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Money and the arts

Bennington
Vermont

October 7, 1977

What strange stories could be written about money and the arts. For centuries, artists were dependent on patrons such as the Florentine Borgias — who handed out money to Michelangelo on one hand while financing the bloodiest of wars on the other. And while private patrons endure today, the government and large corporations are increasingly the source of funds for the arts.

President Nixon can be thanked for greatly increasing federal contributions through the National Endowment for the Arts, and signs are plentiful that these funds will continue to expand annually. But it is still far from easy for working artists to support themselves without resorting to part-time or even full-time jobs on the outside.

The Green Mountain Arts Collaborative in Bennington has helped ease this problem by letting

artists pool their resources, and exhibit and perform their work in a congenial setting. The Collaborative is a social and artistic success, as anyone who has followed its history must know. The Collaborative also needs money.

The new officers of the group recently pleaded their case to Ellen Lovell, executive director of the Vermont Council on the Arts. She was sympathetic, if not open handed. Her organization's resources are limited, though the VCA has not exactly opened its eyes in the past to the considerable artistic activity in these parts.

It is a good sign that Ms. Lovell traveled here to discover what the Collaborative is doing, and it is an even better sign that the Collaborative's health is apparently so ruddy. Now, if only there were more money....

White House Conf.
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