



GRANTMAKERS IN THE ARTS

Volume 6, Number 2

Autumn 1995

Fighting Words

Michael Brenson

The following remarks were prepared for presentation to the Planning Advisory Panel of the Museum Program and Visual Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, March 21, 1995, and revised for "Brave New Art World: Patronage, Politics and the Public Function of Art," a conference at the New School for Social Research, April 1, 1995.

This is a vulnerable time for artists. Private as well as public funding is drying up. With the Contract With America, any semblance of a federal contract with artists is in danger of being broken. America is again being given license to despise artists, as it did in the 40s and 50s, before the Endowment came into existence, when some of the artists who would come to define American art, like David Smith, could feel like expatriates in their own country. Targeting artists is now high on the list of political cheap thrills. If some demagogue wants to mobilize group anxiety, all he or she has to do is mention Robert Mapplethorpe, Andres Serrano, or Karen Finley. If you want votes, talk about a threat to American values and point toward gay, minority, and women artists supported by the Endowment. If you want a successful ad on television, mock abstraction, or mock some art-world straw man you can identify with a doomed challenge to the middle-class family, and the product will energize itself. Through all the scapegoating of the artist and the Endowment, Bill Clinton has been silent. Our President has sent the clear message that the artist in America and the freedom of the creative imagination are not worth fighting for. Artists know that almost no one in political power is going to defend them. For the first time since before the Endowment was founded midway through the Cold War thirty years ago, artists are asking themselves if they are homeless in America.

I am not going to focus on the situation of the National Endowment for the Arts, or on those politicians who are as easy targets in their own ways as Serrano and Finley. I am more interested in trying to understand what the responsibility of the art world may be in the crisis in

IN THIS ISSUE

Fighting Words	1
Michael Brenson	
Against the False Magicians (poem)	3
Thomas McGrath	
Whence the "Art Object"?	5
W. Richard West, Jr.	
"It Takes Guts to Make a Democracy"	8
Interview: Ralph and Myrna Paulus	
Policy Communities and Policy Influence	11
Margaret Jane Wyszomirski	
Who Should Fund the Arts?	15
Penelope McPhee	
AIDS and the Arts	17
Margo Viscusi	
Leverage Lost	18
Interview: John Kreidler	
News, Reports Received, Regional Reports, News from GIA	18

which artists and the Endowment, and a great many people who care about the place of the artist in America, now find themselves. For some time now, I have been trying to come to terms with the general failure of the art world to deal effectively with the Endowment crisis. I have asked myself often—most recently after Lynne Cheney's March 10 Op-Ed piece in *The New York Times*, given the inflammatory title, "Mocking America at U.S. Expense"—some basic questions. How have the enemies of the Endowment been able to set the terms? Why have the defenders of the Endowment been so ineffective in taking the initiative back? I have also asked myself why the culture community has tolerated the devastating distortions of the Endowment controversy in the press, and the astonishing gutlessness, throughout this controversy, of American museums. I strongly believe that we can't get out of this mess without considering the failures of the

custodians of art and culture, and what each of us might have done to contribute to the dramatic situation the Endowment, and art in America, are in. While art and artists are under attack from the outside, they have also been undermined from the inside. It is this inside failure, combined with the outside attack, that has made the situation of the artist so precarious and turned more and more artists away from the culture institutions that exist, in principle, to support them.

Let me give you an example of how the resolve of the art world has been weakened from within. The attack on the Endowment began during a period in which everything about art was being studied and picked apart by some of our most persuasive intellectuals. For some scholars, a painting is now essentially no different than a journalistic illustration, which is no more and no less a source of political and social information. When Mrs. Cheney says the concepts of originality and formal values have been stripped of their authority in the academic world, she is, of course, right. So have notions of heroism, genius, greatness, individuality, imagination, and transcendence. I am not going to argue against the theoretical attacks on these notions, many of them in race, class, and gender terms, which Mrs. Cheney finds intrinsically anti-standards and anti-American. I consider these theoretical challenges indispensable. Many demand attention. The fetishizing of originality, of heroism, of the artist's touch, in part because of the power of these words to turn the objects with which they are identified into expensive commodities, are real problems. These words are so hackneyed that I don't use them. The only one I feel totally comfortable with is imagination, which in the last couple of years I have been using all the time.

This being said, however, I believe absolutely that the ideas represented by these words have value. I believe in the importance, now as much as ever, of heroic art, although I have my own way of defining it. I do believe in greatness. I have worked with artists whose ways of processing information and transforming observations, feelings, and thoughts into multilayered poetic images are so miraculous that I do not hesitate to say that they have a touch of genius. I have been around artists my whole life and there is no group of people I would rather be with. Steve Oliver, one of the most devoted art patrons I know of, is in the construction business in northern California. He is also on the mostly corporate boards of many institutions. Last summer, addressing the crowd that had gathered for a tour of the sculpture on his ranch, he said: "I have been around many different kinds of people. Artists are by far the smartest people I have known." So I resent the ways theoretically sophisticated art historians who have little or no experience with living artists spread their demystifications about artists among scholars only too eager to be told that artists are in fact no more imaginative or intelligent than they are. I know damn well what art can be and what artists can do. I know how much they matter.

My point is that the devaluation of these key words and the discrediting of the artist within many of the most

influential segments of the contemporary art world is one reason why the kind of conviction about art that is needed to counter a Lynne Cheney has been absent. My point is also that we need to think about these words in fresh ways. They always need to be reimagined, redefined. Renouncing them has a price. If they are undermined without putting anything in their place, the terms for defending art are inevitably more prosaic, and the ground for defending the spiritual and moral dimensions of art to many people far from academic conventions is weakened.

The issue of language is posed most dramatically by the world quality. To many people who see their mission as preserving the rule of tradition, this is *the* word. To them, it means almost everything worth fighting for. Among many Americans, the word quality represents legitimate authority and control and the very possibility of continuity and respect.

Within influential sectors of the contemporary art world, the word has been discredited. I don't need to go into all the reasons. Suffice it to say that for many people, including me, the word has been identified with a monotheistic, monoracial, monocultural, monosexual system. In the art world, the people who have been insisting on the word are, to my knowledge without exception, white conservative curators or critics who never struggle to define it, who are almost allergic to work that does not resemble traditional painting and sculpture, who believe quality is incompatible with insult or provocation, and who have little or no interest in exploring the needs and traditions of contemporary artists from non-European cultures. Their obsession with normality, propriety, gentility, and convention means that almost every truly imaginative form of artistic expression eludes them. They use the word not as a means of deepening discussion about the range of creative possibilities but of closing it off.

To give you an example of why the word quality has become, for me, so tainted, I want to comment on a paragraph in the recent Op-Ed article in which Lynne Cheney gives examples of the decline of standards. "In the art world," Mrs. Cheney writes, "the works of Andres Serrano (who portrayed Christ immersed in urine and who has now turned to close-up photographs of corpses) and Karen Finley (who makes a statement about the oppression of women by smearing her breasts with chocolate sauce and bean sprouts) are considered not mistakes but examples of outstanding accomplishment." Mrs. Cheney's characterization of "Piss Christ" is instructive. "Portraying Christ immersed in urine" misrepresents what Serrano did, which was to immerse in urine the kind of small, cheap plastic crucifix that for many people is emblematic of the trivialization of the Christianity in which Mrs. Cheney clearly deeply believes. To me, putting a cheap plastic crucifix in urine or covering your body with chocolate sauce to make a feminist statement has little or no intrinsic value. The results could be good or bad, facile or profound. What is important to recognize is that for Mrs. Cheney, the very fact of creating these images, or for that matter of taking close-up photographs

of corpses, which led to some of Serrano's most moving works, is inherent proof of the decline of standards. Quality here is determined by content. If the content is perceived to be anti-Christian, anti-traditional woman, or anti-American—or rather anti- those parts of America that are assumed by *The Times* to be synonymous with it in its headline "Mocking America at U.S. Expense"—the art cannot be good. Quality is unthinkable if it challenges certain beliefs. This is not an intellectual or aesthetic argument, which is the way Cheney presents it. It is a religious and an ideological argument. Part of the painful confusion of this moment, at least for me, is that the people who present themselves as champions of the aesthetic, and accuse everyone who challenges the word as being ideological, are so blinded by their own ideological obsessions that they have almost no ability to understand what the aesthetic now needs to deal with in order to breathe.

Please bear with me a couple of minutes while I summarize my own position with regard to the word quality. Nearly five years ago, I wrote an article for *The New York Times* in which I tried to articulate what a minefield the word had become. Near the end, after arguing against any either-or view and making a plea for curiosity at a time when so much art from different cultures was demanding attention, I asked: "Should the word quality be used?" I answered: "Probably not. If it is used negatively, to criticize an artist or a body of work, it should be with extreme care."

In a 1991 lecture in which I went a good deal further in defining my own experience of quality in art, I stated more emphatically that the word should not be used. I said: "The current uses and politics of the word quality have had a tendency to obscure the fact that quality can be present in many kinds of art produced by all kinds of people. The word quality tends to prevent artistic quality from even being recognized."

In 1992, speaking in front of the National Council on the Arts, I elaborated on that remark. I said: "To insist on the word quality is now to insist upon control. Some of the most influential contemporary art challenges a sense of control. It is only through a relinquishment of control that a full experience of any art is possible."

I added: "The most serious question is this: if we do not use the word quality, is there any way of assuring that the very particular aristocracy of experience that the best art offers—an experience that carries within it a recognition of all that human beings are capable of and share—will be respected and preserved?"

I answered: "I believe this experience can probably only be respected and preserved now if the word

Against the False Magicians

for Don Gordon

The poem must not charm us like a film:

See, in the war-torn city, that reckless, gallant
Handsome lieutenant turn to the wet-lipped blonde
(Our childhood fixation) for one sweet desperate kiss
In the broken room, in blue cinematic moonlight—
Bombers across that moon, and the bombs falling,
The last train leaving, the regiment departing—
And their lips lock, saluting themselves and death:
And then the screen goes dead and all go home . . .
Ritual of the false imagination.

The poem must not charm us like the fact:

A warship can sink a circus at forty miles,
And art, love's lonely counterfeit, has small dominion
Over those nightmares that move in the actual sunlight.
The blonde will not be faithful, nor her lover ever return
Nor the note be found in the hollow tree of childhood—
This dazzle of the facts would have us weeping
The orphaned fantasies of easier days.

It is the charm which the potential has

That is the proper aura for the poem.
Though ceremony fail, though each of your grey hairs
Help string a harp in the landlord's heaven,
And every battle, every augury,
Argue defeat, and if defeat itself
Bring all the darkness level with our eyes—
It is the poem provides the proper charm,
Spelling resistance and the living will,
To bring to dance a stony field of fact
And set against terror exile or despair
The rituals of our humanity.

Thomas McGrath

Tony Kushner, playwright and commentator for the fall GIA conference, included an excerpt from Thomas McGrath's poem, "Against the False Magicians," in the text of an address that was sent to the GIA Newsletter. In introducing the excerpt Kushner said, "where McGrath specifies the poem as a locus for a difficult kind of hope, I think one can substitute drama, dance, video, music, painting, sculpture—art itself." McGrath's poem seemed apropos to conversations that helped shape the fall conference. The poem was originally published in Movie at the End of the World, and has been reprinted in McGrath's Selected Poems 1938-1988. It is published here with permission from Copper Canyon Press, P.O. Box 271, Port Townsend, Washington 98368.

quality is put aside. I also believe that right now the weight of responsibility is not so much on the wielders and brandishers of the word as it is on those who resist it. The value of art that has been overlooked or that has not yet been appreciated cannot simply be claimed; it is not enough to write about art by offering historical and political analysis and contextual information. Art that convinces and endures has been written about with knowledge, passion, and poetry, and with a built-in responsiveness to respected aesthetic positions either openly hostile to that art or disinclined to take it seriously."

I felt very sure about what I was saying. Each time I made a statement about the word, I declared my own belief in the idea represented by it and my commitment to defining its presence in all the art that mattered to me. I challenged other people who also had trouble with what the word had come to be identified with to be more rigorous and imaginative in defending the art they believed in. I took for granted that it is the job of intellectuals to struggle with difficult issues, and that we, as a group, would never accept, in principle, that any idea is beyond questioning and definition. I saw the problem with the word as a chance to deepen the level of artistic discussion and help language evolve so that we would emerge from the quality debate better able to understand and discuss the power of art without recourse to ideological dismissals or easy labels. I had little doubt that notions of quality would be articulated that would accommodate the new, the insulting, the jarring, and the community-based, as well as the harmonious, the lyrical, and the grand, to the point where the lines between resistance and transcendence would not always be so clear.

What I, and we, have to face is that so far none of this has happened. Critics who use the word still just use it without any attempt to define it. Institutions like the Metropolitan Museum of Art use it more proudly and defiantly than ever. Most art from non-European cultures, some of it challenging European perspectives, some of which I feel very close to, has continued to be defended primarily in politically and sociologically contextual terms. Just as informed curators and critics simply dumped words like individuality and originality, they dumped the word quality without feeling any responsibility to replace it—with another word, or with a group of words, or with language that can inspire a search for the most profound experiences art can offer.

What this avoidance has done is give entire ownership of the word quality to institutions like the Met and the Museum of Modern Art, and to critics like Hilton Kramer, who are at best uneasy with the anxious, uncertain, conflictual nature of contemporary art, and to conservative ideologues who believe they are holding the fort against the onslaught of the polytheistic, multicultural, multiracial, foaming-at-the-mouth, get-out-of-my-way barbarians.

In short, the contemporary art world's general discomfort with many of the words that enable so many people out-

side art to believe in its spiritual and moral value has encouraged the accusations that the controversial art supported by the Endowment, and the ways this art has been defended, are really about nothing other than provoking the establishment and challenging entrenched political power. In taking an ideological argument to the American people about the ideological corruption of the Endowment and the American university system, public figures like Lynne Cheney and William Bennett have been able to enlist, without resistance, some of the most resonant words in our artistic culture. Hasn't handing over these words encouraged the marginalization of the artist in America?

When you try to argue for art and the Endowment on a public stage on which the other side has seized ownership of the symbolic language, you are trying to fight cannons with cap guns. Many people in the art and culture worlds, including myself, have not grasped the extraordinary power of some words as symbols, and how much these symbols connect art to the needs of many Americans. When words that matter are misappropriated for hostile purposes, they cannot be abandoned.

People who care about art—not just one kind of art, *art*—must consider the need for a language with which it can be defended and developed on the most public level. It is probably not going to be the same language as the ones used at the Whitney Museum of American Art and the museums of contemporary art in Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Diego. It is probably going to be radically different from the languages used by artists working in communities far removed from powerful art institutions, which remain for many members of these communities strongholds of exclusion and repression. All these languages, and others, must be developed in order to establish new roots for the artist in America. What I am making a special plea for here is the unending struggle for a kind of language that can function on the national political and media stage to communicate to many kinds of people the indispensability of the artistic imagination.

What I am making a plea for here, most of all, is engagement. There comes a time when people have to take a stand—for art, for the artist, for the imagination. For the artistic experience. For that way of dealing with private and public, self and other, that makes it possible to contest, to imagine, to dream, to feel the poetry of the world and the poetry of struggle, to realize the potential within each person for poetic identity. Against anyone, on any side, who wants to trivialize that experience. If people who believe in art in this country can be clearer and sharper and a whole lot more courageous, American art and artists at least have a chance to come out of the Endowment crisis on more solid ground.

Michael Brenson is an art critic and curator. Brenson holds all copyright to this article. It is published here with his permission.

The National Museum of the American Indian

Whence the “Art Object”?

W. Richard West, Jr.

The following article was first presented to the Association of Art Museum Directors at their 1995 Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland on June 16, 1995. It is published here with permission from W. Richard West, Jr.

In thinking about my presentation this morning, two very different anecdotes from my past crossed my consciousness. The first involves Eugene Thaw, a highly successful and learned New York collector and art dealer, a generous benefactor of the National Museum of the American Indian [NMAI], and at this point a close personal friend of mine who has an eye for Indian material akin to God's. Some years ago, as he was introducing me to his collection at his home in New Mexico, he held up before both of us an exquisite carved Tsimshian bowl and, with a facial expression that can only be described as rapt, said, “Nothing in the entirety of the Renaissance surpasses this.” From the standpoint of the system of aesthetics as we have come to know it in Western art, Gene was entirely correct.

The second anecdote involves my father, a Southern Cheyenne and a studio-trained painter and sculptor for the vast majority of his current eight-three years. When I was a young child, he and I visited the Philbrook Art Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and we chanced upon a Tlingit object in that museum's significant Indian collection not at all dissimilar in artistic quality from the piece I saw many years later with Gene Thaw. My father told me initially of the object's remarkable beauty, including its material, the artisan's technical skill, its color, and its line. Then, with a slight chuckle, he added, “The only problem is—that's not what it really means.”

My father's ironic humor reflects a difference in perception and understanding that is worthy of the attention of all of us in America's museum community—and I would like to offer you my own thinking on it since the distinction sits at the very core of the National Museum of the American Indian. First, I want to describe, speaking perhaps more as a Cheyenne than a museum director, the cultural context that has a dramatic impact on the representation of Indian objects in a museum setting. Second, I want to address the implications of that context for our work at the NMAI—and perhaps suggest what may be a possible ripple effect in the art museum community more generally.

Let me turn first to a discussion of the fundamental elements of Indian cultural context that I believe have an impact on what the National Museum of the American Indian says through objects to its audiences. First, while it often comes as a considerable shock to those grounded in the traditions of Western art and less familiar with Indian material culture, the object, if anything, was a secondary consideration to the primacy of the ceremonial or ritual process that led to its creation. In other words, despite the remarkable aesthetic qualities of much of the cultural material we created, our purpose, in the end, was not the creation of “art.” A former colleague of mine at the NMAI spoke directly to this point when she wrote:

[T]he Native artist . . . [values] the creation [of art] . . . over the final product. Process speaks to historical or cultural significance because it is testimony to cultural continuity and change. It is the evidence of lost traditions, innovations, preserved cultural knowledge, historic perspective and vision of the future. . . . It takes into account a sort of ‘spiritual evidence’ that is integral to the creative process. The integrity of the creative process is foremost. The object is meaningless without it.

