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Obscenity: Andres Serrano Controversy (1989)

Education: National Endowment for the Arts  
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6-21-1989

## Obscenity: Andres Serrano Controversy (1989): Correspondence 18

Margaret Hillis

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CHICAGO  
SYMPHONY  
CHORUS

June 21, 1989

The Honorable William L. Armstrong  
United States Senate  
528 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

THE ORCHESTRAL ASSOCIATION  
ORCHESTRA HALL  
220 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVENUE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604  
(312) 435-8172

MARGARET HILLIS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH FABBOLI  
MANAGER

30TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

Dear Senator Armstrong:

On returning from out of town, I found your letter of May 31st awaiting me.

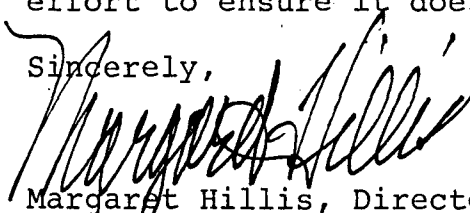
I am sorry so much distress was caused by Mr. Serrano's photograph and cannot help but think of the Salman Rushdie affair which offended so many Moslems.

At the May meeting during the Museum Application Review, the National Council discussed in detail the fellowship Mr. Serrano received from the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art. We were appalled.

As you know, the Endowment is wisely mandated by Congress to refrain from interference with artistic content. This mandate has caused a daunting complexity in the grant-making procedures.

Please be assured that these procedures will be carefully analyzed at the August meeting, and in spite of the fact that only about 20 mistakes have been made in the 80,000-grant history of this remarkable institution, we will make every effort to ensure it does not happen again.

Sincerely,



Margaret Hillis, Director, Chicago Symphony Chorus  
Music Director, American Choral Foundation  
Board Member, Chorus America

cc: Congressmen Yates, Williams, Coleman, Regula  
Senators Pell, Kassebaum  
Hugh Southern, Acting Chairman, NEA  
Members, National Council on the Arts