

A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

Investing in America's Living Cultural Heritage Since 1965



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

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“Art is a nation’s most precious heritage. For it is in our works of art that we reveal ourselves, and to others, the inner vision which guides us as a nation. And where there is no vision, the people perish.”

*From the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act,
signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 29, 1965.*



Mission Statement

The National Endowment for the Arts, an investment in America's living cultural heritage, serves the public good by nurturing human creativity, supporting community spirit, and fostering appreciation of the excellence and diversity of our nation's artistic accomplishments.

Throughout its history, the National Endowment for the Arts has articulated the importance of the visual, literary, design and performing arts in America. This small federal agency—the only one devoted exclusively to nurturing creativity and preserving cultural heritage—has brought a sense of permanence, continuity and commitment to our nation’s art scene.

On the occasion of the NEA’s 35th anniversary, it is appropriate that we celebrate our accomplishments even as we plan for the future. Since 1965, the Arts Endowment has conducted research, convened meetings of experts, and through publications and Congressional testimony, conveyed to an eager citizenry the exciting story of the arts in America. Importantly, the Endowment’s store of knowledge and expertise has supported our most visible work—the 115,000 grants to organizations and artists that have advanced the arts throughout the nation during the past and three-and-one-half decades. In the years since the NEA’s creation, the number of cultural non-profit organizations, state and local arts agencies and performing arts centers has grown dramatically.

While the National Endowment for the Arts cannot claim all of the credit for the abundance of art enjoyed by Americans today, we have helped to fuel the increasing hunger for the visual arts, music, dance, drama and good design among American citizens. I firmly believe there is no more important investment in the creative future of the American people. All of us at the NEA are proud of our role as partner and leader.

Every NEA grant is important; some are transforming. Because an Endowment grant can affect the shape of the cultural life of a community, NEA grants resonate for decades—long after the final bill is paid and the last faded poster is torn down. I understand the unique value of an NEA grant. In 1974, when I was just starting out as director of Nashville’s Country Music Foundation, an Endowment grant enabled us to commission Thomas Hart Benton to paint what was to become his last work, *The Sources of Country Music*. That painting had a lasting impact on the Country Music Hall of Fame and the community of Nashville. Americans need to know about grants like this one.

This volume celebrates the Endowment’s grantmaking legacy by telling the stories of more than 50 projects that were transforming—projects that made a lasting difference to communities, individuals and organizations. These stories are special, but not unique. Each stands for dozens of additional stories—additional investments that have been just as significant. Today, our society stands on the threshold of exciting discoveries about the importance of art to the well-being of communities, young people, families and our nation. This volume speaks to the lasting value of a modest federal investment in America’s cultural life. These stories are a source of pride for every citizen, and they point boldly toward the lasting value of future engagement between our federal arts agency and the cultural life of our nation.



Bill Ivey
Chairman
National Endowment for the Arts

CONTINENTAL HARMONY

Millennium Brings New Musical Sounds Across America

David City, Nebraska (pop. 2,500) is usually a rather quiet place. All that changed when it was chosen to become part of the Arts Endowment's Continental Harmony National Millennium Project, the first-ever, nationwide music commissioning effort.

In 58 locations across the country, organizations ranging from local choirs and jazz bands to chamber groups and symphony orchestras hosted composers of their choice for Continental Harmony residencies. Collaborating with local residents and musicians, the composers wrote and helped facilitate the performance of a new piece of music that reflects each community's distinctive heritage and culture, as well as its dreams for the future.

David City residents were shocked to discover they were chosen as a site. "At the same time we were delighted and scared to death to be selected," says local organizer Bill Magargal. "This project has been so magical for our town and has given us such a wonderful sense of pride."

Composer Deborah Fischer Teason got a feel for David City by interviewing community elders, visiting area festivals and even driving a combine. She worked with a group of residents to write the lyrics for their five-movement composition entitled *Heartland*, which evoked the area's rural traditions. They first came up with objects symbolizing each movement's theme: quilting represents creativity and tradition, the windmill signifies agriculture, the barn illustrates community, mothers' hands show the importance of family and storms convey the residents' enduring spirit. Teason then put their words to music, including parts for a brass band and button accordions, reflecting the community's Czech heritage. A local artist worked with a group of children to create murals representing each movement, which provided the backdrop for performances of *Heartland*.

The \$2.5 million Continental Harmony project was created by the American Composers Forum with help from the National Endowment for the Arts. "The support that the NEA gave made it happen," notes the forum's Project Director Patricia Shifferd. "We wouldn't have been able to raise that kind of money without the Endowment's stamp of approval."



This cross-country pairing of 58 composers and communities is unparalleled in American history, according to Shifferd, and is being archived by the Library of Congress, in a PBS documentary and on a Web site. Many communities drew on their unique local heritage for the project. The Grand Canyon was the setting for Arizona's composition featuring a combination of Native American and European musical instruments. In Mississippi, the project brought together groups of different races to create music reflecting their agricultural history. Farmington, Maine drew on its Franco-American and classical music traditions to produce a work that included folk music and fiddling.

After many months of rehearsal in David City, *Heartland* made its debut in front of an enthusiastic crowd. "I've never seen such a reaction around here," Magargal says. "The audience just jumped out of their seats to give us a standing ovation, which was surprising because people around here are generally so reserved."



Upper left: During her residency, composer Deborah Fischer Teason learns about David City's Czech heritage from area accordionists. **Upper right:** Teason spends time with farmers to help her represent the community's agrarian traditions in her composition. **Above:** Teason brainstorms with townspeople to create the lyrics for their five-movement composition. **Lower left:** School children work with local artist Ruth Nichols to create murals relating to *Heartland's* themes. **Lower right:** A brass band joins the community choir, a violinist and accordionists for many months of practice before the debut performance. All photos by Ruth Nichols.

CORNERSTONE THEATER COMPANY

Creating a More Inclusive American Theater, One Neighborhood at a Time

Growing up in South Central Los Angeles, Guillermo Aviles figured he had three options. He could work in a factory, become a drug dealer or join the military and escape. Becoming an actor never crossed his mind. Now he's getting his Master of Fine Arts degree in theater at the University of California, San Diego. He claims a Cornerstone Theater community project changed his life.

Fellow Watts resident Quentin Drew wanted to be an actor but lacked confidence. "I had sports to get out my aggression but I had no creative outlet to express my emotions," Drew recalls. "Cornerstone gives community residents the ability to empower themselves to be artists. Before, I *wanted* to be an actor, now I *am* one. They gave me the confidence and the skills I needed to succeed." Drew has become an Associate Artist with Cornerstone and established the Watts Village Theater with others from his community experience.



Cornerstone Theater Company

Guillermo Aviles (right) acted on stage for the first time in the Cornerstone Theater production *Los Faustinos*, a contemporary version of the Faust legend by Bernardo Solano. The experience motivated Aviles to become an actor; he is currently working on a Master of Fine Arts degree in theater at the University of California.

Cornerstone Theater, founded in 1986, has visited more than 30 communities around the country, working with local residents to adapt and perform classic plays examining contemporary realities. Now headquartered in Los Angeles, the company has a core group of multi-racial professionals that works with community actors of all skill levels. The company's aims are to forge neighborhood connections and to develop a more inclusive American theater. Its productions are developed in collaboration with the community and performed in local shopping malls, schools, senior centers, churches, libraries and activity centers.

Cornerstone also organizes "bridge" productions, bringing participants from past shows in different communities together to collaborate on a new work. In 1993, the National Endowment

for the Arts awarded Cornerstone a \$125,000 Challenge Grant, requiring a three-to-one ratio of matching funds, to support this initiative for three years.

“Making bridge shows an ongoing part of Cornerstone’s programming literally would not have happened without NEA support and especially the challenge to our other funders and donors to match the grant,” according to Cornerstone’s Artistic Director, Bill Rauch. “Also, the stamp of approval that comes with federal funding opens other doors to support and brings credibility for the work.”

Company productions are the culmination of individual residencies in Asian, Arab, Hispanic and African-American communities in Los Angeles and combine artistic elements of each. Guillermo Aviles got his first acting role in *Los Faustinos*, a contemporary, bilingual version of the Faust legend by Bernardo Solano, performed at his neighborhood’s San Miguel Parish Hall. Quentin Drew played the title role in *Sid Arthur*, an adaptation of Herman Hesse’s *Siddhartha* presented at a largely African-American church. Participants from both productions joined together for the *Watts Bridge Show: The Central Ave. Chalk Circle*. Based on Brecht’s *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, the show won the Theatre League Alliance’s 1996 Ovation Award for Best Production of the Year.

“The obvious jewel of interacting with other people is learning new ways to look at issues such as drugs and violence and to discover how differently other people view the causes and solutions of those problems,” observes Aviles, who worked on a production that included people who were undergoing drug rehabilitation. “Cornerstone’s work shows the power art can have to bring people together, not only to identify social problems, but to address them.”

Quentin Drew (right) performed in several Cornerstone productions including *The Central Ave. Chalk Circle*, shown here. This Endowment-supported “bridge” show brought together participants from previous productions in different Watts neighborhoods.

“Cornerstone gives community residents the ability to empower themselves to be artists. Before, I *wanted* to be an actor, now I *am* one. They gave me the confidence and the skills I needed to succeed.”

Quentin Drew
Cornerstone Theater participant



Cornerstone Theater Company

HMONG ART: TRADITION AND CHANGE

Groundbreaking Exhibition Recognizes Enduring Culture

Tragedy has marked the recent history of the Hmong people, many of whom immigrated to the United States following the Vietnam War. An NEA-sponsored folk art exhibition helped educate Americans about the rich cultural traditions the new arrivals brought with them.

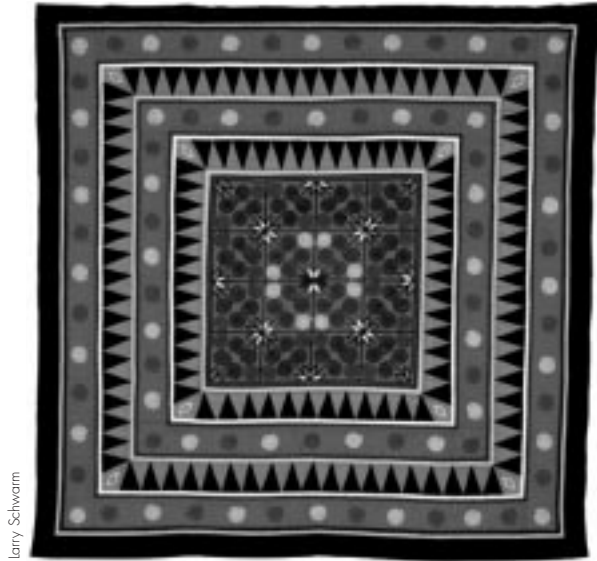


P. Richard Eells

These new-style Hmong costumes, reflecting design traditions from several regions of Laos, were included in the NEA-sponsored exhibition titled *Hmong Art: Tradition and Change*.

Subsistence farmers from the remote mountains of Laos, many Hmong had fought as allies of the U.S. during the Vietnam War. After the 1975 ceasefire and communist takeover of Laos, numerous Hmong were killed or persecuted. Some fled to refugee camps in Thailand. From there, thousands migrated to the U.S., Australia and France. By 1985, over 60,000 Hmong had settled in America, bringing with them the rich visual and performing arts heritage of their homeland. The women continued to produce textiles and costumes with intricate embroidery, appliques and geometric patterns. Some of the men still crafted elaborate traditional jewelry or musical instruments.

Curators at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, Wisconsin were intrigued by the new arrivals and their folk art. They decided to document this important transitional moment in the Hmong people's cultural history. With Endowment support, they mounted the first comprehensive exhibition of traditional Hmong art ever to be assembled in America. *Hmong Art: Tradition and Change* showcased hundreds of objects including costumes, textiles, jewelry, weaponry, basketry and musical instruments. Launched with a festival of Hmong visual, performing and culinary arts, it also included



Larry Schwarm

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center's show featured a variety of textiles, including this appliquéed flower cloth.

center." A national tour took the collection to Green Bay, Chicago and Oakland, California. The show's catalogue, documenting Hmong traditions past and present, is still sold in grocery stores and craft shops across the country.

The exhibition particularly resonated with Sheboygan's largely German population, who began to appreciate the immigrant community's marketable job skills. "The employers looked at the Hmong needlework and saw that the artists have patience and take their craft very seriously," recalls Vue Yang, a leader in the Hmong community. "This exhibition really helped our unemployment rate."

The project also had a lasting impact on how Sheboygan's minority groups interact with the general population. "It really helped make the community aware of the different ethnic groups who are all living here," Yang says. "It brought us together to begin sharing and promoting each other's cultures, allowing us to become part of the city rather than living separately in isolation."

a national conference of textile artists, a film festival, lectures, performances and an artist's residency.

"That was by far the most extensive and complex project we'd ever undertaken," says Ruth Kohler, Director of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center. "The NEA support was extremely important and gave us the kind of confidence we needed to plow ahead and do what we thought was right. This exhibition changed the face of the center."

Hmong Art: Tradition and Change was the best-attended show ever presented by the Kohler. "It was something the Hmong could easily point to to say, 'This is who we are and what we do.' It brought national attention to the Hmong people and its art forms for the first time," Kohler explains. "And it forged an ongoing connection between the Hmong community in Sheboygan and our arts

ARTSREACH

Fostering Cultural Development

Aldijana Radonicic lives in Des Moines, Iowa, thousands of miles from her native Bosnia. She left her war torn country with nothing but memories and her talent as a professional dancer. Through grants from the NEA's ArtsREACH program, the Des Moines Playhouse has been able to offer her and other immigrants a way to express and share the cultures they left behind. Culture Café, a monthly series showcasing artists, gives resident Bosnians, Latinos, Southeast Asians and Sudanese the opportunity to share their traditions, creating bridges to the larger community.



Des Moines Playhouse

The Bosnian Children's Dance Troupe performs as part of the NEA-sponsored Culture Café at the Des Moines Playhouse.

"I never thought I'd have to move from my country. Coming to Iowa, it is my personal dedication to let people learn about my lifestyle, heritage and art," says Radonic. "The Culture Café is a wonderful opportunity to teach people about my culture, to let them understand who I am. The project helps me to cope while letting me give something back through singing, dancing and music."

The Endowment's ArtsREACH program, begun in 1998, funds cultural planning and related implementation projects, and stimulates arts activities in underserved states. Nearly \$2 million has been awarded in hundreds of grants to support partnerships between cultural, business, social, government, religious and civic organizations to integrate the arts more fully into all aspects of community life. As a result of the program, first-time applications to NEA programs from these previously underrepresented states increased by 50 percent, and direct grants to organizations in those states rose dramatically. For example, Mississippi saw a 1,500 percent increase, West Virginia a 600 percent hike and Arkansas awards rose by 400 percent.

The Des Moines Playhouse received its first ArtsREACH grant in 1998 to conduct a cultural survey of the city's new immigrant populations. In partnership with churches and social service groups that had already gained the trust of the new arrivals, a variety of artists was discovered. "It was like a treasure hunt," says Anita Walker, Development Director for the Playhouse. "We were looking for the hidden gems." The next step was to welcome those artists and their communities into the theater and to integrate them into its programming.

One of the big issues Des Moines faces is a decreasing population and a shrinking workforce. "We have to find people to come here and stay," Walker explains.

"It's not just a matter of wanting them to come here and work. We hope they are able to preserve their culture and find mutual respect with people who live here already."

Thanks to a second ArtsREACH grant in 1999, the Culture Café was created to showcase the talent unearthed in the survey. By presenting performances such as Radoncic's Bosnian dancers, the program drew new audiences to the theater, breaking down cultural barriers and enhancing the lives of immigrant populations.

Not only has the Culture Café helped make Des Moines' new residents feel welcome, it's also enabling talented artists to earn money through their crafts, Walker says. "Many of our artists have received jobs performing through their initial exposure at the Culture Café. In some cases, subsistence-level minimum wage jobs are being replaced or enhanced with artistic careers." The theater has become the unofficial talent agency for the city's newcomers. Media coverage of the Culture Café has resulted in requests from schools, classes and churches interested in hosting performances and workshops by the featured artists. "The Culture Café is a resource not only for the theater but for the entire community. People are fascinated to learn about these cultures. They really have something the community values," Walker continues. "This project has gone beyond what we imagined."



Des Moines Playhouse

The Des Moines Playhouse used an ArtsREACH grant to showcase local talent such as Las Guitarras de Mexico and to draw new audiences to its theater.

APPALSHOP, INC.

Celebrating and Preserving Appalachian Culture

Kentucky coal miner and traditional banjo player Morgan Sexton frequently entertained his neighbors on the back porch with melodies using old rural tunings and techniques. In 1988, at age 77, he was invited to give his first public performance at the annual Seedtime on the Cumberland festival of mountain arts. A subsequent appearance on public television catapulted him to national fame—thanks to Appalshop, Inc. of Whitesburg, Kentucky and the Arts Endowment.

Appalshop is a multidisciplinary arts, education and cultural center located in the heart of the Appalachian coalfields. It documents, produces and presents work that celebrates the culture and explores the concerns of people living in the region. Begun in 1969 as an experiment in community-based filmmaking, Appalshop initially trained area young people in media production skills. Since then, it has become a significant local employer, an important rural arts center, and a major producer of award-winning television documentaries, nationally distributed radio programs, original plays, state of the art audio recordings and community cultural presentations.

