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## Briefing Book: National Endowment for the Arts (1994): Speech 10

National Endowment for the Arts

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**Statement by the National Endowment for the Arts  
Regarding the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego's  
"Dos Ciudades/Two Cities: The Border Project"  
September 3, 1993**

*The Federal agency  
that supports the  
visual, literary and  
performing arts to  
benefit all Americans*

Based on a review of information provided by the Museum for Contemporary Art, San Diego regarding the 1989 Arts Endowment grant to the Museum to support "Dos Ciudades/Two Cities: The Border Project," the National Arts Endowment has determined that the distribution of \$10 bills, totaling \$4,500, as part of the "Arte Reembolso/Art Rebate" project is an unallowable expense. The Arts Endowment concluded that these costs were inconsistent with the original application budget submitted by the Museum. Therefore, the Arts Endowment has advised the Museum that this \$4,500 in expenses cannot be charged to this Federal grant.

*Arts in Education*

*Challenge &  
Advancement*

*Dance*

*Drama Arts*

*Extension Arts*

*Folk Arts*

*International*

*Literature*

*Locals*

*Media Arts*

*Museum*

*Music*

*Opera-Musical  
Theater*

*Presenting &  
Commissioning*

*State & Regional*

*Theater*

*Visual Arts*

The Arts Endowment routinely determines the allowability of costs as part of its grant review process. As with all matching grants, final determinations regarding the possible repayment of funds are made at the conclusion of the grant period, which in this case is June 1994, and upon review of final reports.

**The actions which led to this determination are summarized below:**

Four years ago, in 1989, the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, set out on an important effort to use art as a medium to build bridges between diverse communities. "Dos Ciudades/Two Cities: The Border Project" has been an exemplary initiative, a project that has received close to \$1 million in federal, state, city and private funds. This multifaceted project focused on aspects of life along the border between Mexico and Southern California. It encompassed a series of exhibitions, artists' residencies, commissions, bilingual publications, lectures and symposia, concerts and other performances, educational activities, films, and multi-disciplinary programs.

Based on a competitive application review and positive recommendations by a panel of museum professionals and the Presidentially appointed National Council on the Arts, the Arts Endowment awarded the Museum of Contemporary Art an FY89 grant of \$250,000, representing approximately 25 percent of the total \$1 million project cost. The grant award recognized not only the merits of

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**"Dos Ciudades/Two Cities"**  
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this major museum undertaking and the commitment of three dollars from state, local and private sources for every one dollar from the Endowment, but also the history of the Museum which has an outstanding track-record and a national reputation for excellence.

As a small component of the overall, multi-year program, the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Centro Cultural de la Raza co-organized a traveling exhibition, "La Frontera/The Border." Three artists were commissioned by the Museum and the Centro to create a public work as one part of the exhibition. The work is entitled, "Arte Reembolso/Art Rebate."

The Endowment conducted an extensive review of this matter, which included an examination of the application and project budgets, materials provided by the Museum in response to the Endowment's inquiry, and a review of current federal laws and regulations. The Arts Endowment's review concluded that the \$4,500 distributed by three San Diego-area artists is not an allowable expense.

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