I am reminded of a story that hopefully makes this sometimes elusive point. A northern California basket-maker named Mrs. Matt was hired to teach basket-making at a local university. After three weeks, her students complained that all they had done was sing songs. When, they asked, were they going to learn to make baskets? Mrs. Matt, somewhat taken aback, replied that they were learning to make baskets. She explained that the process starts with songs that are sung so as not to insult the plants when the materials for the baskets are picked. So her students learned the songs and went to pick the grasses and plants to make their baskets.

Upon their return to the classroom, however, the students again were dismayed when Mrs. Matt began to teach them yet more songs. This time she wanted them to learn the songs that must be sung as you soften the materials in your mouth before you start to weave. Exasperated, the students protested having to learn songs instead of learning to make baskets. Mrs. Matt, perhaps a bit exasperated herself at this point, thereupon patiently explained the obvious to them: “You're missing the point,” she told them, “a basket is a song made visible.”

I do not know whether Mrs. Matt's students went on to become exemplary basket-makers. What I do know is that her wonderfully poetic remark, which suggests the interconnectedness of everything, the symbiosis of who we are and what we do, embodies a whole philosophy of Native life and culture and speaks volumes about the relationship—and the relative order of importance—between process and object.

The second important aspect of Indian cultural context relevant to the presentation and meanings of material in

museums is that Native objects, in their most profound and ultimate dimension, really were statements and reflections of collective and communal values as much or more than they were individual creative statements—and they were intended to be so. I remember visiting the Millicent Rogers Museum in Taos, New Mexico. I was gazing at a truly magnificent ceramic pot sculpted by the hand and spirit of Popovi Da, the brilliant son of Julian and Maria Martinez of the San Ildefonso Pueblo. I was content to stand there, transfixed, for a very long time, simply lost in its beauty.

My eye, however, finally wandered to a piece of text that had been placed next to the pot. It turned out to be a statement by Popovi Da himself. I have never forgotten it because it spoke volumes about Popovi Da's world and how his personal creativity related to—indeed, arguably was subsumed by—that world:

We do what comes from thinking, and sometimes hours and even days are spent to create an aesthetic scroll in design.

Our symbols and our representations are all expressed as an endless cadence, and beautifully organized in our art as well as in our dance. . . .

There is design in living things; their shapes, forms, the ability to live, all have meaning. . . . Our values are indwelling and dependent upon time and space unmeasured. This in itself is beauty.

My point is the following. As the son of an Indian artist and a modest collector of contemporary Indian art, I always have loved and appreciated our cultural material for its sheer aesthetic qualities. I have watched with pleasure as this material has come increasingly to be valued on the same basis by others outside the Indian community.

In representing and interpreting the material, however, it is not sufficient, in the end, to treat it only as "art," because we miss much in doing so. A person can stand in awe of a Popovi Da ceramic pot for its beauty as "art," but if he does not know the linkage between Popovi Da's world view and community and his personal creative spirit, the cultural interpretation of the pot is incomplete—and it can be made complete only by honoring the place of that nexus in defining the meaning of the object.

Significantly, many contemporary Indian fine artists view the matter similarly. Rick Hill, an artist, former museum director, and now member of the staff of the National Museum of the American Indian, puts the matter this way:

The main difference between Indian and non-Indian artists is that we are still community-driven. . . . Art is the cement that binds the Indian people together, uniting us with our ancestors and with generations yet to be born.

Through art we can take a look at why language is important, why ritual is important, why land is important.

With his characteristic frankness and edge, contemporary Apache sculptor Bob Haozous, son of the renowned sculptor, Allan Houser, and, in my view, an always promising and often brilliant artist in his own right, makes the same point regarding the essential nature of Indian objects.

I want to see people participating in my work. That's totally contrary to what we're taught in America—the artist as an individual, the genius. I don't want to see that in my work at all. I'd rather see, at the most, a cultural reflection of being an Apache. I've been fighting those concepts of individualism, uniqueness, and universalism, concepts that are totally contrary to tribalism. Individualism denies a future or a past awareness. You claim it, you own it, but you're not a part of it.

In other words, through the millennia the Indian people we now call "artists" were not so much in the business of producing "art objects" as they were in creating aesthetically remarkable material whose primal importance lay not in the object itself but in the fact that it reflected—indeed, embodied—the processes, ceremonial and ritualistic, that defined the very community culturally.

Now, I would like to describe how the cultural context I have discussed affects our approach to objects at the National Museum of the American Indian. First, it has everything to do with what I would call our institution's programmatic self-perception and self-image, which derive directly from our mission statement. Our highest obligation, according to that statement, is to represent and interpret for our publics the Native peoples and cultures of the Western Hemisphere, past, present, and future. The vast collection of objects that we hold are a means to that end but do not constitute the end itself. Thus, the National Museum of the American Indian ultimately is categorized most aptly as a museum of culture and cultural history rather than as an art museum.

This conceptual framework is museologically jolting to some, and we heard from a few of them in the critics' community when our inaugural exhibitions opened (fall 1994) at the NMAI's George Gustav Heye Center in New York City. With its characteristic penchant for understatement, *The Wall Street Journal* commented on exhibition labels that referred to the need to look behind the object to the voices of its creators:

A note explains: "The different voices that surround some of the objects speak for them, since they cannot speak for themselves."

Nonsense. These objects . . . speak very eloquently for themselves. . . .

Ironically, . . . items [in the museum shop] are more respectfully displayed than the museum's

own artifacts. Grouped by tribal affiliation and medium, they are in well-lit cases . . . with cards listing only the artist's name and nation. The museum's curators would do well to study them.

I want to be somewhat more gentle with this critic than she was with us because her motivations, in one sense, are laudable and basically kind. Specifically, she is disconcerted and dismayed by parts of our presentation because we declined to represent and interpret the objects exclusively as "art," which, I would venture to guess, is, in her mind and in the Western art tradition, the highest compliment we possibly could pay to the material and the most significant meaning it could have. I am the first to applaud the efforts of many art museums in the twentieth century to liberate Indian objects from the sometimes limiting and deadening gaze of anthropology that brooked no quarter for appreciating Indian objects aesthetically. Nowhere was this liberation more courageously or brilliantly accomplished than by René d'Harnoncourt, in 1941 in the MOMA's *Indian Art of the United States*, as well as in the MOMA's similarly conceived exhibits presenting African and Oceanic objects in 1935 and 1946, respectively.

In the end, however, as the director of the National Museum of the American Indian, I return to a fundamental point of departure. If our mission is to represent, to interpret, to explicate the peoples and cultures indigenous to the Western Hemisphere, we do not serve that mission completely by limiting our presentation to the Indian object as art measured in reference to a system of aesthetics that comes to us from Europe. In doing so we would risk the imposition of an alien interpretation that ultimately prevents our appreciation of the object on the basis of the very cultural values and knowledge that give it meaning and significance.

The cultural context I have discussed has a second and significant impact on the National Museum of the American Indian's approach to the representation of objects. Specifically, since our goal is to bring to the material meanings and understandings reflective of the cultural values that motivated its creation, we enlist the Native voice directly and systematically in the interpretive process. In her Foreword to the catalogue for one of our inaugural exhibits at the George Gustav Heye Center entitled *All Roads Are Good: Native Voices on Life and Culture*, Clara Sue Kidwell, our assistant director for cultural resources, describes the rationale for this methodology:

The "roads" of the title represent the varying cultural backgrounds and ways of viewing objects that the selectors brought to the process of choosing. The reasons for their choices do not necessarily reflect the standards of aesthetic or historic value that might inform displays in an anthropology or history museum. Rather, objects become expressions of distinct ways of seeing the world, an entrée for the viewer into a different cultural understanding of the collec-

tion. Some common themes emerged during the selection process—the nature of the sacred, relationships with the environment, responsibility to the community, for example—but each individual expressed them in a unique way.

In her Foreword to another of our inaugural exhibits, Clara Sue went on to discuss the practical potential of this interpretive approach for expanding and layering the meanings we attach to objects in museums:

[The] different ways of viewing things confer different kinds of validity. A museum endows an object with importance because it represents some kind of cultural value. The object may represent a certain style of craft work, or it may be unique, or it may meet certain aesthetic standards. Museums become arbiters of meaning in the very process of establishing collecting plans and acquiring objects.

Indian people who have lived with objects, on the other hand, bring a different perspective to museum collections. The basket may evoke memories of watching a basket-maker at work. A fringed buckskin dress recalls the hypnotic swaying of many fringed garments as dancers move around a circle to the insistent beat of a drum. The blanket draped over a mannequin recalls the weaver at her loom, the bleating of sheep, the pungent smell of dyestuffs simmering in a pot.

I always have been especially pained by the occasional unfortunate comment that confuses this interpretive methodology with some kind of late twentieth century reflexive political sop to the Indian community motivated by a spasm of political correctness. When I, as director of the National Museum of the American Indian, insist on the implementation of this approach, I am talking culture—not politics. My insistence rests on a recognition, learned while growing up Cheyenne in Oklahoma, that our culture and cultural sensibilities often are fundamentally different from yours, that we bring our values and sensibilities to the material culture we have created and continue to create, and that, as the creators of these objects, we are in a unique position to enrich the Indian exhibition halls of America's museums.

So what, in the end, does all of the foregoing mean to me? We Plains Indians, as some of you may know, are fond of quests, and that is how I see my life at the institution over which I preside. I have seen—and I believe I understand—the anthropological and art history paradigms that heretofore have driven the interpretation and representation of Indian objects.

For different reasons I have found both of them lacking. The former, in its sometimes relentless effort to objectify our cultural patrimony on the basis exclusively of science can deny access to the sheer delight of pure beauty, while the latter, in measuring the object by reference to purely aesthetic standards originating elsewhere, can limit our

progress to an understanding of the intrinsic cultural significance of the object.

In my quest I am comfortable that the National Museum of the American Indian is heading in the right direction, but I do not pretend to know, in my museological youth, the precise location of the interpretive paradigm for which I search. By my approximate mid-course calculation, it sits somewhere on the spectrum between what I refer to loosely as "old anthropology" and "old art history," and, ironically, it will incorporate elements of both, while jettisoning other aspects of each. It is a paradigm that will recognize the aesthetic quality of many Indian objects and will allow visitors to approach and appreciate the material on that basis, but it will not pretend that such an approach marks the ultimate significance of the object. It will bring to the object a cultural surround that adds and enriches meaning and understanding beyond the date on which it was created and the materials of which it is made. It will enlist systematically, as the authentic voices they are, the perspectives of Native peoples themselves in this process of interpretive enrichment.

At the outset of this presentation I alluded briefly to the possible ripple effect these developments may have for the art museum community's representation of objects. I approach this subject with this audience in a state of profound humility, but I will leave you with at least a glimpse of my thinking. First, where objects originating outside the Western art tradition sit in art museum collections—and here I include at least African, Oceanic, and Asian objects—I believe that much can be gained in representing the object by augmenting the interpretive approach beyond the prescriptions of art history. I see this initiative, not as an unwarranted and threatening departure from the sacrosanct, but, instead, as an effort that expands what we museums have to tell our audiences about these wonderful things called objects.

My second suggestion probably has more edge to it, but I hope you will receive it in the good spirit it is offered. From where I sit at the helm of the National Museum of the American Indian, and based on what I have discussed with you for the past several minutes, I will be fascinated to see where art museums and art history go over the next several years. I always have appreciated that, prior to the Renaissance, the basis on which Europeans viewed the meaning and importance of objects was very similar to the attitudes of peoples native to this Hemisphere. So who knows? Although art historians have assumed heretofore that the road to art is straight, linear, and ascending, perhaps, in the end, the past of Western art history may prove far more akin to the Cheyenne cosmology—circular and cyclical.

W. Richard West is the director, National Museum of the American Indian and a member of the board of directors, the Bush Foundation, St. Paul, Minnesota.

"It Takes Guts to Make a Democracy"

Ralph and Myrna Paulus

This interview is reprinted from a documentary publication, The Montana American Festival Project, 1992-1995. The American Festival Project (AFP) is a broad national network rooted in the belief that cultural exchange based on equality and mutual respect can provide a context in which diverse Americans can begin to understand one another. American Festival Projects have ranged from multi-year, state-wide projects to week-long festivals sponsored by universities and exchanges between community-based cultural centers. The AFP was started in 1982 by Roadside Theater and Junebug Theater Project in response to a national increase in Ku Klux Klan activity. Since then it has grown to include Carpetbag Theatre, The Dance Exchange, Francisco Gonzalez & su Conjunto, Robbie McCauley and Company, Pregones Theater, El Teatro de la Esperanza, A Traveling Jewish Theatre, and Urban Bush Women.

The Montana American Festival Project is a multi-year (1992-1995) collaborative project involving Montana cultural organizations, community partners, and artists, along with national touring artists and the American Festival Project. The documentary publication reports, "Over the course of the project's three years, these partners worked together to create a cultural exchange that has grown from the ground up, shaped by each community's unique experience, vision and long term goals." The exchange included not only performances and workshops by both Montana and national touring artists, but the organization of story circles that have collected personal/local stories and begun to share them through performances by community members.

Ralph and Myrna Paulus are farmers who live in the Montana community of Choteau, population 2,000. In addition to being a farmer and a mother, Myrna is president of the local school board. Ralph is a farmer, a father, and a member of the hospital board. The Pauluses are also key participants in the Montana project, bringing artists to Choteau and developing storytelling, poetry, and theater among the people of Montana. In cooperation with the eastern Montana community of Fort Peck, they are collecting local stories as material for plays which they will perform in their hometowns and in each others' communities.

Q: What started you bringing artists to Choteau?

Myrna: We had Norman Luboff's choir come. Norman Luboff is a choir director and choral music arranger quite famous on the international scene.

Ralph: There was a level of excitement and intimacy in the auditorium because they just sang their socks off. We

had a potluck dinner and when they got done I heard this interchange going, the singers and people are all mixed up and it was just magic. I don't think there was a dry eye in the house when they got done. I mean these are real people. They got kids and they're divorced and they got problems and they ain't no different than us, and if we put our mind to it we could do what they're doing.

Q: *How did you start working with the American Festival Project?*

Ralph: How do you go about finding artists? I don't know, I'm a farmer. I didn't go to art school, I don't know anybody at the university to call. But this looked really attractive, so I went and got involved, and Arnie [Malina, director, Helena Presents/Myrna Loy Center, and responsible for originally organizing the American Festival Project in Montana] got us going and jeez, that made all the difference in the world.

He got us involved with the WESTAF artist, Maria Benitez and Danny Berchevsky Jazz Dance. We did some pretty racy things for out here in the boondocks. And it worked. I mean it pushed out of the envelope, and it was OK, we got through it, the audience accepted it.

Q: *What does it mean to pick artists for rural communities?*

Ralph: Picking things that they'll like, so they'll want to come back. We're into what I think was our original intent. Here's an opportunity for us to dig in and send something back. The communication is two ways. That to me is the most important part of what it is we're establishing. We're getting involved in going into our community and finding what's there and trying to connect that up with the rest of the world.

Myrna: I think it relates to the community because we end up finding out that our problems, although they may be totally unique to us . . . there's someplace else that has a problem that's similar. Despite what may be our ethnic background, we all have similarities.

Ralph: I went to New Orleans (for an American Festival meeting) and met with Ann Brown (from Mississippi). She's in her community struggling with lots of the same things we are. Ann Brown's is an agricultural community that has lost control of its own destiny, and likewise we are an agricultural community that's lost control of our own destiny. We're all white here, they're all black there. We're not in anywhere near as bad shape as they're in, I'm sure. But we're in the process of losing control. A connection's been made there. I don't know that I can do her much good but she sure did me a lot of good.

Q: *Can you describe what happened when Adella Gautier and John O'Neal of Junebug Productions came to town?*

Ralph: Adella did Kindergarten and she had a session with first, second, and third grade all coming to the audi-

torium, and she told stories. Afterwards she got down and talked to the kids.

Myrna: They loved her . . . yeah, made sure her color didn't come off. For some of the kids, she was the first black person they'd ever seen other than on TV. She said, "You guys know where I came from?" A lot of them said, "Africa?" And she said, "No, I came from New Orleans." The way she handled it, she's wonderful with kids. She's really quite spectacular.

Last year Junebug Jack did a performance for the 7th through 12th graders, and the freshmen and the juniors did some of their stories, performed for each other, and ended with some music. Carl was playing his guitar, and the auditorium was just kind of welcoming there. The kids that were there were having a good time, and the bell rang for school and nobody left.

School was over and the kids that were in the auditorium were still there, and the auditorium door was just plastered with kids looking in wishing they were inside. That was a really neat exchange to watch. Adella was singing, she even had Ralph's cousin up dancing. It was kind of a neat melding. It was like the kids were really part of the group and the group was really part of the kids.

Q: *Tell me one of your favorite stories.*

Myrna: Mike was telling it one night at one of our meetings. He was telling how his great-grandparents came to this area from Czechoslovakia; and they didn't homestead, they squatted down between Choteau and Augusta. They built just board shacks to live in and the men would go away for weeks at a time and work in the coal mines. The women stayed in those little shacks down on the river, because if they could live there a year and nobody booted them off, then they could claim the land and didn't have to file as a homesteader. The big, joyous occasion was when the men came back with a load of coal, so they could burn coal in the stoves instead of wood. My God, the hardships. . . . Those women had the children there. The wind blows fiercely down along the river, and they had nothing on the walls. It was just boards nailed together. There were even holes, they could see outside. The men took off for the mines. And the women stayed . . . they stayed with those men that would go off.

Q: *How would you describe the interaction of farming and this cultural activity?*

Myrna: It's compatibility. There is a sense of joy at the completion of a task, such as when the seeding is done. It's not just a sense of accomplishment, it's a sense of joy. There's that same thing at harvest. It's a tremendous working experience. It's a unifying experience.

Ralph: I used to think that art and farming had nothing to do with each other. That's why I did it—because I thought it had nothing to do with farming. But it has

everything to do with farming. And in a sense art is more agriculture than agriculture.

And the leverage, too; you put the boar in with the sows. You didn't do much, all you did was open the gate. You run a couple of boars in there with maybe a dozen sows, and in three months you got a mess. In another six months you've got 20,000 pounds of pork to deal with, just from opening that gate. And that's the way this art stuff is. We're planting seeds, who the hell knows what's going to take off.

