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Arts and Humanities: Background (1975-1995): Article 01

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Mapplethorpe II

As a nation that won liberty and adopted its Constitution only two hundred years ago, we are relatively young among the civilizations of this planet. An ancient Greek, in the "cradle of democracy," could find Robert Mapplethorpe's images admirable, Phidian, sculpturally rewarding. Religious rebellions, or rebellions from doctrines of religion, are old as time. Mankind's darker sides, desires, appetites have been part of art through the ages. Look at the carvings on Indian temples for glimpses of the erotic. Look at Japanese woodcuts and ancient prints and Robert Mapplethorpe is far less a cause for wonder. Or look, as did an enlightened Republican Senator James Jeffords, in debate with Senator Helms, at a "Huckleberry Finn" banned in Boston as setting too damaging an example for a then contemporary youth.

Perhaps best of all, look at Francisco Goya, now considered to be the greatest artist of his time. He worked in an era of social upheaval, war and injustice. Along with court scenes and portraits of royalty, he depicted stark atrocities, bestiality, the macabre, the deviations and evils of which mankind is capable.

Especially in his etchings such scenes are apparent. But always here, one is aware first of artistry, line and composition, the juxtaposition of contrasting designs. Then one steps closer and peers intently and thinks, What are these people doing to each other? -- and one may stand back in shock.

I have a general rule. It may not be infallible, but I find it helpful. The great artist transcends his or her subject matter. The artist's ability is of primary importance, the subject matter secondary. If the reverse is true, the work is lacking.

(who served on the National Council on the Arts)

When John Steinbeck/wrote his "Grapes of Wrath," or Honoré Balzac or Charles Dickens their novels, they were compelling statements of the need for urgent social reforms; but first and foremost they were abiding examples of great literature. The subject matter was secondary to the lasting talent of the artist.

Beyond question, the Congress fastened on the subject matter of Andres Serrano and particularly Robert Mapplethorpe. For two years, in two separate concentrations of time, effort and energy, Congress grappled with subject matter, and on a variety of *restrictions* that could be placed on the National Endowment and its grantees.

In 1989 obscenity was considered under the headings of such words as "sodomasochism, homo-eroticism, sexual exploitation of children and individuals engaged in sex acts." It became predictably, for we are a nation that enjoys the sensational, front-page news. Sociologists, psychiatrists, and many involved in the Endowment's history, including this writer, were interviewed and interviewed again.

The question in its simplest form was, and is:

What standards should be applied to art when supported by the

taxpayer's money?

There were ramifications: Where was responsibility for the country's moral fiber lodged in this instance -- with the National Endowment for the Arts, or a Congress, or a Supreme Court?

There was a corollary: Should there be a National Endowment in the first place, since it had gotten itself, obviously, in such a mess? Volumes of words were spoken. Volumes and volumes of mail and messages poured forth.

With that corollary question I had had my own fiery baptism. It was an horrendous and a frustrating period.

When Ronald Reagan became President in 1981, his Administration at once proposed to cut the endowment's budget in half, with the prospect of further reductions to follow and the further prospect within three years of the endowment's elimination. I was still in office. Long before Claiborne Pell and I had decided that an endowment chairman's term should not coincide with a presidential election year. We believed this arrangement would help distance the arts from politics.

The rationale for such drastic reduction was unexpected. It stressed that private support for the arts was all that mattered; if the arts couldn't succeed that way, they didn't deserve help. President Reagan was said to have confided to an aide that his excellent career in the movies, and as an actor, had depended on no government hand-out. Furthermore, government help was causing private help to diminish; corrective steps needed a speedy action.

Immediately we compiled an array of statistics demonstrating, even to subjective eyes, that the endowment had been since its inception an unparalleled catalyst for the growth of the arts and had vastly increased the size of American arts philanthropy. The Administration argument was rephrased. It was focused on what appeared an unassailable American test for success -- if you've got it, you win; if you don't, too bad. This criterion may apply in some commercial areas, especially in the larger ones; but what about the not-for-profit arts? Those the endowment supported; those were the beneficiaries of the philanthropic dollar -- and of a uniquely American system of taxation that rewarded philanthropic giving. The not-for-profit arts were the centers, the main source of American creative expression.

Throughout history great civilizations have been given their most abiding and uplifting memories through the arts. Congressman Winfield Denton and I had shared examples together, as earlier related [Ⓢ] -- remembered the pyramids of Egypt more than a succession of ptolemys; remembered the Acropolis and Parthenon more than wars between Athens and Sparta; remembered the words of William Shakespeare more even than the actions of his Queen Elizabeth. What will be the heritage we pass on? A bomb? Or the works of our own best artists?

