee for Community Development and the Arts was created in response to local interest in a holistic approach to community development that integrates the arts. The Philadelphia funders recognize the growing interest nationally in the potential for synergy when these two fields collaborate. In September 1993, they hosted a one-day national working session that included program staff in the arts and community development from the Ford and MacArthur foundations, arts staff from the New England Foundation for the Arts, Heinz Endowments, Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, and the Philadelphia funders - the Philadelphia Foundation, Fels Fund (which hosted the gathering), William Penn Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts, Bartol Foundation, Corestates Bank, and PNC Bank. Jackie Copeland Olagbaju, associate director for programs at the Philadelphia Foundation, chaired the meeting.

The funders represented are already supporting a broad range of activities by community development corporations and arts organizations that link the arts to community development. In almost all cases, these activities stretch conventional guideline definitions of both "community development" and "art." The obstacles to collaboration across programs in large foundations make it difficult for these activities to find compatible funding.

Despite the obstacles, a diverse group of funders find this work to be compelling. It adds dimensions of communication, ritual identity, and human development - so vital to healthy communities - to the physical issues that generally dominate the agendas of community development organizations. And, in contrast to the preoccupation with art "product" characteristic of arts organizations, this work is more concerned with the development of creativity within a community.

Although stories of success were inspiring, much of the conversation explored the complexity and difficulty of integrating these two fields. The best examples often involve diverse institutional partnerships, the creation and maintenance of which are very demanding and are complicated by issues of race and class. These relationships involve community development corporations, arts groups, social service agencies, public agencies, and others with differing agendas, languages, and institutional cultures. Often high quality work is done by small, community-based arts organizations whose work (or size) fails to register on the radar screens of funders in either the arts or community development. The difficulties suggest various forms of intervention: provision of mediation and other consulting services, support for both the operating and capital needs of these efforts, and establishment of a clear understanding of what constitutes success and how to evaluate it. The difficulties also reinforce the continuing need for funders to critically review their guideline definitions in both community development and the arts.

- Nick Rabkin

# Studies and Reports Received

In June 1993, the Arts Research Center, a project of the Alliance for the Arts in New York City, issued a paper titled *The Federal Role in the Arts*. The paper was researched and written by Tim Tompkins, with assistance from Barbara Oftrosky and Sarah Peterson. It represents a first step in trying to summarize the role of the federal government in supporting and regulating the arts. Section headings include:

"Direct Support for the Arts," describing agencies such as the National Endowment for the Arts, the Institute for Museum Services, the National Gallery, and Smithsonian Institution;

"Support for Arts Programs Managed or Funded by Federal Agencies," such as the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Historic Preservation Fund of the Department of the Interior, the Library of Congress, and the Indian Arts and Crafts Board;

"Indirect Support," including the charitable deduction and postal subsidies; and,

"Regulation," covering copyright regulations, labor laws affecting artists' unions, international treaties for artists and authors, and other topics.

The paper is a concise (18 pages) and useful overview of the current federal role in the arts. Copies are available from the Alliance for the Arts, 330 West 42nd Street, New York, New York 10036.

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The National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies, in the April 1993 edition of its monthly *MONOGRAPHS* series, published the transcription of a talk by Patrick Overton titled "Public Trust or Public Trough? The Ethical Crisis Facing Nonprofit, Tax Exempt Cultural Institutions in America." Overton, assistant professor of communication and religious studies at Columbia College, presented the talk at the Fourth National Conference on Ethics in America, held in February 1993.

Overton raises several provocative questions in his essay. He believes that both internal and external forces have created "values collisions" within cultural organizations. In discussing "external values collision," he asks "Whose mission takes precedence, the organization seeking the funding or the agency giving the funding?" He states, "there are times when the evaluation criteria and restrictions placed on funding eligibility forces the organization to change in order to comply. Unfortunately, the need for financial support frequently wins out in these situations."