Appalshop preserves and encourages the development of Appalachian culture in a way the local people themselves define. It produces works that challenge conventional stereotypes and are characterized by ordinary persons—coal miners, fast food workers, community activists, teachers, traditional artists and others—telling their stories on subjects of universal concern: work, family and community. Its audiences are working class, racially and ethnically diverse, and rural—the inverse of many arts audiences.

The NEA has funded Appalshop for 25 of its 30 years, during which the organization has grown exponentially. “Appalshop has remained committed to the notion that public funds should serve a public purpose,” explains Greg Howard, Chairman of Appalshop’s board. “Our approach to this has been not only to develop non-traditional audiences for the arts, but to engage those audiences in a critical conversation about that status of being excluded from the arts, and to draw upon their stories and experiences in creating and presenting art.”

Appalshop’s major program areas now include the Media Arts Center, the largest single producer and distributor of film and video works about Appalachia and one of the biggest producer-distributors of works about rural America; Headwaters Television, a video series seen on more than 100 public television



Bill Blanton

Appalshop filmmaker Scott Faulkner shooting *Sunny Side of Life*, an NEA-supported documentary about old-time country music and the Carter Family of Poor Valley, Virginia.

stations nationwide; the Appalachian Media Institute, a leadership development, media literacy and production program for young people; the C. B. Caudill Store and History Center, which identifies, documents and disseminates the mountain region's cultural traditions; the Community Media Initiative, which works with grassroots organizations on media strategies to promote positive economic and environmental change in Appalachia; WMMT-FM, a public broadcasting radio station heard in five states and internationally via the Internet; Roadside Theater, a professional ensemble that has developed a body of Appalachian drama and tours nationally; and the American Festival Project, a national artist-community alliance that explores the role of the arts in civic life.

According to Appalshop, the NEA provided the critical support that made its growth possible. "We would not have been able to build an institution like this in a small rural community without the stamp of approval of an outside source, a source that stood for excellence," according to Dee Davis, Executive Producer of Appalshop Films. "NEA funding helped Appalshop make the case that what was local was significant artistically. When we started getting funds from the NEA, people recognized we did work of quality and importance."

ARTRAIN USA

Museum on Rails Rolls Into Rural Communities

It's a museum on wheels, chugging through America bringing art to isolated pockets of the country. Since 1971, it's visited more than 600 communities, bringing a wide range of exhibitions to more than 2.6 million people. Artrain USA doesn't own a permanent collection but borrows artworks from museums and other institutions, so that it can change shows every two or three years.

Founded by the Michigan Council for the Arts, its original, rather modest mission was to bring the arts to isolated areas of its own state for a two-year period. The Arts Council recruited Helen Milliken, the Lieutenant Governor's wife, to help raise the \$850,000 necessary to make Artrain a reality.



Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University

Helen Milliken, then First Lady of Michigan, engineered Artrain's creation in 1971, with support from the Arts Endowment.

"At the very start we knew we needed seed money to get it off the ground," Milliken says. So she paid a visit to Nancy Hanks, who was then Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. Hanks was immediately fascinated by the project and her advocacy helped get Artrain moving.

"It was tremendously important to have the backing of the NEA when we went to businesses and major industries asking for funding," Milliken explains. "It was the key, we couldn't have raised that kind of money without that initial boost." Milliken soon became Michigan's First Lady and used her position to arrange Artrain's first national tour to eight of the Rocky Mountain states. The Arts Endowment provided a grant to cover half the trip's costs with the host states picking up the other half.

Wherever it stops, Artrain acts as a community catalyst, encouraging the formation of local and regional arts councils, bolstering art education programs and spurring downtown revitalization and railroad station renovations.

In Ypsilanti, Michigan an entire neighborhood, known as Depot Town, traces its rebirth to an Artrain festival. Edenton, North Carolina (population 5,300) bused in rural school children from nine counties for a rare glimpse of museum-quality works when Artrain arrived. All in all, 3,000 people visited the traveling museum during its week-long stay. The community is still reaping the benefits. "In addition to the

Kelly Culpepper



Artrain paid a visit to Edenton, NC to celebrate the Chowan Arts Council's 20th anniversary in April 1996.

cultural impact, Artrain supplied the impetus and renovation of the mill village in Edenton's historic district," says Ann Perry, former Executive Director of Edenton's Chowan Arts Council. The unoccupied homes of former mill workers located near the railroad were auctioned off as a part of the Artrain event.

"It's had an immediate and pervasive impact everywhere it's gone, acting as a catalyst for various arts activities," says Milliken. "Who knows what the impact has been on individual lives? Who knows what the individuals who visited Artrain have gone on to do based on that experience?"



Plains Art Museum

Truck Delivers Art to Rural Areas

They can't come to it, so it goes to them. Fargo's Plains Art Museum converted a 48-foot semi-truck into a mobile, climate-controlled art museum so that it could better serve its region's isolated, rural population. The Rolling Plains Art Gallery takes works from the museum's permanent collection to communities throughout North Dakota and neighboring Minnesota. With Endowment support, an art educator travels with the gallery to facilitate interpretive tours, community open houses and educational workshops.

Artrain USA



More than 3,000 people visited Artrain during its stay in Edenton, NC including rural school children bused in from nine counties.

Claymobile Brings Creative Outlet to Underserved

Clay isn't just for kids. The Claymobile makes basic ceramic art education accessible to underserved, inner-city and low-income people of all ages in Philadelphia. Operated by The Clay Studio with Endowment support, the traveling ceramics class in a van goes to a variety of locations including community and cultural centers, after-school programs, homeless shelters, elder-care facilities, summer camps and schools. The classes are not conducted in the van, but in spaces provided by the hosts. The Claymobile contains all the equipment and materials necessary for a class and is also outfitted to transport the finished pieces back to The Clay Studio for firing.



The Clay Studio

ARTS AND ARTIFACTS INDEMNITY PROGRAM

Bringing the World's Treasures to the American People

Priceless canvases painted by Picasso, fragile terra cotta warriors from ancient China, a gilded baroque silver tea service used by nobility in one of Russia's most opulent palaces. These and other irreplaceable objects have been carefully packed in crates and shipped around the globe so that the American people could enjoy them and marvel at the cultures that created such astonishing works.

Given the tremendous value of these objects, their owners require insurance prior to shipping. That's where the government steps in. The Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Program was created by Congress in 1975 for the purpose of minimizing the costs of insuring international exhibitions. The program, administered by the National Endowment for the Arts on behalf of the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities, has indemnified over 630 exhibitions, saving the organizers \$134 million in insurance premiums. The program has a substantial impact on the country's museums, large and small.

"We would not have been able to mount the number of foreign shows we do without the indemnity program. It would really limit our options because the insurance costs would just be prohibitive," according to Earl A. Powell III, Director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. "Because of this program, members of the public get to experience tremendous works of art that they wouldn't normally be able to see unless they could travel to the countries of origin. That's out of reach for most Americans."

Many of the Gallery's shows provide the only public access to rare items. In the case of its exhibition titled *Sculpture of Angkor and Ancient Cambodia: Millennium of Glory*, virtually all of the objects came from sites that were inaccessible for many years due to unrest and war. *Olmec Art of Ancient Mexico* largely contained works from remote provincial sites in Mexico that receive few visitors. *Edo: Art in Japan 1615-1868* gave Americans an unusual chance to view many works from private collections that most Japanese have never even seen.

Besides making rare works of art more accessible, the program has also encouraged museums to take better care of their precious possessions. "Because of its strict guidelines," says Powell, "the packing and shipping standards have been upgraded and now even serve as a model to the European institutions."



Albertina

Raphael's *Two Women with Children* was one of the indemnified works shown as a part of the exhibition, *Italian Drawings, 1350-1800: Master Works from the Albertina*. The drawings, organized and circulated by Art Services International, journeyed from Vienna to Los Angeles and Fort Worth in 1992-93.



Corporation of London, U.K.



National Gallery of Art

Crowds line up outside the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. to see the popular indemnified exhibition of paintings by Johannes Vermeer in 1996.

“Because of this program, members of the public get to experience tremendous works of art that they wouldn’t normally be able to see unless they could travel to the countries of origin. That’s out of reach for most Americans.”

Earl A. Powell III
 Director of the National Gallery of Art

Left: Frans Hals' *The Merry Lute Player*, was included in the indemnified exhibition *Dutch and Flemish Paintings: The Harold Samuel Collection*. The exhibition, organized and circulated during 1992-93 by Art Services International, traveled from London to Richmond, Pittsburgh, Boston, Seattle and Jackson, Mississippi.

Examples of Indemnified Exhibitions:

Treasures of Tutankhamun
 Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York)

Cézanne
 Philadelphia Museum of Art

Splendor of Dresden: Five Centuries of Art Collecting
 Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

Pablo Picasso
 Museum of Modern Art (New York)

Rings: Five Passions in World Art
 High Museum of Art (Atlanta, Georgia)

El Greco of Toledo
 Toledo Museum of Art (Ohio)

The Treasure Houses of Britain
 National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C.)

A Day in the Country: Impressionism and the French Landscape
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Siroganoff: The Palace and Collections of a Russian Noble Family
 Portland Art Museum (Oregon)

Renoir
 Museum of Fine Arts (Boston)

The Dead Sea Scrolls
 Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago, Illinois)



TOURING DANCE

Spreading the Wealth

Spreading America's dance wealth and engaging audiences from Bangor to Baton Rouge and from Seattle to Sarasota, is a hallmark of the NEA's support for dance touring. The first grant ever awarded by the agency went to American Ballet Theatre to support its 1966 national tour. Since then, the NEA has awarded over \$50 million to bring dance companies from large and small cities to communities all over the country. Endowment programs provide funding, help forge partnerships, enhance organizations' capacities to tour and present dance, expand audiences for dance, and encourage innovative programming.

Through the NEA's Dance Touring Program, the West Virginia Fine Arts Camp in Morgantown, West Virginia was able to bring Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre for a three-week residency. In 1982, NEA-supported tours took American Ballet Theatre to Boston, San Francisco, Minneapolis, Miami, Atlanta and Washington, D.C.

The NEA's Dance on Tour program coordinated funding at the national, regional and state levels. The monies it made available enabled presenters to engage a higher level of dance company for longer and more comprehensive tours. For example, the Grand Opera House in Oshkosh, Wisconsin was a partner in Dance on Tour projects that featured artists such as Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company and the Paul Taylor Dance Company. "Dance on Tour had a huge influence," recalls Joi Brown, Executive Director of the opera house. "It provided immediate access to the best artists in the world for our audience. It was an incredible experience."

From 1996 to 2000, the NEA provided \$2.5 million to the National Dance Project, a program developed by the New England Foundation for the Arts to support the production of new work by contemporary dance companies and national tours featuring that work. During its first three years, the project supported 53 tours through 41 states reaching an estimated audience of 820,000.

Touring is also essential for the livelihood of many dance companies who look to those weeks on the road for greater visibility, expanded audiences, opportunities to show new work and extended workweeks for dancers. Ballet Hispanico is a New York-based company that blends ballet, modern and ethnic forms to portray the contemporary Hispanic world. Executive Director Verdery Roosevelt says, "Touring provides not just employment but a welcome opportunity to perform for the broadest possible audience. The NEA has played a critical role in supporting Ballet Hispanico's touring, in particular the company's residency activities."

Opposite: Paul Taylor Dance Company in *Esplanade*, a signature Taylor piece set to music by J.S. Bach, that has been performed on many Endowment-supported tours. *Photo by Lois Greenfield.*

CHAMBER MUSIC RURAL RESIDENCIES

Inspiring Communities With Live Music

String quartets were a rarity in the small town of Jesup, Iowa. In fact, many people had grown up in Jesup without ever hearing the sound of a cello or viola being played live. An NEA program changed all that.

Because residents of Jesup and many other rural communities seldom have the opportunity to experience live music concerts or to learn from professional musicians, the Arts Endowment designed the Chamber Music Rural Residencies program. In addition to benefiting the communities, the residencies provide young, emerging musicians the opportunity to hone their performance and teaching skills. Begun in 1992, the program matches musicians with rural host sites, where they provide school instruction, workshops, private lessons and community concerts.

“The NEA’s support of the Rural Residencies Program has offered communities the opportunity to learn, perform and appreciate music available only when artists are in residence for extended periods of time,” notes Nancy Christensen, Education Director for Chamber Music America, the organization that began managing the project in the mid-1990s. In the first eight years of the program, 39 ensembles participated in 19 host communities in 13 states.

Members of the Ying Quartet, which had won several major competitions, were finishing their formal studies at the Eastman School of Music in 1992. They were looking for an opportunity to gain performance experience, add to their repertoire and share their understanding of music with uninitiated listeners.

In Jesup, Iowa, Superintendent of Schools Mike Krum, along with a local arts council, the Cedar Arts Forum, leapt at the opportunity to engage the quartet in a residency. “The program was a fresh, new idea and we purposely selected a string ensemble because it wasn’t familiar to our community. Many in Jesup had never heard live string players before,” Krum explains. “We struck gold with the Yings.”

The Ying Quartet consists of siblings Timothy and Janet on violin, David on cello and Phillip on viola. “The two years we spent in Jesup as part of the Endowment’s Rural Residency Initiative is without question one of the most significant experiences in our musical lives,” says Phillip.



Cedar Arts Forum

The Ying Quartet, (left to right) consisting of Timothy, Phillip, David and Janet Ying, spent two years teaching and performing in Jesup, Iowa as part of the Chamber Music Rural Residencies program, created by the NEA.



Cedar Arts Forum

The ensemble performed in Jesup area schools and colleges, church services, homes, local businesses, civic clubs and senior homes and taught lessons and workshops to children and adults. They also grew to feel like members of the community.

The Ying Quartet has earned an outstanding national and international reputation over the last decade. The ensemble is now on the faculty at the Eastman School of Music and tours internationally. According to Phillip, “The Rural Residency was a launching pad for our subsequent career.”

ELDERS SHARE THE ARTS

Pearls of Wisdom Make History Come Alive

Pearls of wisdom are being passed down to the next generation of Americans through an innovative program combining oral history and the creative arts. Elder storytellers, known as Pearls of Wisdom, are sharing tales and songs from their own lives that entertain and provide a living history lesson for young audiences.

Each “cultured pearl” brings her knowledge and wisdom to communities that have little access to the arts, performing in neighborhood settings such as schools, libraries and festivals. Created in 1987, the Pearls have given hundreds of presentations in the New York metropolitan area and have also appeared nationally and internationally. Their narratives are as varied as their lives and deal with topics such as immigration, World War II, family relationships, holiday traditions and ethnic issues.

As a Pearl of Wisdom, Carrie Raiford draws on her experiences growing up black and poor in South Carolina in the 1920s. “It’s important these young people realize how much things have changed,” Raiford says. “We try to get them to appreciate their lives and how good they have it.” She recalls that a group of high school students once told her they didn’t believe in voting because they didn’t think it would change anything. “I had to make them understand how important it is and to explain how we had to fight for the right to vote.” After her speech, over 300 students registered to vote at a station set up in the school.

Pearls of Wisdom is just one of the programs developed by Elders Share the Arts, a community-based organization that builds partnerships between the generations, working with the old and young to transform their life stories into dramatic, literate, passionate presentations. ESTA Executive Director Susan Perlstein credits the NEA as being instrumental in getting the storytelling program off the ground and playing a key role in its expansion. “Our elders have such a wealth of vitality and inspiration, but this incredible natural resource so often goes untapped,” says Perlstein. “We honor our Pearls of Wisdom as national treasures and, with the Endowment’s help, give them the space and place to present their unique stories.”



Deborah Kahn

Roberta Jones (left) and Myrtle Covalho (top) share their life stories with youngsters as a part of the NEA-supported program called Pearls of Wisdom. Created in 1987 by New York-based Elders Share the Arts, the Pearls have given hundreds of presentations in neighborhood settings such as schools, libraries and festivals.

THE MARK TAPER FORUM

Groundbreaking Program Makes the Arts More Accessible

Today, flight attendants routinely provide information to passengers using sign language. Many movie theaters offer assisted hearing devices. Most television shows are available with closed captioning. But it hasn't always been that way.

Gordon Davidson, Artistic Director for The Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, credits an NEA-funded initiative developed in the late 1970s with providing the impetus for this dramatic change. This model project was designed to make his theater more accessible to deaf people by providing performances with sign language interpretation, publishing detailed summaries of the plays, hiring a deaf staff person to conduct community outreach and installing a TTY (teletypewriter) machine to enable deaf patrons to make ticket reservations. The Taper gained 350 new deaf subscribers in the program's first year alone. It also led to the creation of the theater's OtherVoices lab, the only professional development program for theater artists with disabilities. The overall impact on the field has been enormous.

"The ramifications of this initiative are profound," states Davidson. "What this did was bring the issue of access right into the life of the theater. It opened everyone's eyes, from the crew to the administrators, and forced them to deal with it. It created a whole sensitivity to the issue. Things will never be the same."

Other model accessibility projects encouraged by Endowment funding include the development of tactile tours of art exhibits and the creation of design courses that teach how to plan and adapt cultural facilities for people with disabilities.

The Taper's consciousness-raising process made the artistic staff more receptive to a new play by Mark Medoff entitled *Children of a Lesser God*. The play deals with the romantic relationship between a deaf woman and a hearing man, told in both signed and spoken dialogue. The show was a huge success. "*Children of a Lesser God* worked on so many levels," Davidson recalls. "It told the story in very human terms of what it is to be deaf and how perceptions of deafness may impact on people's lives."