Q: *How does art relate to democracy?*

Ralph: You have to feel good about yourself to stand up for what you believe in. The problem with democracy is that there's a risk, you have to stand up and shoot your mouth off once in awhile. That's an important part of democracy. You have to have guts to make democracy work. The whole population has to . . . you can't just have a few. And the only way you can have that kind of guts is if you feel good about yourself.

This whole project is about empowering people. They can then feel who they are and where they come from is honorable. No matter where they come from, it's honorable. And if they can feel good about themselves, they can participate in this government.

"It Takes Guts to Make a Democracy" is reprinted with the permission of Ralph and Myrna Paulus and the American Festival Project. For more information about the project and for a copy of the publication, contact the American Festival Project, 306 Madison Street, Whitesburg, Kentucky 41858, 606-633-0108.

Newsletter Ideas?

Do you have ideas for the *Grantmakers in the Arts Newsletter*? The newsletter advisory committee would be happy to hear from you. Current committee members include:

Kathleen A. Cerveny
Cynthia A. Gehrig
Sarah Lutman
John Orders
Joan Shigekawa
Bruce Sievers
Tomás Ybarra-Frausto

Policy Communities and Policy Influence

Securing a Government Role in Cultural Policy for the 21st Century

Margaret Jane Wyszomirski

After five years of intense political controversy, both the concept of federal funding for the arts and its administration by the National Endowment for the Arts are under intense challenge. Other federal cultural agencies, such as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, have also faced criticism. Supporters and opponents of the programs—as well as many neutral observers—have come to the conclusion that this is no way for cultural policies to be made, federal agencies to be administered, or governmental activities to be evaluated. Indeed, the current problem in reauthorizing the NEA has been exacerbated by the lack of policy options. For many months, only two options seemed possible—preserve the status quo or eliminate the agency. Then, at the proverbial “eleventh hour” when other alternatives surfaced—such as merging the NEA, NEH, and IMS or creating a true endowment—no one could offer much advice about their feasibility, implementation, or possible consequences.

The arts community and its philanthropic supporters have often felt—with some justification—victimized, unlucky, and besieged by the turn of events in recent years. But it can also be argued that many arts advocates have been unwittingly complicitous in these travails. Complicitous because they neglected key elements of what might be called the intellectual and political infrastructure of cultural policy. In the discussion that follows, I will introduce readers to concepts and models that are well established in the field of policy analysis. These will be used to examine how the processes and politics surrounding arts policy have operated, to reveal problems in these practices, and to identify some possible improvements that could be made.

Exerting Policy Influence: What is the Problem?

The arts battlefield of the so-called “culture wars” cannot properly be characterized as a debate, since epithets rather than ideas have generally been its driving force. Indeed, the persuasive power of virtually all of the arguments that helped establish and sustain federal arts support for the past thirty years has eroded. But little

effort has been invested in the development of new ideas. The polarized and raucous contention bears little resemblance to a policy discourse since adherents of various positions seldom speak in the same forum, engage each other's assertions, or agree about basic definitions. Since members of the arts community seem to have spent little effort on research other than self-study, they have had little credible analysis or valid evidence to inform policy decisions. Much sponsored research is undertaken for a specific client and given very limited circulation. Service organizations are not always willing to make their data available to others, or they only do so with restrictions on its use. Cultural agencies engage in little policy planning and undertake only limited program evaluation.

While ostensibly arguing over principles, self-interests and ulterior motives have been abundant. Although politics are disavowed, they have been practiced all around. The arts community can agree on few core values. Values that some members have asserted—such as excellence and art for art's sake—have been challenged by both insiders and outsiders. Amidst such ambiguity, the translation or linkage of arts community values to basic political principles or to broad interests of the general public has been virtually impossible.

Policymakers in Congress or in cultural agencies have been cast as stalwart champions or else regarded as venal, even villainous. Meanwhile, the founding generation of political and conceptual leadership is passing and little is being done to cultivate its successors. The processes of policymaking are too often perceived to be politics by another name—and therefore seen as capricious and tainted. Until quite recently, the very terms, "cultural policy" or "arts policy", have been anathema to many members of the American arts community. Some seem to regard policy as a coercive means of governmental control. They fail to realize that policy, when duly legitimized, confers authority to programs and justifies the allocation of public resources. Accountability is seen as an onerous bureaucratic or political burden rather than as the other side of the coin of public trust and public support. There has been much confusion about accountability: does it concern process, results, or goals? Does accountability in one aspect substitute for another, or are all aspects of accountability complementary?

Today—and for the foreseeable future—members of the arts community must deal with new participants and new ideas in what they had thought of as "their" policy monopoly. Some of the new participants disagree over basic assumptions and are hostile to federal funding for the arts. Others hold different perspectives on the possible goals of arts policy or advance different programmatic or procedural preferences. Some critics of public art programs have been able to play fast and loose with accusation, innuendo, and exaggeration, as they seek to redefine issues to further their own agendas rather than to promote good public policy. Learning to deal with such "outsiders" has challenged—and unsettled—many members of the arts community.

Each federal cultural agency and its constituency has operated, in large part, autonomously, emphasizing its uniqueness, rather than finding common cause and mutual interests. Responsible policymakers have been caught between the unreasonable and the nonnegotiable, and between the unthinking and the unthinkable. The resultant policy dilemmas have imposed rising political costs on most participants who cannot untie a metaphorical Gordian knot and who lack alternatives that might cut through it.

Ironically, at the very moment when policy awareness has dawned, the NEA and its cultural constituency (as well as its philanthropic supporters) are discovering that they lack some basic resources for policy effectiveness and are hindered by being only a truncated and fragmented policy community. Long focussed on preserving the status quo, members of the arts community were slow to see this situation until quite recently. For over a decade, the arts community and the NEA successfully fended off partisan changes in program emphases, administrative operations, budget allocations, and agency organization—variations that characterize most federal agencies as they navigate through changes of presidential administration. In the process, constructive adaptation and flexibility were resisted at the cost of eroding bipartisan political support and waning public commitment to the very principle of federal support for the arts. In its quest to avoid politicization, the arts community confused politics with policy, and therefore failed to understand what the policy system is, how it works, how to influence the agenda, and where to find political allies. Focussed on their own particular needs and interests, many members of the arts community lost sight of political, economic, and social changes that would frame the larger context in which policies affecting them would develop.

Things were not always this way. And, historically, foundations played a key role in fostering policy innovation and public entrepreneurship in cultural affairs. In the 1960s, American foundations were crucial in developing arguments and generating momentum for governmental support of the arts and humanities through studies and highly visible task forces. These included the Keeney report on the status of the humanities in American life (1964), the Rockefeller report on the performing arts (1965), the Baumol and Bowen study sponsored by the 20th Century Fund (1966), and the Belmont report on museums (1969). Then, for twenty five years, foundations helped to foster a sense of community within the various arts disciplines while underwriting (as did the NEA) the development of national service organizations. In addition, foundations and the NEA worked to catalyze greater financial support for the arts—through audience development, increased corporate contributions, and advocacy for expanded federal, state, and local government funding.

Together, institutional philanthropy (foundation and corporate) and government patronage helped build a nationwide infrastructure of institutions for the produc-

tion, distribution, and preservation of culture, as well as an interdependent financial support system for these activities. In one assessment of the governmental programs that were developed between 1965 and 1990, political scientist Milton C. Cummings Jr. of Johns Hopkins University observed that

A remarkable system of government aid for the arts has been fashioned over the last thirty years . . . it builds on, and supplements, the extraordinary preexisting system of private philanthropy for the arts in America . . . involve[s] a considerable range of . . . federal programs; [has] been large enough [to have] had a major impact on the development of the arts in America. . . . Taken together, the scope and depth of government programs to promote the arts are of a magnitude that would have been undreamed of just thirty years ago. . . . [They] have played an important role in the remarkable flowering of the arts that has occurred in the United States over the last generation. (Cummings, 1991, pp. 76-77)

When the NEA was established, members of the arts community were concerned with the problems of financial deficits, inequitable public access, and benign political neglect. Now, the arts community confronts a political deficit, a negative policy image, and conflicting public demands. Today, the intellectual infrastructure for the generation of new policy concepts and options is insufficient to the task of relegitimizing public arts policy and of meeting the challenges of the 21st century. Alone, the NEA and its arts constituency cannot effectively function as a cultural policy community. If philanthropic supporters want to address these deficiencies, attention must turn to developing a fully articulated cultural policy community, to rebuilding and extending its intellectual and informational infrastructure, to catalyzing political and public support, and to promoting new leadership. Clues to how this might be done can be found through a clearer understanding of what a policy community is and how it functions. It can also be fostered by studying the components and lifecycles of policy systems, by learning how the policy agenda can be influenced, and by referring to ways other policy communities and systems function.

Policy Communities: Nurturing Ideas and Options

Policy communities are networks of specialists in a given policy area, drawn from inside and outside of government, and spanning a range of partisan and ideological perspectives. They include congressional staff, academics, consultants, interest group analysts, and administrators with planning, evaluation, program and budgeting expertise. Frequently, former officials are involved. Foundation program officers, state and local administrators, and legislative staff may also be included. Some participants act as "sounding boards," while others serve as technical experts. Still others perform the role of "policy entrepre-

neurs"—individuals who are willing to invest time, energy, reputation, and perhaps money in an effort to influence public debate and to shape public policy. As James A. Smith noted in his book, *The Idea Brokers*, policy entrepreneurs

. . . play the role of interpreter of public policy at times and some have legitimate claims as policy specialists They mobilize resources to push a particular proposal, create coalitions among diverse groups of researchers and activists, foster the careers of able and committed aspirants to membership in the policy elite, and initiate new journals and other publishing enterprises. (Smith, 1991, pp. 225-6)

Sometimes "think tanks" provide forums for policy community gatherings. In other cases, university-based programs and research centers serve that function. "Peak associations"—that is, associations of associations—can also serve as community conveners. Inclusion in policy communities is not a matter of invitation or of group-think; it is defined by demonstrated interest and experienced commitment. Members share common concerns but do not always exhibit common perspectives.

In his now classic study of policy agenda-setting process, Michigan political scientist John Kingdon observed that

. . . Ideas float around in such communities. Specialists have their conceptions, their vague notions of future directions, and their more specific proposals. They try out their ideas on others by going to lunch, circulating papers, publishing articles, holding hearings, presenting testimony, and drafting and pushing legislative proposals. The process often . . . takes years. . . . Some ideas survive and prosper; some proposals are taken more seriously than others. (Kingdon, 1984, pp. 122-3)

He goes on to note that

. . . As officials and those close to them encounter ideas and proposals, they evaluate them, argue with one another, marshal evidence and argument in support or opposition, persuade one another, solve intellectual puzzles, and become entrapped in intellectual dilemmas. . . . Policymaking is often a process of creating intellectual puzzles, getting into intellectual binds, and then extracting people from these dilemmas. . . . Lobbyists marshal their arguments as well as their numbers. . . . Both the substance of the ideas and political pressure are . . . important in moving some subjects into prominence and in keeping other subjects low on governmental agendas. . . . (Kingdon, 1984, pp. 131-3)

Such community dynamics can be seen clearly in other policy areas. For example, in the health policy field, foundation grants helped support the activities of the Health Staff Seminars in Washington D.C. as well as the more

informal meetings of the Jackson Hole group that was something of a brain trust behind many recent health care reform proposals. Among nonprofit organizations more generally, a sense of common identity, shared interests, and research resources has been cultivated through the meetings, research forums, theory-building, and data collection projects of the Independent Sector and a new network of university research centers and educational programs that focus on the nonprofit sector. In the broad arena of science policy, the Carnegie Corporation of New York supported a five-year Commission on Science, Technology, and Government. The Commission was composed of leaders from the various scientific disciplines along with leaders from engineering, research, education, industry, and government with an interest in science and technology. Through task forces, background papers, sponsored research, and public reports, the Commission sought to foster a policy community dialogue. The dialogue explored ways that relationships among public, private, and nonprofit interests in the science and technology policy system might be made more effective. Options were developed for how science and technology might further societal goals in education, economic prosperity, international affairs, and environmental policy.

There are no comparable forums in arts policy or in cultural policy, although there are indications that they might be fostered. For example, meetings of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities have, on occasion, served as policy forums. The biennial Getty Conference on Arts Education has been effective in convening and helping to promote a dialogue in arts education. Few think tanks have devoted resources and attention to cultural matters. Those who do—such as the Heritage Foundation, the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, and, to a lesser extent, the American Enterprise Institute—have tended to be critics of federal cultural agencies and their programs. Periodically, private foundations have revisited the subject of public television and its policy issues (e.g. most recently with the 20th Century Fund's report, *Quality Time?*).

In contrast, since the landmark reports of the 1960s, American foundations have done little to underwrite the development of an intellectual infrastructure for arts policy. Such forums and activities are crucial to the maintenance and effectiveness of policy communities. Policy dialogue, issue identification, and option development are ongoing efforts that need multiple venues and long-term commitment. Successful new policy ideas don't just happen, they must be seeded and nurtured. They are the fruit of extensive thought and effort by fertile, interactive, and context-sensitive policy communities.

The Arts: A Fragmented Policy Community

While policy communities vary greatly in their degree of specialization and cohesion, the arts community suffers from being fragmented, incomplete, and uncoordinated.

It is fragmented along many dimensions, such as discipline, generation, ethnicity, and geography. It is incomplete—many community components are disorganized and key resources (particularly information, evaluation, and analysis) are woefully underdeveloped. And it is uncoordinated—many community segments are essentially strangers to one another and have few occasions to interact. In other words, to become more policy effective, the present *arts community* needs to evolve into at least an *arts policy community*, if not into an even more extended, *cultural policy community*.

At present, the arts community tends to cluster in specialized communities: dance or theater, museums or symphonies, state or local arts agencies, grantmakers or scholars. This pattern can be seen in the flock of specialized peer panels that the NEA convenes each year. Even within distinct groupings, there are often specialized associations. For example, the theater world has TCG and LORT as well as the League of Broadway Theaters and Producers and others. Conversely, a specialized group may encompass substantial diversity. The museum community, for example, crosses disciplinary boundaries to include art, history, and science museums. The Conference Group on Social Theory, Politics, and the Arts includes scholars from sociology, political science, survey research, and art history as well as occasional art administrators, art educators, and art consultants. Before it was disbanded, the Congressional Arts Caucus brought together over 200 members of the House of Representatives from both parties who expressed an interest in the arts. Yet despite such variations, the forums of the arts community continue to be geared to segmented professional development, communication, program administration, and sporadic political mobilization. Meanwhile, few policymakers encounter policy scholars, and the academic and practitioner wings of the community are largely strangers to one another. Interaction among policymakers, practitioners, and policy scholars is much richer in other fields of public policy.

What are the ramifications of such fragmentation? First, studies of other policy communities indicate that community fragmentation leads to policy fragmentation. That is, each issue and program tends to be designed and implemented without reference to others in the same or related policy systems. This would seem to be the case both in the arts specifically and in cultural affairs more generally. As a consequence, cultural agencies and their programs may fail to anticipate the range of implications and unintended consequences of their actions. Little thought is given to the relative merits of programs across a range of disciplines, to the potential impact on the arts as a whole, or to the public benefits that might accrue. Alternatively, the value of the lessons of experience and experimentation in any segment of the arts community is diminished by fragmentation, since the knowledge has few channels for cross communication. Instead, it is common to hear members of the arts community assert their uniqueness, that is, how what works in theater will not

Continued on page 32

Who Should Fund the Arts?

Remarks to the National Conference of State Legislators

Penelope McPhee

Grantmakers often are asked to participate in public forums and to speak on regional and national subjects. On July 19, 1995, GIA President Penelope McPhee addressed the National Conference of State Legislators in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and provided the GIA Newsletter a copy of the following text. If you participate in similar forums and have a written text, we encourage you to share it with us. Each of these forums becomes an opportunity to develop the language that Michael Brenson implores us to develop—a language that can function on a public stage “to communicate to many kinds of people the indispensability of the artistic imagination.” (See page 4 of this newsletter.)

I’m very pleased to be here today as part of this distinguished assemblage. I think there is perhaps no other group for whom answering the question “Who should fund the arts?” is so important.

Before I attempt to address the question of who should pay for the arts, I’d like to spend a moment telling you why I’m personally and professionally committed to nurturing the arts, because I believe in some ways the answer to the question “Why are the arts important?” leads us directly to who should foot the bill.

As we sit here, America is in the middle of a domestic war. The violence in our streets, drugs, children killing and being killed, babies having babies, are proof positive that we’re doing something wrong.

As I see it, those of you who are charged with governing are torn between two approaches.

We can commit ourselves to responding to the basic evil in mankind—build more prisons and put more policemen on the streets, put metal detectors in our schools, and move inexorably toward a police state—or we can commit ourselves to believing in the promise of mankind, devoting ourselves to educating our young people, to providing healthy and stimulating opportunities for them.

That’s where the arts come in.

I, for one, would rather spend my tax dollars on the second approach, because, frankly, the first approach is

simply giving in to failure—and that’s not my vision of America.

Let me spend a moment telling you about the America I believe in. It’s a four block area in North Philadelphia that has been transformed because an artist believed even the lowliest among us is entitled to beauty.

In 1986, Lily Yeh, a Philadelphia artist and professor at the University of the Arts, decided she wanted to paint a mural on an abandoned building in a burnt out section of North Philadelphia. This was an area filled with crack houses and drug dealers; a community where fifty-five percent of the households live below the poverty line and where*thirty percent of the labor force is unemployed—one of those areas that cities too often write off.

Lily had no difficulty getting permission from the city to paint the building, and she began her project during the summer. Each day, she came and took out her paints and set about her work, and each day a small cohort of children from the neighborhood came to watch what she was doing. After a few days of this, Lily let the kids help her paint the mural. That, of course, attracted more kids. Soon she decided to put the kids to work helping her clean up the abandoned lot adjacent to the building. Each day, the group of children grew.

Then, Lily decided that the rubble the kids were gathering would make good art materials, so she showed them how to make mosaic sculpture with the trash they were collecting.

