1976

Business Committee for the Humanities (1973-1979): Correspondence 04

Goldwin A. McLellan

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Mr. Michael Straight  
Deputy Chairman  
National Endowment for the Arts  
Washington, D. C. 20506

Dear Michael:

I send you and the members of your group, who attended the meeting at Bob Sarnoff's home, a copy of the paper we have prepared and distributed to all members of BCA.

We have had several stormy sessions on this program. I hope that our next session will be on another subject and a more pleasant one.

You might be interested in a copy of our BCA News just off the press. In it, we talk about Fred Richmond's bill to benefit the arts and education in this country as well as our program for awards to business.

Sincerely,

Goldwin A. McLellan

Enclosures

cc: Miss Nancy Hanks  
Mr. Carl Stover  
Mr. Ray Schaefer  
Mr. Livingston Biddle  
Mr. Greg Fusco

One hundred fifty million dollars was given to the arts by American business in 1975; at least ten corporations each gave over one million.
A Japanese broadcasting company, a manufacturing company in East Walpole, Massachusetts, an insurance company in Long Grove, Illinois, and a furniture company in High Point, North Carolina, were among the winners in the Tenth Annual “Business in the Arts” Awards announced by the competition’s co-sponsors, Esquire Magazine and the Business Committee for the Arts. The Awards to the winning companies were made at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, June 10th, 1976. The Awards, given to corporations for outstanding support programs in the fine and performing arts in calendar year 1975, included 21 first-time winners and 20 companies that have won at least once previously. Twelve of this year’s award-winning companies each gave over one-million dollars to the arts in 1975. In announcing the 1975 Awards, Esquire’s Founding Editor, Arnold Gingrich, and BCA’s President, Goldwin McEllan, noted that the diversity of the arts projects initiated or supported by the corporations is as remarkable as the growth in the volume of corporate financial support. Winning projects included assistance in the preparation of an economic impact study of the arts in a single city, support for the creation of a major new dance work, and a bicentennial music program that in-
Thomas Jefferson had an eye for the Greek Goddess

Characteristic of the eighteenth century, Venus de Medici the famous Greek sculpture, was considered to be the embodiment of ideal perfection and headed a list of works Thomas Jefferson would like to have owned in copy or cast for his Monticello. This emergence of the classical past, as a result of archaeological discoveries in Italy and Greece, redefined the ideals of the son, formed the basis of culture in the nation. The National Gallery of Art's major Bicentennial evokes Jefferson's life-long commitment to the visual arts, which included his deep appreciation of the arts as well as his designing many architectural and landscaping plans and pieces of decorative arts. The exhibition, entitled The Eye of Thomas Jefferson, will be on view in Washington at the National Gallery through September 6. The exhibition is supported by a grant from Exxon Corporation.

Greek Goddess

The restored Opera House in Lexington, Kentucky, opened on May 7th, 1976, with Eugene Fodor, the brilliant young American violinist, as the featured performer. Originally opened in 1887, the Opera House was the cultural center of a growing and sophisticated Lexington for several decades before it gave way to the increasing popularity of movies.

After many years of neglect and deterioration, the theater was given a new lease on life in 1974 when the $2.5 million restoration/reconstruction process began that would recreate the elegance and fine production capabilities of the original Opera House. In 1975 local arts groups formed an Opera House Fund to raise additional money for acquisition of adjacent properties, more furnishings, and operating expenses.

The Opera House Fund has raised in excess of $1 million from state government, individuals and businesses.

Payroll Deductions May Help Arts Funding

Most arts organizations are finding traditional Annual Fund appeals less and less effective to close the gap between expenses and earned income. An ever-increasing demand for arts services and a rising rate of inflation simply push expenses well beyond the reach of the typical, annual campaign.