Mark Taper Forum

“What this did was bring the issue of access right into the life of the theater. It opened everyone’s eyes, from the crew to the administrators, and forced them to deal with it. It created a whole sensitivity to the issue.”

Gordon Davidson

Artistic Director for The Mark Taper Forum

The production transferred to Broadway, where it had a two-year run. The Taper insisted the commercial producers install a TTY machine and teach sign language to box office staff. The play won three Tonys, including a Best Actress award for Phyllis Frelich, the first time a deaf actor received this kind of recognition. *Children of a Lesser God* was also made into a movie, which earned Marlee Matlin an Oscar in 1987 for her film debut.

It was the democratic idea of empowerment that first appealed to Davidson. That the National Endowment for the Arts provided leadership on the issue was crucial, he says. “You can’t overestimate the impact of the federal government taking on something like this; it has a tremendous ripple effect on the local level.”

The Mark Taper Forum produced Mark Medoff’s *Children of a Lesser God* as a part of its accessibility initiative, partially funded by the NEA. Phyllis Frelich (left) won a Tony award for her performance as a deaf woman in love with a hearing man, played by John Rubinstein (right).

MARIACHI

Festivals Create New Audience for Old Art Form

Fernando Mendoza learned to play mariachi guitar in the Wenatchee, Washington schools, acquainting himself with the music of his native Mexico. In 1995, at the age of 16, his school’s mariachi ensemble traveled to New Mexico to participate in Albuquerque’s Mariachi Spectacular festival. It was to become an important musical inspiration to him. At the festival, he was able to study with and listen to the top mariachi players in the world—the Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán of Mexico and the Mariachi Sol México of Los Angeles. “I couldn’t believe I was with these master musicians I had only seen on television. It was really amazing,” says Mendoza. Now age 20, he plays professionally in one of the best mariachi bands in Los Angeles, Trompetas de México.

Since 1979, there has been a veritable explosion of mariachi festivals, performances, conferences, and training across the United States. The NEA was instrumental in the genre’s evolution and popularity, providing leadership and funding for seminal projects.

The mariachi musical tradition originated among ranching and farming people of west Mexico during the 1800s. The latter half of the 20th century saw massive immigration from Mexico into the United States. With the influx came mariachi music as an important expression of cultural identity. Visceral, folksy, fast, syncopated rhythms of the dance music, the image of tightly-cut, silver-adorned suits and sombreros, and songs that speak of love are the hallmarks of the mariachi ensemble. Trumpets were added to traditional stringed instruments, including bass, rhythm guitar, six-string guitar and violins, to create the art form’s modern instrumentation.



Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán, the world’s most renowned mariachi ensemble, performs on San Antonio’s Riverwalk during the NEA-supported International Mariachi Conference in 1980.

Daniel Sheehy



Fernando Mendoza (second from left) was inspired to learn the music of his native Mexico during a school trip to a mariachi festival. Shown here playing the *vihuela*, Mendoza appears onstage at the Fresno Convention Center during the Viva el Mariachi! Festival, produced by Radio Bilingüe.

In the late 1960s, instruction in mariachi music began to take place in U.S. public high schools, middle schools and institutions of higher education. A pioneer in this effort was veteran music educator Belle Ortiz, who started an elementary-level mariachi program in the San Antonio schools in 1966. High school programs were added and soon several neighboring Texas school districts picked up the theme. Today 150 Texas schools offer instruction.

By 1978, Ortiz was dreaming of a San Antonio mariachi conference. She convinced musicians from the premier Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán in Mexico, arguably

the best mariachi group in the world, to appear for student workshops and a concert. That first year, the Festival involved nearly 200 students. Then another was planned.

“It was the NEA that really got us going,” says Ortiz. “The first festival was such a success. Collaborating with the NEA really kicked off a next festival beautifully. Their blessing gave the festival more credibility,” she remarks. Student participation doubled the second year.

The San Antonio model of instruction and performance has been widely followed by over 20 more mariachi festivals in California, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Washington, Kansas, Nebraska, Idaho and Texas. Today, tens of thousands of students participate in mariachi conferences, festivals and classes around the country. “The first and foremost goal for mariachi festivals should be to teach young people what mariachi stands for. It is about preserving history and expressing our cultural identity,” states Belle Ortiz. “A mariachi musician should know the mariachi past, historical compositions as well as the technical aspects of the style. Mariachi stands for the highest musical standards.”

FILM PRESERVATION

Rescuing A Cherished Art Form

What would it be like if America's greatest films were to disappear? This could have happened. In the mid-1960s, more than half of U.S. films produced before 1951 had been lost, largely as a result of deterioration caused by the nitrate base in the film's stock.

Through its leadership, the NEA was instrumental in establishing the infrastructure that brought national recognition and support to saving America's film heritage. In 1967, with additional funds from the Ford Foundation and member companies of the Motion Picture Association of America, the NEA helped launch the American Film Institute (AFI), with preservation as one of its primary missions.

Among the films preserved through NEA support are: John Ford's *Stagecoach* (1949) starring John Wayne as jailbreaker and sharpshooter Ringo Kid; Victor Flemings' *Joan of Arc* (1948) starring Ingrid Bergman, a film that won seven Academy Awards including Best Actress for Bergman; and D.W. Griffith's *Intolerance* (1916), starring Lillian Gish, a silent classic known for its groundbreaking photography.

From 1971 to 1995, the NEA awarded over \$12.7 million through the AFI/NEA Film Preservation Program to over 40 archives, historical societies, libraries and universities. In addition, since 1995, the NEA provided over \$1.5 million in direct grants for film and video preservation. The NEA also awarded a special National Millennium Project grant to the National Film Preservation Foundation for Treasures of American Film Archives, an extensive collaboration with 18 archives around the country.

In 1983, the Endowment and the AFI established the National Center for Film and Video Preservation. Through the Center, the NEA supported the development of a National Moving Image Database and the research and publication of the *AFI Catalog of American Feature Film*, the most comprehensive single resource available.

"The NEA's grant program played a catalytic role in helping the field of film preservation grow," observed Robert Rosen, Dean of the UCLA School of Theatre, Film and TV and Founding Director of the National Center for Film and Video Preservation. "The NEA's effort was historically significant for supporting preservation at a time when it was not appreciated by the field and was in the vanguard for committing public resources that then encouraged the commitment of private resources for preservation."

Opposite: Among the thousands of films preserved is Charlie Chaplin's *The Kid*, starring Chaplin and Jackie Coogan (1921). *Photo courtesy of AFI Stills Collection.*



MAYORS' INSTITUTE ON CITY DESIGN

Birmingham Designs for Reconciliation

Scenes of Birmingham police unleashing attack dogs and fire hoses on young civil rights protesters in the spring of 1963 shocked the world and brought widespread support to the cause. Much of the activity was focused on Kelly Ingram Park. Named for the first white American sailor killed in World War I, it was still a restricted “whites only” area in the early 1960s. Its location as a buffer between the city’s black and white business districts made it the center of the demonstrations that rocked Birmingham. In September of 1963, four young girls were killed when the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, adjacent to the park, was bombed.



Charles Seifried

Sculptor Raymond Kaskey was commissioned to create *Ministers Kneeling in Prayer* as a part of the revitalization of Birmingham’s Kelly Ingram Park in 1992. It commemorates the civil rights demonstrations held there in the 1960s.

For these reasons, in 1990, Kelly Ingram Park was the key to the Birmingham mayor’s revitalization plans for the city’s historic Civil Rights District. As the city’s first black mayor, Richard Arrington knew his design for the park needed to both commemorate the events that took place there and to help heal Birmingham’s lingering racial wounds. Arrington took his plans for the civil rights district to the NEA-sponsored Mayors’ Institute on City Design. Through intensive discussions with some of his counterparts together with architects and other urban development experts, an idea began to form.

Arrington was so stimulated by the session, he worked out his strategy on the plane on the way home, according to Mike Dobbins, Birmingham's City Planner at the time. The mayor decided the park's theme would be "A Place of Revolution and Reconciliation."

"The most dramatic outcome from the Mayor's Institute came from his having had the opportunity to really reflect and develop that theme," Dobbins remembers. "He wouldn't normally have had that amount of time to concentrate on it, given the daily demands of being mayor. The detailed site design all flowed from that expansive theme."

The Mayors' Institute on City Design, created by the Endowment in 1986, has assisted over 400 mayors from every state in finding solutions for problems including the redevelopment of an underused waterfront, the siting of a transportation facility and the design of new public buildings.

"I thought it was quite useful to get feedback on our plans, as well as to see how other cities were addressing their history and revitalization efforts," Arrington says. "The results of our project have been tremendous and have really brought life back to that area. We have public art being used as part of the area's revitalization and also as a way of highlighting the site's important history."

The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, located next to the park, was created as part of the mayor's overall plan. The institute and the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, together with Kelly Ingram Park, form the core of the city's civil rights district.

"The park's renovation has allowed Birmingham to celebrate the civil rights triumphs that emerged there. It also gave white leaders a different way of seeing how this part of our history could be embraced; previously they'd seen it only as a stain on our past," notes Dobbins. "It's helped the whole city move closer to racial harmony. By sharing the best of the past, it can weave together a better future."



City of Birmingham

Birmingham Mayor Richard Arrington developed the theme "A Place of Revolution and Reconciliation" for Kelly Ingram Park while attending a Mayor's Institute on City Design session, sponsored by the Arts Endowment. Now, a Freedom Walk including vivid sculptures and careful landscaping provides the city with a place for reflection.

AMERICAN ART FROM HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

To Conserve a Legacy

Creased canvases, cracked paint, warped frames and discolored mats were just some of the problems conservators faced as they delved into a treasure trove of art long hidden from public view. Part of an NEA-supported initiative called *To Conserve a Legacy: American Art From Historically Black Colleges and Universities*, more than 1,400 paintings, drawings, sculptures and photographs held by six institutions were researched and restored. A traveling exhibition brought more than 250 of them to eight locations around the country.

After the Civil War, colleges and universities had been created to educate former slaves and free blacks. Some of these began to assemble important collections of African-American art, as well as significant holdings in European and American modernism, African and Native American art. Lack of resources and the passage of time had caused many works to deteriorate.



Hampton University Archives

A collection of cyanotype photographs was digitally reproduced and exhibited as a part of the NEA-supported conservation project, including *The Old Folks at Home*, taken in 1900 by a photographer belonging to Hampton University's Camera Club.

To begin to address this situation, *To Conserve a Legacy* was organized by the Addison Gallery of American Art at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts and The Studio Museum in Harlem. The project was conducted in collaboration with the Williamstown Art Conservation Center in Massachusetts and six Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) including: Clark Atlanta University in Georgia, Fisk University in Tennessee, Hampton University in Virginia, Howard University in Washington, North Carolina Central University, and Tuskegee University in Alabama.

The Arts Endowment joined with other public and private funding sources to support the four-year project. "Public funding from the NEA has long been a satisfying indicator of the intellectual and artistic merit of one's creative work. Artistic excellence and good ideas continue to carry real weight in this public funding arena," according to Jock Reynolds, co-curator and former Addison Gallery Director.

To Conserve a Legacy covers over a century of American art and contains works that exemplify key movements and ideas in the evolution of artistic production. More than 100 artists are represented from early nineteenth-century figures such as sculptor Edmonia Lewis and painter Robert S. Duncanson to postwar artists such as Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett and Jacob Lawrence to innovators of the 1970s such as Sam Gilliam and William T. Williams. The exhibition also includes some unexpected works, including several that were part of a major gift to Fisk University by Georgia O’Keeffe following the death of her husband, famed photographer and art dealer Alfred Stieglitz. The inclusion of major artists who are not black shows the work of African-American artists in the context of the work of their peers.

“The strong multi-racial partnership of individuals and institutions has created a powerful artistic and educational vehicle for raising public awareness of America’s highly diverse and rich visual culture,” according to co-curator Richard Powell, Chairman of the Art and Art History Department at Duke University. “This work and service has helped ensure that important HBCU art collections will be better cared for and better known in the future.”

To help develop the next generation of curators, the project also included a hands-on internship program. Howard University student Carol Dyson was given a box of works to unpack on her second day on the job. “It was like my birthday or Christmas—unwrapping the treasures. Unwrapping the pieces gave me such a connection with the artists. I felt honored to handle their work.”



Williamstown Art Conservation Center

As part of the *To Conserve a Legacy* project, Thomas Branchick of the Williamstown Art Conservation Center restores an oil painting from the Hampton University Museum’s collection. Samella Sanders Lewis, the first African-American woman to earn a Ph.D. in art history, created *Waterboy* in 1944 while a student at Hampton.

WESTERN FOLKLIFE CENTER

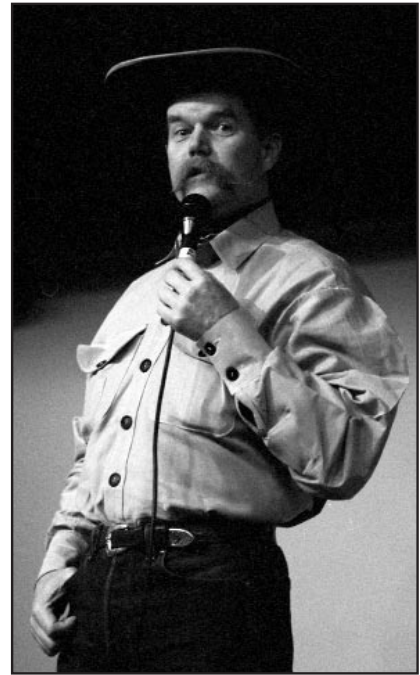
Cowboy Poetry Gathering Revives Traditional Art Form

With his ten-gallon hat, seated on horseback with lasso in hand, the fictitious cowboy has captured the popular imagination as a strong, silent type. A group of Western folklorists set about to change that stereotype.

“The image of a cowboy has strayed so far from reality through negative images in the media and in movies, the cowboys felt they didn’t have a forum for the expression of their true selves,” says folklorist Hal Cannon. “Cowboy poetry is a way to connect and to express a way of life that’s valued.”

With Endowment support, Cannon and his colleagues began by surveying ranchers to identify and study contemporary cowboy poetry. Its ballad style has roots that stretch back at least to the 1860’s. Since then, wranglers and buckaroos have been entertaining each other in bunkhouses and on trail drives with poems they’ve memorized as well as with rhymes they’ve made up on the spot. “We knew cowboy poetry still existed in isolated pockets but we didn’t know it was such a widespread phenomenon,” Cannon says.

The next step was to produce an event that would showcase the talent they’d unearthed. It wasn’t an idea that had commercial appeal. “I approached 50 corporations and other organizations that were identified as using cowboys in their marketing and they all turned me down. Poetry wasn’t something they saw as being part of the cowboy image,” says Cannon. “The Cowboy Poetry Gatherings would never have happened without the Endowment. The NEA support was a very important indicator of trust and helped us to get cowboy poetry off the ground.”



Chris Simon

Rancher-turned-poet Waddie Mitchell entertains the audience at a Cowboy Poetry Gathering, presented by the Western Folklife Center in Elko, Nevada.

The first gathering in 1985, held in Elko, Nevada, drew five times the expected audience. Enthusiasm has continued to build and the gathering, presented by the Western Folklife Center, has grown into a week-long annual celebration of American cattle culture, attracting 8,000 enthusiasts and adding over \$6 million to Elko's economy. Cowboy poetry's popularity in general has also multiplied, breeding books, radio programs and over 200 other gatherings across the country.

Rancher-turned-cowboy poet Waddie Mitchell, who performed at the original gathering, recalls his initial surprise at the tremendous audience response. "I hadn't thought anyone else would be interested in cowboy poetry. It was just how we used to entertain each other, telling stories around the campfire or in the barn. I think it's found its way into the American psyche because it's pure—it touches people's hearts and imaginations."



Jan Deimarest

Sourdough Slim leads a song while Ernie Sites wows the crowd with rope tricks at a Western Folklife Center program for children.



Sue Rosoff

The Cowboy Poetry Gathering is so popular that memorabilia like these commemorative spurs have been created.

Excerpt from

Anthem

by Buck Ramsey

Oh, we would ride and we would listen
 And hear the message on the wind.
 The grass in morning dew would glisten
 Until the sun would dry and blend
 The grass to ground and air to skying.
 We'd know by bird or insect flying,
 Or by their mood or by their song,
 If time and moon were right or wrong
 For fitting works and rounds to weather.
 The critter coats and leaves of trees
 Might flash some signal with a breeze—
 Or wind and sun on flow'r or feather.
 We knew our way from dawn to dawn,
 And far beyond, and far beyond.

Excerpt published with the permission of Betty Ramsey.



ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE CENTER

Strengthening Cultural Identity

Preserving, honoring and sharing endangered Native traditions is at the heart of the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage. “The center creates a better understanding of Native peoples so that they are not relegated to the past and earmarked for extinction,” says Roy Huhnorf, the center’s Chairman. “Through educational and employment training efforts, we are rejuvenating our culture as a means to improving our self-image. We harken back to ancient ways where we live in harmony with the land and are proud of who we are, not ashamed.”

The center opened in the spring of 1999, providing a gathering place for the sharing, celebration and perpetuation of Alaska Native cultures. The Arts Endowment joined in the tapestry of funding sources to create the center, which sits on 26 acres in Anchorage near the Chugach Mountains. The facility offers a 26,000-square-foot welcome house with a theater, performance spaces, galleries, artist workshops, a small lake and walking trails leading to five historic village exhibits.