Overton also suggests "practice strategies for avoiding values collisions." He describes a workshop he conducts called "Navigating White Water in a Leaky Raft." "There is enormous turbulence buffeting all aspects of our society. Cultural institutions are not exempt from this turbulence. But, the problem isn't just white water turbulence. The problem is, we are trying to navigate the white water in a leaky raft. And, a raft with a hole in it isn't going to last very long. I believe the holes in our 'organizational rafts' are caused by the internal and/or external 'values collisions' I have been addressing in this paper."

Overton urges nonprofit, tax-exempt cultural organizations to avoid grant programs that require bending mission or program activity toward grantmaker preferences. Grantmakers whose guidelines attempt to select grantees who will comply with foundation-defined goals and objectives may find Overton's comments especially probing.

Copies of the April edition of *MONOGRAPHS* can be ordered from NALAA at 927 15th Street NW, 12th Floor, Washington, DC 20005.

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*The Promise at Hand: Prospects for Foundation Leadership in the 1990s* is a new publication of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Marking the

Foundation's twentieth anniversary, this document was written by Terrance Keenan, a member of RWJF's program staff for twenty years. Keenan's opening chapter is an unusually succinct overview of the development of federal regulation of private foundations. In a concluding chapter, Keenan discusses the societal trends that he thinks will affect the future of philanthropy most strongly.

The publication's middle section recounts the programming of RWJF, mainly a discussion about the health care field, and also presents Keenan's thoughts on "Special Qualities of Private Foundations," and the ideal "Principles of Practice." These sections are the compendium of a life's work as a philanthropic professional. Keenan's conclusions about the field are a straight-forward summation of the pitfalls of this work. For example, Keenan offers the following list of "three sins a program officer can commit."

"1. Underfund the proposal. If resources aren't adequate to the task, the proposal should not be recommended for support. It does the grantee no favor to leave him or her stranded in mid-project.

"2. Neglect the project. Monitoring a project once it is launched requires a fine sense of proportion. If the project is given too little attention, avoidable difficulties go unaverted and the grant becomes a problem case, with attending unhappiness all around. This is somewhat less likely than the equally unhelpful alternative below.

"3. Micro-manage the project. The zealous over-management of fiscal or program aspect of grants is an unfortunate element of RWJF's management style. On the fiscal side particularly, we drive our grantees to distraction without improving their performance in the least. The Commonwealth Fund over-manages their grants in much the same way. To avoid this, establish a clear, feasible outcome for the project at the outset, define a work program and budget to achieve that outcome, then back off. The grantee's progress can be monitored through regular annual and fiscal reports."

Copies of this interesting document are available by writing to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Route 1 and College Road East, Post Office Box 2316, Princeton, New Jersey 08543-2316.

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The National Endowment for the Arts issued *Cultural Centers of Color: Report on a National Survey* written by Elinor Bowles. The report presents data gathered in a national survey of 543 culturally-specific organizations conducted by NuStats, Inc. in 1990. Statistical information in the report is broken down according to various characteristics, such as type of organization, percentages of income from various sources, staff salaries, and regional variations. One particularly interesting break-down sorted the centers both by discipline and by the year each was founded.

The chapter on Critical Issues facing this group of organizations will be of special interest to arts grantmakers. The chapter presents such topics as the shortage of skilled staff from communities of color, the need for a wider tolerance among funders for variations in organizational structure, lack of ability to earn revenue when serving low-income communities, and problems associated with collaboration with larger cultural organizations.

The report's final section profiles twelve organizations from throughout the United States, including INTAR (New York City), Urban Gateways (Chicago), Galeria de la Raza (San Francisco), and Carver Community Cultural Center (San Antonio). Appendices include a directory, with telephone numbers, of groups surveyed.

Copies of the report may be obtained from the National Endowment for the Arts, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20506.

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The Aspen Institute's Communications and Society Program issued *Media Literacy: A Report of the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy* in June 1993. Included in the report is a

background paper written by Jay Francis Davis. In his introduction, Davis states:

"Efforts by the public to influence electronic media have a long history in the United States – a history at least as long as the history of electronic media. Historical concern about the influence of media has led to at least three distinct strategies for protecting or empowering the public: 1) Regulation, 2) Pressure on advertisers and those responsible for creation of mass media, and 3) Media education.

