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Kerr, John Hoare (1978-1984): Correspondence 01

John Hoare Kerr

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NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR
THE ARTS

WASHINGTON
D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the
National Council on the Arts

October 24, 1978

Barnett Fain
Fains, Inc.
126 N. Main Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Bunny:

I am enclosing my resume for your perusal as I am interested in ^{the} Rhode Island School of Design Museum's Director, and I thought you might be able to assist me. We have accomplished many good things together and your knowledge of the achievements in Education under my direction here might be helpful in letting the Committee know the success probability were I to be the Director.

As you know we brought the program from a budget of one hundred thousand a year to approximately five million a year (and that matched two or three times over by grantees) in addition, I have years of solid museum experience in the fine arts both as a curator, consultant in American Arts and Director.

I would like to return to Rhode Island should the opportunity offer itself. I am hopeful that by the time of the deadline for Livingston's retroactive "5-Year and Out" plan, November 30, I will have placed myself...hopefully at the museum.

With all good wishes to you and your wife.

Cordially,

John Hoare Kerr
Director of Education

Enclosure

Curriculum Vitae: JOHN HOARE KERR

Mailing Address: 1) 5301 Westbard Circle, Washington, D.C.
20016 (301) 657-2696
2) "Derrydown", Newport, Rhode Island (Summer)
(401) VI.63776
3) OFFICE: National Endowment for the Arts
Washington, D. C. 20506
(202) 634-6028

EDUCATION: Secondary: Hill School and Mercersburg, in Pa., the Art Students League, N. Y.

University: Yale University, New Haven, Conn., B.A. 1955, History of Art and Political Science: Foreign Relations, with courses in the Fine Arts at Yale School of Fine Arts. University of Rhode Island, Kingston, R.I., advanced courses in Economics, 1957. Boston Museum of Fine Arts -- advanced courses in Fine Arts, experience as painter, 1958-59. Seminars at The Foreign Service Institute, 1967.

GOVERNMENT FOUNDATION EXPERIENCE: 1969 to present. Director of Education, National Endowment for the Arts, National Foundation of the Arts and Humanities, Washington, D. C.

As director of Education, I am responsible for program evaluation and development in all matters affecting the Endowment's grants or interests in education at all levels: primary, secondary, and higher education, and in general public education particularly as it affects the arts. I advise the Chairman and the Council of the Endowment, serve as liaison with government agencies and private foundations in developing programs, and serve as a member for the Endowment on various high level government groups such as the Federal Inter-agency Committee on Education (FICE), FICE Task Force on Educational Issues, Conference on the Humanities in the Schools (NEH), Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Task Force on In-Service Education of Teachers, and Panel of Educational Research and Development of the President's Science Advisors Committee, and Chairman of Museum Committee of the Federal Council of the Arts. Represent the Endowment Chairman as her alternate on many government bodies.

CULTURAL-DIPLOMATIC EXPERIENCE: 1967 to 1969, Senior Foreign Service Officer, USIA Cultural Affairs Officer with diplomatic-consular rank as Consul, assigned to Madras, India reporting to USIA and The Department of State (Cultural Affairs) on matters concerning all the arts, performing and visual, and education and exchange matters between the United States and India.

MUSEUM DIRECTOR: 1964 to 1967, Director, Huntington Galleries, Huntington, West Virginia. As Director of the major fine arts museum in West Virginia (encompassing the immediate tri-state area which included parts of Kentucky and Ohio), I was responsible for the total opera-

tion and planning for the museum. With the enthusiastic support of the museum's twenty-six member board, significant strides were made during this period. The museum was entirely refurbished, freed of debt, an important collection donated, and its education and school progress stepped-up, its collections solicited, resulting in impressive donations. Community and private support was greater than ever before. Funds for a one million dollar wing (designed by Walter Gropius) were secured, and significant progress towards the establishment of an Appalachian collection of American Art through Government funding was made by securing project support of a two and a half million dollar collection development plan in American Art for the museum (and Appalachia) through endorsement by the West Virginia Arts and Humanities Council, and encouragement by the National Arts Council, and approval in principle by the 13 Governors of Appalachian States sitting on the Appalachian Regional Commission. Additional voluntary activities: I was called upon to testify before the U. S. Congress in support of national legislation to aid the arts, and was a member of the Governor's Interim Council on the Arts and the West Virginia Arts and Humanities Council set up to promote the cultural growth of West Virginia. I also served on the Board of the Charleston Creative Arts Festival, and completed a preliminary study for a book on American Art to be published at a later date.

GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, COLLECTION AND FOUNDATION PLANNING EXPERIENCE:

1963-1964. As special consultant to the Smithsonian's National Collection of Fine Arts (N.C.F.A.) I succeeded to the work begun by the late Dr. George C. Groce, author of the New York Historical Society's "Dictionary of American Artists." This work was in connection with the broadening program of the N.C.F.A. (permitted by an overall seven million dollar government expansion grant). My work involved surveying, visiting, and evaluating major museums in the U.S.A. with collections of American art; examining their collections, facilities, recommending possible sources of future exhibits and loans and suggesting to N.C.F.A. display and exhibit techniques. In addition, a complete survey of patterns of Foundation giving to the Arts with recommendation of approaches to selected Foundations was made. I also surveyed the entire Smithsonian N.C.F.A.'s collection of American Art recommending what works were of major interest and what works should be removed. To plan an ideal collection, I wrote a three volume, exhaustive study of all major painters, (including many minor) sculptors, and print makers in the American field from earliest colonial days to the present with appropriate classifications, commentary and justification of their achievement. This work was carried on with the closest cooperation and liaison with museum directors, connoisseurs and curators.

CULTURAL FOUNDATION - MUSEUM MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE: 1961-1963. Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, New York, a non-profit, educational foundation administering a collection of historic house museums, restored and operated under a grant from

the late John D. Rockefeller, Jr. These historic properties, located in the lower Hudson Valley, span three centuries of history in the political, cultural, intellectual and decorative arts fields, and contain distinguished and historic collections of furniture, paintings and decorative objects. My particular segment of responsibility was for the educational or interpretive phase, the Interpretation Program, as presented to the public, schools, special adult groups; its planning, coordination and supervision. This required detailed familiarity with the collection, furnishings, architecture and history; management and training of personnel, surveying of field performance, coordination, and future planning.

ADMINISTRATIVE - EDUCATIONAL - GOVERNMENTAL SERVICE EXPERIENCE:

1959-1961. United Nations, U. S. Committee for UNICEF, United Nations, N.Y. The Committee was established with its primary function, an educational one: to inform and educate the public and its leaders on the world-wide work of UNICEF on behalf of children. It provided information of a cultural and social nature, published books, materials, provided fund raising programs to stimulate public interest, and advised the Executive and Legislative branches of government. As executive assistant and Acting Deputy I aided in program planning and administration, liaison with White House, Congressional leaders and other branches of government; edited publications, layouts, lectured, planned meetings exhibits (in connection with UN Art Exhibits) and participated in research, surveys, and public and inter-committee relations.

BUSINESS EXPERIENCE: 1957-1958, Overseas Training Program, 1st National City Bank of N.Y.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE: 1955-1957, United States Army. Troop Information and Education Program (graduate: Information and Education School, Fort Slocum, N.Y.) Lectured to troops on current events, Army programs, educational and cultural subjects, served as reporter and broadcaster, United States Armed Forces Network. Awarded: Official Commendation from Commanding General for Outstanding Military Service.

PERSONAL DATA: Born 1931, divorced, 3 children, health excellent. Knowledge of French, Spanish.

Professional Organizations: Professional member of both the American Association of Museums and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Society of Architectural Historians.

BIOGRAPHIC LISTINGS: "Who's Who in the East", "Who's Who in American Art", "The Biographic Register", and "Foreign Service List" published by the Department of State.

PUBLICATIONS: Numerous involvements with museums, American Art, Art of India, Foreign Affairs (cultural) and Educational matters.