These thoughts return to me often. They were uppermost as I sought out -- as was my training during my years of ~~work~~ on Capitol Hill -- the staff person responsible for initiating, of sending up the ladder of command, presidential

Ⓢ see my book "Our Government and The Arts" - Pages 192-198...

proposals for the arts. He was a young man, legally experienced, with bright countenance. We lunched together.

What was wrong with the National Endowment, I inquired?

He was quick to answer. Unfortunately, it funded the wrong kind of art.

What kind was that, I asked?

It was the kind very few people understood, he replied. It was mostly avant-garde art, beyond appreciation by the American people as a whole. It was unpopular. It didn't merit help.

Was he a follower of the arts, I asked? Did he, for example, go to the Kennedy Center?

Occasionally, he said, when time permits.

Did he enjoy opera?

The answer was -- not often.

Symphonic music? The National Symphony?

Yes, he said. Once in a while. His time was pretty limited, I should understand.

What was his favorite symphony?

He pondered without reply.

Beethoven's Fifth, I suggested.

Exactly, he said. A classic.

What made it a classic, I asked?

It has stood the test of time, he said. It's musical. It's popular. People understand it.

I asked if he felt it was popular in its own day.

Why not, he asked me?

I told him Beethoven's harmonies were often questioned,

considered untraditional, criticized as being avant-garde. I could see growing skepticism, so I mentioned a variety of artists whose work found bitter disapproval in its own day but later emerged to the realms of the masterpiece. We were reviewing the French Impressionists, whose paintings appealed to him -- once called the daubings of children; Rodin and his once-termed unfinished failures; Van Gogh and an uncomprehending public. Today's market place was hardly an *flawless* judge of the arts, I offered. The eyes facing me grew thoughtful, but the cuts proposed remained firmly in place.

Huge efforts were required to dislodge them. My head, I learned through the cleverest and most anonymous of moles, was being sought. I considered resigning, for I did not wish to raise such an outcry as to damage an excellent and loyal staff. I resisted instead both withdrawal and the reductions with every friend to be mustered. Sidney Yates was of immense valor, an Horatio at the Bridge, sometimes in solitary combat against a force that came from many directions. In the end, after all the battles, the fifty percent cut -- at one time raised to sixty that same year, 1981 -- became only five. It was a time for rejoicing.

Shortly afterward my term as chairman expired, under the law and not otherwise. I was eligible under law for reappointment. No one in the then Administration suggested it.

Sidney Yates was instrumental in working out the fundamentals for the first Mapplethorpe compromise between Senate and House. Influenced by the insistence of Senator Helms, the

Senate passed an arts appropriations bill that mandated outright rejection of whatever might be obscene, or in line with those several other words by then long repeated and quoted above. The language was^{as}/all-inclusive as it was vague in precise definition. Who was to define a binding and legal definition? Was there to be an ultimate censor? -- in a land where censorship and the suppression of freedom was anathema?

Matters were left to the House appropriations process and the subcommittee Sidney Yates chaired.

The House endorsed rejection by the Endowment of obscenity, and sadomasochism, homo-eroticism and the like, but it made two important additions to the Senate bill. It made the endowment the judge of the fundable, and it used words from the Supreme Court decision of Miller vs. California, the landmark case dealing with obscenity. Work, said the Supreme Court, must be "taken as a whole" before judgment is passed. In Mapplethorpe's case, for instance, a decision could be made that "taken as a whole" -- despite some objectionable (or worse) elements (or photographs), the artist's totality of work possessed artistic value.

A conference committee of Senators and Representatives, working for compromise, agreed with the House.

Some Senators maintained that to let an offending National Endowment for the Arts ~~be~~ be the judge of obscenity was like leaving the door to the chicken coop open to a marauding fox. The compromise, however, prevailed. Said Senator Helms, referring to Sidney Yates and to his own proposed amendment, and

addressing the Senate's President Pro Tem, "Mr. President, I have a message for the Congressman. Old Helms has been beat before. But old Helms does not quit. If the Senate does not approve the amendment today, the Senate will vote on it again and again, on bill after bill, month after month, year after year, until Government subsidies for 'artistic' perversion are prohibited once and for all."