“The NEA was enormously helpful to our project as an early funder. That support was extremely important in developing the kind of programs and educational projects we had envisioned,” remarks Huhnorf, one of the leaders of the project. “The center is a wish come true. We believe it is good for the whole nation because it shows how Native people fit into our complex society.”

During the summer, the Heritage Center brings together Native Alaskans and guests from a variety of cultures, backgrounds and generations. All visitors experience first-hand the past and present lifestyles of Alaska Natives, enriched by traditional song, dance, storytelling, crafts and visual arts. In winter, programs focus on strengthening cultural identity and promoting cross-cultural understanding. Among the beneficiaries of the training are local employees such as the Federal Aviation Administration’s Alaska-based staff. According to Jim Pooley, an FAA human resources manager, not all of the cosmopolitan residents of Anchorage are aware of how their rural neighbors live. “Fifty miles in every direction and it’s a different world. It’s no longer modern America. In many small towns there is no electricity, no running water, no sewers, maybe no paved streets,” he observes. “Cultural awareness training gives us a dose of reality on what Native Alaskans face on a daily basis.”

Opposite: A child enjoys the blanket toss, a tradition of the Inupiaz people of Alaska’s north coast region at the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Programming at the Center is funded in part by the NEA. *Photo by Clark James Mishler.*

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS' AWARDS

Honoring Artistic Excellence

National Medal of Arts

The National Medal of Arts recognizes individuals or groups for outstanding contributions to the excellence, growth, support and availability of the arts in the United States. Awarded annually by the President since 1985, its recipients include authors William Styron and Eudora Welty, choreographers Paul Taylor and Martha Graham, actors Gregory Peck and Jessica Tandy, composer Stephen Sondheim and singer Aretha Franklin, painters Roy Lichtenstein and Georgia O'Keeffe, and arts patrons Brooke Astor and Paul Mellon.

Right: Frank Gehry received the 1998 National Medal of Arts for his extensive contributions to the field of architecture.



Neshan Nalichayon



Konstantinos Pilarinos was awarded a National Heritage Fellowship in 2000 for his excellence in Orthodox Byzantine woodcarving.

National Heritage Fellowships

America's folk artists are honored for their contributions to our national cultural mosaic with the National Heritage Fellowship in the Folk & Traditional Arts. As a group, these folk and traditional artists reflect the diverse heritage and cultural traditions that transcend their beginnings to become part of our national character. Each year, the winners come to Washington to receive their award in a public ceremony and perform in a popular, free concert during late September. Established in 1982, winners include gospel singer Shirley Caesar, Slovenian accordionist and polka master Louis Bashell, African-American tap dancer LaVaughn E. Robinson and Native American basket maker Mary Mitchell Gabriel.

American Jazz Masters Fellowships

The National Endowment for the Arts recognizes the importance of jazz as a truly American art form and seeks to increase awareness of our jazz heritage and encourage its perpetuation. The American Jazz Masters Fellowships are awarded annually to recognize significant contributions to jazz, artistic excellence, and impact on the music field. Honored artists include Dizzy Gillespie, Count Basie, Miles Davis, Ella Fitzgerald, Art Blakey, Lionel Hampton, Sarah Vaughan and Dave Brubeck.

The Presidential Awards for Design Excellence



Weiss/Manfredi Architects

To encourage outstanding design at the federal level, the Presidential Design and Federal Design Achievement Awards were established to honor projects representing the highest standards of design in fields including architecture, landscape architecture, urban design and planning, historic preservation, interior design, engineering and graphic design. The Federal Design Improvement Program, a partnership between the Arts Endowment and the General Services Administration, helps ensure that good design is an integral part of responsible stewardship of public resources.

Awardees have included the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., the Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and the Department of the Interior.

The Women In Military Service For America Memorial in Arlington, Virginia received an NEA Federal Design Award in 2000. The memorial's dominant feature is a 225-foot semicircular glass belvedere that holds large glass tablets inscribed with quotes by and about the women who have served in the military.

FOSTERING CREATIVITY

Profiles of Success



Rex Rystedt

Sherman Alexie

POET AND WRITER

Poverty, alcoholism and depression were common on the Spokane Indian reservation where poet and novelist Sherman Alexie grew up. After a series of personal struggles in this environment, Alexie found his voice through writing.

In 1992, he received a National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship in Poetry. "I was just an Indian boy from the 'rez.' My version of the American dream was getting that fellowship grant," Alexie recalls. "It was the first time I ever felt embraced by my country, like I mattered." That same year, Alexie was described as "one of the major lyric voices of our time" in *The New York Times Book Review*, which selected his first book, *The Business of Fancydancing* as a "1992 Notable Book of the Year."

"I was just an Indian boy from the 'rez.' My version of the American dream was getting that fellowship grant. It was the first time I ever felt embraced by my country, like I mattered."

and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven, published in 1994, was a citation winner for the PEN/Hemingway Award for Best First Fiction. Other books include *The Toughest Indian in the World*, *Reservation Blues* and *Indian Killer*. In June 1999, *The New Yorker* acknowledged Alexie as one of the top writers for the 21st century. The literary quarterly *Granta* named Alexie one of the "Twenty Best American Novelists Under the Age of Forty."

"The NEA Poetry Fellowship provided a pathway to being a full-time writer. Without the freedom it allowed me, my career might never have happened," explains Alexie. He is a prolific poet, novelist, short story writer, essayist, screenwriter, producer and stand-up comedian. Alexie's several books of poetry include *Old Shirts & New Skin*, *The Summer of Black Widows*, and *One Stick Song*. His first collection of short stories, *The Lone Ranger*

Alexie's first screenplay, *Smoke Signals*, became the first feature film produced, written and directed by Native Americans. It premiered at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival. He currently serves as a Creative Advisor to the Sundance Institute Writers Fellowship Program and is on the Board of Trustees of the American Indian College Fund.

Wynton Marsalis

MUSICIAN AND EDUCATOR

The youngest artist ever to receive an NEA fellowship, Wynton Marsalis has gone on to become one of today's most accomplished and acclaimed jazz and classical musicians. The bandleader, composer, recording artist, educator and artistic director of *Jazz at Lincoln Center* was the recipient of an Arts Endowment Jazz Study grant in 1981 at the age of 20.

"Musicians have limited avenues of support, especially when they are starting out," observes Marsalis. "Fellowships like these can provide an artistic, financial and emotional boost at a critical moment in a career, and have the potential to make the difference between an artist continuing to develop a great talent or giving up on it altogether." The public recognition that NEA funding brings to all arts endeavors is crucial, he says, and has been especially meaningful in the jazz field where there has been little philanthropic support. "It has been an extremely important factor in the acknowledgement and positioning of jazz as one of the centerpieces of American culture."

Born in New Orleans, Marsalis began his classical training on trumpet at age 12. He made his recording debut in 1982 and has since produced close to 40 jazz and classical recordings, winning eight Grammy Awards. In 1997 he became the first jazz artist to be awarded a Pulitzer Prize in music, for *Blood on the Fields*, an epic oratorio on the subject of slavery that was commissioned by the television series *Jazz at Lincoln Center*.

Marsalis is also music director for the internationally recognized Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra that spends over half the year on tour and has traveled to over 100 cities on five continents. The Arts Endowment supports a number of programs and tours produced by *Jazz at Lincoln Center*. In addition, Marsalis is respected as a teacher and spokesman for music education. One of his most far-reaching education programs, the Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band Competition and Festival, makes professionally transcribed Duke Ellington scores available to nearly 60,000 high school students nationwide for free each year.

"*Jazz at Lincoln Center's* ultimate goal is to see the arts in America achieve the prominence they deserve in our educational curriculum," Marsalis says. "Through its support, the NEA has helped us achieve this."



Carol Friedman

"Fellowships like these can provide an artistic, financial and emotional boost at a critical moment in a career, and have the potential to make the difference between an artist continuing to develop a great talent or giving up on it altogether."

Mark Morris

DANCER AND CHOREOGRAPHER



Lois Greenfield

“In order to work as an artist, you need to have the time to not work as a waiter, tinker or candlestick maker. The fellowships allowed me to be an artist.”

“In order to work as an artist, you need to have the time to not work as a waiter, tinker or candlestick maker. The fellowships allowed me to be an artist,” notes esteemed modern dance choreographer Mark Morris of the Endowment support he received in the mid-1980s.

Since forming the New York-based Mark Morris Dance Group in 1980, Morris has choreographed over 100 works for his company, as well as dances for many ballet and opera companies including the Paris Opera Ballet and the New York City Opera. Among other achievements and accolades, he was Director of Dance at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, Belgium from 1988 to 1991, founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov and received a MacArthur Fellowship in 1991. The film chronicling the

creation of *Falling Down Stairs*, a collaboration between Morris and cellist Yo-Yo Ma, was part of the 1997 Emmy Award-winning television series, *Yo-Yo Ma Inspired by Bach*.

“Mark’s work was a return to musicality and lyricism with an accessible and irreverent sensibility,” remembers Philip Bither, Performing Arts Curator at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis who has worked with Morris and his company since 1984. “He had absolute confidence and assurance about where he wanted to take the art form and has emerged as his generation’s leading dance maker.” But Morris needed the time to create. “The impact of the fellowships on my work was simple: time,” says Morris. “The money bought me the time to make up my dances. And time unencumbered was everything back then.”

August Wilson

PLAYWRIGHT

“The National Endowment for the Arts has helped the individual artist, enabling people to create art who otherwise would not have the opportunity. Even more important, receiving an NEA grant sanctions the art form and the artist by showing faith in them,” according to award-winning playwright August Wilson.



Joseph Mehlberg

Many of Wilson’s works have been produced in collaboration with the Yale School of Drama, with support from the Arts Endowment. Wilson’s popular plays portray different aspects of the African-American experience. In 1985 his first major work, *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, won the New York Drama Critics’ Circle Award for best play. Wilson won a Pulitzer Prize in 1987 for his play *Fences* and in 1990 for *The Piano Lesson*. His other major plays include *Jitney*, *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone*, *Two Trains Running*, and *Seven Guitars*. “The government and the people of our country should support the arts because they help define the character and conscience of our society,” he says.

“The National Endowment for the Arts has helped the individual artist, enabling people to create art who otherwise would not have the opportunity.... an NEA grant sanctions the art form and the artist by showing faith in them.”

Julie Taymor

DIRECTOR AND DESIGNER

Widely renowned for her commercial success *The Lion King*, director-designer Julie Taymor's creations often originate in non-profit theaters. Taymor credits NEA support, including theater residencies and an individual fellowship, for jumpstarting her career. "On a personal level it gives a public sense of encouragement as well as financial support. It says we are interested in what you have to bring to the table as an artist. And most importantly it allowed ideas to flourish and projects to happen."

During a two-year theater residency beginning in 1995 that was partly funded by the Arts Endowment, Taymor produced two classic works for New York's Theater for a New Audience. After having the opportunity to explore Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and Carolo Gozzi's *The Green Bird* without commercial pressures, she was ready to take them to a wider audience. Taymor's production of *The Green Bird* saw a run on Broadway and she directed a film version of *Titus Andronicus*, starring Anthony Hopkins and Jessica Lange.

"Had I not had the opportunity to discover the work on the stage, under the supportive environment of Theater for a New Audience, I would never have ventured into this challenging and deeply satisfying experience," she explains. "To see Shakespeare's *Titus* playing in malls in Middle America as well as the art houses of Europe is a wonder."

Taymor also received an individual NEA fellowship in 1988, which she used to create an original opera titled *Grendel*, telling the Beowulf legend from the monster's point of view. Although it's not yet been produced, she says just having time to explore this and other underappreciated masterpieces is valuable.

"It is critical that the artist be able to develop and create without the pressure of financial success. The elements of risk and experimentation are fundamental to innovation, originality and growth. As in science: technology, medicine, exploration etc., research is a funded laboratory," adds Taymor. "We believe in continuing to improve the physical health of our nation but we also must, through government support of the arts, see to its spiritual health as well."

"On a personal level it gives a public sense of encouragement as well as financial support. It says we are interested in what you have to bring to the table as an artist."



Theater for a New Audience

Dale Chihuly

MASTER GLASS ARTIST

“Support for individual artists is as important as support for organizations,” according to world-renowned master glass artist Dale Chihuly. “It’s really money well spent and the benefits continue to come back to society.” He says the NEA support he received early on provided an important boost to his career. “It was really critical to my development and success—it gave me the money, the prestige and the confidence that I needed at that time to grow into the artist I am today.”

His work is now included in over 170 museum collections from New York to Kyoto and has earned him numerous awards and honorary degrees. In 1992, he was named America’s first National Living Treasure by the University of North Carolina.

Chihuly says government encouragement of young artists enriches everyone’s lives. “You know, what goes around comes around and these artists won’t forget and will be more inclined to help bring others along when they’re older.”

In addition to founding the Pilchuck Glass School, an international glass center near Seattle, Chihuly also gives time and financial support to programs that teach the art of glass making to seniors and young people. Hilltop Artists in Residence reaches out to youth in Tacoma, Washington and Taos, New Mexico to provide them with a positive alternative to life on the streets. “I’m trying to help these young people get a footing,” he says. “They’re some of the brightest people I’ve ever met but they’re stuck in these negative environments and it’s difficult for them to get out.” Chihuly says the immediacy and glamour of glassmaking attracts them. “This program takes their minds off other temptations and really builds their self respect,” he says. “I find working with these young people to be quite fulfilling and inspirational.”



Scott M. Leen

“It was really critical to my development and success—it gave me the money, the prestige and the confidence that I needed at that time to grow into the artist I am today.”

Garrison Keillor

WRITER AND BROADCASTER

Lake Wobegone: “Where all the women are strong, all the men are good-looking and all the children are above average....”

It’s the setting for *A Prairie Home Companion*, the nationally known weekly radio series hosted by writer and humorist Garrison Keillor. For 25 years, Keillor has drawn listeners into the program with stories, songs and quips about home, family, church and neighborhood. The Minnesota Public Radio program is heard by nearly three million listeners on more than 485 stations across the country.

“In 1974, a grant from the NEA enabled us to start *A Prairie Home Companion* in Minnesota. Help which was crucial, because the show was not that great to start with, we had 12 people in the audience for our first broadcast, and we made the mistake of having an intermission and lost half of them,” said Keillor at a Congressional hearing in 1990.

Keillor credits the NEA with directing his early career choices. “I grew up in a family that never attended concerts, never went to the theater, never bought books. We were opposed to them, and I never imagined that a person could be a writer. But twice in my life, at crucial times, grants from the Endowment helped me to imagine that I could be a writer. One was in 1969, when I was young and broke and married and had a child and was living on a farm out on the prairie.” At that time he received a Writers in the Schools residency grant that earned him \$300 for a month’s work. “It was the first time that anybody paid me to be a writer and was the sort of experience that a person looks back at afterwards and wonders what would have happened if it had not come along.”

The Endowment has changed how Americans think about the arts, according to Keillor. “Today you can be a violinist in North Carolina, you can be a writer in Iowa, you can be a painter in Kansas, which is a revolution in this country, and the National Endowment and the U.S. Congress have helped to bring this about.”

Keillor has written eleven books, been inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame, won a Grammy Award and received the National Medal of the Humanities.



Jason Bell

“It was the first time that anybody paid me to be a writer and was the sort of experience that a person looks back at afterwards and wonders what would have happened if it had not come along.”

MUSEUM PURCHASE PLAN

Investing in Public Collections

Small investments allowing hundreds of American museums to add strategically to their collections are paying huge dividends today. The Arts Endowment's Museum Purchase Plan enabled curators across the country to secure thousands of works by living American artists, making them permanently available for public enjoyment.

Between 1968 and 1990, the program awarded about \$9 million in small grants to hundreds of beneficiaries including the Canton Art Institute in Ohio, the J.B. Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky and the Amarillo Art Center in Texas.

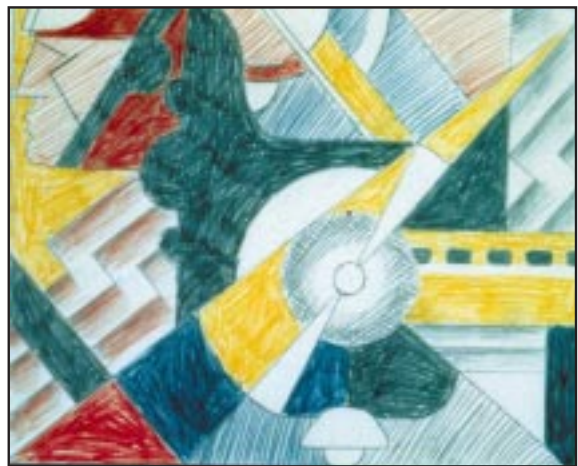
Given the exorbitant prices in the current art market, many of these purchases would be impossible for public collectors to make now. For instance, the Arkansas Arts Center purchased a Richard Diebenkorn watercolor for \$3,500 in 1974, with assistance from the NEA plan. That drawing would currently go for about \$150,000.

When Townsend Wolfe took over the Little Rock institution in 1968, it owned only 800 works. Today, its holdings number over 4,000. They include works by Andrew Wyeth, Georgia O'Keeffe, Willem de Kooning and Roy Lichtenstein, all purchased with help from the NEA's Museum Purchase Plan. Under the program, the Arkansas Arts Center was awarded less than \$100,000 over a nearly 25-year period. After adding matching funds from his donors, Wolfe was able to use the money to buy a total of 88 works that are worth millions today.