"All three strategies are unified by the common assumption that something about the mass media environment is problematic. The public must either be protected against media or empowered so that the negative effects of the mass media are lessened and the positive enhanced.

"This paper sketches the growth of the latter empowerment model for media education, which itself has moved from a protectionist model to its current empowerment status. The protectionist view – which says that the public must be protected against the media – assumes that the public is not able to fend off the negative effects of media. Citizens are seen as empty vessels waiting to be filled with whatever flows through the square box. Early media educators, as well as those fighting for regulation and pressuring media creators, tend toward this view of citizens as empty vessels.

"The empowerment model, in contrast, sees citizens as continuously negotiating meaning as they watch, listen, or read. This view sees citizens with media sharing the power to determine the influence of media. As this new empowered viewer perspective takes hold, a major change of focus from media activism to media exploration is occurring in the United States."

Copies of the full report are available from the Communications and Society Program, 1755 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20036.

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The National Art Education Association (NAEA) published a preliminary report in May 1993 on the subject *Creating a Visual Arts Research Agenda Toward the 21st Century*. The report describes the desired content of such an agenda, tells how the agenda would result in improved and expanded education in the visual arts, and ends with ten recommendations from NAEA's Commission on Research in Art Education. NAEA proposes to invite and support participation in research efforts by offering technical assistance to individual and group research projects. NAEA also hopes to facilitate communication between individuals and groups engaged in research, with emphasis on work that addresses issues relevant to art teaching and student learning in a variety of educational settings. When feasible, NAEA will encourage cooperative research efforts for gathering and interpreting data. When appropriate, NAEA will also make provisions for exchanging and cross-referencing findings from specific research projects it supports. Copies of the report are available from NAEA, 1916 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091-1590.

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The Ford Foundation's Spring 1993 *Report* included a special section on **Cultural Preservation**. Two articles discuss the work of Ford grantees in Africa and Indonesia, highlighting the opportunities and difficulties presented by working internationally in the arts. Grantmakers considering expanding their arts grantmaking beyond U.S. borders will find the report interesting, if not inspiring. Copies are available from the Ford Foundation, Office of Communications, 320 East 43rd Street, New York City, New York 10017.

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The Arts Education Partnership Working Group, under the sponsorship of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, published *The Power of the Arts to Transform Education: An Agenda for Action* in January 1993. The report summarizes the recommenda-

tions of the Working Group, whose thirty-nine members represent classroom teachers, principals, and superintendents; and representatives of theaters, dance companies, orchestras, museums, art centers, state and local arts organizations, foundations, and other national organizations in the arts and in education. The Working Group focused on the strong relationship between inclusion of the arts and overall educational excellence. Among the Group's recommendations are these:

- the establishment of a National Center for the Arts in Education;
- the transformation of teacher education in the arts for both pre-service and in-service, recommending the creation of a federal program for arts education comparable to the Eisenhower Program for Math and Science Education;
- coordination by Congress, the Department of Education, and other federal and state agencies to seek inclusion of the arts in the National Educational Goals and to support coordination between the arts curriculum standards-setting process and the arts assessment process, among other tasks;
- the establishment of "appropriate national programs" that will: 1) support and encourage all communities involved in education reform to include the arts in their goals; 2) involve arts educators and arts and cultural organizations in planning and implementation; and 3) institute a program to identify, recognize, and disseminate information about community-school partnerships that use the arts for achieving excellence and for advancing education reform.

Copies of the report may be obtained by writing the Arts Education Partnership Working Group, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC 20566-001.

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The July/August 1993 issue of the *Columbia Journalism Review* contained a special section on "Covering the Culture War." The issue included three

stories, complemented by a resource guide, all adapted from presentations at the CJR annual conference. The titles and authors of the three articles are: 1) "Before the Shooting Begins," by James Davison Hunter, professor of sociology and religious studies at the University of Virginia and author of *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation and Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*; 2) "The 'Religious Right' and the Pagan Press" by Laurence I. Barrett, a journalist who covers politics for *Time* magazine; 3) "A Political Story – Chapter and Verse," by Joe Conason, executive editor of *The New York Observer*. A four-page resource guide includes a bibliography of books and articles about the "culture wars" and a listing of key contacts and resources, divided into two sections titled "The View from the Right" and "The View from the Left." Taken together these articles and the accompanying guide would provide a good introduction to trustees or others who have questions about the scope and intensity of cultural politics in contemporary U.S. society.

