

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT



Photo by Vance Jacobs

When I began my term as Chairman in February 2003, I was confident that the National Endowment for the Arts could be restored to its rightful place as the nation's leading institution for the promotion of art and arts education.

The Arts Endowment had weathered many years of controversy, retrenchment, and reorganization that had often left it uncertain and apologetic about its mission. Generally characterized as embattled or weakened, the agency had developed a confused public identity. Despite the good work of recent chairmen, there also remained widespread concern among both cultural and civic leaders that the agency had become marginal in addressing the nation's needs in arts and arts education.

It was my conviction that the National Endowment for the Arts could best reestablish itself by focusing on its stated core mission to foster excellence in the arts—both new and established—and to make the best of the arts accessible to all Americans. We also needed to increase our efforts in improving arts education.

The Arts Endowment needed to be confident and unapologetic about that mission as we communicated the value of our programming to the nation. It was my belief that by working in a positive, inclusive, and non-divisive manner with members of Congress, the Administration, arts and arts advocacy organizations, and artists, we could build a constructive new consensus in support of the Arts Endowment.

As this annual report will demonstrate, 2003 was a time of renewal for the Arts Endowment. We continued support for all our existing programs while launching several new national initiatives that significantly expand the agency's reach and coverage, especially in smaller and rural communities. We also greatly expanded our commitment to arts education.

Budget

Our congressional appropriation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 was \$115,731,000. Of this total appropriation, \$38 million went to our important partners, state arts agencies and regional arts organizations.

In 2003, Congress once again funded the NEA initiative Challenge America, providing \$17 million to bring the arts to underserved communities throughout the country and to better serve the Challenge America goal of providing artistic excellence and extensive outreach.

An even more significant development in 2003 was the substantial increase, from \$5 billion up to \$8 billion, in the authorized limit for the Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Program, administered by the NEA for the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. This program is a federal partnership which helps make possible international exhibitions in museums across the country by minimizing the costs of insurance.

National Initiatives

Our most important national initiative is Shakespeare in American Communities, the largest tour of Shakespeare in American history. This ambitious program, which combines theatrical touring with arts education, represents an innovative joint venture between the NEA and more than 100 partners, including numerous theater companies and arts presenters—all coordinated by Arts Midwest, a regional arts organization.



Shakespeare in American Communities began with six professional theater companies touring all 50 states. In an unprecedented partnership with the Department of Defense, we added a seventh company exclusively to tour military bases across the country. With support from The Sallie Mae Fund, we also expanded our reach among American high school students. Shakespeare in American Communities is reviving a great American theatrical tradition of touring Shakespeare.

By the end of 2005, the Shakespeare in American Communities initiative will have engaged 29 theater companies to tour more than 200 cities and 1,000 high schools in all 50 states, and 18 military bases. Over the next few years, it is our hope to bring one million students to a live,

professional production of Shakespeare. For most of these students, these performances will be their first experience with professional theater.

The tour also includes artistic and technical workshops, symposia about the productions, and educational programs in local schools. The Arts Endowment has developed an educational resource package of exceptional quality that is available free to teachers. It includes a teacher's manual, recitation booklet, brochure for students, timeline poster, audio CD, educational video, and bookmarks. Using these materials and events, we are helping to integrate Shakespeare into the arts education programs of our middle and high school students. More on Shakespeare in American Communities can be found in the National Initiatives section of this report.



Opening night for the Shakespeare in American Communities initiative in New London, Connecticut in September 2003.
Photo by A. Vincent Scarano

Grants to Arts Organizations

While the Shakespeare program may have the highest profile of NEA-funded initiatives, the Endowment has continued to provide grants to arts organizations of all sizes, in all areas of the country, in all disciplines. In FY 2003, the NEA awarded more than \$99 million in funding, totaling more than 1,900 grants. These include not only the Challenge America grants, but grants to organizations in creativity, heritage and preservation, arts on radio and television, arts learning, and organizational capacity; fellowships for creative writing in poetry and translation; lifetime achievement awards in jazz and the folk arts; and partnership agreements with state arts agencies and regional arts organizations.

