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Business Committee for the Humanities (1973-1979):
Correspondence 04

Goldwin A. McLellan

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Mr. Michael Straight  
Deputy Chairman  
National Endowment for the Arts  
Washington, D. C. 20506  

Dear Michael:  

I send you and the members of your group, who attended the meeting at Bob Sarnoff's home, a copy of the paper we have prepared and distributed to all members of BCA.  

We have had several stormy sessions on this program. I hope that our next session will be on another subject and a more pleasant one.  

You might be interested in a copy of our BCA News just off the press. In it, we talk about Fred Richmond's bill to benefit the arts and education in this country as well as our program for awards to business.  

Sincerely,  

Goldwin A. McLellan  

cc: Miss Nancy Hanks  
Mr. Carl Stover  
Mr. Ray Schaefer  
Mr. Livingston Biddle  
Mr. Greg Fusco  

One hundred fifty million dollars was given to the arts by American business in 1975; at least ten corporations each gave over one million.
Mr. Robert W. Sarnoff, chairman, addressing the Awards banquet at the Kennedy Center. A Japanese broadcasting company, a first-time winner, made a grant of over two million dollars to the National Endowment for the Arts in a single city, support for the creation of a bicentennial music program that included 325 artists and auxiliary personnel from the U. S. territories.

Mr. Goldwin A McLellan, President of BCA, who noted that the diversity of the corporations is as remarkable as the potential to collect nearly $1.2 billion from individual taxpayers each year by small donations of $3.00 to $5.00 as shown by the recent Harris Poll, "Americans and the Arts". The poll indicated that 84 percent of the adult public would be willing to pay an additional $5 a year for arts and cultural facilities, 47 percent would be willing to pay an additional $25 a year, while 36 percent would pay an additional $50. HR 8274 is currently pending before the House Ways and Means Committee, where all tax legislation originates. Supporters of the Richard Bill are pressing for hearings.

Thus far the Bill has 19 co-sponsors including three members of the Ways and Means Committee, including Burke (Boston), Rangel (New York) and Stark (San Francisco). In addition, numerous distinguished artists and educators have joined the list of endorsers and well known organizations have publicly indicated support.

Mobil Oil Corporation, in announcing the transfer of the New York City-based operating units of its U.S. Marketing company in Long Grove, Illinois, and a furniture company in High Point, North Carolina, were among the winners in the Tenth Annual "Business in the Arts" Awards announced by the competition's co-sponsors, Esquire Magazine and the Business Committee for the Arts. The Awards to the winning companies were made at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, June 10, 1976. The Awards, given to corporations for outstanding support programs in the fine and performing arts in calendar year 1975, included 21 first-time winners and 20 companies that have won at least once previously. Twelve of this year's award-winning companies each gave over one million dollars to the arts in 1975. In announcing the 1975 Awards, Esquire's Founding Editor, Arnold Gingrich, and BCA's President, Goldwin A. McLellan, noted that the diversity of the arts projects initiated or supported by the corporations is as remarkable as the growth in the volume of corporate financial support. Winning projects included assistance in the preparation of an economic impact study of the arts in a single city, support for the creation of a major new dance work, and a bicentennial music program that in-
Thomas Jefferson had an eye for the Greek Goddess

Characteristic of the eighteenth century, Venus de Medici, the famous Greek sculpture, was considered to be the embodiment of ideal perfection and headed a list of works. Thomas Jefferson would like to have owned in copy or cast for his Monticello. This emergence of the classical past, as a result of archeological discoveries in Italy and Greece, redefined the ideals of the eighteenth century, and through Jefferson and Greece, redefined the ideals of the nation. The National Gallery through September 30, 1976.

The restored Opera House in Lexington, Kentucky, opened on May 7th, 1786, with Eugene Fodor, the brilliant young American violinist, as the featured performer. Originally opened in 1807, the Opera House was the cultural center of a growing and sophisticated Lexington for several decades before it gave way to the increasing popularity of movies.

After many years of neglect and deterioration, the theater was given a new lease on life in 1974 when the $2.5 million restoration/reconstruction process began that would recreate the elegance and fine production capabilities of the original Opera House. In 1975 local arts groups formed an Opera House Fund to raise additional money for acquisition of adjacent properties, more furnishings, and operating expenses. The Opera House Fund has raised in excess of $1 million from state government, individuals, and businesses.

Payroll Deductions May Help Arts Funding

Most arts organizations are finding traditional Annual Fund appeals less and less able to close the gap between expenses and earned income. An ever-increasing demand for arts services and a rising rate of inflation simply push expenses well beyond the traditional Annual Drive. Secondly, the Arts Annual Fund has, this year, been unable to close the gap between expenses and ability to raise their $1 million from state government, individuals, and businesses.

The exhibition was held in J.C. Penney building and was presented by that company as tribute to the Scouts and the man that caught the spirit of America in his art. It was not a new idea, but no one had dared to bring the collection to the attention of the nation’s cultural leaders, or to provide a touring art exhibition and public service TV program, applaud a symphony orchestra and dance group, or admire the talents of a gifted performer at a concert. How far are those contributions from business helped make it possible.

Hundreds of companies—from big ones such as IBM, Exxon, Corning Glass, Alcoa, Texas, to many smaller ones—have made such contributions an integral part of their corporate philosophy. And each year, the business community is picking up a greater share of this aid. In fact, despite the economic downturn, business contributed $150 million in 1976, more than in any previous year.

The Business Committee for the Arts estimates that companies have given over $600 million to cultural activities during the past five years.

Why so many contribute? Because, like our corporation, they recognize the need to preserve and enhance our nation’s cultural assets. Cultural endeavors provide opportunities for people to express themselves. And corporations are made up of people—people seeking better communities in which to live, work, raise their children. When we at Allied Chemical provide leadership for the local arts council or help a theatrical group or contribute to libraries and museums, the life of the entire community is enriched.

But companies can spend money only in relation to their earnings. So when profits line up, more funds for contributions can be set aside. When profits are down, less money is available. Yet, during a period when profits are more important than ever to our nation’s future, they are far from adequate.

A recent survey showed Americans think the average manufacturing corporation makes more than 30 cents profit on every sale dollar, but the truth is that in 1975 it was less than 5 cents.

The artist in America always has traveled a rocky road. It’s going to take more profits, not just good intentions, to take some of the bumps out of that trail.