Soon, even some of the adults in the neighborhood were attracted to the site. One was a convicted drug dealer called “Big Man,” who had the idea to make some mosaic benches on the abandoned lot. Gradually, together, Lily and the neighborhood decided to make a park. Lily managed to scrounge some surplus tile for their mosaics, and Big Man became the master mosaicist.

By now, summer was over and the kids were back in school. Lily saw there was a need for a place where they could congregate safely—a place where they could do homework and maybe even get some help. She asked the city if she could renovate the abandoned building on which she had painted her mural. The city agreed, and the Village of Arts and Humanities was born.

Shortly after that, Lily applied for and received a small grant from the city for materials needed for the renovation.

That encouraged her to apply for another small grant—this time from the Pennsylvania Council for the Arts—which she also received. The neighborhood—adults and children—pitched in, and by the time I met Lily in the fall of 1991, the Village of Arts and Humanities boasted a ninety-foot mural, a park with mosaic trees, flowers, benches and sculpture, a community vegetable garden, and the beginning of an organized education, social, and

arts program, with classes in art, cooking, dance, gardening, and after-school tutoring. Big Man—straight now—was working on six large-scale mosaic angels on the side of another abandoned building, and teaching the kids how to make mosaics.

Although a few local Philadelphia foundations and corporations began making small contributions to the Village of Arts and Humanities, it was not until Lily received a small grant from the NEA that the Village showed up on the radar screen of national foundations as a community development project.

The national recognition of an NEA grant validated Lily's project and told the world, "This is important. This is worth supporting."

Today, buildings in a four-block area have been renovated. The neighborhood looks and feels very different than it did when I first went there four years ago. But more importantly, lives have been saved. Big Man is not the only story of salvation. Children are staying in school. Teenagers are taking responsibility for their neighborhood. And art remains the core of it all.

I can tell you many more such stories—from Pittsburgh to Miami—from Macon, Georgia to St. Paul, Minnesota—from New Orleans to Brooklyn—about art changing lives, changing neighborhoods, keeping kids in school and out of trouble; even teaching them marketable skills. Are these not the very issues we're asking government to address, the very same social goals at the top of all of our agendas? And, if they are, is it not only appropriate—but obligatory—for government to invest in this process?

So, here we are, then, at the question of who should foot the bill. (You knew I'd get here eventually.)

To address the issue thoughtfully, it's important to give you a brief background about how the arts have traditionally been funded.

The arts funding system, as we know it, is really only about thirty years old. Before the mid-1960s, the arts were supported much the way many in Congress are suggesting now: wealthy individual donors supported their favorite museum, orchestra, or opera company for the amusement of themselves and their friends. Three decades ago, outside of New York City, there were virtually no professional theater or dance companies. Few orchestras could support full-time musicians; and only the largest northeastern and midwestern cities boasted major museums. The arts until that time were truly the province of an economic and geographic elite.

All that changed in the mid-1960s when two things happened simultaneously. The Ford Foundation began making grants in the arts and the NEA was established. Because these two programs were developing side-by-side, they had tremendous effect on one another and the landscape around them. In fact, they created an intentional chain reaction.

From the beginning, the majority of NEA grants were made on a matching basis. The logic was that the NEA's investment would stimulate a broad and ever-expanding funding base.

The NEA's original legislation also contained provisions for block grants to state arts agencies. Prior to 1965, only four states had arts agencies. Stimulated by the NEA, fifty states and all the U.S. territories had arts agencies by 1980. This expanding state and federal funding in turn led to the formation of more than 3,000 local arts councils. Thus began the three-legged stool of support—earned income, private donations, and public funding—that we know today.

For the next thirty years, public and private sector giving in the arts grew together. They leveraged one another; they complemented one another; and they were interdependent.

What developed was the very kind of public/private partnership that Congress is now promulgating as a model for public funding. It's ironic, of course, that many in Congress are trying to eliminate one of the most successful examples of public/private partnership while proselytizing for it in other areas.

The success of this partnership in the arts can be measured in all kinds of ways:

For one, it created a nonprofit arts industry that today accounts for \$36.8 billion in annual revenues, supporting 1.3 million jobs, and generating \$3.4 billion in federal taxes—a wildly successful return on the NEA's annual investment of \$167 million that any Wall Street tycoon would envy.

The public/private partnership in the arts also created a fundamental research and development arm for a much larger for-profit arts industry that includes everything from Hollywood to rock music to fashion and automobile design to television production. You know filmmakers, musicians, designers, and writers don't spring full blown in Hollywood, Memphis, or Detroit. They have to be trained. And a great deal of that training happens in the nonprofit cultural sector.

But finally, and most importantly for this audience, the public/private partnership in the arts has had its greatest impact in making the arts accessible to the widest possible audience. And this is the role for which only government is ideally suited.

Through museums, libraries, schools, dance companies, concerts, and theaters all over America, the arts have truly become part of the public domain.

Because of the NEA's mandate to reach the entire country, from rural areas to urban ghettos, from school-children to the elderly, from Indian reservations to Main Street, there is hardly a region or an individual in America who has not been touched by an NEA-funded project.

Even if the private sector could fill the gap of lost public funding—and I'm going to tell you in a moment why they cannot—only government has the mandate and the mission to reach out to all Americans.

If support for the arts is left in private hands, I can guarantee you that it will once again become the domain of the haves, and those who need it the most will have it not!

Now, let me spend my last few minutes explaining why the private sector will not be able to bridge the gap of lost government support, and why it is a great deal more likely that if the NEA is eliminated or emasculated, private support for the arts will, in fact, decrease.

There are really two simple reasons: The first is lack of money; the second, lack of motivation. Let's look at the bottom line.

In 1992, foundation and corporate giving to the arts totaled \$1.36 billion dollars. For the same period, federal, state, and local government spending combined totaled \$733 million. That means if all government support were eliminated, private donations to the arts would have to increase by fifty percent.

I don't need to remind this audience that government support at the state and local levels is dwindling even faster than at the federal level. Without the leverage of the NEA, we have to presume continued decline from these sectors.

Meanwhile, private funding in the arts also lost ground in the period from 1989 to 1992. Although giving to all charitable causes rose twelve percent, the arts' share dropped slightly. And during this period, corporate giving remained flat or declined.

This trend will undoubtedly continue. The Independent Sector has just released a report entitled "The Impact of Federal Budget proposals on the Activities of Charitable Organizations and the People They Serve." The study shows that almost every area served by charitable organizations—from hospitals to day care to the homeless—will be affected by the proposed cuts in federal spending. If the House spending blueprint were to take effect, all charities would have to raise seventy percent more in private contributions.

As you know, foundations are required by law to give away the equivalent of five percent of their assets annually. In a period of slow growth in the stock market, such as we've been experiencing, those assets remain relatively flat.

So there is absolutely no possibility that foundations will be able to increase their giving by seventy percent.

The arts will be in serious competition for foundation dollars without the leverage the NEA has provided in the past. And I can assure you, that leverage has been

as potent in the board rooms of private foundations as it has been in state capitals and city halls.

Even foundations committed to the arts will be hard pressed to maintain current levels of funding in the face of the abdication of government.

Let me turn now to corporations. Most corporate giving is not made through corporate foundations, but is a voluntary contribution based on a percentage of annual profits. In a corporate environment where the emphasis is on downsizing and re-engineering, we have to assume that those donations are likely to continue to decline or remain flat. In addition, as I said, corporate contributions are voluntary. When they are made, they are generally made with a business intent—I've heard it called benevolent self-interest.

That means that contributions are often designed to produce product recognition or image enhancement and are targeted to a specific market. If the corporation's market happens to be yuppies, we shouldn't be surprised if it doesn't fund arts in rural communities; if its headquarters is in Milwaukee, we shouldn't be surprised if it isn't interested in funding the arts in Miami. Corporations don't exist for the public good. Government does. That's why we should expect government to ante up for the arts.

There is at least one more misguided policy being discussed in Washington that contributes to why the private sector won't make up the gap in public funding. It has to do with incentives. One incentive for giving for both individuals and businesses has always been tax deductions. So it's ironic that while Congress is asking private donors to replace dollars for programs traditionally funded by government, it is also talking about a flat tax, which would effectively eliminate any tax incentive for giving.

This is, in fact, exemplary of the kind of contradictory policy discussion that's long on rhetoric and short on intelligence. The arts are an easy target—without the strong lobbies of the tobacco or insurance industries. But eliminating the tiny budget of the NEA will not have an impact on the national debt. It will only leave our children impoverished.

I don't envy the difficult choices each of you must face as we decide together what purpose government plays. But I hope we will remember that public support of the arts has been the mark of every great society. Our democracy depends upon our knowing, cherishing, and preserving our cultural heritage.

Penelope McPhee is program officer for arts and culture, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

AIDS and the Arts

Margo Viscusi

"AIDS and the Arts" was first published in the summer 1995 issue of the Bulletin, a publication of Funders Concerned About AIDS (FCAA). Like Grantmakers in the Arts, FCAA is an affinity group of the Council on Foundations and can be contacted at 310 Madison Ave., Suite 1630, New York, New York, 10017, 212-573-5533. Margo Viscusi served as interim director of FCAA in June and July, 1995. The article is reprinted here with permission from both Viscusi and FCAA.

It has been an enormous privilege to direct Funders Concerned About AIDS between the resignation of Michael Seltzer and the arrival of our new executive director. Since this is the only Director's Message I'll publish in these pages, I want to devote it to something close to my heart: the arts.

The other day Richard Parker, an American working and teaching on AIDS in Brazil, stopped by. He mentioned that he would be grateful for any information about donors interested in AIDS and the arts. I assumed he meant *using* the arts—for example, folk puppetry or popular music—for "social marketing." Wrong. He meant THE ARTS.

I should have known. Before he left Richard gave me *A Cure of AIDS*, a little book of essays he had translated by Herbert de Souza, a Brazilian political activist and former exile who founded and directs the Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Analysis. De Souza, a hemophiliac, became, in 1986, the first public figure in Brazil to openly declare himself HIV-positive. Since then he has not stopped working for the rights of the poor and hungry and of people living with HIV/AIDS. His essays on AIDS, reprinted from various publications, express anger, compassion, irony, and a shining, hard-won hope that is close to poetry.

The New York Times Book Review of June 4, 1995, alerted me to another extraordinary book, a short (202-page) novel called *To the Wedding* by John Berger (New York: Pantheon Books, 1995). Berger, who is British, has lived for many years in a small village in the French Alps. He is a prolific art critic and fiction writer well-known in Europe. Parts of *To the Wedding* appeared earlier in *The New Yorker*.

As the *Times* reviewer pointed out, this is a European novel. Characters wander across borders without fuss but can also savor in depth the unique social, cultural, and sensual qualities of a given place. Berger makes frequent references to cultural history, from Greek literature, to Venetian churches built to implore God to stop the plague, to lyrics by the Doors. These references never

impede the reader's progress and add layers to Berger's stories of ordinary working people.

At telling such stories, Berger is probably unsurpassed among writers today. He creates, without any sentimentality, characters we would no doubt overlook were they real: a railway man, a man who sells goods out of his truck at open markets, a salesgirl in a shop, a shepherd. Teenage computer hackers. Communists, former communists, socialists, an East European dissident.

Into the lives of a scattered group of these people comes AIDS. The bearer is an ardent, beautiful, and somewhat wild young woman angry and bewildered by what has befallen her. An Italian falls in love with her and she with him. She tries, his father tries, everyone tries to resist or deny this love, to no avail. He marries her in his family's tiny village on a branch of the Po River, near Venice. The wedding feast is a bacchanal of music and dance and food and tears and overwhelming joy. It is attended by Death but dominated by youth, vitality and the love emanating from and surrounding the couple. Developed by a master novelist, the theme is the same as de Souza's: Love, compassion, and the artistic imagination are weapons against AIDS as potent as any medical technology.

Granters concerned about AIDS, don't ignore the arts. Literature, music, dance, theater, the visual arts can all tell us so much we wouldn't otherwise know, couldn't otherwise say, about AIDS and about ourselves in the face of AIDS. And now is the time to champion support for young artists: We can't have the full-blown performance or book or painting if we don't support our artists' first steps. Finally, just as you demanded that AIDS become part of the nation's political, social, and scientific agenda when it was a hidden subject, demand now that artists remain uncensored in their expression so they can treat all our secret fears and undiscovered glories in this great battle.

P.S. The last page of *To the Wedding* reads: "The royalties from this book will be given to Harlem United Community AIDS Center (207 West 133rd Street, New York, New York 10030), an organization which provides support for those who are HIV-positive and their families."

IF YOU FUND THE ARTS, YOU CAN FIGHT AIDS.

The arts are a powerful way to educate, to engage, to move people to action.

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts applied this power to the fight against AIDS by funding a national tour of photographs that awakened thousands to the emotional and social issues of the epidemic.

To find out how you can get involved, contact Funders Concerned About AIDS, 310 Madison Avenue, Suite 1630, New York, New York 10017.

AIDS. Something good must come of it.

FUNDERS CONCERNED ABOUT AIDS

Leverage Lost

The Nonprofit Arts in the Post-Ford Era

An Interview with John Kreidler

Following are excerpts from an interview with John Kreidler (San Francisco Foundation) conducted by Kathleen Cervený (Cleveland Foundation and GIA board). The paper that Kreidler discusses in the interview provides a background for his "Flight Simulator," a computer program designed to demonstrate the arts ecosystem. The "Simulator" will be available for hands-on experimentation at the upcoming GIA conference. (See page 36.)

KC John, as I understand it, the premise of your paper is that any attempt to understand or analyze the nonprofit arts world should be undertaken from a systems standpoint—the arts world is a complex system that has emerged organically over a period of time.

JK That's right.

KC You characterize the history of this system as having evolved through three distinct developmental stages: the pre-Ford era, roughly 1850 to 1957; the Ford era, 1957 to 1990; with the post-Ford era being the last five years. Few people would argue with the notion that the Ford Foundation, led by McNeil Lowry's vision, essentially created the system that has characterized arts grantmaking for nearly forty years. But Ford did not conceive of its own arts initiative as a permanent mechanism to fund the arts. Rather, the initiative was a tactic to create a much larger system of support for the arts—by leveraging the support of others.

JK Yes. Ford advanced a remarkably well-conceived strategy to advance the nonprofit arts over twenty years with an investment of more than \$400 million, though it never saw itself as a source of permanent subsidization for the arts. However, Ford's approach to institution building and leveraged grants helped fashion an unprecedented ecosystem of arts organizations supported by new and increased sources of private and governmental philanthropy that thrived for another two decades after the Ford Foundation's influence had peaked.

KC Ford was trying to prime the pump.

JK "Pump priming," "seed funding," and "funding leverage" were all popular concepts during the Ford era. The core notion was that a limited-time investment of funding would produce a multiplied return of earned and contributed income that would be sustainable long-term.

KC From where we now stand, we can see this didn't happen, hence the title of your paper, "Leverage Lost."

JK The mistake comes from the belief that the nonprofit arts ecosystem can grow indefinitely. Even in the absence of the recent downturn in federal and state funding, it was inevitable that the arts would eventually face a stagnation in growth or an outright decline. A tenet of systems thinking now widely acknowledged by environmentalists is that upwardly spiraling growth is unsustainable. No system can rely forever on a "free lunch."

KC As you call it, "the fatal flaw in the theory of leverage funding."

JK Yes. But I'm not a critic of the Ford Foundation or others who advanced the concept of leveraging. It is my view that the amount, quality, and diversity of artistic production in the United States has vastly improved since the late 1950s. The problem today is that the resource base—both the money and, more importantly, the labor supply—is not adequate to maintain all that was created during the past four decades. As grantmakers, we can choose to ignore this reality or to acknowledge it. I believe we need to better understand the systemic underpinnings of today's nonprofit arts ecosystem so we can make grants that are effective in an era of changed circumstances. Leisure time, education, societal values, levels of prosperity, technology, and many other key trends have changed dramatically in recent years.

KC Ford's purpose was to both increase the dollars available to the arts and also to increase the supply of artists. I was interested in the comments you make about how the labor of the artist is leveraged in the current system, and how that leverage is also being lost.

JK Without the huge supply of low-priced labor that became available in the 60s and 70s, it is doubtful that the arts would have flourished even with the heavy investments being made in the system. Historically, most arts groups began without grant funding. The liberal-arts-educated college graduates of the 60s and 70s generation felt compelled to make art regardless of the lack of financial reward. Certain visionary artists became magnets for other artists, administrators, and technicians who wanted to be part of producing art. This new supply of labor was supported by a lower cost of living, part-time jobs in non-arts occupations, shared living accommodations, and the willingness of youth to endure poverty. Grant income and low-cost labor were on similar trajectories of pyramidal growth.

Grantmakers and artists were increasing the supply of art with the assumption that public demand would eventually catch up with the supply, thereby achieving an equilibrium of supply and demand that could be sustained. Indeed, some evidence indicates that during the Ford era public demand increased. But recently, demand has begun to erode—especially in the performing arts. In addition, the environment surrounding the nonprofit arts sector has been altered by powerful societal and economic forces. Given this landscape, I think grantmakers must ask ourselves whether it is responsible to encourage further growth in supply. Indeed, we should also ask whe-

ther stabilization, that is, maintenance of organizations without further growth, is justifiable as a general strategy.

KC You make the point that, rather than trying to sustain the current system, the survival strategy for the arts now is creative adaptability and anticipating alternative futures.

JK Yes. My sense is that survival will be a matter of making complex and idiosyncratic adjustments to a complex and ever-shifting ecosystem. I am very suspicious of any simple and singular approach, such as focusing just on better boards of directors, enhanced marketing, or stronger capitalization.

What I hear many grantmakers talking about is merger and sharing. But I don't see that being successful very often because so much of making art is idiosyncratic. One artist's vision is not another artist's vision, and putting them together just isn't going to work.

The main phenomenon I see in San Francisco is the preservation of production capability by shedding fixed costs: eliminating long-term and year-round commitments to staff, rent contracts, etc. More resources, both labor and funding, can then be focused on one production at a time, rather than supporting a fifty-two week operation.

KC As I see it, John, one of your purposes in writing "Leverage Lost" is to further a dialogue about how the nonprofit art world operates, what defines the system, how we can learn from the past and present, and maybe how we can acquire some wisdom about the future.