He has kept to his word; but he seems a distance further from his own professed goal. In the fall of 1990 Congress reauthorized the National Endowment for the Arts for another three years. Reauthorization and appropriation are normally two separate processes. An entity must be "authorized" to receive funding appropriated. In this case the two legislative actions were taken simultaneously in the waning moments of a Congress busy with many other most vexing problems. Gone now is the so-called "content restriction" in endowment granting of arts assistance. In its place is new phraseology. It states that the NEA shall "ensure that artistic excellence and artistic merit are the criteria by which applications are judged, taking into account general standards of decency and respect for the diverse beliefs and values of the American public."

In addition, final determination regarding obscenity is left up to the courts. If a court finds that the work of a grantee is obscene, the endowment must ^{seek} full restoration of the funds involved. An Independent Commission -- headed by one-time Congressional arts leader, and president of New York University, John Brademas, and one-time legal adviser to President Nixon and a stalwart of arts support, Leonard Garment -- decided that

the endowment was not an appropriate "tribunal for the legal determination of obscenity." Congress has agreed.

It is a vastly complex subject. John Frohnmayer, who succeeded Frank Hodsoll, inherited the Mapplethorpe mess. His own efforts included distribution of a document to prospective grantees requiring that they pledge not to involve their work in obscenity. Signing of the document would precede the award of assistance. Many called the requirement a "loyalty oath," harkening back to days of anti-intellectualism and attacks on the arts when a Senator Joseph McCarthy was in power. It seemed to me that the requirement was unnecessary, legally and spiritually. After the new reauthorization it was rescinded.

John Frohnmayer has other problems. By no means have they ended. I have a feeling that some artists are now testing the endowment -- how far will it go; how far can they go and maintain that they are truly artists meriting assistance, while at the same time wearing a flagrancy that can attract media attention? It's news. It's hide and seek. It's temptation. It's -- perhaps a new gallery offer. The one-time publicity of being banned in Boston has counterparts. And meanwhile, state legislatures and politicians on the rise, and others, are eying the notoriety that being outspokenly "anti-obscenity" can provide. Man, as Goya could note, is not always a selfless, generous creature, nor always an idealist no matter what his calling...

Where are we going? I can only know my own convictions. They are quite basic.

First, I believe that the arts are central to life.

John Rockefeller said that long ago in a Senate hearing when an arts endowment was not yet born. We thought it rhetoric for the country at large, though it has always been true for me. It has taken a while for a credible national application.

The arts have so many tangible values. Often these appeal most in Congress. Regard the business of the arts -- from an object as small as a photographer's flashbulb, to the bricks and mortar of a cultural center. So many tangible items are in between. Think of the growing manufacture of musical instruments alone. I remember telling Claiborne Pell, less than ten years after the endowment began, that in Rhode Island some two hundred organizations were being helped to grow because of the program he had sponsored. They employed over two thousand individuals, who now paid taxes. The payroll was about \$20 million per annum. He looked astonished: "Why, that's the size of an important industry here." He paused. "Pro bono publico is turning into pro bono politico."

Regard the arts as tourist attractions; think of a New York City as a prime example, but reflect also on a small town where there is a museum, or theater, where the visitor who stops could otherwise pass by.

Consider the arts as rescuers of a blighted urban environment. So often have I witnessed how even a small arts center can bring vitality and hope to an underprivileged neighborhood. We think at once of Lincoln Center, ⁱⁿ /New York again, still the center of our own country's artistic activity -- how it rose up from the slums to present excellence in the performing arts (the not-for-profit kind) and attracted educational institutions, Fordham University's Liberal Arts College and

the Juilliard School; how apartment buildings arose, and restaurants, and how property values increased to benefit city coffers.

My favorite example is on a far smaller scale. It comes from a day in Houston visiting that city's major cultural assets in symphony, dance and museums, and then turning to what had been until recently an abandoned theater in a deprived urban section. Driving there was like crossing a desert of poverty and finding an oasis. Suddenly windows were unbroken, little plots of grass cut, doorways painted. The old theater had been restored by the hands of those nearby. Classes under skilled teaching were being given in acting, in music and dance. Talent, Billy Taylor, the fine jazz musician and scholar, used to tell me, is where you find it.

Just down the street was a school. En route the walls were bright with colors and murals. Inside was the same brightness. Children were responsible. The teacher told me that the arts motivation came from parents in the old theater. Truancy, she said, had been eighty-five percent before self-expression in drawings and paintings arrived. Now it was less than fifteen percent and falling; and it was good, she said: pupils were learning better their other ~~other~~ lessons, arithmetic and spelling. The atmosphere was congenial. It was a stimulus.

I went back to the theater. The project director was slender and quick in gestures. He said, "You know, when we first started here, we thought the most important problem was drugs, better health care. But then we came to a realization that physical well-being was just not enough. We needed something

special for the human spirit. We turned to the arts."

