

1973

Business Committee for the Humanities (1973-1979): Correspondence 03

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BUSINESS COMMITTEE FOR THE ARTS, INC.
1270 avenue of the americas, new york, n.y. 10020 (212) 765-5980

chairman
FRANK STANTON

AC _____
DECL _____
REP _____
RECEP _____
ONLY _____
"NO" _____

Dear Senator Pell:

Your office may have told you that I tried to reach you this morning. It had been my hope that I would be able to talk with you personally about what I am now doing by this letter.

The annual business meeting, reception and dinner of the Business Committee for the Arts will be held this year on Monday evening, April 9, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. On behalf of the officers and Directors, I would like to invite you to be our dinner speaker on this occasion.

Although I am confident that you know about BCA, its programs and objectives, I am enclosing some material which will give you additional background.

The occasion will be black tie, with most of our distinguished members and their wives in attendance. With a few special guests, the audience will come to about 200. In past years our speakers have been Douglas Dillon, David Rockefeller, Senator Percy, Congressman Brademas and, last year, J. Irwin Miller. A copy of his speech is included with the materials. Goldwin McLellan, President of BCA, will be available to coordinate arrangements with your staff, should you be able to be with us on April 9.

I understand that you will return to Washington mid-week. I must be there again Thursday for a meeting of The Business Council. I will call you then in the hope that you

will be able to give me your response. We would be
honored indeed if you could accept our invitation.

With all good wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be a cursive name, possibly "S. Pell".

The Honorable Claiborne Pell
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

February 10, 1973



Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.
51 West 52 Street.
New York, New York 10019
(212) 765-4321

WISCONSIN CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS AND THE ARTS

FRANK STANTON, Vice Chairman

Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.

Racine, September 28, 1972

It is a very special pleasure for me to be here with you tonight. Wisconsin has always occupied a particularly strong and central position in the American experience -- socially, politically, economically, and -- what specifically concerns us tonight -- in the arts. In the present century, this state has been a conspicuously lively source of talent in opening up new prospects in the arts, and in the application of their values to daily life, for the rest of the country and, indeed, for the rest of the world.

We have to go no farther than the remarkable building in which we are meeting to be aware of this. The questioning, innovative and visionary spirit of its creator epitomized the arts at their freest and at their best. Frank Lloyd Wright took the oldest form of architecture -- the dwelling unit -- and in a single lifetime did more to free it from the age-old tyranny of the box-with-windows concept than everyone else put together in the country's three-and-a-half centuries of house-building. He brought the same high qualities of boldness, independence and imagination to commercial architecture -- nowhere better exemplified than in his work for the Johnson Wax Company here in Racine, and to institutional architecture, beautifully culminating a long and richly productive life with the provocative spatial

I evoke the memory of that gifted son of Richland Center tonight, not just for its own sake -- rewarding and nourishing as that might be -- but because he seems to me uniquely to have demonstrated in his life's work the indivisibility of our daily lives -- in the home, in commerce and industry and in our public institutions -- and of the arts that enrich those lives and, what is more, give them grace and meaning. That indivisibility ought to be reflected, not in occasional visits of the layman to the museum or in the occasional venturing forth of the artist from his studio, but in the daily spending of life, going about all its tasks and its pleasures. The great lesson that men of Wright's perceptions teach is that this is possible; that utility and beauty are allies and should not be in conflict; and that function should not defy form nor form deny function.

Another Wisconsinite, Thornton Wilder, freed the modern theatre and the novel from many of their old conventions with such works as Our Town and The Bridge of San Luis Rey. A third, Orson Welles, broke new ground in film-making with Citizen Kane. Still others -- Woody Herman in music; Alfred Lunt, Frederic March, Spencer Tracy in acting; Houdini in his illusory masterpieces -- gave the ancient arts of performance vastly expanded dimensions that brought new insights and new joys to millions. And in the fine arts, Georgia O'Keefe, in her long career as one of the world's greatest painters, achieved new levels of strength and clarity in her luminous use of color.

In my own field, we are constantly aware of the enormous role that art plays in human communications. Art is the cohesive that binds together the centuries: virtually all that we know and prize of ancient civilizations, in which many of our most-prized institutions are rooted, is in surviving remnants of their arts in the most inclusive sense. The ~~common thread~~

diverse civilizations today is their art -- the beat of the music, the movement of the dance, the line of the sculpture, the hue of the painting.

This was effectively demonstrated early in the 1960s, I think, by the incredible reception given to the world tour of the collection assembled by S. C. Johnson and Son, of whose foundation we are guests here tonight. Under the auspices of the United States Information Agency, the 102 American paintings were more widely seen than any other collection of American art in history, reaching eager audiences in such remote and diverse places as Tokyo and Stockholm, Milan and Dublin, Athens and West Berlin. My old colleague, Edward R. Murrow, then Director of USIA, who knew the world and its conflicts better than most men, said: "[Our art, music, theatre, literature -- the record of our human experiences] capture the heart and soul of America in ways that can be understood most readily by persons in other lands whose own cultures have survived, developed and flourished over the centuries...It is this record that the government seeks to send abroad along with our business skills, economic help and military assistance. For such human experiences are universal, and they are the stuff of a true common bond of understanding among all peoples."