JK You've got it.

KC In addition to the paper, you've created a tool people can use to test their learning and try to project alternative futures—a "Flight Simulator" computer program that grantmakers can "test fly" at the October conference.

JK What I've done is create two non-linear models—a fictitious theater company and a hypothetical arts environment in a metropolitan area—with six or seven variables that can be manipulated by the "pilot." People can play on the micro level or the macro level. The simulations are not meant to give insights into actual future directions of the nonprofit arts ecosystem, but I am hopeful they will provide an easy and fun way to test possible strategies and gain an appreciation for the complex behavior of organic systems.

KC So, to push for a systems outlook, what advice would you give?

JK Regardless of whether we work locally, regionally, or nationally, our first priority should be to thoroughly understand the system within which we're working—in all its complexities. Without that, there's a very good chance that our interventions will do more harm than good.

If nothing else came from this paper but a debate about how the arts ecosystem has evolved—even if my view of it was dismissed—that would be OK. We'd be further along. We need to stand back and understand the system.

KC One final question. Has your understanding of the history of the nonprofit arts world made a difference in the grantmaking at the San Francisco Foundation?

JK Yes it has. Some time ago, I shared an early version of my paper with our board, whose members have a great passion for the arts. We recognized that the San Francisco Foundation does not have the resources—maybe no one has the resources—to reverse the trends or even influence the system. Clearly, building up organizations is a questionable idea right now, and maybe even sustaining or maintaining them might do more harm than good. We might be keeping organizations from evolving or adapting naturally to the changed environment. The Foundation is now much less active in initiating small, new groups, and is shifting its support more to performing arts presenters and intermediary groups that can help artists continue to produce their work without the need to create complete organizational structures. In addition, we are increasingly interested in arts that emerge from the community and that have a much broader appeal. As a consequence, we are diverting some funds into participatory activities—parades, festivals, and community cultural events. We recognize that broad appeal for the arts, envisioned by grantmakers during the stimulating growth era of support from the Ford Foundation and the NEA, has not, in fact, materialized.

Kreidler's paper, "Leverage Lost: The Nonprofit Arts in the Post-Ford Era," will be distributed to all attendees of the 1995 GIA conference. If you cannot attend and would like a copy, contact John Kreidler at the San Francisco Foundation, 685 Market Street, Suite 910, San Francisco, California 94105, 415-495-3100.

Join Grantmakers in the Arts

Membership in Grantmakers in the Arts is open to both professional staff and trustees of organizations whose primary activity is grantmaking. Memberships are renewable annually by July 1. Although the 1995 deadline has passed, memberships and renewals are still being accepted. For information, contact Membership Committee Chair Barbara Barclay, The William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, 525 Middlefield Road, Suite 200, Menlo Park, California 94025.

News

The Center for Art and Culture

Past issues of the *GIA Newsletter* have reported on the conception and initial research for a new Center for Art and Culture. Plans for the Center took a step forward recently when its founders hired Daniel F. Ritter as executive director. Until accepting the position, Ritter was minority counsel to the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities in the U.S. Senate. The Subcommittee is the Senate's primary authorizing entity for the Department of Education, the NEA, the NEH, the Institute of Museum Services, and the Library Services and Construction Act. Ritter's responsibilities as counsel included drafting legislation related to the arts and humanities, acting as liaison to cultural advocacy groups around the country, and negotiating with staff and members of Congress on arts and humanities issues. Ritter joined the Subcommittee after practicing civil rights and entertainment law in New York City.

The new center was founded by a coalition of foundations concerned about the future of cultural policy in the U.S. including Nathan Cummings Foundation, Ford Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, Joyce Foundation, Kenan Institute for the Arts, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Peter Norton Family Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, and Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. The Center for Art and Culture will be an independent, nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization located in Washington D.C. Ritter, who assumed his new position on September 25, 1995, provided the *GIA Newsletter* a background paper on the Center. The document states: "Although the Center is dedicated to an open and non-partisan examination of the goals of cultural policy, it is premised on certain principles: 1) culture is central to the democratic experiment; 2) our nation's cultural life must be grounded in the basic principles of freedom of expression; 3) cultural variety and pluralism vastly enrich our society; and 4) the marketplace, private philanthropy, and the various levels of government must necessarily in-

teract with one another in supporting our nation's cultural life." The center's goals and activities will fall in two main areas: research and scholarship, and grass-roots education and alliance building.

"The Center will be grounded in an evolving body of scholarship that is perceived as rigorous and non-partisan," writes Ritter, "and it will seek to stimulate practical and timely scholarship from a variety of disciplines." In this work, he continues, "the Center is dedicated to creating a sense of engagement among Americans with their culture. Thus, the Center will seek significant public, corporate, and community participation in debates, symposia, and seminars all around the nation. In addition, the Center will conduct analytical studies, publish and disseminate relevant research, and maintain a library of material relating to cultural policy. It is expected that bringing together the individuals and organizations previously absent from the highly charged nationwide debates on culture will decrease the polarization of the debate and demonstrate the extent to which culture permeates all aspects of American life."

Ritter can be reached at the Center for Art and Culture, 1755 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20036.

New Research Project Announced

The National Campaign for Freedom of Expression recently announced that it is establishing a Research and Policy Development program. NCFE executive director, David Mendoza, and board members Richard Bolton, Jan Brooks, and Julian Low are developing the program, which is supported by a grant from the Albert A. List Foundation. The first phase will consist of a series of small roundtable discussions, the first of which took place in late June at the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. The program also includes identifying research needed, undertaking policy analysis and initiatives, creating new language and ideas that promote the role of artists and culture in society, and, in general, reinvigorating the current cultural debates "through a pro-

gressive lens," according to Mendoza. A subsequent phase of the project will be a "fellows" program to commission papers on topics that emerge from the roundtable discussions.

Discussions also will take place online, and NCFE will regularly post summaries and invite comments at its new site on the World Wide Web (<http://www.tmn.com/Artswire/www/ncfe/ncfe.html>). NCFE will also be working in collaboration with other policy and think tank efforts underway including the Center for Art and Culture, the National Association of Artists' Organizations' "Cultural Policy Summit," and Websters' World. For more information contact David Mendoza, National Campaign for Freedom of Expression, 1402 Third Avenue, Suite 421, Seattle, Washington 98101.

Update on the NEA

News about the National Endowment for the Arts has changed frequently over the past year. The following was summarized from information obtained from the agency in mid-September, as the GIA Newsletter went to press.

Congress appears to be moving toward a 32-40% cut in NEA funding for fiscal 1996, which will mean substantially fewer funds for arts organizations as well as significant cuts in staff. Congress also seems likely to impose limits that will preclude support for organizations' overall seasons and direct support to individual artists except for Literature Fellowships, National Heritage Fellowships, and Jazz Masters.

The NEA Office of Communications reports that "a major restructuring of the NEA is necessary" in response to the cuts. NEA personnel also stressed that current restructuring proposals are in progress and are not yet final. According to the most recent plan, NEA grants to institutions and organizations would be built around four "funding themes:" 1) creation and presentation, 2) heritage and preservation, 3) education and access, and 4) planning and stabilization. With the restructuring, the agency would no longer be divided into disciplines, and a "team approach" would be institu-

ted. "However," the Communications Office reports, "maintaining a strong discipline focus remains a priority." The agency is considering a panel process that would entail, first, a review of applications by an appropriate discipline-based panel, and, then, a review of recommended applications by a cross-discipline theme panel.

Beyond grants to organizations, the NEA would continue its partnership activities with the states, locals, regionals, federal agencies, and the private sector. The agency would also undertake "leadership initiatives" to support activities that require or deserve a special dedication of resources. One priority already identified is "the need to ensure a sound financial infrastructure for nonprofit arts in America."

Fiscal year 1996 (October 1995-September 1996) will be a transition year. A new guideline book, with categories delineated by theme, will be published by early 1996. By fiscal 1997, all support will be provided through the new structure. The NEA Office of Communications can be reached at 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington D.C. 20506, 202-682-5570.

Recommended Reading

Holly Sidford (Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund) suggests that the "latest book to read" is *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* by Robert D. Putnam (Princeton University Press, 1993). Putnam studied the evolution of democracy in Italy between 1970 and 1990, and considered the relationship between a region's tradition of civic associations and the development of a strong democratic government. His research shows that a history of citizen participation is a prerequisite for effective democracy. Sidford also recommends Putnam's article, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," published in the January 1995 issue of the *Journal of Democracy* (Volume 6, Number 1). "Bowling Alone" explores the fact that "by almost every measure, Americans' direct engagement in politics and government has fallen steadily and sharply over the last generation."

Art Matters Catalogue

GIA member Art Matters, Inc. announced the formation of a for-profit catalogue company headed by Cee Scott Brown. The purposes of the new company are to increase the financial resources of Art Matters' grant program and to stimulate public interest and appreciation of contemporary art. The catalogue's inaugural issue is now available and features works by eighty living artists. Since 1985, Art Matters has awarded nearly \$3 million in fellowships to about 3,000 individual artists. For information about the catalogue, call 1-800-979-ARTS. For questions about the foundation, contact Art Matters, Inc., 131 West 24th Street, New York, New York 10011. Art Matters will open a site on the World Wide Web in September (<http://www.artnetweb/artmatters.com>).

President's Committee for the Arts and the Humanities

The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) was created in 1982 by executive order of President Reagan to study and stimulate private sector support for cultural life in the U.S. The nonpartisan committee, currently chaired by John Brademas, president emeritus of New York University, is composed of thirty-two presidential appointees from the private sector, two Congressional designees, and eleven heads of federal agencies with cultural programs. The role of the Committee is to track trends in private support from foundations, corporations, and individuals, to investigate creative new ways to finance the arts and humanities, and to act as a broker for private support and worthy causes.

The PCAH recently sent the *GIA Newsletter* a brief summary of some of its current and future activities. In conjunction with an October 1995 meeting, the President's Committee will release two studies: a study of cultural tourism that includes recommendations to the travel and tourism industry and will be distributed to the 1,700 delegates to the White House Conference on Travel and Tourism; and a report summarizing research on the impact of arts education courses on

student performance in K-12 schools published in cooperation with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and the GE Fund.

Also in October, the Committee will announce two partnerships: one with the USDA's Food Stamp program to develop a series of nutrition education posters, and another with a consortium of public agencies interested in public art. The latter partnership, led by the General Services Administration and including the PCAH, Voice of America, General Services Administration, and Department of Health and Human Services, will rededicate a New Deal mural, "The Meaning of Social Security," painted by Ben Shahn in 1942. The ceremony will commemorate not only Shahn's work but that of all the New Deal artists and the overall legacy of public art in federal buildings.

The major activity of the PCAH in the coming year is likely to be the preparation of a *Report to the President*, an in-depth study of the financial health of the cultural sector. President Clinton, in appointing Committee members in 1994, called on the group to produce a report that would offer new ideas for improving the status and funding of arts and humanities institutions in the United States. The *Report to the President* will address such topics as the relationship between public sector funding and private philanthropy, the effects of funding cuts on arts and humanities groups, alternative sources of funding, possible recommendations for changes in the tax code to benefit the arts and humanities, and other suggestions for enhancing support at all levels for the arts and humanities. The report on cultural tourism, which includes economic impact studies by museums and other arts groups, is a beginning for the larger study.

The *Report to the President* "poses some tricky issues for us," says Malcolm Richardson, PCAH Deputy Director. "We actually have three separate problems: not only must we assess the adequacy of current levels of funding, we must also hit a moving target when we attempt to describe the state of funding next year, and, finally, we have to weigh a variety of alternatives that

have been suggested as possible new funding strategies."

The Committee welcomes comments, ideas, and white papers from grant-makers, professional societies, and others. For more information, contact Malcolm Richardson, PCAH, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 526, Washington D.C. 20506.

Creators Endowing Creators

One idea for an alternative source of funding being considered by the PCAH originated with George White, founder and director of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. In his proposal, the creative community itself would invest in the production of future creative work through an extension of the current copyright term. The basic idea is that the copyright term of works about to enter the public domain would be extended by twenty years, and a percentage of the royalty proceeds earned during the extended period would be invested in a "national cultural trust," which could also be endowed by private and other public sources.

In 1994, after the European Community extended copyright protection from "life plus fifty years" to "life plus seventy," U.S. copyright holders began to push for a similar extension in Congress. The PCAH will explore whether such an extension might be turned to a public good rather than merely providing a twenty year "windfall" for the heirs of the creators. A PCAH-supported study is considering whether the "creators endowing creators" concept is sound public policy, how much revenue would be derived by extending the copyright term in this way, and whether funds should be directed to the NEA and NEH or to a "cultural trust fund." Results of the study should be available from PCAH later this fall.

"Sustainable Folk Arts Programming"

About forty folk arts coordinators and allied cultural specialists from across the nation met at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill in July

1995 to explore major factors affecting support for folk and traditional arts. Public folklorists—along with specialists in cultural anthropology, historic preservation, arts funding, ethnomusicology, heritage tourism, and cultural geography—met to discuss the development of a sustainable base for traditional culture. Featured topics on the meeting's agenda were "The Politics of Culture," "Cultural Pluralism," "Culture and the Environment," and "Cultural Tourism." Other themes were the history of funding for public folklore, building alliances, and the potential for collaborative work between fields.

Presenters and discussion leaders included Muriel Crespi, director, Ethnography Program, National Park Service; Deirdre Evans-Pritchard, author, *Tradition on Trial*; Bess Lomax Hawes, 1993 National Medal of Arts recipient and director, NEA Folk & Traditional Arts Program, 1977-92; Charlotte Heth, assistant director, Public Programs, National Museum of the American Indian; David Lowenthal, author, *The Past Is a Foreign Country*; James L. Peacock, president, American Anthropological Association; Dan Sheehy, director, NEA Folk and Traditional Arts Program; Deborah Tuck, executive director, Ruth Mott Fund; and Elizabeth Watson, chair, National Coalition for Heritage Areas. With support from the NEA and working closely with Bess Hawes, seminar organizers came from the Folklife Section of the North Carolina Arts Council, the Curriculum in Folklore at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, and the American Folklore Society.

A working list of recommendations generated by participants is available on request. Contact Beverly Patterson, Folklife Specialist, North Carolina Arts Council, Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2807, 919-929-5180.

Vote '96

Judith Golub (American Arts Alliance/AAA) and Carol Seifert (Alliance for Justice) recently convened a meeting of twenty national organizations that are committed to registering the 65 million unregistered, eligible voters.

The group subdivided into caucuses according to specialty or area of interest. Golub heads the Arts Caucus and plans to instigate a contest among participating organizations to see which group registers the greatest number of people. "Arts organizations have a perfect opportunity to register people before and after performances, during intermission, when they enter the building, and when they or their family members participate in outreach activities," says Golub. For more information about "Vote '96" contact the American Arts Alliance, 1319 F Street N.W., Building 500, Washington D.C. 20004-1106.

Rethinking Stabilization

The Ford Foundation has commissioned Strategic Grantmaker Services to undertake a major study of "the emerging field of arts stabilization, its history and evolving strategies, and its opportunities for more effective service." Much of the research and a discussion draft of a report have been completed. During the next several months, groups will meet in several U.S. cities to discuss the draft report and add to its findings. Titled "*Rethinking Stabilization: Strengthening Arts Organizations during Times of Change*," the report is being circulated to provide a focus for the regional discussions. The report has several sections. The first section attempts to define the characteristics which, taken together, describe "stability" in an arts organization. Next are sections describing past and current stabilization programs. The authors then propose new definitions of stabilization, and present ideas for strengthening the stabilization field. Finally, the report documents the effects of stabilization programs on eight organizations, and describes more than twenty programs offered by grantmakers to promote organizational health. The draft report was written by Jane Culbert, William Keens, Laura Lewis Mandeles, and Thomas Wolf.

Reports Received

Should You Open A Store? is a practical guide prepared by the African American and Latino Art Museum Working Group. Written in workbook style with questions and exercises, the guide leads readers on a step-by-step exploration of the feasibility of using a museum store to increase revenue and promote the museum's mission. The book begins with very basic questions about organizational mission and capacity, and concludes with assistance in developing realistic financial projections. In between, the workbook discusses everything from store layout to merchandise pricing policies and presents charts to help the reader consider factors such as sales per visitor and inventory size.

The book illustrates its points with highlights from the four museum stores that prepared the guide. While participating in the Ford Foundation's African American and Latino Art Museum Program, each museum independently began exploring how its store could be strengthened. At the invitation of Ford, the four developed this guide to share what they had learned with other institutions.

Should You Open a Museum Store? should be extremely helpful to organizations contemplating such a venture as well as to grantmakers evaluating proposals for store openings and expansions. It may be purchased for \$10 from any of the participating museums: Hampton University Museum Store, Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia, 23668; Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum Store, 1852 West 19th Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60608; Mexican Museum La Tienda, Fort Mason Center Bldg. D, San Francisco, California, 94123; and the Studio Museum in Harlem Store, 144 West 125th St., New York, New York 10027. (D.E.)

• • •

Jennifer Lindsay offers an overview of cultural activities, infrastructure, and policies in seven Southeast Asian countries in a survey commissioned by the Australia Council, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Myer Foundation.

Ms. Lindsay, who worked as a cultural counsellor at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 1989 to 1992, developed the material after realizing how difficult it was to arrange international cultural exchanges without an adequate understanding of the varying cultural infrastructures of different countries.

Each profile begins with a brief historical, social, and political description of the country and includes an explanation of its government policy toward the arts as well as information about activities and traditions in visual arts, performing arts, libraries, and museums. Countries included in the book are Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Copies of *Cultural Organizations in Southeast Asia* may be ordered from Asialink Centre, 107 Barry Street, Carlton VIC 3053, Melbourne, Australia. The cost is \$20 plus \$7 for international postage. (D.E.)

• • •

Arts in Crisis was completed shortly before Jane Alexander's confirmation as head of the NEA and more than a year prior to the 1994 Republican Congressional landslide, but it is still relevant to understanding the underlying issues involved in the current debate over the NEA.

Joseph Wesley Zeigler, who has been a consultant to arts organizations in long-range planning, audience and market research, marketing and communications, funding, and programming for more than twenty-five years, provides a detailed history of the relationship between the arts and government in this country since Colonial days.