Business offices of the CJR are located at 700A Journalism Building, Columbia University, New York City, New York 10027. The charge for back issues is \$5.50.

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The Aspen Institute has published *The Inaugural Report of the Nonprofit Sector Research Fund*, describing the Fund's first-year activities and grants. The Fund was established in 1991 to address the sector's long-standing need for an independent, cost-effective, central institution through which donors of all kinds could support outstanding basic and applied research on nonprofit organizations. The Nonprofit Sector Research Fund seeks to expand knowledge of nonprofit activities, impacts, and values, and to promote the use of new knowledge with the goal of improving nonprofit practices and informing public policy. The Fund's activities include both grantmaking for research and dissemination of findings. Projects funded in 1991-92 included research on the role of the nonprofit sector, the

nonprofit sector work force, philanthropy, public accountability, financial resources, and international dimensions of nonprofits, among others. Applications are reviewed by peer panels. Reviewers listed for 1991-92 include Stanley Katz, president of the American Council of Learned Societies, and Margaret Wyszomirski, director of the NEA's Office of Policy, Planning, and Research.

Information about how to apply for grants from the Nonprofit Sector Research Fund, along with copies of the Inaugural Report, may be obtained by writing to the Fund at The Aspen Institute, 1333 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Suite 1070, Washington, DC 20036.

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In March 1993, the American Association of Museums issued its first major report on the educational role of museums. Titled *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimensions of Museums*, the report was developed by a twenty-five member task force. The report speaks of "a new definition of museums as institutions of public service and education, a term that includes exploration, study, observation, critical thinking, contemplation, and dialogue." The task force, chaired by Bonnie Pitman, deputy director of the University Art Museum/Pacific Film Archives in Berkeley, California, agreed to ten principles. The 30-page report presents these principles and accompanying recommendations for action. The principles are as follows:

1. Assert that museums place education – in the broadest sense of the word – at the center of their public service role. Assure that the commitment to serve the public is clearly stated in every museum's mission and central to every museums' activities.
2. Reflect the diversity of our society by establishing and maintaining the broadest possible public dimension for the museum.
3. Understand, develop, expand, and use the learning opportunities that museums offer their audiences.

4. Enrich our knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of our collections and of the variety of cultures and ideas they represent and evoke.

5. Assure that the interpretive process manifests a variety of cultural and intellectual perspectives and reflects an appreciation for the diversity of the museum's public.

6. Engage in active, ongoing collaborative efforts with a wide spectrum of organizations and individuals who can contribute to the expansion of the museum's public dimension.

7. Assess the decision-making processes in museums and develop new models that enable an expanded public dimension and a renewed commitment to excellence.

8. Achieve diversity among trustees, staff, and volunteers to assure a breadth of perspective throughout the museum.

9. Provide professional development and training for new and established professionals, trustees, and volunteers that meet the needs of the museum profession so that museums may carry out their responsibility to their diverse public.

10. Commit leadership and financial resources to individual museums, professional organizations, and training organizations and universities to strengthen the public dimension of museums.

The AAM developed a "kit" which includes a copy of the report, a series of short sketches of museum education programs, and a copy of the January/February 1993 issue of *Museum News*, which featured education. Interested grantmakers may obtain a kit by contacting the AAM at 1225 Eye Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005.

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## Recommended Reading

*Note: Due to the increasing number of books we receive, the Grantmakers in the Arts Newsletter plans to begin a Book Review feature beginning with the Spring 1994 issue. Grantmakers interested in being considered as possible reviewers, or those who wish to propose a book to be reviewed, are encouraged to contact us.*

*Sex, Sin, and Blasphemy: A Guide to America's Censorship Wars* was written by Marjorie Heins, who for the past two years has served as director of the ACLU's arts censorship project. The book serves as a guide to the major skirmishes of recent years as well as to the parties involved in them. A complete bibliography and suggestions for further reading help make this one of the most complete books on the subject published recently. Published by *The New Press*, the book is available through bookstores or by writing to book distributor A.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10110.