The significant thing is that the arts are all-embracing -- that they are human in their scope and permeating in their effect. And so the arts are not a luxury; they are a necessity, without which the ultimate point of the lives of mankind everywhere would be lost and their immediate delight diminished. This is true not just of the few but also of the many, as is demonstrated by the eagerness with which Americans everywhere are turning to all the arts. Last week the New York State Council on the Arts

the Arts, of attendance at 543 performing and visual art centers in the state, with some remarkable findings.

The study showed that while baseball, basketball, football and horse races (the four most popular sports) drew slightly over 22 million people a year, more than three times that number -- over 70 million -- attended events, presentations and exhibitions involving the arts. And this figure does not include millions who attended the Broadway and off-Broadway theatres -- only those attending the offerings furnished by non-profit institutions. To do this enormous job, those institutions altogether employ only 31,000 people and spend about \$177 million a year -- or about 55 people and \$325,000 per institution. I am sure that every businessman here will agree with the study director's observation that, "Few industries with such modest capital and manpower served so many with so much as the arts and cultural industry in 1970-71."

It is obvious from this that the arts are not on the edge of American life today but close to the center and that they are a pervasive current in the mainstream of our society. They make no discrimination among the sources of their own renewal, the discovery of new talent, save that of merit; and they make no discrimination among their beneficiaries, save the willingness to come to see and to listen. In a society whose whole character and drive and distinction is its pluralism, the arts with our intellectual life constitute the most pluralistic of all its ingredients. They are more: they are an outward and visible assertion of the proposition that the richness and vitality of a free society consist not of the dominant strength or influence of any one of its constituents but of the combined and contrasting effects of many.

The great viability and range of the arts cannot survive unless their sources of support also reflect, in plausible measure, the pluralistic nature of our society. Business is one of the most vigorous forces in American life. It is an integral part of the mix that has made this nation unique both in its achievements and in its aspirations. It has, therefore, as integral a stake in the quality and healthfulness of the country's arts as it does in that of its education, its government or, for that matter, its economy. And one of the most striking facts in corporate life today is that more and more business organizations are recognizing that fact by their donative policies. During the past decade business support of the arts went from 3 percent of all corporate giving to 12 percent.

This is not enough.

The New York State study revealed that only 3 percent of the income of institutions devoted to the arts came from businesses. And the figure for most of the country is even smaller. Consequently, as private support from individuals has approached the predictable limits and as costs soar, these institutions are turning more and more to government for aid or abandoning or curtailing their activities. The latter is tragic. The former is risky.

Government support, to be sure, has an important -- an essential -- role to play in keeping these institutions alive and lively. But it should not be dominant fiscally because if it becomes so, it will inevitably become dominant substantively. The countervailing and supplementary forces in our society must also be generously and effectively represented in the support of the arts. And among these, business must accept a larger share --

not grudgingly but seeking out opportunities and, when necessary, creating them.

Professor Richard Eells of the Columbia University Graduate School of Business put the matter quite clearly in a monograph of the series, Studies of the Modern Corporation. "The argument," he wrote, "is not the crude one that all private sectors must help each other to stand up against government. It is rather that in a free society the public government does not attempt to be omnipotent and omnipresent, and the job of governing men and getting the world's work done has to be shared by public and private sectors, and that when the private sector falls down on the job the public governments perforce move in with their coercive machinery, to the great disadvantage of everyone. This is as true of the arts as it is of other activities."

I do not think that, before this group, I need to enlarge upon the roster of direct benefits business derives from a flourishing condition of the arts: product design, imaginative promotional materials, recruitment of promising young people who want to live in proximity to lively art institutions, the power of striking commercial and industrial architecture, the stimulation of a rich and full human environment. All these are familiar to you, I am sure, as are the other advantages that accrue -- directly and indirectly -- to the business world from the arts.

The point I do want to make is that no society in history has ever been sure of its own survival and that you cannot have -- in our case -- the benefits of a pluralistic society without accepting a realistic share in the responsibility of sustaining it. This is not a matter of theory but a matter of real substance. If in any area so vital and basic as the arts --

with all their powers to suggest, to criticize, to explore, to postulate, to mold, to construct and to interpret -- support is left either to government or to chaos, the pluralism not only of the arts but of the social structure itself is ultimately endangered. The corporate sector of our society is not going to be preserved if the vitality of any other fundamental sector is in any serious way enervated, because financial support is wanting, or compromised, because that support is unilateral.

The distinguishing dynamic of American society is its realistic recognition of the sources of its strength and a voluntary determination to nurture them. We have done this in developing a multi-lateral educational system, in creating the world's leading centers of medical research and health care, and in organizing our human and material resources to provide the highest standard of living the world has ever seen. Business has given wisely and effectively of its counsels and its funds to all these. The arts must no longer be a thing apart but take a place in our awareness no less clear and consistent than those other activities that have rightfully, and to our unending satisfaction, made their claims upon us.

I congratulate you on undertaking what I hope very much will be only the first conference between businessmen of Wisconsin and spokesmen for the arts. I hope that it will be the beginning of a strong and deep alliance. And I know by understanding more fully one another's opportunities and problems and by taking steps jointly to meet them, not only will art in Wisconsin be the stronger and better for it -- but so will business and the total society.