Zeigler traces government policy and the periodic controversies which have arisen surrounding the NEA in detail, delineating what he feels are patterns of "indifference, suspicion and distrust" that have played a major role in each instance. Examples such as memos from Jesse Helms in the mid-1970s concerning NEA support for Erica Jong's book *Fear of Flying*, pro-

vide a foreshadowing of the current controversy. He devotes particular attention to analyzing the 1989 controversies involving Serrano, Mapplethorpe, and the NEA Four, describing the political forces at work and evaluating the arts community's response.

Zeigler devotes the last section of his book to a discussion of four major questions that he feels underlie the debate: Is denial of government funding censorship, and is refusal to fund a project a violation of the First Amendment? Should the Endowment fund individuals? Should the Endowment primarily serve the arts, or the people? Is the NEA worth the bother? He presents both sides of the question in each instance, and then offers his own individual thinking on the issue. His answer to the last question about the NEA's ultimate worth, however, is a resounding yes, and he devotes the last chapter to an exploration of options for restructuring the Endowment.

In a final comment, Zeigler suggests: "Other government crises of the last thirty years, like Vietnam and Watergate, have led to analysis and reform. We have a right to expect that the NEA crisis, too, will allow us as a nation to look in depth at this whole enterprise, and plan a better future for it. There should be in the next few years . . . a comprehensive, careful, insightful and challenging analysis of the Endowment . . . not only on behalf of the arts, but on behalf of the American people." The observation, written almost two years ago, has a lesson for us: past controversy paves the way for present controversy, and failure to address the underlying issues will not make the problems go away.

Arts in Crisis is published by a capella books, Chicago Review Press, Incorporated, 814 North Franklin Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610. (D.E.)

• • •

An ad hoc working group of grantmakers and arts organizations has been meeting in New York City to discuss access to private funding for organizations that serve artists of color and their work. In the course of the meetings, the group decided to pull

together information it had gathered about the dynamics of the grantseeking process and the facts about actual funding patterns, since the data did not seem to exist in any easy-to-review form. *A Report on Funding to Organizations in New York City that Serve Artists of Color and their Work* is the result. The report, researched and written by Joan Hocky, describes and documents funding in New York City in recent years from individuals, foundations, corporations, and government.

Working group participants hope the report will be used to inform and expand the dialogue about access to funding sources for organizations that serve artists of color. To this end, it provides a baseline of solid information on recent giving patterns. It also presents unvarnished perceptions of the grantseeking and grantmaking process by grantmakers and by people in leadership positions with organizations that serve artists of color. While the report is in no way a definitive study of the topic, the research and observations it contains provide a snapshot of the current funding situation for these organizations and offer some thoughts for future efforts.

Funding for the study was provided by the Nathan Cummings Foundation, the Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. To obtain a copy of the report, please contact the Warhol Foundation, 65 Bleecker Street, 7th floor, New York, New York 10012, after November 1, 1995. (P.C.)

• • •

The American Association of Museums, MUSE Educational Media, the Getty Art History Information Project, and the Annenberg Foundation published *Sample CD-ROM Licensing Agreements for Museums* earlier this year. The purpose of the publication is to help museums study the new considerations regarding copyright and other intellectual property laws that arise from digital technologies. The project sponsors also have begun to survey the museum field to learn how many museums have digitized all or

part of their collections, and to ask whether museums are interested in becoming CD-ROM producers. Grantmakers who work with museums will find the report a useful introduction to the problems museums may encounter as they begin to document and disseminate images and other items from their collections in digital form. The publication is available from MUSE Educational Media, One East 53rd Street, 10th Floor, New York, New York 10022. (S.L.)

• • •

The Aspen Institute's Communications and Society Program continues its active publishing program with two new reports. *Toward an Information Bill of Rights and Responsibilities* was edited by Program Director Charles M. Firestone and Rutgers University Professor Jorge Reina Schement. (Schement spoke on telecommunications policy at the 1994 Council on Foundations meeting in San Francisco.) The report documents a four-day meeting at which invited guests discussed the principal features of ideal public policy for the information age. Arts organizations and other "content providers" in the digital age are discussed repeatedly in the text; the proposed Information Bill of Rights includes a strong statement about the development and protection of intellectual property in digital form. The report is an excellent introduction to key points of current public policy debate about new technologies.

The Future of Community and Personal Identity in the Coming Electronic Culture, written by rapporteur David Bollier, recounts the discussion at an Aspen Roundtable on new technologies held in summer, 1994. The report concludes with an essay by Charles Firestone titled, "The New Intermediaries." Firestone argues that the functions of intermediary organizations (such as political parties, community organizations, and even retailers) are changing. Instead of acting as gatekeepers, these organizations will be "two-way exchanges, facilitating the flow of communications in two (or more) directions. The successful intermediaries of the new electronic world will be those that not only filter infor-

mation, but also integrate systems or audiences, serve as agents for the user (consumer, reader or communicator), help navigate the vast worlds of information resources, analyze and contextualize information to facilitate its conversion to knowledge in the minds of the user, and authenticate the value of the information."

Both of these publications are available from The Aspen Institute's Communications and Society Program, Suite 1070, 1333 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20036. (S.L.)

• • •

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute published *Science Museums: Enlisting Communities in Science Education Partnerships*, a report on a meeting in September, 1994 of program directors for Hughes Institute's grant recipients. The Institute provided \$10.65 million to fifty-one institutions as part of its Precollege Science Education Initiative for Museums in 1992 and 1993. According to the report, the Institute considers "museums and related institutions [to] have the capacity to train teachers and assist them in instructing students to develop problem-solving skills and curiosity in settings where they can enjoy learning through exploration. Further, these institutions play significant roles in stimulating parental and communal involvement in the science education of children and youth. Among the activities of particular interest to the Institute are those involving disadvantaged and underserved minority youth and those bringing museum programs to families and youth groups in rural and urban areas with limited science resources." Among the program's goals are to determine long-term impacts, such as levels of involvement and interest in learning science among families, participating schools, and the general community.

The report begins with an introductory statement about the rationale and goals of the Institute's programs followed by a brief progress report from grantees. The main section of the report consists of transcripts of presentations by program directors and

prominent science educators: their papers range from nuts and bolts descriptions of programs to more theoretical topics. Discussions include "Matching Program Content with Local Needs," "Achieving Science Literacy Benchmarks," and "Steepening the Learning Curve."

No doubt many GIA members work with local science, youth, and children's museums as part of their cultural grantmaking activity. This report provides these grantmakers with a useful survey of science education programs nationally, and offers them the ability to compare audience reach and program cost to geographic location and program goals. For grantmakers whose terrain is more narrowly "the arts," the report may still hold interest. The Howard Hughes Medical Institute appears to have approached science education funding for community-based organizations in a methodical way, more thoroughly than many examples set in the arts education field. As a presentation of a grantmaking program the publication is exemplary. The report can be obtained from the Office of Grants and Special Programs, 4000 Jones Bridge Road, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815-6789. (S.L.)

• • •

People for the American Way released *Artistic Freedom Under Attack, Volume 3* in March, 1995. The 130-page report provides in-depth discussion of over one hundred "challenges to artistic expression" during 1994. The report found that "censorship prevailed in 78 percent of the cases—a sharp rise from the 63 percent rate in both 1992 and 1993. About one-third of art censorship incidents were based on sexuality or perceived sexual content, with viewers charging that works were sexually explicit, pornographic, or obscene. Eleven percent of 1994 art "challenges" were based on accusations that a work was sacrilegious.

The report's three key findings were these:

"Freedom of artistic expression is in growing jeopardy because of continuing political attacks and a rising censorship success rate.

"The arts have become a prime scapegoat for public anger and frustration with the perceived erosion of moral values in America.

"In a small but growing number of incidents, art that has stirred controversy is the target of vandalism."

In a related report, People for the American Way published *Tucson Talks: A Search for Common Ground*. This case study both documents and draws conclusions from a community effort organized by People For, the University of Arizona Faculty of Fine Arts, and the Creative Coalition. The event was organized to create a dialogue among differing viewpoints about Michael Cristofer's play *The Shadow Box*, and to present and debate related constitutional law. A local high school teacher's resignation was forced after she attempted to produce the play with students in 1992. The Tucson Talks project brought a nationally recognized cast to Tucson for a staged reading of the play. After the performance, Chief Justice Stanley G. Feldman of the Arizona Supreme Court moderated a panel discussion involving local citizens with opposing views. The sold-out event was widely covered in the local media, both before and afterwards.

Grantmakers or arts administrators who are considering the range of possible responses to acts of censorship or intolerance will find this short publication informative. The "Observations and Lessons Learned" section contains valuable perspectives on how best to organize a successful event.

Copies of both reports are available from People for the American Way, 2000 M Street, N.W., Suite 400, Washington D.C. 20036. (S.L.)

• • •

The *GIA Newsletter* received a copy of Artsvision's research report titled *An Arts in Education Annotated Bibliography*. The report lists and describes research studies and papers demonstrating the impact of arts education on children's behavior and academic achievement. The report's introduc-

tion acknowledges that most of the studies also are listed in "Building a Case for Arts Education: An Annotated Bibliography of Major Research, 1990" developed by John McLaughlin and published by the Kentucky Alliance for Arts Education. Although the bibliography would be somewhat more helpful if addresses and other information were provided to readers seeking a copy of a full report, it nonetheless provides a good introduction to the basic literature of the arts education field. Copies can be obtained from Artsvision, 6 Libera Court, Rhinebeck, New York 12572. (S.L.)

• • •

The Alliance for Justice recently released a new guide, *Myth v. Fact, Foundation Support of Advocacy* (June 1995). The 26-page booklet begins with a brief introduction including legal background and definitions of terms such as advocacy, lobbying, charitable, and educational. The heart of the book contains a series of myths and facts about funding advocacy that follow the grantmaking process chronologically from preliminary contacts with prospective grantees to grant agreements and grant reports.

The booklet explores such myths as: "A foundation may not mention an interest in funding advocacy in its application guidelines," "Proposal budgets that contain a line item for lobbying pose special problems for foundations," "Project grants offer a foundation greater legal protection than do general support grants," "Foundations may not make grants to individuals," and "Foundations themselves may never lobby on legislation." An appendix contains definitions of key terms, a sample grant agreement, and charts laying out the lobbying rules for private foundations, public foundations with §501(h) election, and electing and nonelecting charities.

Taking one example, *Myth v. Fact* discusses the "myth" that "Foundations may not fund voter registration activities." In fact, foundations are allowed to make grants to charities that do nonpartisan voter registration work as long as the grants are not earmarked

for that work. Grants may even be earmarked for voter registration work if made to charities that meet specific criteria described in section 4945(f) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Myth v. Fact was written by tax lawyer Thomas R. Asher, published by the Alliance for Justice, and overseen by Carol Seifert, Deputy Director of the Alliance. Reviewers of the guide include Nancy Feller of The Ford Foundation legal department; John Edie, General Counsel of the Council on Foundations; and three Washington D.C. tax attorneys whose clients are largely nonprofit organizations: Gail M. Harmon, Michael B. Trister, and Thomas A. Troyer. The project was supported by The Ford Foundation and the Nathan Cummings Foundation.

Myth v. Fact can be obtained for \$20 per copy from the Alliance for Justice, 1601 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Suite 601, Washington D.C. 20009. The Alliance also offers a series of workshops about the information in the guide for both foundation and nonprofit boards and staff. (A.F.)

• • •

A Practical Guide to the IRS Rules on Lobbying by Charities is a summary of the IRS definition of lobbying and a description of how much lobbying nonprofit organizations—501(c)(3)—are allowed to do. The guide is based on IRS regulations finalized on August 31, 1990 and is written by Gregory L. Colvin, an attorney with Silk, Adler & Colvin in San Francisco. The guide describes the section of the Internal Revenue Code—§501(h)—that allows nonprofits to elect an “expenditure test” limiting their lobbying to certain percentages of their budgets. Using this election, a nonprofit may choose specific financial limits to test the legal limits of its lobbying rather than abide by the vague test of lobbying as an “insubstantial” part of its activities. The guide also helps unravel the distinctions between direct lobbying, grass roots lobbying, and nonlobbying (or unlimited) advocacy. The guide can be obtained by contacting Colvin at Silk, Adler & Colvin, 235 Montgom-

ery Street, Suite 1120, San Francisco, California 94104. (A.F.)

• • •

A study released in late 1994 suggests that the economic health of large cultural institutions may depend on the well-being of smaller arts and cultural groups. *Individual Participation and Community Arts Groups* was a project of the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work and the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance conducted by Mark J. Stern and Susan Seifert. The study examined arts participation by 478 residents of five counties in the Philadelphia metropolitan area in 1992. It found that individuals who lived in neighborhoods with many local cultural groups were more likely to attend concerts, plays, musicals, operas, and museums than people who lived in areas with fewer arts groups. Further, the presence of arts groups in communities apparently stimulates individual participation not just in local but also in city-wide cultural events. Stern and Seifert examined a number of explanations for the link between the presence of neighborhood cultural groups and the frequency of individual attendance. They concluded that the most likely explanation is that the presence of many groups in an area changes the sense of community in a way that motivates residents to more involvement in the arts. They began to ask whether the link is an example of “social capital”—the degree of trust, cooperation, and interaction that people have with their communities. Stern and Seifert believe that local arts groups may constitute a critical, but often overlooked, resource for community revitalization. The 1994 study is available from the Social Impact of the Arts Project, School of Social Work, University of Pennsylvania, 3701 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6214.

A new study will allow them to take the inquiry further. The Social Impact of the Arts Project just received a two-year grant from the William Penn Foundation to consider the community context more specifically. Economic impact arguments have often domi-

nated discussions of arts funding and policy and tend to focus on larger institutions located in the central areas of a city. With an emphasis on community-based activity, Stern and Seifert will research the social impact of arts participation and the degree to which it helps build social capital within a community. (A.F.)

• • •

The New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) recently published *Artists' Communities and Residency Programs in the United States*. Researched and written by Mary Griffin, the report documents a study of organizations that offer residency programs to artists—“rural retreats and urban workshops”—and provides a history of their development and their sources of financial support. The report also includes fiscal profiles, descriptions of the programs offered, demographics of the artist population served, comments from artists, and descriptions of selection procedures, governance, organizational structure, staffing, community outreach, and funding. Principle concerns raised in the report include overextended staff, mixed policies on artists' stipends, and lack of adequate funding. Griffin found that these centers are often stewards of land and buildings, and make a significant contribution to open spaces and urban redevelopment. The report includes a listing of brief information about the seventy organizations that participated in the survey.

In her concluding remarks, Griffin writes: “This enterprise . . . flies in the face of a society which generally believes that efficiency lies in getting the job done in the least possible time, that business is busy-ness. The art world has to some extent bought the ethos of the larger society and points proudly to its arts education programs, its community outreach, its immense productivity. And it should be proud of these programs; they are an essential part of the work of the community. But in its efforts to justify itself to a world which still suspects artists to be dreamers, slackers, overgrown children who don't work very hard, the art world must again emphasize

the crucial importance of the creative process, must insist that dreaming is grueling work, and that most of us shy away from it."

Published with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and The Pew Charitable Trusts, *Artists' Communities and Residency Programs* is available from NYFA, 155 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10013. (A.F.)

• • •

In June 1995, the Independent Sector released a new study that details the impact that federal budget cuts would have on nonprofit organizations. The study, *"The Impact of Federal Budget Proposals upon the Activities of Charitable Organizations and the People They Serve, 1996-2002,"* states that if congressional proposals are enacted, nonprofit organizations in the U.S. would face a \$254 billion cumulative "gap" during fiscal years 1996-2002. One hundred organizations were studied, spanning thirty-one states and representing the diverse range of nonprofit activities and services including child care, counseling, education, environmental action, disability rights, arts and culture, among many others. The purpose of the study was to estimate the impact of congressional budget cuts on the ability of nonprofit organizations to serve community needs.

Organizations participating in the study reported spending \$765 million on 306 separate programs. Approximately 32 percent of the revenue supporting these programs came from federal sources. By the year 2002, the percentage of total revenue coming from the federal government is projected to decline by 22 percent, and the federal share of total program spending will decline from 32 to 25 percent. The report indicates that the impact of the proposed cuts would get progressively more severe. By the year 2002, if the organizations had to make up the lost revenue with private gifts, charitable contributions would have to increase by 124% over what is projected to be raised in the previous year (2001).

Copies of the report are available from Independent Sector Publications, 301-490-3229. The cost of a copy is \$30 plus shipping and handling (\$21 for I.S. members). (A.F.)

• • •

The Idaho Commission on the Arts has published *"Young at Art: Artists Working with Youth at Risk,"* an informative booklet documenting an art project run by the Commission during 1993 and 1994. The Commission wanted to explore the idea that artists could help first-time juvenile offenders find connections to their communities, and decided to operate a program itself as a first step. Ten artists with experience working with young people lived in Boise to teach and work with young offenders. The Commission chose artists who worked in different styles, experimented with different ways to recruit youth, and arranged for various relationships between the artists' residencies and other community organizations. The booklet briefly documents each residency through descriptions of its process, problems, and results, as well as excerpts from journals the artists were asked to keep. The Commission has put what it learned to use in a follow-up program, the YouthArt and Community Initiative, that encourages artists and communities to undertake similar programs. For copies of the report and more information about the project, contact the Idaho Commission on the Arts, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0008, 208-334-2119. (A.F.)

• • •

The Ford Foundation has developed a series of resources with the title *"Investing for Social Gain,"* about its twenty-five years of experience in providing Program Related Investments (PRIs). A PRI is an investment—typically a loan—that a foundation makes to support charitable activity. Ford's resource package is free of charge. It includes a video that briefly describes PRIs and profiles the experiences of four organizations that Ford has supported in this manner. A companion book examines these four projects and six others in detail, provides a history of PRIs, describes the process for mak-

ing a PRI, and discusses the management of risk and loss. The package also includes a selected bibliography about the field, a summary of frequently-asked questions, and a form to request additional materials such as a list of resource people. To receive "Investing for Social Gain," contact the Ford Foundation at 212-573-5043.

(S.L.)