Something special for the human spirit. In these past twenty-five years I have heard many variations on that theme: imagination, awareness, perception, exploration and the wish to explore, the artist's striving to improve and to create a work that will last, the never-ending attributes of the quest.

Is this not the heritage we want to leave?

If the arts have lasting value, the second part of this equation is that the National Endowment has been, in its brief but significant history, the single most important catalyst for growth. Created to encourage, conceived as "seed money," it has exceeded the dreams of its founders.

Before an NEA arrived, private support for the arts had been flat during the previous decade: \$250 million per year. Today it is estimated at very close to seven billion dollars.

Before an endowment, the arts were concentrated on the east coast, Washington to Boston, in and around Chicago, in a few places in Texas, and between Los Angeles and San Francisco in the west. We used to prepare a map for Congress to show this situation graphically. There were vast empty spaces.

Today one is hard pressed to find even a small community where the arts are not alive, putting down their roots or deepening them in the soil. Some statistics: in 1965 there were 58 orchestras in the U.S., today there are 230; in 1965, 22 professional theater companies, today 420; in 1965, 27 opera companies, today 120; in 1965, 37 dance companies, today 250.

Two basic principles have undergirded success. The

program began as a partnership between government and the private community; the the program is guided by private citizens. The government is a junior partner, but it is the junior partner who triggers the great majority of support. My research over the years shows that one federal dollar invested in the arts returns four times the amount in non-federal funding. That one dollar is the catalyst, the key.

The arts are a national priority; the endowment is crucial to their development. Parts one and two of the equation fit together.

During my time as chairman, beyond strengthening the National Council and its responsibilities, involving it in planning and the refinement of goals, I believe I improved federal-state relationships. In my day under law 20 percent of endowment appropriations went to assist state programs. They grew mightily and responsibly given a greater sharing in the whole process. I worked for minority concerns and began new programs in jazz (Council member Billy Taylor gave me the term "America's classical music") and in opera and musical theater, under the guidance of Hal Prince. A new international program was emphasized, for the arts are remarkable world diplomats crossing boundaries sometimes closed. I worked to establish a new partnership with business leaders, stressing the junior role, and I expanded the catalyst toward other federal programs, where their separate funding could be provided.

The Interior Department brought the arts into public city parks. The Small Business Administration worked

with artists seeking financial advice and help. The Veterans Administration brought the healing values of the arts into its hospitals. The Education department began to develop projects for the arts for young people; for that is where the start must be, not at the end of high school and not in college as just another elective subject at a tangent to the core curriculum. The arts must be integrated into learning. When this happens -- and too rarely it does to date -- the results are wonderfully self-evident. Funding for the NEA grew from \$100 million in a year to over \$165 million. The number can be multiplied by five -- the one federal dollar generating four others. But that is only part of it. Those dollars are the core for expanded philanthropy -- from corporations, foundations, and most of all from individuals.

A flat period ensued. The catalyst did not grow. A gradual sense of drought developed; for these are so often slender roots. The hardy plants, the larger institutions, can find a means of survival. The smaller ones, the ones that can add an immense variety of bloom to the garden, are in danger. My estimate is that \$250 million is needed now for the NEA to keep the arts flourishing and vibrantly growing. It is not about to happen.

The Administration of President Bush has recommended no growth for the arts endowment, while increases are proposed for the National Endowment for the Humanities, the arts endowment's sister agency, and for the Smithsonian Institution and the National Gallery, the NEA is excluded. A punishment for alleged wrong doing? More likely it comes from a desire to avoid more controversy.

In earlier times the White House itself had champions

for the arts: Abe Fortas in the Johnson era, Leonard Garment and Nelson Rockefeller to encourage Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, Walter Mondale and his artist-wife Joan for Jimmy Carter. But no such voice is heard today on Pennsylvania Avenue. It appears the endowment in th&is springtime of 1991 is a ship adrift on troublous seas. The sails are not filling with a fresh breeze; the "boards" of Coleridge seem apt to "shrink." The albatross hovers.

President Carter was about to cut the budget for the arts, along with almost all programs in ^{his} days of stringency. I helped persuade him that a minor increase -- a tiny blip on the radar screen of a total budget -- would signal to the arts world a commitment. But it will stand out, I was told, it will be listed as a plus in an ocean of minuses. I consulted with the Vice President. He made his own plea -- my wife will divorce me, he said, if you don't relent. The President did. But who will use such powers of persuasion today?