*Changing Community* is the title of the tenth Graywolf Annual, published by Graywolf Press. Edited by Graywolf founder Scott Walker, this anthology includes twenty-five essays by authors including Václav Havel, Kathleen Norris, Sanyika Shakur (a.k.a. Monster Kody), and Gary Snyder. In "An Introduction: Creating Community," Walker writes:

"For thousands of years, humans have lived in small groups, for the days and months and years of each lifetime, secured by the bonds of absolute and proven methods of social discourse, and with very little contact with anything outside of the village or tribe. Our values, definitions of morality, and the structure of our societies are based on our experience of ourselves and others in community.

"Nineteenth century Europe's headlong rush toward industrialization, urbanization, and colonization permanently disrupted the dense weave of family, tribe, or village, and the deep rhythms of human lives resonant with those of the land. The Twentieth century's technological miracles produced an incredibly shrinking world which has made us all one neighbor-

hood, separated only by a phone call, a few hours' flight, or a tv screen. Even in the most far-flung areas of our neighborhood, people wear the same adver-t-shirts, the same running shoes, and hear the same stories told around the televised campfire.

"In historical terms, this metamorphosis was sudden and cataclysmic. Its effects rippled through all aspects of culture, spurring profound political, religious, social, economic, and psychological changes.

"Now, as a society, we are settled enough into those changes to begin to notice their effects. We feel the loss of individual identity, a lack of connection to our families, neighbors, and society, and an unsettling discord between our experience of life and our time-and-community-forged values. Political and social structures are breaking down.

"We are feeling, in other words, a need to re-create community. This can't be done by going historically backwards, back to the land, tribe, or village. In the same ways we have had to redefine what constitutes a family in this decidedly non-Ozzie-and-Harriet age, we are searching for new forms of community. Many of the major strands of contemporary political and social movements may be seen as part of a general search for individual and community identity."

Taken as a whole, this wide-ranging collection of essays presents a complex picture of the decaying social fabric in the United States as well as a series of intimate portraits of communities that are thriving and intact. *Changing Community* is available in bookstores or by writing directly to Gray Wolf Press at 2402 University Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55114.

## The Role of Arts, Culture, and Humanities in the Independent Sector

*Independent Sector sent its membership a new publication developed by its Government Relations Committee. The purpose of the publication is to prepare people in voluntary and philanthropic organizations to define, describe, and defend the sector. IS suggests excerpting and editing passages from the publication for presentations to local government officials and local service clubs, for preparation of television and radio spots, and for use by voluntary organizations in grant proposals or other publications.*

*The publication consists of a large folder containing:*

- a booklet covering the sector as a whole and as well as nine major sub-divisions of the sector, with definitions and descriptions developed by groups of IS's members;*
- loose sheets with texts of the definitions and descriptions, which can be easily photocopied;*
- three samples of ways to extract and customize relevant passages of the prepared texts for testimony, grant proposals, and brochures.*

*Because very few arts grantmakers belong to IS or attend IS meetings, the following paper is reprinted here in its entirety as published. Copies of the complete publication can be purchased from IS by writing to 1828 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.*

More than 42,000 nonprofit organizations support and encourage the pursuit of knowledge and creative expression in the visual and performing arts, in the humanities – including literature, history, and philosophy – and in science.

By supporting and encouraging – and preserving, displaying and interpreting – works of human expression, these organizations provide the structure for communicating values of creativity, culture, and free inquiry to our society at large.

Nonprofit organizations' ability to attract private support from individuals and foundations, and assistance from volunteers, frees the artists, thinkers, and others whose works they sustain from total dependence on the govern-

ment, which demands political conformity, or the market, which requires commercial viability.

They also reinforce, in important ways, fundamental values of the independent sector and important related values, including:

**Community.** Throughout civilization, artistic and humanistic expression has given communities a focus and a means to develop and maintain their identity. Arts, culture, and the humanities are vital mechanisms for human communications. Concerts, other performances, and exhibits bring together people of disparate backgrounds and interests to share cultural experiences or ceremonial occasions in community life. Through experiencing other cultures, people can begin to grasp those cultures' values.