"It allowed us to take some risks," Wolfe says. "We were able to purchase both known and emerging artists, some of whom were unfamiliar to my acquisitions committee. It gave me much more freedom and leverage with my donors."

In an effort to share its riches, the center often loans these works and has included many of them in its exhibitions that frequently make national and international tours.

The purchases Wolfe made under the Endowment program now form the upper 20 percent of the Arkansas collection. "We were able to get some incredible things," he notes. "It would be almost impossible to buy these today."



With help from the NEA's Museum Purchase Plan, the Arkansas Arts Center acquired 88 works for its collection including: **(upper left)** Andrew Wyeth's *Snowflake*, 1966; **(upper right)** Richard Diebenkorn's untitled work from *The Ocean Park Series*, 1972; **(lower left)** Larry Rivers' *De Kooning in My Texas Hat*, 1963; and **(lower right)** Roy Lichtenstein's *Study for Aviation*, 1967. All images provided by the Arkansas Arts Center.

STEPPEWOLF THEATRE COMPANY

Ensemble Comes of Age But Remains True to Its Roots

It's gone from performing in a suburban church basement to mounting award-winning productions on the world's finest stages. All the while, Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company has remained true to its mission to advance the vitality and diversity of American theater.

Founded in 1974 by high school friends Terry Kinney, Jeff Perry and Gary Sinise, the company has grown to include over thirty members. The borrowed church basement has been replaced by a 500-seat theater with state-of-the-art production facilities. Founded on a commitment to ensemble collaboration and artistic risk, Steppenwolf has made it a priority to commission and adapt new works for the stage.

As the company grew from a young, feisty group to a much-revered acting ensemble, the National Endowment for the Arts provided support at several crucial points in its history.

A landmark in Steppenwolf's development of new plays came in 1988 when ensemble member Frank Galati adapted John Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Grapes of Wrath*. An Endowment grant supported the effort that required an expanded cast and lengthy rehearsal time. The production played

to packed houses in Chicago and London, before transferring to Broadway in 1990, where it won Tony Awards for Best Play and Best Director. It also reached a national audience when it was broadcast on PBS in 1991.



Steppenwolf Theatre Company

With the help of an NEA Challenge grant, the Steppenwolf Theatre Company built a new \$8 million home that includes this main stage with state-of-the-art production facilities.

"It was one of the most celebrated productions this theater has ever done," says Michael Gennaro, Steppenwolf's Executive Director. "It was clearly American—written and adapted by American authors, performed by Midwestern actors and it dealt with a specific, very important time period in American history. It was a watershed moment in terms of national acceptance for this theater."

Company members such as John Malkovich, Laurie Metcalf and Gary Sinise had also been busy launching film and television careers. But they remained committed to the creative power of ensemble work and to Steppenwolf as their artistic home. The actors asked the company's board of directors to create a permanent physical home to which they could return, continuing to produce Steppenwolf's own brand of dynamic and exciting theater. They also wanted a bigger space and better production facilities.

A capital campaign was launched and \$8 million was raised to fulfill their dream. An Arts Endowment grant of \$300,000 broke the ice. "The validation that came from NEA funding of Steppenwolf was clearly important in our efforts to attract donors," according to Gennaro. "It changed people's perceptions about us and made them say 'OK, we should give money too.'"

Steppenwolf moved into its new home in 1991. While the main stage can seat 500, it retains the feel of Steppenwolf's earlier theaters. "It's perfect because it allows for a high degree of intimacy between the actors and the audience," says Gennaro. The new theater also has a studio space where productions can be mounted for smaller audiences. The enhanced capacity has helped Steppenwolf's subscriber base more than double since 1990, reaching 23,000. The longest ever continuously operating ensemble of American actors, Steppenwolf was awarded the National Medal of Arts in 1998. As the company has grown in both size and stature, it has nurtured emerging and established playwrights in its New Plays Lab and has mentored some of Chicago's younger ensemble companies.

Whether performing for audiences at home or around the world, the company sees itself as an expression of America and what's best about American theater.

"Steppenwolf takes a tremendous amount of community and national pride in what we've accomplished," explains Gennaro. "The Endowment's stamp of approval is wrapped up in that. Because of those statements of faith in us, we feel we owe a position of leadership to other American artists."



Michael Brosilow

Gary Sinise (left) and Terry Kinney (right) in Steppenwolf Theatre Company's Tony Award-winning production of *The Grapes of Wrath* in 1988. John Steinbeck's powerful novel was adapted for the stage by Frank Galati with NEA support.

ALEXANDER CALDER'S *LA GRANDE VITESSE*

Initial Public Art Project Becomes a Landmark

Stamped on everything from the city's letterhead to its garbage trucks, Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* is much more than a landmark. It's the ubiquitous symbol of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

"Literally and figuratively it's become the heart of the city. It's so fitting that it's bright red," says Nancy Mulnix, who first conceived the project. In 1967, Grand Rapids was building a new city hall downtown in the hopes it would help bring the blighted area back to life. Mulnix asked the fledgling federal arts agency to help the city commission a sculpture for the plaza in front of the new building.



City of Grand Rapids

Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* helped revitalize Grand Rapids' ailing downtown. It was the initial project of the NEA's public art initiative that awarded \$15 million to help create almost 700 works.

The Arts Endowment awarded a \$45,000 grant to Grand Rapids, as part of the agency's new public art initiative. Mulnix and her committee raised the additional \$83,000 needed to commission, ship and construct the new work. Alexander Calder, one of America's preeminent artists, was chosen to create the first civic sculpture jointly financed by federal and private funds. The NEA went on to fund almost 700 other works as part of its \$15 million public art project.

In May 1969, Calder's 42-ton work arrived in Grand Rapids in a series of enormous crates. A huge crane lifted the 27 separate sections so they could be bolted into place. The whole process took five days. "It created a kind of a circus atmosphere," Mulnix remembers. "It was all laid out like a jigsaw puzzle. It was fascinating for people to watch this big object grow before their very eyes. The sparks flew as the welders worked and then the vivid color was painted on. It was like outdoor theater."

Literally translated, *La Grande Vitesse* means “the great swift-ness.” The work, standing 54 feet long, 43 feet high and 30 feet wide, was designed to provide dramatically different views from each corner of the square. Although the sculpture is stationary, it gives the appearance of movement.

The Calder had a dramatic impact on Grand Rapids, Mulnix says. “I thought it could function as an icebreaker does out on the Great Lakes in early February. It proved to be true; the Calder energized the community and made anything seem possible.” It sparked the city’s interest in other arts activities, she adds. A new home for the art museum, a civic theater and a symphony hall were soon built. The Calder sculpture’s birthday is celebrated with an annual arts festival, encompassing ten city blocks and attended by a half a million people.



Grand Rapids Public Library



Grand Rapids Public Library

Alexander Calder (foreground) created *La Grande Vitesse* to provide a focal point for the city’s center. Its success encouraged Grand Rapids’ residents to pursue other arts-related projects including building new homes for their symphony, art museum and civic theater.

“It changed the role of the arts and public sculpture in the life of this community because of the sheer magnitude of *La Grande Vitesse* and the excitement surrounding it, as well as all the work the community did to bring it here,” notes City Historian Gordon Olson. “It led to a change in attitude so that the assumption now is that every good community project should include a piece of public art.”

Hundreds of Grand Rapids residents turned out for the 1969 dedication of *La Grande Vitesse*, attended by its creator, Alexander Calder.

La Grande Vitesse

The Grand Rapids Press

June 14, 1969

For years people will look at *La Grande Vitesse* and ask: “What does it mean?” The answer is, What does Beethoven’s Fifth symphony mean? Art speaks to us in its own language, because words are incapable of saying what it means. *La Grande Vitesse* means whatever the viewer takes it to mean. And that meaning will change as the city changes and as time alters the perspective of the viewer. But it will stand there as long as anything in the city stands as a challenge to the imagination and as a symbol of man’s constant striving to express the inexpressible.

Excerpt from Editorial Page reprinted with permission from *The Grand Rapids Press*.

PENLAND SCHOOL OF CRAFTS

Bringing Stability to Premier Crafts School

Just paying the electric bill used to be a challenge. Now, the Penland School of Crafts has a healthy bank balance, thanks to its endowment created in part with NEA support.

Located in the picturesque Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, Penland is one of the premier national centers for craft education, providing quality instruction in ten craft forms to 1,200 students each year. The school also sponsors artists' residencies, an educational outreach program and a craft gallery.

For more than 50 years it operated with virtually no endowment, often struggling to meet its day-to-day expenses. Then, in 1988, the NEA awarded it a \$200,000 Challenge grant in order to establish a permanent endowment. Penland exceeded the grant's requirement that it be matched three-fold with funds from other sources.

That grant was the beginning of Penland's real fiscal stability, says Jean McLaughlin, the school's director. "The NEA's credibility helped to leverage funds for us and the match requirement was a carrot that really worked. Since the Arts Endowment is known for awarding grants to institutions that have merit, this grant was also a source of legitimacy for us and really helped to make the quality of our programs well known."

Penland, which had not previously conducted formal fundraising, discovered the grant produced another long-term benefit. "We began building a base of donors in the course of raising the Challenge Grant match that continues to support us today," McLaughlin reports.

Now worth over \$2.5 million, Penland's endowment has stabilized the school's operating income and allowed it to undertake long-range planning, including the construction and renovation of buildings and landscaping enhancements. But the quality of the school's programs remains paramount, McLaughlin stresses. "More than anything, our endowment has allowed us to continue and improve the high level of education that Penland brings to the craft world."

Penland welcomes students with all levels of experience from complete beginners to serious professionals. Many find it changes their lives. Eleanor Gould says she originally came to take a ceramics class and was encouraged to stay on to experiment with other media such as metals and textiles. "I'll leave Penland with more confidence about being an artist. Whatever art form I choose to pursue, I'll draw on the experiences I've had here for the rest of my life."



Ann Hawthorne



Robin Dreyer

The Penland School of Crafts is one of the country's premier craft education centers, located in the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. With NEA support, quality instruction is offered in ten craft forms including books and paper, clay, drawing and painting, glass, iron, metals, photography, printmaking, textiles and wood.



Robin Dreyer



Robin Dreyer

JOHN KENNEDY TOOLE'S *A CONFEDERACY OF DUNCES*

Comic Novel Wins Pulitzer Prize

John Kennedy Toole took his own life in 1969 before a publisher was found for his comic novel, *A Confederacy of Dunces*. His mother refused to give up, convinced her son had produced an important work. The prospects were bleak. With no author alive to help publicize the book and with no future works forthcoming, the project was seen as a bad commercial risk.

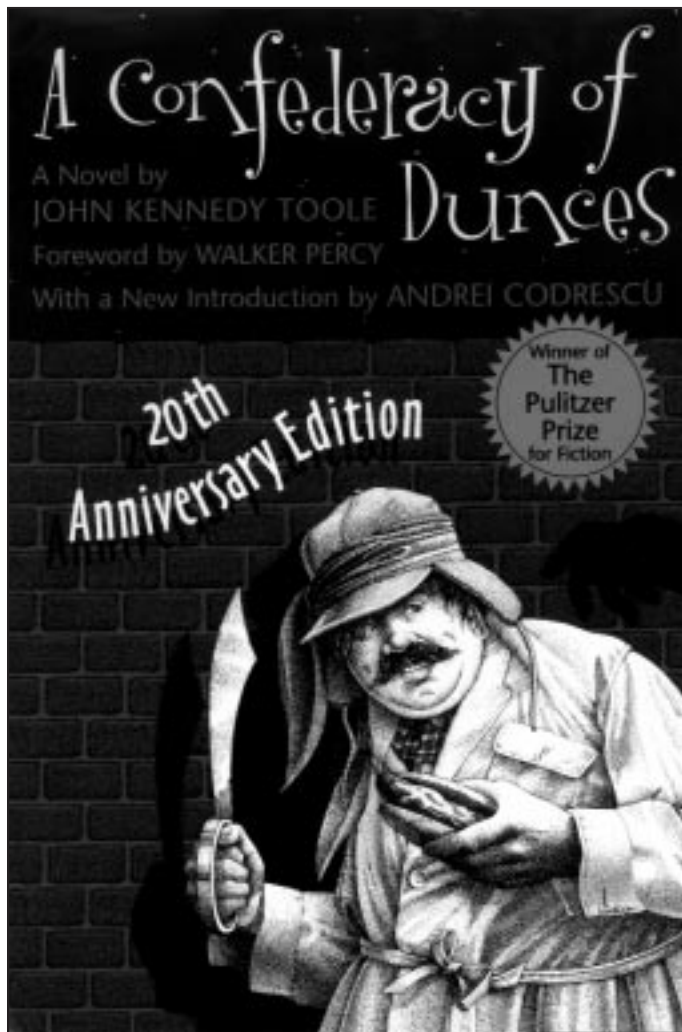
In 1976, Thelma Toole persuaded writer Walker Percy to read the smeared and fading manuscript. He in turn brought it to the attention of the Louisiana State University Press, which had just begun publishing full-length novels. "We felt the quality of the work demanded that it be published," recalls Les Phillabaum, LSUP's Director. "When I first read it I thought it was enormously funny."

Set in New Orleans, the satirical novel brings to life a series of zany characters including one Ignatius Reilly, an intellectual, ideologue, deadbeat and glutton who is revolting against the entire modern age. In the book's introduction, Walker Percy portrays him as "a mad Oliver Hardy, a fat Don Quixote and a perverse Thomas Aquinas rolled into one." The book's title was taken from a Jonathan Swift essay. "When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him," Swift wrote.

Since the book was expected to generate a commercial loss, LSUP asked the National Endowment for the Arts to help defray the publishing costs. A grant of \$3,500 was awarded and the book finally went to press in 1980, more than a decade after it was written.

"That the NEA supported our decision to publish this novel was an important endorsement of the work we were doing and helped us to establish credibility within the literary community," says Phillabaum.

A Confederacy of Dunces immediately drew rave reviews. Over 50,000 copies were sold in the first year alone. The novel was translated into 18 different languages and won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1981. "That was the final jewel in the crown," says Phillabaum. "I was very pleased that the book and Toole got that kind of enduring recognition and validation."



Louisiana State University Press

Above: John Kennedy Toole received posthumously the 1981 Pulitzer Prize for *A Confederacy of Dunces*. The Comic novel was published by Louisiana State University Press, with support from the Arts Endowment.

"An astonishingly good novel, radiant with intelligence and artful high comedy."

Newsweek

"A gem—one of the funniest books ever written."

The New Republic

"A masterwork of comedy...The novel astonishes with its inventiveness, it lives in the play of its voices. *A Confederacy of Dunces* is nothing less than a good comic fugue."

The New York Times Book Review

COLORADO COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

Columbine High School Benefits from the Healing Power of the Arts

In a matter of minutes, one of their teachers and 14 of their classmates were lying dead. Many witnessed the shootings first hand. Some had been friends of the two boys who finished their rampage by turning their guns on themselves. The teenagers of Columbine High School were badly traumatized and in shock.

Members of the local arts community stepped in to help shortly after the massacre on April 20, 1999. The Arts Endowment provided a grant to help fund the effort known as the Healing Power of the Arts. The Colorado Council on the Arts and its partner, Young Audiences, had an ongoing relationship with Columbine High School that paved the way. “We knew we were in a position to offer assistance and healing,” says Fran Holden, Executive Director, Colorado Council on the Arts. “With the NEA support, we were able to respond very quickly. The truly valuable work was done within hours of the tragedy.”

The arts council felt Columbine’s students and teachers could benefit by expressing their grief and anger through arts activities. One artist-in-residence who responded to their call for help was poet and psychoanalyst Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés, well-known author of *Women Who Run With the Wolves* and *The Gift of Story*. Shortly after the shootings, Estés led students and teachers in a poetry writing session in which they described the trauma they were feeling. Many students expressed guilt at having survived the shootings or in not having noticed the two teens were so troubled. The creative process helped the healing begin. Estés recalls, “We helped them reassemble hope through the arts. Psychologically, beauty is one of the most effective cures for depression and tragedy. Making art requires creativity, innovation and invention—all these help bring our souls back to our bodies.” Estés says the arts bring healing in ways all of the consoling words in the world cannot. “The arts are like hidden reservoirs inside us. They are our *aquae vitae* that fill us with life and allow us to continue on under the worst possible conditions. At Columbine, the teachers are the star supporters of this process.”

For the final three weeks of the school year, Young Audiences brought in additional artists for more than 100 hours of sessions using creative writing and visual and performing arts to aid the healing process. The resulting creations were displayed in area art galleries and in an exhibition at the public library. During the summer, a core group of Columbine teachers worked with artists as an outlet to continue their own healing and creative expression, to prepare them to return to school in the fall.



Barbara Hirokawa

Looking In was created by Columbine High School student Kim Chlumsky during one of the Arts Endowment-sponsored workshops held in the wake of the shootings.

What became a support group for teachers, using the arts as a focal point, continued through the following school year. Over 70 hours of arts workshops were offered to teachers and students. In addition, the arts council launched a research project to identify and evaluate resources that help increase tolerance and promote cross-cultural understanding. The comprehensive results were posted on the Internet as a permanent resource. “From the dawn of time, humans have known that the arts have an incredible power to heal both the body and the spirit,” notes Holden. “We hope this electronic resource will allow others in need to investigate the power of the arts as a force for positive change.”