Catharina and I have been privileged to have known the best in the arts, and the arts striving to achieve, and to have helped. That's the greatest reward of this life we've shared: to feel the individual has helped when a Luciano Pavarotti sings, or a Beverly Sills, or a Loren Maazel conducts, or a Mstislav Rostropovich plays the cello, or a Billy Taylor the piano, or when a museum opens our eyes to the arts of America, or of Africa, or China or Egypt's King Tut... or a new play receives critical acclaim, a new writer, a new actor or actress, or painter or architect or film-maker.

One rainy night we were atop a windswept mesa in Arizona. We'd brought a small grant to help the arts indigenous to our many heritages. Hopi indians performed a dance rooted in religious tradition and special ceremony. We were the only non-native Americans present. The eyes, first perceiving us, were questioning, seemingly hostile, disapproving. The dancers wore garlands of vegetables and fruits to invoke a successful harvest. They danced solemnly, summoned as Kachina spirits from a distant mountain range. Their eyes in passing regarded us. They were to dance in relays all night long.

Suddenly the largest dancer paused in front of Catharina. He detached an orange from the necklace he wore and held it out. Catharina took the orange and bowed her head. The dancer did the same. For a moment the small white-washed room was motionless and quiet. I think it was the best accolade we received.

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Commitment to the arts is essential to all this work. It must be complete.

Once, walking through a Congressional hallway, I met a member of the House moving in an opposite direction. He was a Republican and important to an upcoming vote.

"I hope you'll remember us," I said, stopping him.

"Livvy," he told me. "I'm very busy -- and I have to tell you there are priorities, in my view, that surpass the arts, no matter what you may think."

"Name one," I invited.

It could be called hyperbole. The Congressman might choose another word. But we were friends. We smiled at each other. "I'll do what I can," he said and hurried off. But

these were better days for the arts.

What will stem the present tide and reverse its course? Today's difficulties, turmoils, contentiousness and flarings of anger stem in part from a perception of inconsistency in governmental arts leadership. It may be an unfair assessment. Intentions, personalities, may be blameless -- but, especially in Washington, perception is frequently as damaging as actual error. Inconsistency is equated with vacillation, vacillation with weakness, weakness with vulnerability. On those perceived vulnerable pounce the enemies.

The arts endowment is no longer fledgling; but neither is it old enough to withstand concerted, continuing attack. It needs to assert, with all its strength, that freedom of expression is the "sine qua non" of the arts. Obscenity is illegal. We know that. The courts can give it ultimate test. But no one at the National Endowment has tried to foster obscenity. It's a perception, the kind of illusion the demagogue enjoys. When it is repeated, when it is repeated and allowed to be repeated ad infinitum, people believe.

The arts world needs to say... enough! Enough of this nonsense! The endowment could help mobilize that voice, and the present Administration.

It's not difficult. The arts have a centrality to life. Freedom of expression is central to the arts. A National Endowment is central to the growth and the numberless benefits of the arts.

Put it in perspective. Out of almost 90,000

grants, little more than a dozen in twenty-five years have been singled out for abuse. What percentage is that, in an area where controversy is a constant ~~accompanist~~? Is it a record for pride -- or condemnation?

I am struck by the huge assortment of words offered in Congress and elsewhere, passionately delivered, to limit the arts, to limit freedom of expression. No one yet has said -- stop, listen, pay attention, this is a government program; who should be defending freedom, is it not a governmental responsibility? Isn't that a founding principle of democracy?

Let's end the fears and doubts and squabbles, all the intricacies of verbiage. Let's commit ourselves. Without delay. There's fitting resolve for continuing a life's work.

Above all, commitment must be dedicated. It needs to come from love. The arts can sense a substitute a long distance away.

Given commitment, given the values the arts themselves make so clear, they will grow. I have always been an optimist. I remember other times of deep ~~concern~~.

My own life is committed. So is my wife's. We are a team, learning from each other, learning, still questing, trying to improve. So there is no real ending, only new beginnings each day. These are lessons we have learned.

MEMORANDUM

Design Program

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

To: Cherie Simon, Director, Office of Public Affairs
Dick Woodruff, Director, Congressional Liaison
From: Samina Quraeshi, Director, Design Program
Date: November 14, 1994
Re: Strategic use of Design Program during 1995

In light of last week's election results and the looming challenge of reauthorization, it seems more important than ever for the Endowment to play whatever strategic "cards" it has in the coming year. By that I mean communications and contacts that will influence the general public, key leaders in both public and private sectors, and their representatives in Congress.