Leadership Initiatives

The Arts Endowment also funded leadership initiatives such as the Mayors' Institute on City Design, which helps mayors throughout the country develop design resources for their cities

through sessions with colleagues and design professionals. The agency also funded the National College Choreography Initiative, which supports professional dance artists working with colleges and universities nationwide to create new works or restage classics with and for students.

Federal Partnerships

In addition to national initiatives and grants, the NEA partnered with fellow federal agencies on a number of initiatives, from international exchanges to arts initiatives in rural communities.



Installing climate control systems in the Jackson Pollock-Lee Krasner home in East Hampton, New York to preserve this historic site was one of the Save America's Treasures projects in 2003.

Photo by Helen A. Harrison

One of the most important of these is Save America's Treasures, dedicated to the preservation of our nation's rich artistic and cultural heritage. This initiative was created through a partnership with the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities to fund grants administered by the National Park Service. This initiative supports preservation and conservation work on nationally significant intellectual and cultural collections and historic properties. These grants provide much needed financial support to save those artistic accomplishments that are a testament of America's greatness.

Technology

The NEA maintains not just a connection to the past, but also a path to the future. In FY 2003, 13 innovative projects received Resources for Change: Technology grants in amounts ranging from \$50,000 to \$165,000. These grants were awarded to nonprofit arts organizations to help them develop distinctive ways of using new technology to advance the arts and better serve the public. Many arts organizations lack the resources to realize their full technological potential to serve their patrons; these grants provided significant assistance so that the organizations can better utilize today's advancing technologies.

Arts and Accessibility

The NEA also has continued championing accessibility issues through our Office for AccessAbility's activities. In FY 2003, the office funded the final year of a three-year study, Impact of the Arts on Older Americans, to measure and evaluate the effects that professional arts programming has on the quality of life of older adults. In addition, the office partnered with the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and MetLife Foundation to publish *Design for Accessibility: A Cultural Administrator's Handbook*. This publication is designed to help arts organization administrators not only comply with Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* and the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, but to assist them in making access an integral part of their organization's planning, mission, programs, outreach, budget, and staffing.

Research

To broaden the conversation about American culture, the NEA funds research that examines various aspects of the arts, from audience participation to artist employment to economic trends of arts organizations. In FY 2003, the NEA Office of Research and Analysis produced *Raising the Barre: The Geographic, Financial, and Economic Trends of Nonprofit Dance Companies*. This report used newly available data to examine trends in the nonprofit dance field spanning the late 1980s through the late 1990s, detailing factors such as growth in the number of dance companies, geographic concentration, and financial aspects such as the importance of ticket sales and the effects of the 1990-1991 recession. The analysis also investigates the role the National Endowment for the Arts plays in leveraging funding for dance companies that serve communities across America.



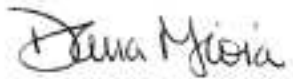
Expanded Reach

All these activities demonstrate something fundamental about the NEA. The agency is committed to reaching beyond big cities and large organizations. We now travel on the back roads of this vast country as well, bringing art to all areas, providing funding and leadership in

the arts to support work of indisputable artistic merit, engaging the American people in the best that our culture has to offer.

We believe a great nation deserves great art. That simple but ambitious statement has been our motto over the past year, and with good reason. The arts represent a central part of America's identity and legacy. In this sense, the National Endowment for the Arts represents an essential expression of the country's highest aspirations.

In these pages, you will find examples of projects the NEA has supported in every state, projects representing the vast array of lively, rich, and diverse art being created in this country. It is our goal to broaden our national coverage to include not only every state, but also every community, so that all our citizens can be enriched through the arts.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana Gioia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dana Gioia
Chairman