Just such a situation—almost total reliance on a stagnant Annual Fund has, this year, compelled the Saint Paul-Ramsey Arts and Science Council to augment and refine its traditional campaign in two ways. First, an effort has been made to find new fund-raising methods that might complement the traditional Annual Drive. Secondly, the Arts and Science Council has sought to sophisticate and expand its traditional annual campaign.

The problem was two-fold: not only did the council have to educate prospective donors, it also had to give them new, more convenient ways to give. A challenge grant and a campaign to characterize the arts as having "something for everyone" helped heighten public awareness.

Ultimately, the council decided the obvious answer was to implement payroll deduction plans in a variety of Twin City organizations. It was not a new idea, but no one had dared venture into the long established and exclusive domain of the United Way.

The Council presently has seventeen organizations participating in payroll deduction plans and that number is growing. Organizations presently participating include: 19 banks, 1 trust company, 2 insurance companies, 1 brokerage house, 3 public accounting firms, 1 law office, 1 manufacturer/company, and the Arts and Science Council office and headquarters.

It is too early to document results. The Council is cautiously optimistic, but it is just now in the process of making actual appeals. Payroll deduction is an exciting fund-raising tool which could greatly expand the base as well as the level of individual support of the arts. However, the St. Paul Council's initial experience indicates that while this plan can bring dramatic results, it is only as successful as its basic fund-raising fundamentals allow it to be. Payroll deduction for the arts is not a panacea, but it is an exciting development and certainly worth further investigation.

VIEW FROM FIRST BALCONY of restored Lexington Opera House shows the ornate proscenium arch framed by box seats on either side. Left side of proscenium arch has been swung open. Right section after swing away, increasing opening by 8 feet wide.

J.C. Penney Company, Inc. sponsored a two-week exhibition (May 17-28, 1976) of 31 of Norman Rockwell's famous paintings of the Boy Scouts in connection with the Boy Scouts of America's Annual National Meeting in New York. The exhibition was held in J.C. Penney building and was presented by that company as a tribute to the Scouts and the man that caught the spirit of their organization on canvas.

Robert W. Sarnoff, a member of the board of the Boy Scouts of America and the American Academy of Arts and Letters, was present at the opening. The Chairman of the Art Committee of the Boy Scouts of America, Robert W. Sarnoff, was present at the opening.

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Hundreds of companies—from big ones such as IBM, Exxon, Corner Glass, Alcoa, Texas, to many smaller ones—have made such contributions an integral part of their corporate philosophy. And each year, the business community is picking up a greater share of this aid. In fact, despite the economic downturn, business contributed $150 million in 1975, even more than in any previous year. The Business Committee for the Arts estimates that companies have given over $500 million to cultural activities during the past five years.

Why do so many contribute? Because, like our corporate, they recognize the need to preserve and enhance our nation's cultural assets. Cultural endeavors provide opportunities for people to express themselves. And corporations are made up of people... people seeking better communities in which to live, work, raise their children. When we at Allied Chemical provide leadership for the local arts council or help a theatrical group or contribute to libraries and museums, the life of our entire community is enriched.

But companies can spend money only in relation to their earnings. When profits are up, more funds for contributions can be set aside. When profits are down, less money is available. Yet, during a period when profits are more important than ever to our nation's future, they are far from adequate.

A recent survey showed Americans think the average manufacturing corporation makes more than 30 cents profit on every dollar of sales, the truth is that in 1975 it was less than 5 cents.

The artist in America always has traveled a rocky road. It's going to take more profits, not just good intentions, to take some of the bumps out of that trip.

When you visit a museum or library, enjoy a touring art exhibition and public service TV program, applaud a symphony orchestra and dance group, or admire the talents of a gifted performer at a concert, chances are that contributions from business helped make it possible.

The Road to Culture is Paved with Profits

When you visit a museum or library, enjoy a touring art exhibition and public service TV program, applaud a symphony orchestra and dance group, or admire the talents of a gifted performer at a concert, chances are that contributions from business helped make it possible.

In 1975 Allied Chemical has set aside $1 million from state government, individuals and businesses.