Arts in Education

*Challenge &
Advancement*

Dance

Design Arts

Expansion Arts

*Folk &
Traditional Arts*

International

Literature

Local Arts Agencies

Media Arts

Museum

Music

*Opera/Musical
Theater*

*Presenting &
Commissioning*

State & Regional

Theater

Visual Arts

I believe that the Design Program has unrealized potential to be of assistance in this outreach effort by tapping contacts and targeting information drawn from its grants and initiatives. Senior members of my staff and I have sketched out some of the possibilities below and would welcome the opportunity to do more focused strategizing with you both in the coming weeks. Timing is of the essence if we are going to start laying the groundwork for a series of events and communications leading up to reauthorization and the 30th anniversary of the agency next fall.

As the attached pages explain in more detail, possible design-related outreach runs the gamut from fairly simple activities to more complex ones:

- 1) Thematic PR -- Creating a "critical mass" of information about completed grants and initiatives by linking them thematically to issues of concern across the US: affordable housing, sustainable development, global competitiveness, etc.
- 2) Leveraging events in 1995 -- Some events to be carried out by our initiative cooperators in 1995 can be tweaked for greater visibility in the press, with influentials, and on the Hill. Among these are the Mayors Institute, Your Town, Design for Housing, and the Presidential Design Awards. Grant projects coming to conclusion offer other venues around the country and other issue-springboards. By starting now, we may also be able to influence and capitalize upon events planned by other organizations that are friendly to the NEA and can reach potential advocates in both public and private sectors.
- 3) Launching new events -- The last category consists of events that could be carried out in 1995 itself, or announced in '95 and implemented in successive years as Millenium Projects. These include the *National Conference on Design*, a multi-partner *Heritage Tourism* initiative, a CD-ROM tour and moveable feast of the *Arts Across America*, and the *Community Improvement Network*, a multi-year program of periodic national videoconferences and on-line dialogues on Mom & Pop issues of interest to local communities.

Obviously some of the actions we suggest can be accomplished in-house, while others will require careful collaboration with outside groups, ranging from grantees and initiative cooperators to other organizations and agencies.

We recognize that all of the ideas described below will require coordination with both your offices. Some will also require human and financial resources beyond the Design Program's current staffing and budget.

DESIGN'S DECK OF STRATEGIC CARDS

Thematic PR

Linking grant and initiative information thematically gives the Endowment the opportunity to present a different message about its relevance to Americans than that often conveyed by the media. economy. Most of the projects we support can be tied to one or more of the following issues:

- o affordable housing
- o American heritage
- o citizen participation
- o community building
- o design & technology
- o economic innovation
- o education & training
- o sustainable development
- o infrastructure

We would like to work with you to draw up a PR plan for 1995 that would target national and/or specialized media as appropriate with a critical mass of good news from the NEA on these and other topics. Targeted media could include publications read by the financial community, CEOs, state & local officials, environmentalists, and members of religious groups. Thematic as well as geographically specific communications could also be crafted for regional publications such as *Southern Living*, *Midwest Living*, and *Arizona Highways*, as well as newspapers serving key Congressional districts and states.

Using Events in 1995

There are a number of events already on the calendar for next year that the Endowment may be able to use to its own advantage in terms of speaking directly to key constituencies, generating media coverage, and stimulating positive communication with the Hill by influential citizens. These events range from those more directly under our influence to those controlled by friends of design, who might be persuaded to help us out. Below are just a few examples:

INITIATIVES

Mayors Institute -- There will be four regional institutes in 1995, held in California, Georgia, Missouri, and Massachusetts. The two national institutes generally are held at UVA, but this year, the fall institute was held in San Antonio in conjunction with the national conference of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Possibilities include: selecting mayors from key districts and states, inviting members of Congress to address one or more of the institutes, holding the fall '96 institute in DC or in conjunction with another major group, and generating PR from all of these events in national, state and local media.

Your Town -- The next invitational workshop for 30 small town leaders will be held in rural Georgia, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 1994. The SW one will be in Arizona in January. Two more will be held in 1995. Possibilities include: selective invitations, choice of venues, Congressional speakers and PR. A nationwide videoconference on small town/rural development might be organized with other federal agencies and national organizations for the fall of 1995.

Design for Housing -- This workshop for developers of affordable housing is now offered as part of four national and four regional training institutes put on by the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. We have less control over locations, speakers and attendees, but could discuss options with the NRC, whose Congressional appropriation has increased from \$40 to \$100 million. Another possibility would be a nationwide videoconference with the NRC and other organizations on exemplary design of affordable housing. (Many religious congregations are building or rehabbing housing for low and moderate income families, so this is an issue that might provide a bridge to them.)