“Psychologically, beauty is one of the most effective cures for depression and tragedy. Making art requires creativity, innovation and invention—all these help bring our souls back to our bodies.”

Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés
Poet and Psychoanalyst

WATTS WRITERS' WORKSHOP

New American Voices Rise from Ashes of Watts

Budd Schulberg was glued to his television as he watched flames rip through the Watts neighborhood of South Central Los Angeles on August 13, 1965. Believing that as an author he had a special obligation to understand society and to serve as its conscience, he visited riot-torn Watts while its remnants were still smoldering.

Schulberg, best known for writing the screenplay for *On the Waterfront*, was moved to take action. "In a small way, I wanted to help. The only thing I knew was writing, so I decided to start a writers' workshop." Schulberg was amazed at the talent that sprang forth.

"I think of it as being like a hidden underground pool that hadn't been tapped. If this had been oil seeping away down through the earth, people would have said we shouldn't lose a drop of it and would have spent money to recover it," he says. "Artistic talent is as valuable a natural resource as oil and shouldn't be squandered."

Johnie Scott was 19 when Watts burned. The oldest of seven children, he had grown up poor and fatherless in a rough housing project. He became one of the original members of Schulberg's Watts Writers' Workshop.

"Writing saved my life," claims Scott. "The two-way exchange of opinions at the workshop was vital to me, just having the opportunity to hear other voices and to know I wasn't alone, that I was part of a serious dialogue taking place that would have



Budd Schulberg (center) conducts a session of the NEA-supported Watts Writers' Workshop. Schulberg created the workshop in response to the 1965 Watts riots.

Los Angeles Times

impact nationwide. It gave me the chance to let go and to discover the artist within me.” Scott went on to become Associate Professor and Director of the Pan African Studies’ writing program at California State University at Northridge.

Since many of its writers were homeless, Schulberg wanted to find a building to serve both as the workshop’s center and to provide housing for its participants. One of the program’s early funders, novelist John Steinbeck, recommended the workshop ask the newly-formed National Endowment for the Arts for help. The agency responded with a grant for \$25,000 to help establish Douglass House, named for the runaway slave, newspaper editor and abolitionist Frederick Douglass. An additional \$25,000 was awarded the following year so that the workshop could expand its programming. “The NEA provided tremendous assistance, no question about it,” according to Schulberg. “It was like the *Good Housekeeping* seal of approval and it helped us gain additional private support and also obtain help from the film industry.”

Poet Quincy Troupe lived and worked at Douglass House for several years. “It gave us a platform to express our ideas. It was really the first time many of us had had the chance to do that,” he notes. “It allowed us to critique each other’s work, to discuss it and to improve and grow as artists.” Since then, Troupe has published several award-winning books and become a literature professor at the University of California at San Diego.

By the summer of 1966, the workshop was attracting national and international media attention. In particular, an hour-long NBC television documentary exploring the anger, fears and frustrations of the Watts writers drew an enormous public response. An anthology of work was later published entitled *From the Ashes: Voices of Watts*.

Excerpt from

Watts, 1966

by Johnie Scott

Watts, a womb from whence
has been spawned molotov
cocktails and shotguns, but most
of all, a lack of care:
for care has been exposed

as fraudulent and so deserving
of no due other than that
accorded burnt newspaper wafting
away in blackened wisps while
mothers hang out their clothes

and talk on the telephones of the
danger and their children
and the nightmare that has descended
...and how hopelessness,
helplessness, is their

young one’s due.
The man named Fear has inherited half an acre,
and is angry.

Excerpt published with permission from the author.

“The Watts writers served as a bridge to white America,” Schulberg notes.

“Through that experience, they gained the sense that the pen is mightier than the sword.” He saw the sixties as a second African-American Renaissance, as significant as Harlem had been in the 1920s.

For Scott, it meant the beginning of social change. “Watts was the paradigm that marked a real shift in race relations and racial perceptions. The Watts Writers’ Workshop allowed us to voice what urban, black America was thinking, feeling and seeing and to get that out to the rest of the country,” he observes. “Before that, we had no voice; no one was listening.”



Frederick Douglass Creative Arts Center

Students receive homework help, creative writing instruction and computer skill development at the Frederick Douglass Creative Arts Center in Harlem. Writers Budd Schulberg and Fred Hudson founded the center with NEA support in 1971.

The Writers’ Workshop Lives On

In 1971, Budd Schulberg and Fred Hudson, a former screenwriter for Paramount Pictures, moved east to found the Frederick Douglass Creative Arts Center in Harlem. Providing professional development in all genres of writing, the center offers college graduates a place to get practical, hands-on experience. An after-school program provides homework help, creative writing instruction and computer skill development to students ages 10 to 15.

The Center’s annual Black Roots Festival of Poetry, Prose, Drama and Music, supported by the NEA, has been showcasing the world’s most talented black writers since 1972. Participants have included Toni Morrison, Rita Dove and Derek Walcott.

“We have developed the voice of the African-American writer in this country,” Hudson says. “If you look back at who has been featured at our festivals, you literally have a Who’s Who of black writers.”

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

A Place to Grieve and Reflect

The Vietnam War caused one of America’s most painful wounds. To help the country move toward reconciliation and to recognize the sacrifice of those who had lost their lives in the conflict, a group of veterans asked that a memorial be built in the nation’s capital.

The National Endowment for the Arts helped fund a site study and assisted with the design competition that drew 1,421 entries. Twenty-one-year-old architect Maya Lin submitted the winning design. It resembles a polished cut in the earth, she says, intended to evoke a sense of loss and provide a cathartic healing experience. Dedicated in 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has become one of the most visited sites in Washington, D.C.

Robert Doubek, who served as an Air Force intelligence officer in Vietnam in 1969, was co-founder of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. “The memorial was designed to stimulate emotion and reflection. Visitors find themselves swept up in it, surrounded by it,” explains Doubek. “It’s helped millions of people come to terms with their experiences and sacrifices and has helped them to move on with their lives.”



Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund

The National Endowment for the Arts helped fund a site study and assisted with the design competition for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which has provided millions of visitors with a place to grieve and reflect.

ARTS RECOVERY FUND

San Francisco Earthquake Unites the Arts Community

By 8 p.m., San Francisco's historic Geary Theater would have been teeming with patrons eager to see the season's opener, George Coates' *Right Mind*. Luckily the house was empty when the Loma Prieta earthquake struck at 5:04 p.m. on October 17, 1989, collapsing the theater's proscenium arch and ripping a 2,000-square-foot hole in the ceiling. The front-of-house lighting bridge and the first six rows of orchestra seats were buried beneath tons of rubble.

It would take \$28.5 million and six years to rebuild the Geary, home to the American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) company. In the meantime, the show had to go on.

"The NEA really turned on a dime and responded quickly and in the best possible way, working with the local philanthropic community," according to John Sullivan, who was A.C.T.'s Managing Director at the time.

After the earthquake, the Arts Endowment immediately expressed its willingness to commit resources to help the artists and arts organizations affected. This offer encouraged local foundations to band together to form the Arts Recovery Fund. The NEA granted \$550,000 to the fund on a three-to-one matching basis, providing a critical impetus to community giving.

"Without the Endowment's fast leadership, local philanthropic institutions would probably have acted independently and surely would have contributed less to this effort," notes John Kreidler, then Program Executive of the San Francisco Foundation. "By acting in unison, the fund not only generated far greater resources, but also succeeded in involving the arts community in the planning and grantmaking processes. As a result, many artists and arts organizations touched by the fund were not only grateful for the monetary assistance, but also were satisfied that the process was inclusive, non-bureaucratic and sensitive to their needs."

All in all, the fund raised over \$2.2 million that benefited about 60 independent artists and arts organizations in seven counties. The fund's committee, made up of local artists and arts administrators, determined that the American Conservatory Theater had suffered the most profoundly from the earthquake. A.C.T. was awarded about 40 percent of the fund's resources so that it could continue to operate while it conducted a major capital campaign to rebuild the Geary.



John Sultton

American Conservatory Theater's historic home suffered massive damage in the 1989 earthquake. With NEA support, A.C.T. was able to continue operation by renting other San Francisco-area venues.

“Here you had an organization that was already operating on a tight budget,” says Sullivan. “We had an immediate need to keep our customers coming. If we couldn’t keep our subscriber base, we were dead.”

A.C.T. took its supporters on a tour of San Francisco, performing at five different theaters in the first year after the quake, adapting productions to fit each space. The company survived, completed a successful capital campaign and moved back home into the rejuvenated Geary Theater in 1996.

“In many ways, it was one of the best experiences I’ve ever had,” remembers Sullivan. “There’s nothing like disaster to get the juices flowing and to bring out the best in people.”



Terry McCarthy

It took six years and \$28.5 million to restore the historic Geary Theater, home to the American Conservatory Theater.

ARTS COUNCIL OF OKLAHOMA

Designing Renewal: Oklahoma City Rebuilds

On April 19, 1995, Oklahoma City was shaken to its very core. The bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building killed 168 people, injured 600 and damaged nearly 350 businesses. The north downtown area was shattered. Less visible was the emotional toll on the community and its citizens.

In the wake of this tragedy, the National Endowment for the Arts helped the community of Oklahoma City tap one of the oldest and most effective sources of healing—the arts. The effort took two approaches: one drew on the art of design to shape a new city, and the other tapped music, writing, painting, maskmaking and weaving as therapy for those whose lives were affected. These creative resources moved the city forward on the path of rebuilding.

Looking back, Jackie Jones, who was then Executive Director of the Arts Council of Oklahoma, notes the importance of the arts as a sensitive and appropriate outlet for the community. “What we learned after the bombing,” she says, “was that the arts were essential for people to express what they were feeling, especially when they didn’t have the words. For each individual, it was a very personal thing.”

Designed exclusively for survivors and families of the bombing victims, the Oklahoma Arts Institute offered A Celebration of Spirit, free, hands-on, intensive workshops in the arts. Activities included poetry and creative writing, mask making, memory box sculpture and Cherokee basket making. The institute also held a drawing and painting workshop for teens.

Participants came together to acknowledge their grief in a positive way. Survivor Kathleen Silovsky says, “This workshop increased my self-esteem and was fun and relaxing. It left me with a sense of achievement.” Tim Rollins, who led a painting workshop, wrote these thoughts after the session: “Art is the enemy of death. Art is the way when there is no way out. Art is hope made manifest and I am a witness.”

Oklahoma City also needed to repair the physical wounds inflicted on its downtown. The Endowment planned a special design charrette—a brainstorming session to generate ideas and guidelines for redesigning the damaged downtown—as a part of its Mayors’ Institute on City Design initiative.



© Jill Evans

“Art is the enemy of death.

Art is the way when there is
no way out.

Art is hope made manifest and
I am a witness.”

Tim Rollins

an artist who led workshops in Oklahoma City

“At two minutes to nine on April 19, 1995, I left my desk on the seventh floor of the Murrah Building to get a cup of ice from the fourth floor snack bar. It saved my life. My desk and my Public Housing workmates who remained on the seventh floor all fell to their deaths.”

Kathleen Silovsky

Above: Silovsky creates a mask in an Arts Endowment-supported workshop, held by the Oklahoma Arts Institute to help survivors express their feelings and begin the healing process.

The workshop brought together government officials, architects, urban planners and landscape and graphic designers. This group, working with the city’s residents, local architects, engineers, planners and property owners, assessed community needs and developed short-term and long-range plans.

The results were documented in a written report and in an exhibition titled *We Will Be Back: Oklahoma City Rebuilds*, co-sponsored with and housed at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. Both the publication and exhibition testify to the role design can play in sensible and creative redevelopment planning that focuses on the city’s physical and spiritual rebirth.

“The process energized our local community to come together and plan for the future of our downtown area,” according to Ronald Norick who was Oklahoma City’s Mayor at the time. “The combined perspectives provided by a partnership between team members with national and international experience and local participants resulted in strong and cohesive recommendations. This process, once again, reminded Oklahoma City that our community extends far beyond our city limits.”

SAVE OUTDOOR SCULPTURE!

Millennium Project Restores Public Art

The ravages of weather, vandalism, neglect and time have endangered nearly half of all public outdoor sculpture in America. To counteract this problem, Save Outdoor Sculpture!, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and Target Stores, is helping communities obtain professional assessment and treatment for their local sculptures most in need of cleaning and repair.

“This funding gave us the impetus to tap these communities on the shoulder and say ‘this is what’s wrong and here’s what you can do to fix it,’” says SOS! Director Susan Nichols.

SOS!, a joint project of Heritage Preservation and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, is a National Millennium Project. It aims to preserve a minimum of one artistically and historically significant sculpture in each state plus the District of Columbia.

In the first phase of the conservation treatment program, community volunteers identified 32,000 publicly accessible outdoor sculptures and reported that half were in need of treatment, 10 percent urgently. The resulting data are being maintained by the Smithsonian.

Urbana, Ohio’s bronze statue, *The Indian Hunter*, was one of those found to be badly in need of attention. John Quincy Adams Ward, one of the most prominent American sculptors of the late 19th century, was its creator. He made his reputation as the leader of a group of post-Civil War sculptors who depicted American themes with simple, direct naturalism. The original *The Indian Hunter* resides in New York City’s Central Park. When the artist died in 1910, his wife had it recast to mark his grave in Urbana’s city-owned Oak Dale Cemetery.

Time had not been kind. “It had green and black splotchy areas all over it and it looked like it was deteriorating,” says Joseph Smith, Assistant Director of Administration for the City of Urbana.

With advice and support from SOS!, Smith commissioned Venus Bronze Works of Detroit to clean and preserve the sculpture. “When you drive by the cemetery now, you can see *The Indian Hunter* standing up there looking so regal and shiny,” Smith continues. “People here are very pleased that we’ve taken the initiative to do something like this that really demonstrates our community’s pride in its heritage.”



Venus Bronze Works, Inc.



Venus Bronze Works, Inc.

The Indian Hunter was cleaned and preserved as a part of the Save Outdoor Sculpture! Initiative, funded by the NEA and Target Stores. The statue, by John Quincy Adams Ward, graces an Urbana, Ohio cemetery.

During the restoration process, city officials learned how to better care for their local landmark. They've even budgeted the necessary funds for annual cleaning and waxing, to ensure *The Indian Hunter* is preserved for future generations.

Other works restored through the program include the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden's *Spoonbridge and Cherry*, Baltimore's *Francis Scott Key Monument* and Kalamazoo's *Martin Luther King, Jr.* "These projects have helped rally community groups that wouldn't necessarily have worked together before. Often this has triggered other repairs and the revitalization of neglected areas surrounding the sculptures," says Nichols. "All across the country, the results have been just fabulous."

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

Festival Nurtures “Indie” Films

Independent films—originally conceived as an alternative to Hollywood’s big-budget blockbusters—are now so successful they’ve even been adopted by Tinseltown’s major studios. In large part, moviegoers have the Sundance Institute to thank for the increasing variety of their cinematic options.

The Sundance Institute was begun in 1979 by renowned actor Robert Redford, who gathered a group of colleagues and friends in Utah to discuss new ways to enhance the artistic vitality of American film. The result was the Sundance Institute, dedicated to the support and development of emerging screenwriters and directors and to the national and international exhibition of new, independent dramatic and documentary films.

Sundance has transformed the movie industry by bringing to public view a much wider range of artistic vision, voice and expression. By creating unprecedented partnerships between established filmmakers and emerging talents, the institute has powerfully impacted the creation of new film markets. The Arts Endowment has supported the institute since its initial four-week workshop and seminar for independent filmmakers held in 1981.

“Our very beginning was due in large part to the support of the NEA,” Redford recalls. “The Arts Endowment has played a key role in encouraging organizations like the Sundance Institute to grow and expand its influence, not only through financial support, but, more significantly, through consistently articulating the importance of the arts and the artist in our society. It’s hard to imagine the arts in this country without the NEA as a rallying point, a promoter of independent thinking artists, and a symbol of what we hope to be.”

More than 70 projects supported by Sundance have been produced to wide success. Many past participants of the institute’s feature film program have gone on to produce critically-acclaimed works. These include Quentin Tarantino, who made *Reservoir Dogs*; Paul T. Anderson, creator of *Hard Eight*; and Kimberly Peirce, whose film *Boys Don’t Cry* won both an Academy Award and a Golden Globe. They, in turn, return often to the labs in a mentoring capacity, to provide creative support to new filmmakers.

Today, over 300 filmmakers benefit annually from Sundance’s programs. Over 20,000 people attend the Sundance Film Festival and millions more attend films originally developed by Sundance. The artists and films supported by the Sundance Institute are the recipients of numerous Oscar, Emmy and international film festival awards.



John Schaefer

Actor and producer Robert Redford founded the Sundance Institute, which has received NEA support since its first workshop in 1981.

“The Arts Endowment has played a key role in encouraging organizations like the Sundance Institute to grow and expand its influence, not only through financial support, but, more significantly, through consistently articulating the importance of the arts and the artist in our society.”

Robert Redford
Founder of Sundance Institute

Fresh out of film school, 23-year-old Tony Bui took part in a Sundance writers and directors lab. Encouraged by the experience, Bui went on to write, direct and produce the film *Three Seasons*, his first feature. The movie is groundbreaking historically as the first American film to be shot in Vietnam using Vietnamese actors speaking in their native tongue. “The Sundance experience gave me the confidence to make the kind of films I do,” Bui says. “It reinforces the process of making meaningful work. The advisors, actors, producers and directors give you the confidence to walk that path. I always fall back on this when I’m in doubt—to uphold my own voice.”