• • •

The Arts in Education Program of National Endowment for the Arts has issued a new report titled, *"Schools, Communities, and the Arts: A Research Compendium."* The report is the result of a year of work to identify and summarize the most compelling research that supports the value of the arts in education. Prepared under the auspices of the Morrison Institute for Public Policy, the report was prepared by Nancy Welch, Senior Research Analyst, with Andrea Greene, Senior Research Analyst. The report is divided into five sections: Broad Based Studies, Targeted Studies, Compilations, Attitudes and Public Opinion, and Status Studies. Altogether, some fifty studies are described. Although the GIA newsletter did not obtain a copy of the full report, the Table of Contents indicates that this report may well be the most comprehensive to date on this subject.

Among the conclusions of this research survey are these:

- Arts education contributes significantly to general academic achievement, including achievement in science, mathematics, social studies, language arts, and other subjects, and to the development of general cognitive skills, self-expression, and fluency.
- Arts education is related to certain fundamental indicators of educational success. For example, arts experiences in early childhood help prepare children for their first years of school; arts programs are related to safer and more orderly school environments, and to keeping students interesting in and staying in school.
- Programs in arts education seem to play a significant role in the profes-

Continued on page 35, column 2

Regional Reports

Southern California

Political Savvy, Tourists, and Large Donors Combine to Keep the Arts Afloat

Southern California's megalopolis coastal zone of Los Angeles, San Diego, and Orange Counties contains three of the country's five largest counties and is home to nearly fifteen million people. Given that kind of population mass, certainly any big news is national news, and the region's ongoing travails have undoubtedly begun to bore the rest of the country. Natural disasters, sensational murders, public scandals, and fiscal crises seem as much a part of the landscape as freeway gridlock and overdevelopment. More than a few of the locals are convinced that the region's problems are divine retribution for having stayed too long in the sun.

Inevitably, as goes the region, so goes the arts community. Few are the organizations that are not reporting a decline in some revenue category or carrying a cumulative deficit. Morale seems to be low, and the recent announcements that the Lewitzky Dance Company and L.A. Festival will cease or "suspend" operations reflects the regional stasis.

Arts organizations have every right to be worried, particularly given the region's economy and the current state of public funding for the arts: the emasculation of the NEA; the precariousness of local government in counties that are either bankrupt (Orange), near-bankrupt (L.A.'s projected \$1 billion deficit), and/or reeling from radical, enforced conversion to a civilian economy (San Diego); and the consequences of federal devolution to a state arts council obedient to Governor Pete Wilson [n.b. the California Arts Council's FY96 budget was recently approved at a level \$12.6 million—including \$2 million from the NEA]. Heck, if L.A. County is closing hospitals to try and narrow the budget gap, what does that mean for the Music and Performing Arts Commission?

Would you believe more money? (Well, yes and no.)

In fact, in the midst of the regional turmoil, there is rare good news to report from each of the counties, and the good news is in some ways reflective of their own distinct personalities.

From **Los Angeles**, the good news is named Laura Zucker, who three years ago assumed the position of executive director of the Los Angeles County Music and Performing Arts Commission. Having come from the regional theater world and a brief stint directing cultural activities in adjacent Ventura County, Zucker brought an aggressive and proactive stance to what had formerly been a quiet County agency whose major program had long been the production of a twelve-hour Holiday Celebration performing arts marathon at the venerable Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. While the Holiday Celebration remains a fixture, Zucker has proven remarkably resourceful in finding hidden stores of money in the County's \$11 billion budget, and in marshalling her experience as impresario and native chutzpa into political savvy.

Among her coups was the discovery of a long forgotten trust fund for the maintenance and operation of the John Anson Ford Amphitheater—a charming, though underutilized, county-owned, 1200-seat facility located in the hills, across the Cahuenga Pass from the Hollywood Bowl. Using the fund as venture capital, Zucker initiated the Summer Nights at the Ford series, wherein the Commission co-presents the work of a broad diversity of local performing arts groups. While the series proved an immediate success, Zucker recognized that County support and ticket sales were inadequate to insure the continued subsidization of the program, and with Commission backing did what many other arts councils have long been forced to consider, but loath to undertake: established a private entity for fundraising purposes. Confirming the value of the program, the Ford Theatre

Foundation has registered some immediate successes, most notably a recent \$90,000 grant from the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation for marketing purposes.

Another Zucker-inspired success was her convincing the five-member County Board of Supervisors about "the appropriateness of using the Cable T.V. Franchise Fund to finance arts organizations." Another little-known slice of the County pot, the Franchise Fund is comprised of the annual fee that cable stations pay the County for rights to operate within its jurisdiction. Although the Commission had been tapping into the Fund for some time to underwrite the broadcasting of the Holiday Celebration, a reserve had built up and Zucker was able to gain access to it. Because of the reserve, the Commission was able to offset a \$170,000 in its general fund allocation and increase its total budget by about \$75,000 to \$1.765 million for FY96, and thereby insure the continuance of its presenting programs, its three grantmaking programs, its efforts to promote cultural tourism, and its numerous technical assistance programs.

In summarizing Music and Performing Arts Commission's relative health amidst the disarray of other County services, Zucker explains that, "the reason we've been able to move forward is that we've concentrated on getting out of the General Fund and finding appropriate designated sources of revenue. This is definitely the trend among arts councils as general fund money continues to erode . . . 'Get out of the general fund' is the lesson."

Among the most popular "designated sources of revenue" for arts councils is the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT), the so-called "bed tax" that is automatically added-on to a visitor's hotel bill. Long used to benefit the arts in many cities (San Francisco's thirty-year-old TOT is in part responsible for the vitality of that city's storied arts community), the **City of San Diego** established its own TOT in 1966, but did not begin distributing tax revenues to arts organizations until the early 80s. In 1989, a Commission for

Arts and Culture (CAC) was created to oversee TOT disbursements and, according to the Municipal Code, "strongly advocate [for] a substantial increase in funds for arts and culture."

Until 1994, the City Council was wholly responsible for determining the size and percentage of TOT disbursements to City agencies and the general fund. Such a system was rife with uncertainty as it put the agencies in direct competition with one another. Moreover, the prolonged regional recession had greatly affected tourism, thereby reducing TOT revenues, and adding immeasurably to the sense of desperation that accompanies the budgetary process.

As embattled self-interest creates a congenial breeding ground for concerted advocacy, so did San Diego's arts community band together and fight successfully for an exemption from the yearly parrying. In 1994, the City Council agreed to set aside about 10% of each year's TOT revenues for disbursement to arts and cultural organizations.

The current fiscal year represents the first full year under the agreement, and the change has already been dramatic: the CAC budget jumped to \$5.6 million, up from last year's City Council-directed \$5 million. With tourism in the region rebounding, the news is indeed bright for San Diego arts organizations. And, things are sure to get better: in an ironic twist of fate, San Diego is playing host to the 1996 Republican National Convention. All those politicians. All that media. All those special interest groups. All those hotel rooms. All that TOT money.

If L.A.'s arts community is benefiting from an entertainment tax, and San Diego's from a bed tax, then the **Orange County** arts community . . . must not be getting a thing, right? Well, not from taxes.

Were there a single salient feature characterizing Orange County's political profile, it is probably the area's fame as a bastion of get-government-off-of-our-backs Libertarianism. So pervasive is the belief, in fact, that a

recent referendum to raise the sales tax by a quarter-of-a-percent—considered by many experts to be the County's best hope of climbing out of bankruptcy—was overwhelmingly defeated at the polls. It is therefore not surprising to note that the County provides no support for the arts whatsoever. Consequently, the County's recent descent in bankruptcy did not affect the arts community. Directly, anyway.

Indirectly, of course, everyone is feeling the pinch. Arts-in-education programs, for instance, are a major part of virtually every Orange County arts organization's outreach programming. And, while the county does not subsidize the arts community's participation in such programs, it does fund the public schools which, in turn, have been providing related transportation services. As goes the county, so go the schools, and the arts groups have suddenly been left scrambling to try and provide the buses that the schools can no longer afford.

Also problematic is the state of individual fundraising in the light of the bankruptcy and on top of the prolonged regional recession. As one development director told me, "people are holding on to their money," waiting to see what further fallout, if any, may come of the bankruptcy.

However, there is a silver lining. Congressional conservatives and Libertarians have at least one thing in common: the conviction that support of the arts should be the private sector's responsibility. True to form, into the Orange County debacle rode a private hero: William J. Gillespie, heir to a Farmers Insurance Group fortune and in his own right a successful investor in real estate. In the dark days of May, Gillespie announced an astounding \$6.62 million in grants. Made explicitly in response to the bankruptcy and the NEA's demise, the awards will be divided among five of the County's best known performing arts groups and presenters: \$2.8 million to the Orange County Performing Arts Center, \$1.2 million to the Pacific Symphony Orchestra, \$1 million to Pacific Chorale, \$940,000 to South Coast Repertory Theatre, and \$680,000 to the Orange County Philharmonic Society.

Given the Senate's recent recommendation of funding the NEA at a \$110 million level for FY96, that means that the arts community only needs another eleven or so William Gillespies to make up the slack. Anybody got suggestions?

Dan Miller,
The James Irvine Foundation

Minnesota

The Minnesota Council on Foundations collects data on grantmaking activity by Minnesota foundations and corporate giving programs. In late 1994, the Council released a report on **trends in grantmaking from 1986 to 1992**. Minnesota's largest private, corporate and community grantmakers report giving 19% of their 1992 total grant dollars to arts and humanities. This compares with 13% on a national level, according to figures from the Foundation Center.

Among the many arts funders in the state, two large grantmakers have recently announced, or are in the midst of announcing, program guidelines. Brief summaries follow; more information may be obtained by contacting the foundations directly.

The Bush Foundation recently announced a new Regional Arts Development Program, through which it will spend from \$750,000 to \$1,500,000 per year to make multiple-year unrestricted operating grants to selected arts organizations in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. These grants, it is hoped, will help improve the quality, financial strength, or audience reach of participating organizations. In order to participate, organizations must describe their long-range plans, and what difference can be anticipated by the presence of Bush multi-year operating support.

The Regional Arts Development Program resulted from the Bush Board's review of its experience since 1970 in providing general operating support for several large Twin Cities arts organizations. Although originally conceived on a case-by-case basis, the Foundation's support could be viewed, in retrospect, as an experiment in the persistent application of

operating support toward general organizational development. Without claiming pure cause and effect, this persistent Bush Foundation experiment in continuing support can be seen as one aspect of a general improvement since then in the health and accomplishment of these major organizations. Through the Regional Arts Development Program, the Bush Board aims to extend this experiment more broadly, and, of necessity, in a more structured way. The Bush Board will review new applications to the program beginning in September 1995. The program will remain open to new applications for a five year period, when it will be reviewed and its next steps determined. Eligibility criteria and guidelines for the Regional Arts Development Program may be obtained from Sarah Lutman, Program Associate, at 612-227-0891, E-900 First National Bank Building, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101.

In addition to the Regional Arts Development Program, the Bush Foundation will continue to review applications from arts organizations for short-term program support, and for capital grants. The Foundation also supports individual artists in the region through the Bush Artist Fellowships Program.

The McKnight Foundation's arts funding program is approaching the end of a five-year commitment. It has annually provided \$6.0 million of support in Minnesota to over 200 arts organizations and 300 individual artists. The Foundation's direct grantmaking consists of general operating, project, and capital grants. It also has regranting relationships with eighteen organizations to provide support to community-based cultural activity and artist fellowships. Over the past year, McKnight has been evaluating the impact of its arts program and is considering what its future commitment will be. In late fall/early winter, it plans to announce the results and publish some of the material gathered during the program evaluation. Neal Cuthbert manages the arts program at the McKnight Foundation.

Changes in corporate management of the Dayton Hudson Corporation and

the staff of the **Dayton Hudson Foundation** raised questions about the company's commitment to arts grantmaking. Ben Cameron, senior program officer, confirms that the Foundation is in a planning mode at present and that arts grantmaking at the Foundation continues much the same as it did in the past.

The Dayton Hudson Foundation's arts giving is focused on programs and projects that develop and sustain professional arts activities in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Within the professional realm, the Foundation has three distinct priorities: 1) organizations of significant size, who hold important positions nationally and whose constant interaction with national and international artists enriches the local community; 2) organizations that give voice to under-represented or under-served communities; and 3) organizations that focus on creation of new works by living artists. Dayton Hudson gives strongest consideration to organizations that pay their artistic personnel, and it specifically does not support arts training, arts therapy, avocational arts programs or arts-in-education programs. In addition to local giving, the Dayton Hudson Foundation has a small national grants program that primarily supports national service organizations whose work complements the Foundation's local giving.

*Cynthia A. Gehrig,
Jerome Foundation*

New Jersey

"A New Vision for the Arts in New Jersey" reflects the underlying spirit of the **Arts Challenge Fund**. Inspired in part by New York City's Arts Forward Fund, a collaboration of private and corporate foundations in New Jersey have come together with the mission of helping arts organizations reassess their missions, structure, and constituencies in order to create new options for long term health and stability.

In 1992, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation offered a \$250,000 challenge to other funding groups in the state to "revitalize the funding community's appreciation of what the arts bring to

the state economically, culturally, and educationally," and to rethink with the arts community how they do business. During the summer of 1994, after raising contributions from a core group of additional foundations, the Arts Challenge Fund held a series of town meetings and focus groups in six different locations across the state. More than 300 artists and arts leaders came together to appraise the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the New Jersey arts community, to "dream out loud" about new ideas and strategies, and to identify the key concerns that the Fund should address. Application guidelines responded to the five major concerns that emerged: resource development, arts education, audience development, cultural facilities, and services to the arts. The guidelines also stated, "While we welcome requests to apply from individual organizations, we are also committed to strengthening existing partnerships and supporting new collaborations." Among the criteria used in the selection process were "altering the landscape of the arts in New Jersey," and "effecting systemic change in the way arts groups do business in the state."

In July, 1995, with participation from twenty-one corporate and private foundations, the Arts Challenge Fund awarded \$622,000 in grants and initiatives. Nine grants were given to individual arts organizations, six grants went to collaborations of arts organizations (involving approximately thirty organizations in all), and five were awarded to regional or statewide membership/service organizations. At least one of the collaborations came together as a direct result of the application and review process. The Arts Challenge Fund is also undertaking several initiatives, among which are an Internet/World Wide Web project with Arts Wire and a series of management training workshops on fundraising, grant writing, and board development.

For more information about the Fund, contact Eduardo Garcia, 908-828-6338.

News from Grantmakers in the Arts

Board of Directors Activities

The GIA board of directors held its summer meeting on July 10, 1995 in New York. The most important activity of the meeting was a strategic planning discussion led by facilitator Bill Keens. The discussion was prompted by the board's sense that GIA's mission and activities should be reexamined in the context of the changing climate for the arts and for arts grantmakers.

During the past five years, Grantmakers in the Arts has established itself as a membership organization, further defined its governance and operating structure, and continued to operate as a small, volunteer-led organization designed to serve the professional needs of its grantmaker-members through occasional publications, studies, and meetings. However, as the organization matures and becomes more visible and as the climate for the arts changes dramatically, it is increasingly important to decide how GIA can focus its energy and strategies most effectively.

During the planning session, the GIA board determined that priorities should be established among all the activities that might be undertaken by the organization. Overall, possible GIA activities fall into four domains:

- **internal to grantmaking**—such as general professional development, trustee education, and program or guideline development;
- **internal to the art field**—such as engaging in activities and discussions with others in the arts on such subjects as organizational stabilization, partnerships and collaborations, and public/private funding policies and models;
- **external in the community**—such as building bridges between the arts and community interests in other fields: community development, education, and other local priorities;

- **external in cultural policy**—such as playing an active role in shaping cultural policy at the federal level, defining the relationship between public and private sector funding, and understanding the role of the artist in society.

Further discussion and planning will be needed to determine the appropriate focus/balance within and among these areas, and to assess the organizational and financial implications of expanding GIA activities in any of them. It was agreed that the GIA membership should be informed and invited to participate in the discussion of these options. One way to begin to engage the members will be a membership survey that will be completed before the end of 1995. Strategic planning for GIA will also be a major topic of discussion at the October conference.

Janet Sarbaugh, Board Secretary

Arts Funding Revisited

Arts Funding Revisited: An Update on Foundation Trends in the 1990s, by Loren Renz, was released by the Foundation Center in August 1995. In 1993, the Foundation Center published *Arts Funding*, a benchmark study that charted patterns of foundation funding for the arts through the 1980s, with extensive analysis of giving in 1983, 1986, and 1989. The new study monitors recent changes in the field by analyzing over 9,500 grants awarded by foundations for arts and culture in 1992. It compares growth in arts funding with all foundation funding and, within the field of arts and culture, reviews changes in types of support, geographic and subject distribution, and major donors. The report also compares actual trends with predictions from the earlier survey. Both the original report and the update were commissioned by Grantmakers in the Arts.

Following are a few of the key findings that were highlighted in an executive summary of the report:

- *Foundations spend more in the 1990s, but growth rate slows; arts spending lags slightly behind all spending.* In 1992, U.S. independent, corporate, and community foundations gave out \$10.2 billion in grants to all fields. Overall, giving stayed well ahead of inflation, rising 14 percent in real value since 19889, but this increase did not match the much faster growth rate of the 1980s.
- *Growth of foundation arts spending contrasts with decline in government funding.* Although its growth rate slowed, foundation arts funding far outpaced government spending. Between 1989 and 1992, the National Endowment for the Arts' budget dropped by more than nine percent in real value, while state arts funding plummeted by eighteen percent after inflation.
- *Share of funds to the arts drops slightly.* From a ten-year perspective, arts giving as a share of all giving remained fairly constant. Nevertheless, comparing data from foundation samples for 1989 and 1992, the share of arts giving inched downward from 13.6 percent to 13.3 percent. Even though the arts claimed a slightly smaller share of all funding among independent and community foundations, these funder groups nevertheless gave more money to the arts, amid increases in their combined overall grants budgets. This was not the case, however, in the corporate funders' world. Overall, corporate foundation giving was flat in the arts, as in all fields.
- *More grants, but growth in number of recipients slows.* In 1992, funders in the sample gave out more than 9,5000 arts grants to 4,037 recipients. Between 1989 and 1992, the number of grants continued to rise rapidly along with the sample size, but the number of arts recipients, which had jumped by nearly half in the 1980s, increased by only a few hundred. These data suggest that either the formation of new arts groups slowed down or that funders were less likely to expand support to new grantees.
- *Share of dollars to top 50 recipients unchanged.* Not only did the recipient sample grow more slowly, but the trend toward more equitable distribution of funding across the sample, noted throughout the 1980s, failed to

Continued on page 35

Policy Communities and Policy Influence

Continued from page 13

apply in dance, how museums differ from artists' organizations, etc. Yet, clearly, at some level, dance and theater are both aspects of the performing arts, just as both art museums and artist organizations deal with the visual arts. Both museums and dance companies express concern for preservation, and similar concerns cross over into the humanities and heritage as well. Customizing programs has certain benefits. But much is also to be gained from comparisons and from discovering programs and policies that can accommodate variations.