SCS/Rural Design -- USDA's departmental office of publications is now in charge of designing and publishing a booklet on the NEA/SCS demonstration project, aimed at rural leaders and people who work on rural conservation and development projects. The emphasis in the

booklet is on citizen participation in managing local environmental change and the benefits of involving design professionals. The booklet should be ready to go to press at the end of January. After a direct mail-out to national and state leaders in rural development and to environmental groups, the booklet will be available through the Soil & Water Conservation Society in Ankeny, IA. SCS and NEA could explore joint PR/Congressional activity around the publication's release, involving the Chairman, the Chief of SCS, the Society and others, possibly at a venue well beyond the Beltway.

Carnegie-Mellon University -- CMU has been awarded \$75,000 as seed money for the development of "Design for Business," a series of videos and print materials aimed at manufacturers and other corporate leaders. When the university has raised the rest of the production money, NEA might hold a joint press conference with the business press to announce the project, which is an outgrowth of our previous support for pilot materials and market research.

Presidential Design Awards -- Already funded and underway for a fall, 1995, awards ceremony at the White House.

GRANTS

With some guidance from both your offices as to key districts and topics, we could survey the grant projects that are coming to fruition in 1995 and contact recipients to see how we might leverage more recognition for NEA from them. Activities could range from an NEA press release, to joint news conference, to attendance by the Chairman or other senior official at a grantee event. A quick scan of FY'93 grants likely to be finished this year includes:

- o Computer-program on neighborhood mapping for inner-city Boston school children
- o "Wild Sounds Walk," combining landscape design and technology to create acoustic environments as part of a nature preserve on reclaimed strip-mined land, Muskingum, OH
- o Design of new window system accessible to elderly and disabled, Rochester, NY
- o Design of viewing platforms made of aerospace materials for use in fragile landscapes, CA
- o Monograph on the design of exemplary rehab environments, WS
- o Book on the design of public spaces in arid communities, Phoenix, AZ
- o Book & slide show on affordable housing, Asian Neighborhood Design, San Francisco
- o Regional development plan for central KY
- o Materials on design of child health-care facilities, Bethesda, MD
- o Campus master plan for Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, NM
- o Design of affordable housing in Matewan, WV
- o Adobe church preservation, NM (2 grants: one for training and one for research)
- o Videos on the design of children's museums, Penn State University
- o Video and slides on improving pedestrian environments, Project for Public Spaces, NYC
- o Traveling exhibit on vernacular housing on Texas/Mexico border, Univ. of TX at El Paso
- o Book on the success of YA/YA, young furniture and fabric designers in New Orleans
- o Master plans for Amana Colonies in IA and towns of Lawrenceburg & Greendale, IN
- o Guidelines for preservation and planning in Town of Tully, NY
- o K-12 education projects in NYC, Philly, Baltimore, DC and elsewhere
- o Training for citizens serving on planning & design review boards, Vermont
- o Arts facilities in NV, NY, FL and NC (Pottery Museum, Asheboro)

OTHER GROUPS

U.S. Conference of Mayors -- The Chairman is already scheduled to speak at the mayors meeting in late January. Possibilities include: special press event with Chairman, Joe Riley and other alumni of the Mayors Institute; invite former mayors who now serve in Congress to speak and/or attend special reception (example: Senator Inhofe was mayor of Tulsa in late 70s); get mayors to call on key members on our behalf; use the occasion to announce some

special NEA program later in 1995 focusing on mayors, their staffs, or other community issues.

Design Management Institute -- DMI has been both a grant recipient and a cooperator, developing cases on design for use in business schools. In June, 1995, the Institute will hold its annual conference at Stanford, bringing together business leaders and faculty. Earl Powell, DMI's President, has said he would be willing to consider some focus on the NEA at this event. (Another angle is DMI's possible collaboration with NIST at Commerce to put its design case studies on-line to reach all the federal tech transfer centers in the country. NEA might be able to join NIST in sponsoring that effort, with a joint press conference by Secretary Brown and the Chairman.)

NASAA -- We have heard that NASAA plans to have a special track on design at its fall, 1995, conference in Providence. Given that Roger Mandel is now President of RISD, we might be able to help fashion this track in a way to garner maximum media attention for NEA's role in advancing design in business and communities. Possibilities on the business side include bringing in CEOs as speakers and writers on design, technology and the economy, such as Bruce Nussbaum at *Business Week* or Michael Schrage from MIT (*LA Times* syndicate). On the community side, we could highlight mayors, some of the better state design programs (SC, AL, KS), design writers from the Times, Globe, Dallas Morning Herald, and projects that have addressed underserved populations, such as affordable housing, design in education, and graphic design (Concerned Citizens for Humanity, Hartford).