As they create, reflect, interpret, and criticize the community, arts, culture, and humanities organizations lead a process that frequently is joyous but may be unsettling and uncomfortable. Artists', critics', and scholars' visions of a society may differ dramatically from how the society prefers to view itself. By questioning assumptions and providing alternative perspectives, the arts, culture, and the humanities enhance community self-knowledge.

**Pluralism.** Arts, culture, and the humanities challenge a society to see itself from many perspectives, question its values, and shape or reshape its future. In presenting divergent viewpoints, they encourage the free and creative expression which in turn produces new challenges.

Where existing organizations fail to make room for new forms of expression, interested people are free to form alternative groups to present works from non-Western cultures, experiment with new ideas about culture, and develop new, more diverse, American creative idioms. Alternative theaters, dance companies, and exhibition spaces provide the public with wide-ranging choices.

**Preservation.** Through preserving art and artifacts of the past, nonprofit organizations open important windows to knowledge of earlier cultures and societies, enriching our lives and enabling us to understand and appreci-

ate them for far more than just their social or political accomplishments.

The objects that museums collect and protect represent the entire world's common cultural and natural heritage. They both preserve, restore, and display them for the general public, and provide the materials for scholarly research. Orchestras recreate the music of the past, sometimes with instruments of that period. New video technology now permits preserving great works of dance and even the techniques used by great dance teachers.

**Creativity.** Art, literature, and science stimulate and provide outlets for humanity's creative impulses. Creative endeavors stimulate new inquiries and new responses, help society re-imagine itself, and generate original ideas that touch all areas of life. Cultural organizations support creativity and communicate its products to broad public audiences.

**Excellence.** Freed by private gift support from total dependence on ticket sales, nonprofit cultural organizations promote excellence in creative expression and provide ways to convey it to the general public. By fostering the value of striving toward excellence, they teach an important lesson that carries over to other aspects of life.

**Discipline.** The creation or expression of art demands intense discipline on the artist's part. Studying an instrument, learning a dance form, or developing the skills to write, draw, sculpt, or practice any art or craft, engender a discipline in young people that benefits them throughout their education and their lives. Cultural organizations support education in numerous ways, from youth orchestras and dance companies to teaching the arts in elementary and secondary schools.

**Altruism.** Support for the arts, culture, and the humanities in America depends on substantial gift support from individuals, corporations, and foundations – and on the services of hundreds of thousands of committed volunteers. Their generosity reinforces the values of giving and service and, by sustaining opportunities for the public to experience the many fruits of human creativity, is itself a priceless gift to the community.

### Grantmakers in the Arts Newsletter

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Editors, Anne Focke and Sarah Lutman

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Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA) is a national membership organization of primarily private sector grantmakers interested in the arts and arts-related activities. GIA's purpose is to strengthen arts philanthropy and its role in contributing to a supportive environment for the arts nationwide. GIA is incorporated as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and is an affinity group of the Council on Foundations.

Grantmakers in the Arts, Ella King Torrey, President, c/o Pew Fellowships in the Arts, The University of the Arts, 250 S. Broad Street, Suite 400, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

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## Grantmakers in the Arts Newsletter

### Submission Information

The Grantmakers in the Arts Newsletter welcomes inquiries and finished articles that present articulate points of view on any of the following topics: trends in the management of nonprofit cultural organizations; larger societal issues facing these organizations; support for artists, discussions of their working conditions; ethics in philanthropy; trends in or problems associated with current philanthropic practice; or, other ideas relevant to our readership of predominantly private sector arts grantmakers. Correspondence regarding submissions may be directed to either or both of the coeditors at the addresses listed below. We enjoy receiving letters to the newsletter, as well as suggestions for future articles.

This newsletter is published twice each year, spring and autumn. Deadlines for articles for each issue fall approxi-

mately two months prior to publication. Specific deadlines for each issue will be announced in the preceding issue. Reports and studies received will be included on a space-available basis.

The deadline for the spring 1994 issue is February 1, 1994.