Second, fragmentation inhibits the cultivation of common outlooks, values, and ways of thinking. In other words, fragmentation hinders both paradigm and option development. The truncated character of the arts policy community and its fragmentation create a particularly invidious problem. On the one hand, members of the arts community do share—to a substantial extent—outlooks and values and language. On the other hand, these commonalities do not seem to hold sufficient sway when it comes to cultural policy. The clash between accusations of censorship and demands for accountability demonstrates a serious difference in values. Likewise, competing ideas about what constitutes "excellence" in the arts and about the relative merits of peer versus public review indicate other fundamental fissures. Within the fragmented arts community, such differences have festered because there are few mechanisms for reconciliation or accommodation among conflicting perspectives.

Finally, fragmentation breeds instability and vulnerability. Without broadly agreed-upon and resilient paradigms, fragmented policy communities are susceptible to crises. Crises can occur for many reasons—volatile shifts in agenda focus and public perceptions, program flaws or failures, and inadequate or unstable leadership. Fragmented policy communities may also be particularly vulnerable to changes in context for two reasons. First, fragmentation implies a certain narrowness of interests that may limit the scope of environmental scans. Second, the organizational consequences of fragmentation can be costly and inefficient, leaving few resources for investment in the development of policy capital. Consequently, fragmented policy systems—like the arts—may lack adequate systems of "early warning" about environmental shifts and therefore, may find themselves in a reactive position with few contingency plans. Fragmented systems are also likely to become complacent about the status quo because they devote little attention to considering alternatives.

Ultimately, such fragmentation, incompleteness, and lack of coordination have impeded the ability of the arts community to deal with crisis and change. However, these flaws are not inherent and need not be fatal.

Putting the Pieces Together: Implications for Action

The foregoing discussion of policy in the arts attempted to survey the role, structure, and functions of a policy community in the making of public policy. At least two other policy "maps" could also be drawn: one showing the stages of policymaking and a second concerning the institutional elements and political dynamics of the policy subgovernment. Then, all three schematics could be overlaid to get a multidimensional picture of policymaking processes to identify how they might be influenced.

In our recent book, *America's Commitment to Culture*, my colleagues and I have dealt with the arts policy subgovernment at some length. Therefore, I will not revisit that subject here. As to the policymaking process, a full discussion is clearly beyond the scope of this article. However, it is worth noting that, despite the historical emphases of the arts community, policymaking is not limited to what are essentially its middle phases of budgeting and program administration. Surely, one of the lessons of the "art wars" has been that greater attention must be paid to both the beginning and the end phases of the policy process. That is, how does one set agendas, influencing which issues attract political attention. Also, who defines how issues are characterized, and how can this influence be exerted? In both instances, the arts community lost the initiative by focussing on the middle phases of the policy process. Alternatively, a later stage of the policy process is highlighted by the growing demand for evaluation in an increasingly competitive funding environment and an escalating public thrust for accountability in government. Policy evaluation serves important functions: legitimating ongoing programs, identifying ways that programs and policies can be improved, and anticipating problems and criticism before they become political issues. Failure to evaluate can allow opponents to determine the standards and to dominate the assessment process when it does occur.

The "patron state" model in the United States seems to be waning. Consequently, one of two general courses of action suggests itself. Either a new policy paradigm and a changed governmental role must be invented, or the idea of a federal role in cultural affairs may have to be abandoned. To be innovative requires developing a policy community, rebuilding the policy system, and broadening policymaking engagement.

Foundations could reassert their historic role by galvanizing new ideas and new leadership. To some extent, everyone has an interest in promoting "good" public policy—policy that is regarded as legitimate, feasible, and effective. But designing, enacting, and administering such policy is seldom a matter of discovery or revelation, although good luck and a sense of timing are helpful. Rather, "good policy" is the product of a complex process that requires three key ingredients—ideas, politics, and

leadership. This suggests two general strategies—both of which also have implications for fostering leadership.

1) Stimulate mechanisms that foster policy ideas—from the articulation of core values and a central paradigm to the development of program models and policy options. Tactically, this might involve activities such as:

- *underwriting forums and projects that promote the expansion of a policy dialogue and the development of a functioning cultural policy community.* A multi-year blue ribbon commission to explore how arts and culture can help government and society achieve national goals while preserving vital creative resources and institutions could be one such activity. Another might be supporting forums for the discussion of policy options. How could a national trust fund be created and operated? What might closer collaboration among cultural agencies look like? What are the most effective roles for the national, state, regional, and local agencies? What innovative ways can be found to improve the financial self-sufficiency and stability of arts organizations? How can new talent and creativity be encouraged? How can cost sharing arrangements among cultural institutions be fostered, and in what circumstances do they seem to work? Are there ways in which the nonprofit and for-profit segments of the cultural industries can work with one another—and what are the pros and cons of such engagement? The list of questions could be long and the range of solutions quite wide. Yet unless such questions are raised and the possible answers thoughtfully examined, the arts community will continue to find itself relying on improvisation and hoping for inspiration in the midst of crises.

- *investing in the intellectual infrastructure of cultural policy by supporting better information, communication, analysis, and evaluation.* New policy rationales must be developed because the old ones have lost persuasive power. The deficit dilemma of arts organizations is less compelling in the face of the pervasive national budget deficit. Economic impact has been oversold and fails to capture the full value of the arts. Art for art's sake has come to look like a special interest claim that ignores much of the public. Access to the arts has become more equitable, particularly in geographic terms. How can we demonstrate the impact of cultural policies and programs? What are public expectations and attitudes about the arts and about arts policies, and what shapes them? What is the size of the arts sector and what are the trends in its finances, artistic activities, and administrative practices? Are these common across the arts community or do they vary by geography, size, or art form? Unless more information, thought, and dialogue are brought to bear on these and many other questions, the arts community will remain confined to anecdote, belief, and assertion in future policy debates.

- *exploring how we can learn from comparison.* Many other policy areas look at the experiences of other countries

for policy ideas, options, and indicators. In education, policymakers debate the effectiveness of the Japanese system; in health policy, they argue about merits of the Canadian plan. We looked to the British model at the creation of the NEA; now, much might be learned (and mistakes avoided) from a better understanding of how other countries practice cultural policy. Similarly, many policy fields learn from the experience of state governments—which are presented as “laboratories of democracy.” Several states have engaged in entrepreneurial activities and are experimenting with program alternatives. Innovation and option testing could be facilitated if such comparative information and analysis were expanded and shared.

(2) Assist in efforts to enhance the political effectiveness of the arts and other cultural communities. In operation, this might involve the following:

- *supporting projects that foster a supportive public.* Understanding public attitudes and opinions is a first step toward broadening and strengthening popular support. Most other policy areas have extensive and longitudinal polling data; arts institutions themselves engage in considerable market analysis. Yet the arts policy field knows very little about relevant public opinion and even less about its dynamics.

- *fostering coalition building efforts.* This needs to be done both within the arts community and among the various cultural communities and might be addressed through targeted grant activity and/or through special application requirements. The goal would be two-fold: to get groups and associations to develop working relationships that can evolve into political coalitions, and to establish a network of possible future allies.

- *helping the arts community rebuild a political base among federal institutions and officials.* Turnover among public officials and their staff is persistent, although the magnitude of Congressional change that has occurred in the past four years is exceptional. Therefore devices and ongoing efforts must be undertaken that help bring together the arts community with current, new, and potential officials and their advisers. Other policy communities sponsor occasions where incumbents and candidates can become familiar with the concerns, conditions, and options of that community and where the community can learn of the views, attitudes, and interests of officials. Concomitantly, communication and familiarity is broadly cultivated—not just with a select few but with all relevant legislative committee members and staff. Similarly, former leaders of federal cultural agencies could be organized into a virtual alumnae association and networked more effectively with other participants in the arts community. Currently, much of this political talent and experience is wasted, and the arts community is denied the benefits of counsel and access that such individuals can contribute whether out-of or in-between official positions.

Access, interaction, and information exchange help build political capital that can be used as issues and crises arise. Furthermore, such interactions are critical regardless of what happens to the NEA. Other federal policies affect the arts; public support for them is essential to their continuation or enactment. The future and fortunes of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors are integrally intertwined; hence policy will never become irrelevant.

- *cultivating better and expanded relations between the arts community and key intermediaries such as journalists, commentators, think tanks, and political party organizations.* Few political journalists are really conversant with the issues and programs of federal cultural policy, yet they are crucial links in interpreting these to the public and to public officials. Conversely, few arts journalists, who are accustomed to writing for the leisure sections of newspapers, are practiced reporters of politics or policy processes. Other policy communities, such as science or the environment, have made special efforts to expand the exposure of the press to their own experts and information. The arts should do likewise. Similarly, many policy communities work at establishing linkages and connections to broad-based think tanks as well as to political party institutions like the DNC, RNC, or DLC. All these venues have contacts with public officials as well as private sector leaders. Getting on their agendas, networking at their meetings, and contributing to their understanding of the public interest are long term investments in advocacy effectiveness and policy awareness.

What might happen if nothing is done to address the weaknesses of the arts policy community and the deficiencies of the arts policy system? Let's pose an assumption. The current system is not in stasis, rather it has been destabilized, lost its compass, and broken its rudder. If one accepts this assumption, then doing nothing will probably only allow conditions to worsen. What might then ensue? It is likely that parts of the institutional infrastructure of the arts will crumble. Some worry that certain state arts agencies will be undermined by the fallout of national controversy. Others fear that some regional arts organizations as well as a number of mid-size arts organizations will be squeezed out of a weakened financial support system. There is a good likelihood that the arts community might further fragment and balkanize into separate disciplinary segments. Grasping to keep current operations afloat, certain preservation needs may go unmet, and so we may all lose, irretrievably, pieces of our cultural heritage. Some promising new talent will probably be reflected into other endeavors or face stunted careers. Politically, the arts—already enfeebled—may slide into sterility, impotence, and, ultimately, irrelevancy. Arts policy will become recessive; and instead the nation's cultural policies will consist solely of entertainment and communications. In this, the United States will be out of tune with other nations, many of which have renewed concern for their cultural interests and have recast their cultural policies with a clearer sense of purpose and worth.

Like the specter of the future in *The Christmas Carol* of Charles Dickens, these are merely the shadows of what might be—not what will be. Actions taken and directions set in the months ahead can play a decisive role in the eventual outcome. If there is any subliminal lesson to be drawn from the recent years of controversy, it should be neither frustration nor fatalism.

In commenting on this past summer's efforts by the U.S. House of Representatives to shut down the NEA and NEH, a respected arts advocate commented, "The sad fact is that after all these years we still have to justify support for the arts. It's discouraging to have to make the same arguments over and over." It would be even sadder if the arts community and its philanthropic supporters could not summon the vision and the will to find new arguments, to muster better evidence, to cultivate greater political resources, and to acquire the policy proficiencies needed to be more effective in the future.

September 1995

References

- Milton C. Cummings, Jr., 1991. "Government and the Arts: An Overview," in *Public Money and the Muse*, edited by Stephen Benedict (New York: W.W. Norton)
- John W. Kingdon, 1984. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, (Boston: Little Brown)
- Kevin V. Mulcahy and Margaret Jane Wyszomirski, eds., 1995. *America's Commitment to Culture: Government and the Arts* (Boulder: Westview Press)
- James A. Smith, 1991). *The Idea Brokers: Think Tanks and the Rise of the New Policy Elite* (New York: Free Press)
- Twentieth Century Fund, 1993. *Quality Time?: Report of the Task Force on Public Television*, (New York: Twentieth Century Fund)
- American Council of Learned Societies, with the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States, and the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa, 1964. *Report of the Commission on the Humanities*, (New York: ACLS)
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund, 1965. *The Performing Arts, Problems and Prospects* (New York: McGraw Hill)

Margaret Jane Wyszomirski, Ph.D., is director, Arts Management Program, Weatherhead School of Management, Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations, Case Western Reserve University. She is former director, NEA Office of Policy, Planning, Research, and Budget.

News from GIA

Continued from page 31

progress. In 1992, the top 50 recipients, representing one percent of arts grantees, secured 32 percent (\$232.9 million) of the total funds awarded by sampled foundations, a share identical to that claimed by the top 50 recipients in 1989.

- *Million dollar gifts nearly double, absorbing one in three arts dollars.* The number of million dollar plus gifts grew at a much faster pace than the number of all grants, adding to the imbalance in funding between large and small recipients. In 1992, nearly one in three arts dollars were contained in grants of \$1 million or more, compared with just one in five dollars in 1989.

- *Consistent funders raise spending for art education, fulfilling predictions from 1992.* The original survey of arts funders predicted strong growth in the arts education field, which broadly defined includes multidisciplinary and single discipline programs and professional training. Indeed, the new study finds that among consistent funders, both the number supporting arts education and the amount of total spending increased significantly.

- *Support for ethnic arts grows in 1990s.* One of the more striking changes in funding patterns between 1989 and 1992 was a jump in funding of ethnic arts programs. Looking at broad trends, the share of funding for ethnic arts more than doubled, increasing from less than four percent in 1989 to more than eight percent in 1992. Actual dollars accounted for in the sample tripled (from \$18.6 million to nearly \$60 million), while the number of grants roughly doubled.

- *Funders make more grants for program and operating support.* Consistent with trends in the 1980s, the share of support for arts programming continued to rise, while the share for capital projects continued to decline. In contrast, unrestricted support, which has fallen in the late 1980s, returned to 1986 levels. Specifically, operating support climbed from 13 percent to more than 16 percent of dollars, and from one in six and a half to one in five grants.

Copies of *Arts Funding Revisited* can be ordered from the Foundation Center, Dept. PR71, 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York, 10003-3076, 1-800-424-9836 (212-620-4230 in New York).

Reports Received

Continued from page 27

sional development of teachers, and to increased parental involvement in the schools.

- A majority of American people believe that the arts are a valuable component of K-12 education and support having quality arts education programs in our schools.

Copies of the report will be available for a fee as soon as a national distributor has been named. Interested readers could contact the Publications Office at the National Endowment for the Arts for further information. (S.L.)

• • •

The newsletter editors are grateful to Deena Epstein (George Gund Foundation) and Pamela Clapp (Warhol Foundation) for their help in reviewing and summarizing reports in this issue. Anyone interested in helping with reports in future issues is welcome to contact us. More importantly, we encourage you to send us copies of research, studies, and reports prepared or supported by your organization and to let us know about reports by others that you find stimulating.

Grantmakers in the Arts Newsletter

Autumn 1995; Volume 6, Number 2

© 1995 Grantmakers in the Arts

Editors, Anne Focke and Sarah Lutman

The newsletter is published twice a year. The submission deadline for the next issue is February 1, 1996. Send submissions to:

Anne Focke, 110 Cherry #302, Seattle, Washington 98104, 206-343-0769, afocke@artswire.org

Sarah Lutman, The Bush Foundation, E-900 First Nat'l Bank Bldg., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101, lutman@artswire.org

Individual authors retain the copyright to their work. Grantmakers in the Arts is happy to assist with inquiries about rights for reprinting. Please contact Anne Focke for information.

Grantmakers in the Arts Board of Directors

Penelope McPhee, President

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Holly Sidford, Vice President

Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund

John Orders, Treasurer

The James Irvine Foundation

Janet Sarbaugh, Secretary

Heinz Endowments

Barbara Barclay

The William & Flora Hewlett Foundation

Kathleen A. Cerveny

The Cleveland Foundation

Eduardo Díaz

The City of San Antonio Arts and Cultural Affairs

Marian A. Godfrey

The Pew Charitable Trusts

Polly Nyberg

St. Paul Companies, Inc.

Peter Pennekamp

Humboldt Area Foundation

Nick Rabkin

MacArthur Foundation

Suzanne Sato

AT&T Foundation

Klare Shaw

Boston Globe Foundation

Christine Vincent

The Ford Foundation

Tomás Ybarra-Frausto

The Rockefeller Foundation

Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA) is a national membership organization of primarily private sector grantmakers interested in the arts and arts-related activities. Its 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.

We make the road by walking.

Annual GIA Conference

Borrowed from Paulo Freire, the theme of the 1995 annual conference of Grantmakers in the Arts intends to suggest moving through uncharted territory at the end of one era and the beginning of the next. The conference offers grantmakers an opportunity to consider the "rising tide" of change in the nation and in the arts, to learn from case studies of organizations that have or are changing, to explore whether new directions will mean fundamental restructuring, and to consider art and ideas that endure through change. The conference will take place October 8-11, 1995 at the Eureka Inn in Eureka, California. If you haven't received a conference brochure and would like one or want further information about the conference, contact the Humboldt Area Foundation, P.O. Box 99, Bayside, California 95524, 707-442-2993. Information can also be obtained through the Internet; the email address is hafound@northcoast.com and the Web site URL is <http://www.northcoast.com/~hafound/gia.html>.

Conference Roundtable Topics

Following are topics that have been suggested for breakfast roundtable discussions at the upcoming GIA conference.

- Helping organizations close their doors gracefully and/or "pulling the plug"
- Interventions in organizations in crisis
- Evaluating proposals for planning
- Public and private grantmakers—prospects for partnerships
- Update on the NEA and the future of public funding
- Rethinking operating support programs
- Supporting individual artists
- Update on the Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership
- Preserve established institutions or let a thousand flowers bloom?

Grantmakers in the Arts Newsletter

c/o John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
One Biscayne Tower
2 South Biscayne Blvd., Suite 3800
Miami, FL 33131-1803