Ken Regan/Camera 5

The Egyptian Theatre in Park City, Utah is home to the Sundance Film Festival, attended by over 20,000 people each year.

LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS

Building on a City's Industrial Heritage

Lowell, Massachusetts saw its heyday in the mid-1800s, as the nation's largest cotton textile center. Charles Dickens even visited in 1842 to wonder at the utopian miracle at the center of America's Industrial Revolution.

But by the 1970s, the glow of the mechanical age had long since died out. The canals that once brought power to hundreds of clattering looms had become open sewers. The mills, previously admired for their utilitarian beauty, were lying in ruins.

Most Lowellians wanted to put their industrial past behind them, taking the conventional route to urban renewal. They planned to drain the canals and pave them over. They wanted to raze the crumbling mills and erect modern structures in their places. But a few local visionaries disagreed. Unable to secure local or state funding for their ideas, they appealed to the National Endowment for the Arts and were awarded a design grant for \$30,000 in 1974.

"To get a grant from the NEA was tremendously helpful and really galvanized our efforts to transform the city's identity with reverence for its role in American history as the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution," explains Frank Keefe, who was then Lowell's City Planner. "It was the first time there was a consensus that we should be celebrating our heritage instead of destroying it."

Momentum grew and the state pitched in \$10 million for the project. Shortly afterward, Congress approved \$40 million to make central Lowell a national park. "A little seed money and a good idea got a lot done very quickly," Keefe recalls.

The key to the project's success was involving local residents in the planning process, says Bob Malavich, Lowell's Director of Housing and Community Development. "We used the perceived negatives of our city—such as our rundown mills and polluted canals—and we turned them into positives. They became a tool for saying 'We're different and we have meaning and purpose.' We had a definite idea of who we are, who we were and who we can be."



James Higgins

The restored Boot Cotton Mills and clock tower are part of the Lowell National Historical Park, which attracts 500,000 visitors annually.



James Higgins

Lowell's 5.6 mile canal system, once an open sewer, has been cleaned up to provide a connection between the city's neighborhoods and the setting for sightseeing cruises. Original planning for the revitalization was conducted with an Arts Endowment grant.

Ribbons of waterways and walkways were conceived, to connect neighborhoods with each other and to discourage people from driving their cars. Culture, once laughed at in Lowell, was woven into plans for the city's rebirth, according to Malavich.

"The community made the decision to use culture, recreation and education as part of the overall approach to revitalization; we didn't just focus on economic development and real estate," he adds. "It's resulted in a city that's very livable from a human point of view."

The renovations helped Lowell attract investment and new businesses, causing a dramatic drop in the unemployment rate and a reinvigorated cultural life. Old mill buildings now house Internet start-ups, apartments for the elderly, a cultural center, an historical museum and artists' studios. A sports arena was built, canal and river cruises were developed and an annual folk festival was created, the latter with early support from the NEA. The Merrimack Repertory Theater moved from the suburbs to downtown. Lowell even had to add a visitor center to handle the 500,000 people it attracts each year.

Lowell's success has been replicated in numerous locations around the country, as urban planners discover the benefits of city centers that serve as residential, cultural and economic anchors.

"Lowell's legacy is that it's causing mid-sized cities nationwide to realize that their downtowns are vital centers that play an important role in their community's identity," Keefe says. "This whole movement came from Lowell and what went on there."

PROJECT ROW HOUSES

Blighted Structures Get New Life As Artists' Studios

Houston artist Rick Lowe had a dream. The transforming power of the arts would be used to rebuild an impoverished neighborhood and, in the process, help rebuild the lives of its citizens. That was back in 1993. Since then, a predominantly African-American, underserved community in Houston, Texas has become home to Project Row Houses.

This unprecedented model project began with \$25,000 in seed money from the National Endowment for the Arts. "Without the initial NEA money, Project Row Houses would still be just an idea. It helped validate the project, attracting other corporate and foundation support," according to Founding Director Rick Lowe. With the federal dollars in hand, local businesses and arts groups stepped forward with financial and personnel support. Residents from around the city came to help clean up the site and the sheriff's office cooperated by sending volunteers to pitch in. With this unique partnership of neighborhood residents, local volunteers, arts organizations and area businesses, Lowe's vision began to take shape. Previously uninhabitable residences were transformed into artist studios and exhibition spaces for local, national and international artists—a place where neighborhood children, Houston residents and visitors from all over the country and the world could interact and experience the arts firsthand.

Before long, Project Row Houses expanded to meet other crucial neighborhood needs—developing after-school and adult education programs, summer courses, an infant care facility, a parenting class and housing for teenage mothers and a neighborhood garden. Throughout the project, Lowe says, "artists are encouraged to partner with the general community, such as parents, churches, youth programs and senior citizen groups." Many of the young people who benefit from the project return later to contribute their time as mentors.

In the process of transforming the spirit of its community, Project Row Houses also has become a major player in the economic development of the area, making a substantial impact on real estate and tourism. The success of Project Row Houses has not gone unnoticed. Other cities are exploring how to replicate its vision, described as a successful blend of culture and community service. So far, more than 100 artists, more than half from outside the Houston area, and countless citizens have enriched their lives through this exemplary project. As Lowe sees it, "Artists are the visionaries of our community."



Project Row Houses

In addition to art exhibitions, Project Row House provides after-school and adult education programs, a neighborhood garden, a child care facility, a parenting class and housing for teenage mothers.



Project Row Houses

With the help of NEA seed money, Project Row Houses transformed a Houston neighborhood by turning rundown housing into artists' studios and exhibition spaces.



Project Row Houses

Volunteers pitch in to clean up the site and make it a place where Houston residents and visitors can interact and experience the arts firsthand.

ALTERNATIVE SPACES MOVEMENT

Artists Reinvent Urban Landscape

Many struggling artists were frustrated by the 1970s art scene. They felt closed out of commercial galleries and shunned by the museum world, which largely declined to show the work of living artists. Determined to take control of their own destinies, groups of these committed and idealistic artists took over whatever spaces they could afford, creating workshop and exhibition sites that they could run themselves. They reclaimed neglected industrial buildings and abandoned warehouses—going anywhere they could find low rents and expansive spaces.

Their grass-roots efforts were often multidisciplinary and multicultural, showcasing the talents of unheralded emerging artists, including women and minorities. Their collaborations included avant-garde installations, performance art, exhibitions and working facilities for artists. The exchange of creative ideas and the examination of social issues were more important to them than commercial success.

As part of this movement, a group of Atlanta photographers founded a storefront collective in 1973 called Nexus. They later joined with other artists to lease an old elementary school before moving on to a decrepit warehouse complex in an abandoned neighborhood downtown. Nexus transformed that space to house galleries, artists' studios and its award-winning publication operation.

Nexus, now known as the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, has received Arts Endowment support for exhibitions, publications, workshops and other programming since 1978. The NEA also awarded \$165,000 to help Nexus establish a cash reserve and an endowment as well as to renovate its current space, a former truck repair garage and warehouse complex.

“The NEA was a critical factor in the development of Nexus and of the Alternative Spaces Movement in general,” says Louise Shaw, former Executive Director of Nexus. “The agency helped create policy and proactively changed the field. It rewarded innovation, experimentation and community activism.”

Federal support of Nexus was an important endorsement of its artists and the quality of their ideas, she adds. That in turn brought respect and funding from state and local arts organizations.

The Arts Endowment also supported other examples of the Alternative Spaces Movement including New York's Artists Space, San Francisco's New Langton Arts (formerly 80 Langton St.), Chicago's Randolph St. Gallery, Houston's DiverseWorks and New Orleans' Contemporary Arts Center. The creation of many of



Lucinda Burren

Nexus Gallery, now known as Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, turned this decrepit truck repair garage into a space for its exhibitions, performances and educational programming.

these spaces contributed to the economic and cultural revitalization of ailing urban neighborhoods.

By the 1990s, the traditional art world adopted many of the alternative spaces movement’s characteristics, showing more experimental work and including more culturally diverse artists. But the lasting legacy of the alternative spaces movement, according to Shaw, is how it revolutionized the role of the artist in American society.

“We see it all the time—artists’ opinions are more valued today and they’re more likely to be included in the process of community building,” Shaw observes. “It helped to create public awareness about the needs of artists and produced a general understanding that art is a tool for social change and community development.”

Below: The renovation of the rundown garage complex has helped to trigger an economic revitalization in the formerly blighted downtown neighborhood, bringing in new restaurants and other businesses.

“The NEA was a critical factor in the development of Nexus and of the Alternative Spaces Movement in general. The agency helped create policy and proactively changed the field. It rewarded innovation, experimentation and community activism.”

Louise Shaw
former Executive Director of Nexus



Atlanta Contemporary Art Center

AMERICAN MUSIC

Fostering Musical Creation and Performance

American music, especially contemporary work, was not widely performed until the early 1980s. This shift can be traced to an emphasis on American music begun by the Arts Endowment. Several Endowment initiatives encouraged orchestras, chamber ensembles and choruses to commission, perform and record new works. The NEA also established meaningful partnerships to advance American music's creation and presentation, including those with Meet The Composer, Reader's Digest, the Helen F. Whitaker Fund and others.

"Previously, the European orchestras and administrators looked down their noses at American composers, unwilling to acknowledge them. Now, 25 years later, American music is played by all the European orchestras," remarks Gerard Schwarz, Music Director of the Seattle Symphony. "The respected position that American composers hold around the world is due to the quality of their music and to the NEA's efforts to record that music. It is powerful to see the difference those recordings have made."

Endowment programs like Composer in Residence educated audiences, increasing their understanding and appreciation of contemporary music. "Before American music was better understood, orchestras played it safe and focused on the familiar older works," says Henry Fogel, President of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. "The NEA played an important role by encouraging increased programming of American music."

As a part of that effort, the Endowment created the Consortium Commissioning grant category in 1985. It was a response to the need for support of repeat performances of new American music, which are usually more difficult to fund than premieres. Three organizations commissioned three composers; each organization performed each of the three works twice. "The NEA has been a constant force in the collaborative process. Although the amount offered monetarily was small, that it was part of the equation was very important. Psychologically that the nation cared on some level was important," states Michael Tilson Thomas, Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and Miami's New World Symphony.



HD Video/KCTS Television/Seattle

Gerard Schwarz, Music Director, conducts the Seattle Symphony in Benaroya Hall, Seattle, Washington. The orchestra has recorded numerous American works with assistance from the NEA.

The state of the American recording industry was another long-standing concern of the Endowment and the music community. In 1981, the NEA began awarding recording grants, designed to encourage the preservation of American music. A wealth of music was recorded and distributed including John Adams' *Nixon in China*, Elliott Carter's *Canon for Four*, George Perle's *Cello Sonata* and Virgil Thompson's *Sonata A Quattro*.

One project funded by the program was the American Composers Series undertaken by the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. The complete orchestral works of Walter Piston, Howard Hanson, and David Diamond were recorded. The first compact disc of the project series garnered three Grammy nominations, a *Stereo Review* Record of the Year award, and more than 30 weeks on *Billboard's* best-seller charts.

Since 1974, the Houston Grand Opera has presented 24 world premieres and six American premieres, including John Adams' *Nixon in China* and Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk*. "A lot of the success that opera is experiencing now has to do with the fact of new commissions and compositions that are distinctly American," notes David Gockley, General Director. "The NEA provided the catalyst for a lot of works that otherwise would not have happened."

"Previously, the European orchestras and administrators looked down their noses at American composers, unwilling to acknowledge them. Now, 25 years later, American music is played by all the European orchestras."

Gerard Schwarz
Music Director of the Seattle Symphony

SPOLETO FESTIVAL

Internationally Renowned Arts Festival Brings Local Benefits

With its vibrant array of dance and theater performances, concerts and exhibitions, the Spoleto Festival USA attracts visitors from around the world and is a vital component of Charleston, South Carolina’s commercial revitalization. The festival is the American counterpart to the Festival dei Due Mondi (Festival of Two Worlds) in Spoleto, Italy and provides opportunities both for artists to showcase their talent and for audiences to experience a wide range of cultures and artistic styles.

An NEA grant supported the initial planning efforts to extend the Italian festival to a companion location in America in the early 1970s. “It was the NEA that got us started,” says Priscilla Morgan, former Associate Director of the festival. Morgan was on the team whose job it was to find the right location. Charleston fit the bill.

Since the festival began, the city’s annual visitation has increased threefold and brings \$42 million directly into the community each year, according to the City of Charleston. Through a ripple effect, the festival’s annual economic impact is estimated to be more than \$100 million. “Cities all over are developing arts districts or arts centers, and in large part they have this festival to thank, because it has shown mayors and city councils that if we invest more in the arts, we will get a high return in terms of the economic and physical and social development of our cities,” explains Joseph P. Riley, Jr., Mayor of Charleston. Mayor Riley has been involved with this internationally recognized celebration of the arts since its beginning in 1977.

The 17-day long festival offers a broad range of artistic styles and forms, including classical ballet; modern dance; opera; chamber, symphonic, and choral music; jazz; theater; and the literary and visual arts. More than 100 performances are offered each season by artists from around the world with as many as ten performances on any given day. “Without the NEA, the Spoleto Festival in Charleston wouldn’t be there. It wouldn’t have happened,” remarks the festival’s current General Director Nigel Redden.

Opposite: The Spoleto Festival, created with NEA funding, showcases a vibrant array of art forms, attracting visitors from around the world and adding more than \$100 million annually to Charleston’s economy. *Photo by William Struhs.*



OPEN STUDIO

Helping Artists Go Online

Hispanic artist Carlos Rael is a *santero*, a carver of religious icons known as *santos*. *Santo* carving is an art form that originated centuries ago in Europe and continues to evolve in the Americas. While his artistic style is traditional, his marketing methods are cutting edge.

Rael is one of a growing number of artists in Taos, New Mexico who are learning to use technology through Open Studio, a program jointly created and funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Benton Foundation. Expanding the reach and potential of the Internet, Open Studio trains artists to use new technology not only as a medium for displaying their work, but also as a resource for artistic research and for facilitating communication between artists and art consumers across the country. In addition, the project's Web site provides over 500 additional training resources, tools and materials. An example of a successful public-private partnership, the Endowment's total investment of \$1.5 million has been nearly tripled with funds from other sources, further expanding the program's reach.



Artist Carlos Rael has created a Web site to market his works, carvings of religious icons known as *santos*. Rael received computer and Internet training as part of the Arts Endowment-sponsored Open Studio program. *Photo provided by Carlos Rael.*

Open Studio funds enabled La Plaza, the New Mexican non-profit organization serving as the Taos training site, to purchase state-of-the-art computer facilities and bring in specialists to train local artists such as Rael.

Rael says going online has transformed his career. "The flexibility computers bring to my work is unbelievable. I think we are about to see a real transition in the art world in which virtual galleries will be the wave of the future, since they will allow artists such as myself to rotate art exhibits more easily and to reach a larger audience. Also, virtual galleries cut out the large commissions that galleries charge."

While the Taos site helps Rael and other New Mexican artists find markets for their works, over 70 additional sites nationwide are encouraging artists and organizations to become participants in the digital arena in a variety of other ways. For example, the Seattle Art Museum has developed a curriculum specifically to teach artists how to look at the Web as a new medium. In East St. Louis, Illinois, the Katherine Dunham Center for the Arts and Humanities put its collection online, creating a virtual museum. Space One Eleven in Birmingham, Alabama has formed a partnership allowing it to offer commercial Web server space and technical assistance that would not otherwise be available to artists.



The Open Studio Web site is located at www.openstudio.org.

In New Mexico, Carlos Rael has high hopes for the new technology. “My site is new and is just starting to get recognition but already I have gotten positive responses. In the long run, I think having access to computers and being able to run my own Web site will allow my name and my work to become better known. The possibilities are just so far reaching.”



Artist Carlos Rael practices the centuries-old art form of *santos* carving. While his artistic style is traditional, his online marketing methods are cutting edge. *Photos provided by Carlos Rael.*



Thomas Hart Benton's *The Sources of Country Music* portrays 17 nearly life-sized figures and illustrates the various cultural influences on country music, including a train, a steamboat, a black banjo player, country fiddlers and dulcimer players, hymn singers and square dancers. The painting memorializes entertainer Tex Ritter as the singing cowboy on the right. Image provided by *The Country Music Foundation*.

COUNTRY MUSIC FOUNDATION

Thomas Hart Benton's Final Gift

Artist Thomas Hart Benton was reviewing his completed work illustrating the origins of country music when he died of heart failure on January 19, 1975. The colorful six-by-ten foot mural was commissioned by Nashville's Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, with support from the Arts Endowment.

"Our board was reluctant at first to enter into a fine arts commission," says Bill Ivey, former Executive Director of the Country Music Foundation. "The NEA grant was critical to making it happen. The Endowment's willingness to put in money was a sign this was a project with real value."

Ivey, who later became the NEA's Chairman, says the painting developed into the main point of contact between the museum and the arts community. The mural and Benton's original sketches have toured frequently to a wide variety of venues, from the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum to a Nashville auto factory cafeteria, where live country music was provided to accompany the painting during meal breaks.

The project also helped shift the museum's focus. "It motivated the board and staff to become engaged in the world of visual arts as it relates to country music," Ivey says. That led to other art exhibitions including one showcasing album cover designs.

