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NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

1800 G STREET NW., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506



National Endowment for the Arts
National Council on the Arts

September 29, 1966

EDITORIAL COMMENT ON NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS PROGRAMS AND PLANNING

Following are excerpts from press reaction to the announcement that the National Council on the Arts, at its sixth meeting August 29, allocated funds to projects in educational television, creative writing, opera, the visual arts, music and theatre:

NEW YORK TIMES, critic-at-large Howard Taubman:

"It is too early to assess the ultimate value of all grants that have been made by the National Arts Endowment, but it is not a bit too soon to commend its chairman, Roger L. Stevens, and his advisers, the members of the National Arts Council, for their energy and breadth of vision. The endowment is confounding the Cassandras who glumly prophesied that public funds would be spent on cautious principles and unadventurous programs. The reverse has been true... Seldom has a new government program, especially one so beset with possible booby traps, been implemented with so much imagination and dispatch... The arts endowment has elected to support a multiplicity of ventures in all the arts since it was approved less than 12 months ago by an act of Congress and received its initial appropriation." (September 1, 1966)

CHICAGO TRIBUNE article by Thomas Willis:

"The remarkable fact is that the National Council on the Arts so far has been a muscular, fast-moving, and unorthodox arm of the government which plants its punches where they likely will count most and wastes neither energy nor money. With only \$8,250,000 to spend, the council has created more excitement and less controversy than anyone had a right to expect." (September 18, 1966)

WASHINGTON EVENING STAR editorial:

"The National Council on the Arts continues its thoughtful assistance to American cultural life. The latest series of grants, like its predecessors, shows creative imagination in the administration of funds to match the creative imagination the council hopes to nurture in the arts." (September 5, 1966)

WASHINGTON POST editorial:

"The grants and programs announced by the National Council on the Arts at the end of its two-day meeting here are impressively varied... Perhaps the most exciting of the new programs is the commission given Alexander Schneider to create a master chamber orchestra 'of virtuoso caliber'... The matching grants for three educational television organizations come at a time when there is a growing interest in the medium. While not an enormous sum, even when matched, the \$875,000 will make it possible for educational television to produce more programs on the arts." (September 6, 1966)

ASSOCIATED PRESS article by William Glover:

"The biggest theatrical angel this season isn't on Broadway -- but in Washington. He is Uncle Sam, backing with \$1 million a multipurpose test of drama in education... Taking part, in a rare display of agency togetherness, are the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, the United States Office of Education and state and local boards of education... It is the first time that two Federal units have meshed efforts and cash in the cause of culture... As (Roger L.) Stevens describes the undertaking, the National Endowment, about a year ago, envisaged exposing teenagers to performances by first-class theatrical companies, thereby hopefully creating a future audience." (September 18, 1966)

NEW YORK POST editorial:

"For Joseph Papp's (New York Shakespeare Festival) troupe, the situation is considerably different today -- thanks to its art, the generosity of public and private contributors and -- most recently -- to a new \$100,000 matching grant from the National Council on the Arts... The key word is... 'matching.' Both the Shakespeare Festival and the educational TV stations will have to find new private contributions. Contributors should remember this when they are approached for new gifts. The timely federal grants are a welcome beginning and a real encouragement. It is now up to audiences to participate." (September 3, 1966)

REPORTER DISPATCH (White Plains, N.Y.) editorial:

"The United States government has traditionally taken a perfunctory interest in the nation's artistic life... But now the picture has been brightened somewhat. The National Arts Endowment, which is supported by the National Arts Council, has made grants to a number of projects which will encourage new ideas and fresh approaches in the creative fields. The experimenters are being given a chance to satisfy the ever increasing appetite of the American public for culture in general, and for new ideas in particular." (September 6, 1966)

SPRINGFIELD NEWS (Massachusetts) editorial:

"In this age of federal grants, where much of the emphasis has been on public works projects and physical facilities, it is encouraging to read of a \$1.8 million nationwide program of government support for various educational and art forms... Under the \$1.8 million program, the largest single recipient is educational television as \$875,000 has been offered to three non-profit organizations which must match the government's share. This is the most extensive government assistance program ever undertaken for educational television and can prove a tremendous boon in realizing the potential of educational TV which has been hampered by limited funds... In a real sense, any nation is only as strong as its cultural heritage. Government financial aid to enrich this heritage promises to reap sound dividends." (August 31, 1966)

NEW YORK TIMES article by Henry Raymont:

"The National Council on the Arts Sunday announced a grant of \$400,000 for organization of a chamber music institute and a chamber orchestra... It is the largest grant awarded any single musical institution by the government art council and reflects the grave concern among its members over the need to encourage higher standards of ensemble playing."
(August 29, 1966)

NEW YORK TIMES, critic-at-large Howard Taubman:

"You have heard the lamentations, and they are well-founded. We live in an age of speed, noise, tension and shocking violence. But all is not lost. The National Arts Endowment has made a grant of \$400,000 for the cultivation of chamber music and its acolytes." (September 3, 1966)

NEW YORK TIMES news dispatch:

"A three-year, regional program of art education likely to cost about \$500,000 (was announced) yesterday by the Detroit Arts Commission. The program at the Detroit Institute of Arts, will be supported by city funds and other contributions to be matched by a grant of \$90,000 to start, from the National Endowment for the Arts... Detroit's Mayor, Jerome P. Cavanaugh, said that the program was planned to set standards in art education that could be copied by other states." (September 4, 1966)