Other Contacts -- The Program could talk with leading organizations and individuals in the design disciplines to see what other events NEA might capitalize on during 1995. Possibilities include conferences in such arenas as business, technology, environmental conservation, community development, housing and tourism. We might also be able to find and brief selected CEOs to carry our message to their colleagues. Don Rorke, an industrial designer and CEO of Steuben, who has attended all the Goals 2000 planning meetings, is a possibility. We might be able to produce a program specifically about design for business and get it on BizNet, with the US Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable as co-sponsors.

New Events & Programs

National Conference on Design -- This initiative will go to panel this week and then to the February Council. It is our intent to convene a high-level meeting with leaders drawn from business, government and education to demonstrate that design is a strategic national resource in helping to achieve America's economic, environmental, education and social goals. Conferees will be asked to assess the current state of design in the U.S. and develop a design agenda identifying specific opportunities for using design to improve the economy and quality of life in American communities. The conference could be held in DC or elsewhere. It could be linked to the Presidential Design Awards in the fall of 1995, or announced at that time and held in the spring of 1996. It could be a stand-alone conference or made a national event with videoconferencing links to regional or local sites.

Access to American Heritage -- We are just initiating discussions with the NEH about the possibility of a joint, multi-year initiative that could involve the NEA, NEH, IMS, the Office of Travel and Tourism at Commerce, federal agencies that manage visitor attractions (NPS, USFS, BLM, etc.), and national organizations such as the Travel Industry Association, the National Trust and the Coalition of Heritage Areas. The three themes of the initiative could be: 1) *Access to Places* (dealing with environmental design issues, from the broad landscape, to buildings, to signage...including disability issues), 2) *Access to Culture* (involving the whole array of the arts), and 3) *Access to Meaning* (involving issues of historic interpretation as well as accessible presentation in various media). Depending on how this develops, the NEA and other public and private sector partners (American Express, etc.) might be able to kick this off as part of the 30th anniversary, with training events and materials to follow in 1996-97.

Arts Across America CD/Tour -- This is a Millenium Project to add to the list of previous suggestions. It could be a joint project with the American Automobile Association and other tourism industry players. Each Program at the NEA would pick 50 or so grantees or cooperators from the past 30 years of the agency. (Alternatively, this could be staged as a grassroots competition with special panels picking the best examples.) A CD-ROM would be produced enabling users to tour the US by clicking on a map of states and cities to see what arts NEA has supported there, complete with video clips showing excerpts from artistic performances, tours of facilities, and interviews with key individuals. Or the user could do searches for particular art forms: finding the best of the jazz, opera or folk arts supported by the Endowment....or all the communities that did public facilities or preservation projects with grants from Design, Locals or Challenge. With sufficient private sponsorship, the CD could be pasted into major magazines and given away to millions of readers. Or it could be sold, with funds going into a fund administered by the President's Committee.

Complementary efforts could include special exhibits and events timed to occur across the country during a single celebratory year -- a sort of Moveable Feast (or Feats?) of the Arts. All the information could be fed into the AAA's computers so that they could offer members special cultural trip-tiks during that year.

Community Improvement Network -- This is another Millenium Project fusing the arts and technology: the creation of periodic national videoconferences starting in 1996 and running till 2000 on a variety of topics of interest to people concerned with community improvement in all its facets: economic, social, environmental and cultural. Each topic would enable the NEA to partner with different agencies, organizations, foundations and corporations. Depending on the topic and partnership, the event could be telecast to fixed downlink sites, such as those at hospitals, college campuses, hotel chains, GM dealers, Walmarts, Chambers of Commerce, etc....or an ad hoc network could be created with satellite feeds to any number of hotels, restaurants, schools, TV stations, cable systems, portable receivers, etc.

Topics could cover the full spectrum of NEA Programs and local interests: design for manufacturing, community cultural planning, affordable housing, art in K-12 education, the design of parks and recreation areas, therapeutic uses of the arts, master classes, managing local arts agencies, downtown revitalization, design for America's growing elderly population, the arts and tourism, developing artist work/live spaces, design of museums for all ages, reclaiming America's waterfronts, health care options for artists, etc. Some topics might generate more than one program. All could be planned with on-site facilitators, take-home materials, and follow-up, including use of on-line services for continued dialogue and information sharing.