The mural, considered to be one of Benton's finest works, was commissioned for \$60,000 with a third of that coming from the Arts Endowment. Now worth nearly \$1 million, it's the museum's greatest asset aside from bricks and mortar, and has even been used to secure loans for other projects.

The impact of this single NEA grant continues to resonate within the Country Music Foundation. "It provided the motivation for the organization to delve into the realm of visual art, created a vital connection between the museum and the arts community and produced an increasingly valuable asset," Ivey says. "This is really a grant that keeps on giving."



Bill Ivey, then Executive Director of the Country Music Foundation, views Thomas Hart Benton's *The Sources of Country Music* in the artist's studio shortly after his death in January 1975.

GREAT PERFORMANCES

Bringing Dance to America's Homes

The best dancers in America appear in living rooms across the country, courtesy of the Arts Endowment-supported *Dance in America* program. Part of the *Great Performances* television series, it brings many of the finest classical ballet and modern dance companies into the homes of up to four million viewers per broadcast.

The inception of the program dates back to 1974, when the NEA and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting invited public television stations to submit proposals for a series celebrating American dance. Thirteen/WNET in New York City was chosen and the NEA along with Exxon and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting together awarded \$3 million for the first eight programs. The Endowment continues to provide significant support to the series. Judy Kinberg, Senior Producer, notes, "If there had been no NEA, there would be no *Dance in America*."

In announcing the new series back in 1975, Jay Iselin, former President of WNET, said, "*Dance in America* is a tribute to the depth, richness, and diversity of American dance so evident to all of us. We all believe it's time to share this flowering with spectators throughout the country and the world."

The series does not intend to replace the experience of live performance but rather seeks to extend and, in certain cases, inspire it. The Joffrey Ballet was one of the first companies to appear on *Dance in America*. A National Research Center survey conducted shortly after the Joffrey's program aired, found that of first-time attendees to the company's live performances, 59 percent noted that seeing the broadcast was a significant factor in their decision to attend.

In addition to developing audiences, the series inspired artists. Desmond Richardson, former principal dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and guest artist with other major companies, is among many for whom *Dance in America* was an important influence. "*Dance in America* was a huge catalyst for me," Richardson says. "I was mesmerized by the magic, seamlessness, and passion of the dancing." After seeing artists such as Rudolph Nureyev dance across the screen, he told his mother he wanted to become a professional dancer.

Jack Mitchell



Desmond Richardson was inspired to become a professional dancer while watching an early *Dance in America* broadcast. Here he performs with Renee Robinson in Ulysses Dove's *Episodes*, for a *Dance in America* special, *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater: Steps Ahead*.

Dance in America is also unique in the relationship it has developed between choreographers and television producers and directors. When the choreography is the primary element in a program, the choreographer is not only the source of content but also a full collaborator in the process of shaping the work for television.

The NEA has also provided significant support to other popular and lauded television series including *American Masters*, *Live From Lincoln Center*, *Alive From Off Center*, *American Playhouse*, and *Metropolitan Opera Presents*.

Low Light Camera Technology

The beeping of cellular phones and pagers can shatter an audience's enjoyment of a live performance. At such times, modern technological advances are not especially appreciated. But in the mid-1970s, a new technological development dramatically improved the experience of watching a live performance, whether in the theater or on a live television broadcast at home.

A quarter century ago, live concert and dance broadcasts required exceptionally bright stage lights and large, obtrusive television cameras. Audience members seated in the theater inevitably found that this equipment hampered their enjoyment of the performance, while those watching on the screen at home saw a less-than-ideal image. Then, with assistance from an NEA grant, the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts developed special cameras that used extremely low levels of light to transmit a picture. This new technology allowed those watching from their living rooms to share more of the intimacy and excitement of a live performance while minimizing the disruption for those attending in person.

MANCHESTER CRAFTSMEN'S GUILD

Preparing Young People for Arts Careers



Lynn Johnson

The Manchester Craftsmen's Guild provides art classes and career training to Pittsburgh teens, with support from the Arts Endowment.



Lynn Johnson

Over 75 percent of the Guild's participants have gone on directly to college after completing high school. One is now a photo-journalist at the *Detroit Free Press*.

More than 30 years ago in a high school pottery shop on Pittsburgh's North Side, a 15-year-old African American youth watched in astonishment as his teacher shaped a vase on a potter's wheel. The student, Bill Strickland, went on to found the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild in 1968 on a shoestring budget, operating out of a donated row house. Initially an informal, neighborhood-based art program for inner-city children, the guild has become a nationally renowned arts training center serving thousands of urban young people and other community residents.

With the help in the mid-1980s of a \$250,000 NEA Challenge grant, requiring a three-to-one match, the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild now occupies a state of the art, terra-cotta masonry structure near the neighborhood in which Strickland grew up. The grant was a key part of the guild's capital campaign that resulted in a 62,500 square foot facility, including permanent photography and ceramic art studios, a multi-purpose exhibition space, concert hall and library. The new facility allowed the guild to expand its programs and achieve a new stage in its development.

The building houses arts and career training programs and is a haven to many of Pittsburgh's teens. "We provide a sanctuary of sanity and understanding that they may not have anywhere else in their lives," explains Joshua Green, a ceramic artist and Director of Arts and Education at the guild. "We're really about changing kids' lives by not only teaching them new skills but by providing them a safe place to be. We expose them to a wide range of people and give them the opportunity to dream about their future."

Guild programs are carried out in partnership with Pittsburgh's Public Schools. Guild artists work with classroom teachers in a broad range of subjects to enrich the curriculum for up to 1,000 students each week through hands-on, creative activities. And almost 400 high school students attend the guild's after-school studio sessions, making new friends and obtaining free instruction in ceramic art, digital design, painting, drawing, photography and media arts.

The guild fosters students' skill development and the reflection that connects art with their lives. For the past decade, over 75 percent of Manchester Craftsmen's Guild alumni have gone directly to college following high school. About a fifth of these study art or art education, and all find that their time at the guild affects their lives in significant ways. Alumnus Gabriel B. Tait, now a photojournalist for the *Detroit Free Press*, says, "The guild provided an environment that allowed all students to excel. My first photography classes were there. I learned that the sky was the limit and the camera was an extension of what was in my heart. The guild helped develop my dreams and make my goals become a reality."



Lynn Johnson

The Manchester Craftsmen's Guild offers free instruction in ceramics, digital design, painting, drawing, photography and media arts.

The Manchester Craftsmen's Guild is also renowned for its Community Development Corporation/Arts Resource Initiative, which enables arts administrators and community development leaders to use the arts as an integral part of community revitalization. The initiative brings together community arts programming and entrepreneurial organizational development on the premise that combining the two renews the economic, physical and social conditions of neighborhoods, towns and cities.

In addition to supporting the capital campaign, the NEA has funded numerous guild programs over the years. Strickland, now President and CEO of the guild and recipient of a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship, says, "The National Endowment grant funds have provided a platform for which Manchester Craftsmen's Guild has created nationally recognized programs in the arts, education, entrepreneurship and community economic development. It is a textbook example about how government, the private sector and the social sector can form a strategic alliance on behalf of its most disadvantaged citizens. The NEA represents a premier example of how this can be done."

WOLF TRAP INSTITUTE FOR EARLY LEARNING THROUGH THE ARTS

Preschoolers Benefit from the Arts

They may be young, but they sure do have the blues. Memphis musician Kenneth Jackson sees to that. He uses music and movement to teach preschool students everything from the alphabet and numbers to proper behavior and good hygiene practices.

“I woke up this morning and my hair was all a mess. I tried to comb it out, but my mother could do it best,” he sings to them. “I won’t smell good if I don’t jump in the tub! I get my soap and water, and I start that rub-a-dub-dub.”

Jackson created that song and others as part of the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts program headquartered in Vienna, Virginia. The accomplished blues musician, who got his start as an opening act for James Brown, says the kids really respond to his tunes. “They were using old nursery rhymes but I felt like they needed a beat. Something these little ones could respond to,” he explains. “By using the arts, you can really grab them and open them up to learning.”

Significant research had been done on the benefits of arts education for older children but not as much was known about its impact on preschoolers. In 1994, the NEA provided seed money so Wolf Trap could study how that age group can learn through the arts. Wolf Trap used the information it gathered to develop its early learning program. It brings specially trained professional actors, dancers, storytellers and musicians into Head Start centers and pre-school classrooms to engage children, their teachers and parents in performing arts learning activities. Wolf Trap’s residency program is designed to help children improve their self-confidence, socialization skills and ability to concentrate and remember information. Wolf Trap also offers workshops to provide teachers with strategies that allow them to weave these arts activities into their entire curriculum.

“It’s made the arts part of the early learning experience for tens of thousands of children in our 13 regional programs. We’ve also given teachers and parents a sense of how the arts can connect with their own lives and how they can approach the arts and learning,” says Miriam Flaherty, Director of Education for the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts.

NEA support also helped Wolf Trap attract corporate funding, allowing it to expand the program across the country. “Whenever we get NEA funding it’s like a slingshot. It helps us launch new programs and initiatives. Not only does it inspire our other funders to come on board, but the schools respond to the Endowment’s support as well,” observes Flaherty. “Also, the teachers are impressed. They recognize the NEA’s support means they are taking part in a quality program.”



Musician Kenneth Jackson uses the blues to help teach young children academic concepts such as the alphabet and numbers, as well as life skills including how to behave and how to practice good hygiene. The program was developed by the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts, with NEA support.

For the children, it means they are more engaged in classroom activities. While singing and dancing, they also absorb important messages like this one in a Kenneth Jackson song: “I’m not gonna bite. I’m not gonna fight. And when I grow up, I’m gonna be all right.”

The Art of Learning

The arts play a central role in the quality of life for persons of all ages. The National Endowment for the Arts supports education in the arts by assisting elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools; teachers; artists; and arts and education organizations.

Beginning in 1969, NEA’s Artists-in-Schools program placed visual artists in six school districts. By 1974, all 50 states and two of the six special U.S. jurisdictions had initiated similar programs. The NEA helps to make the arts basic to pre-K through 12th grade education in its partnership agreement with state arts agencies. In 1997, these agreements yielded a total investment of \$37 million in arts education supporting more than 7,400 projects in 2,600 communities, involving thousands of teachers and artists.

In partnership with the Department of Education, the Arts Endowment supported the development of the National Standards for Arts Education, guaranteed the arts were included in the National Assessment of Educational Progress and conducted comprehensive national surveys of arts education in the elementary and secondary schools. The NEA has also been at the helm of important arts education research efforts.

The Arts Endowment maintains that education in the arts should be made available to all Americans beginning in the pre-school years and continuing throughout life. Arts education has been shown to improve life skills including self-esteem, teamwork, motivation, discipline and problem-solving skills that help the young and old alike.

YOUTHARTS

Providing Positive Alternatives

Perception is everything. Michael, age 14, says he sees himself as cool, drug-free, gang-free and a good photographer. He thinks others see him as a punk and a drug-addict who fights a lot.

The exercise is part of the YouthARTS program, designed to help teens stay out of trouble, get better grades and feel better about themselves and their future. The NEA provided start-up funding for the project, a collaboration between arts organizations and the U.S. Department of Justice. “Young people who are involved in making something beautiful today are less likely to turn to acts of violence and destruction tomorrow,” notes U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno.

The YouthARTS Development Project conducted a three-year field study focusing on pilot arts programs for teens in Portland, Oregon; San Antonio, Texas and Atlanta, Georgia. The resulting research shows participants improved their ability to express anger appropriately, learned to communicate more effectively, and were able to work more cooperatively to resolve conflicts. “It teaches you a lot of things, not only about art but about life,” explains 16-year-old Jasmine. “You learn to appreciate life in a different perspective.”

In Portland, teens who’ve had scrapes with the law are enrolled in group sessions with artists, meeting twice a week after school for three months. Each session focuses on a different medium including printmaking, photography, poetry, drama and videography. Probation officers participate in the sessions and control any behavioral problems.

The outcomes there have been encouraging. For example, more than 30 percent of arts program participants reported an improved attitude towards school. Only 22 percent of them had a new court referral compared with 47 percent of the comparison youth. The level and type of offense committed during the program period were less severe than prior offenses. While only 43 percent of the program participants demonstrated an ability to cooperate with others at the start of the program, a full 100 percent did so by the time it ended 12 weeks later.

The YouthARTS project also included the production and distribution of a toolkit, designed to guide other communities in creating and evaluating effective arts programs for young people. “I learned that I can stick with things,” one participant reports. “I learned I can do things I don’t normally do. It wasn’t perfect but I did a good job. Something that I finished paid off.”



One YouthARTS exercise involves the creation of self-portraits. At left, Christopher, 15, shows how he sees himself. At right, he shows how he believes others see him. Photos provided by YouthARTS.

MUSIC! WORDS! OPERA!

Universal Art Form Teaches Many Lessons

History, Language, Drama, Science, Social Studies, Literature, Poetry, Dance. Children can learn about all these topics and more through exploring opera, the universal art form that incorporates all of these subjects into a single genre.

Music! Words! Opera! is a program for young people begun by Opera America in 1990 through support from the Arts Endowment. It offers a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to learning core subjects through the study and creation of this multi-art form.

Music! Words! Opera! is available in nearly 1,000 schools in 15 states across the U.S. Resource materials developed by educators and opera professionals together provide an integrated curriculum and methods to explore cultural diversity and cultivate creative and critical thinking skills. The program brings about

collaborations between schools and local opera companies where students compose music, write libretti, design costumes, make scenery, and work within a budget as they create, produce and perform their own works.

The Opera Theatre of St. Louis (OTSL) became one of the first companies in the country to implement the *M!W!O!* Program in 1991. The opera company works in schools during the academic year, offering classroom enrichment through visits from professional composers, artists, storytellers and docents.

OTSL's *M!W!O!* Festival for Young People takes place in the summer. The program involves 150 young people, ages 9–12. "Opera helps me not be so



Jerry Nounheim, Jr.

Students study Scott Joplin's *Treemonisha* during the Music!Words!Opera! Festival Camp 2000 held by the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

shy about singing and performing,” says participant Brigid, age 12. “We had to take risks by singing in front of a crowd. It built my self-esteem and my character. It made me not afraid.”

Classroom teachers also participate through intensive summer enrichment and training workshops conducted by national trainers. Teachers from the St. Louis Public Schools attend workshops and implement opera programming in their classrooms. OTSL provides storytellers, composers, stage directors and volunteer docents for classroom appearances. It also allows students to attend dress rehearsals and take backstage tours. Visiting artists present informal recitals in the classroom to assist teachers in implementing the curriculum.

“Some students need more than a pen and paper approach to learning. This program offers a comprehensive approach using music, dance, drama and visual arts in teaching the core curriculum,” states Christina Boudoures, an art teacher at St. Louis’ Clark Elementary School, and *M! W! O!* program participant.

“*Music! Words! Opera!* wouldn’t have been possible without the NEA,” comments Marc Scorca, President & CEO of Opera America. “Since its introduction, the program’s materials have been embraced in numerous cities across the country. Related intensive teacher training was also funded. The NEA both helped to develop the materials and ensure its expanding utilization. Research shows that opera audiences are growing steadily and growing younger. The proof is in the pudding.”



Jerry Naunheim, Jr.

As part of the NEA-supported *Music!Words!Opera!* project, the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis presented *Sukey and the Mermaid*, written and performed by students of the Carr Lane Visual and Performing Arts School.

JAZZ SPORTS

Teen Music Program Provides Role Models

Combining basketball and jazz is a sure way to attract teens. Jazz Sports is an innovative after-school program that teaches high school students about music and gives them the chance to perform in front of live audiences at NBA games. Developed by the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz with support from the Arts Endowment, the program also adds structure and discipline to the participants' lives.



The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz

Students gain valuable experience performing in front of live audiences at NBA games as a part of the NEA-supported Jazz Sports program.

program participant Ryan Porter. “Jazz Sports gave us enough room to learn, not even just about music but about the music business and the people involved in it. Interacting with professional musicians in the master classes gave us a different mindset. It showed us the possibilities and put our heads in the right place to continue on with our music.”

Basketball legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Chairman of Jazz Sports, says basketball and jazz teach similar lessons. “Jazz players pass the solo spotlight amongst themselves the way basketball players pass the ball. And, in both cases, it only works when it’s about teamwork.”

Since 1995, Jazz Sports has involved over 9,000 students from 30 schools in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. In addition to receiving regular instruction in jazz theory, improvisation and technique, the students also take part in master classes taught by jazz legends such as Herbie Hancock, Kevin Eubanks and Ernie Watts.

The exposure helps the students set goals for themselves, says former pro-



Ryan Porter (right) says interacting with professional musicians during the Jazz Sports program helped him to see new possibilities for his own career. Porter is now studying music at Manhattan College. *Photo provided by Ryan Porter.*

Porter, now studying music at Manhattan College, is only one of the program's success stories. Over 90 percent of Jazz Sports participants have maintained a grade point average of 3.2 or above and have attended college after graduating.

Thelonious Monk, Jr., Director of Jazz Sports, describes this program as an example of how the Arts Endowment provides a crucial leadership role in the development of non-commercial arts programming. "The NEA is not simply a funding source—it's also a great place for gathering and networking," Monk says. "It supplies the impetus for projects like Jazz Sports, not just financially, but also spiritually."

"Interacting with professional musicians in the master classes gave us a different mindset. It showed us the possibilities and put our heads in the right place to continue on with our music."

Ryan Porter
Jazz Sports participant

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