For further information, please feel free to contact us. Thank you!

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## Grantmakers in the Arts

### Membership Information

Members of Grantmakers in the Arts help sustain GIA programs while enjoying the following benefits:

- Preferential registration and reduced fees to annual conferences and other GIA programs,
- Subscription to the GIA newsletter,
- Reduced rates for GIA-sponsored publications,
- Access to reports generated by member organizations,
- Membership directory,
- Voting privileges at the GIA annual meeting.

There are two categories of membership: *institutional* and *affiliate*. All memberships are open to both staff and trustees. *Institutional membership* is

open to private foundations, community foundations, corporate giving programs, and nonprofit cultural organizations whose primary activity is grantmaking. *Affiliate membership* is open to individuals active in the arts funding field whose organizations are not eligible for institutional membership, primarily public sector funders. All benefits and privileges of membership are available to affiliate members with the exception of voting rights at the annual meetings.

Annual fees for institutional members are based on a current year arts grants budget and range from \$100 to \$500. Annual fees for affiliate members are \$50. Membership forms are available from the Membership Committee Chair, Myra Millinger, at the Flinn Foundation, 602-274-9000.

# Alternative Futures

## Challenging Designs for Arts Philanthropy

The eighth annual conference of Grantmakers in the Arts will be held November 3-5, 1993 in La Jolla, California. The conference is designed around a series of commissioned essays, compiled in a "Workbook of Ideas" and distributed to conference attendees in advance. The essays are written in response to three central questions:

- What is the current relationship of culture and philanthropy, and what are its roots? Are there alternative relationships?
- What is the relationship between art and democracy, and how could this affect cultural philanthropy in the future?
- What can *E Pluribus Unum* mean for the arts and philanthropy of the future? Given our country's increasing diversity, how will it be possible to construct unity? What, if any, are the roles of the arts, culture, and philanthropy in finding that unity?

The commissioned authors have been invited to respond specifically to one of the three questions, and all will participate in the conference. Authors in-

clude George Anastaplo, professor of law; M. Melanie Beene, arts consultant; Andrei Codrescu, writer, film director, and radio commentator; Guillermo Gómez-Peña, performance artist and cultural critic; bell hooks, writer and professor of African-American and women's studies; Paul Mattick, Jr., professor of philosophy; Kathleen R. McCarthy, historian of philanthropy; Michael Morgan, symphony conductor and music director; B. Ruby Rich, cultural critic, film scholar, and journalist; and Greg Tate, arts writer.

The conference has been developed as a retreat to allow for focused conversations with the authors. In addition to plenary sessions, there will be small- and medium-size group discussions and ample opportunities for informal interaction.

In addition to discussion of the Workbook of Ideas, roundtable sessions will be held both mornings of the conference. These sessions have been developed and will be led by grantmaker attendees. The roundtables break down into three general areas, and will include the following: 1) **Issues:** Free-

dom of Expression and the New Right Wing, Grants for the Benefit of Individual Artists, Cultural Pluralism: Top Down vs. Bottom Up Strategies, Issues for Trustees, Ethics in Grantmaking, The Impact of National Funders on the Local Arts and Arts Funding Communities, Assessing Arts Education, The Future of Public Support for the Arts; 2) **Tools:** GIA's Benchmark Study, Telecommunications; and 3) **Models:** Arts Stabilization Initiatives and Alternatives (NASF, Arts Forward, Santa Clara Arts Fund, Entrepreneurial Models), Providing More than Money: Technical Assistance and Other Hands-on Involvement, Chicago Experiments: Arts Education (Marshall Field's Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education Program and "GALLERY 37" - A Collaborative Model), Is Real Estate Destiny? (The Cultural Facilities Fund, ARTSPACE, Collaborative Structures and Arts Facilities), Audience Development Initiatives for Mid-sized Performing Arts Organizations.

The conference will be held at the Sheraton Grande Torrey Pines Hotel which is located on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean and Torrey Pines State Reserve and Beach. For further information about the conference contact Carunchio & Associates, 215-482-7891, or Grantmakers in the Arts, 215-875-2285.

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