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Ruth Dean

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Reagan's Low-Key Arts Teams

By Ruth Dean
Washington Star Staff Writer

Last spring, President-elect Ronald Reagan confidently wrote in a national arts magazine, that if elected, "I will end as soon as possible the politicization of the National Council of the Arts so conspicuous during the Carter-Mondale administration."

Then-candidate Reagan also told Alliance for Arts magazine readers he'd select council members for their artistic skills "rather than their political connections." He would also designate a White House liaison for the arts, reviving the precedent set by President Richard Nixon when he appointed Leonard Garment in that capacity.

Reagan said he'd shift the grant award process directly to the arts institutions to "assure that merit and merit alone is the criterion for making a grant." He said he also favored new ways of making private sector support for the arts attractive, perhaps by tax checkoff, and getting the arts out of social welfare.

Now with the campaign behind him and the transition in full swing, Reagan's transition task forces for the national endowments for the arts and for the humanities, are exhibiting a cautious demeanor not quite commensurate with the firebrand boldness of those promises.

Some of the transition rhetoric does indeed echo what was said during the campaign. Talk of "a return to excellence in the arts" persists, and "cutting out the fat," if there is any left to cut, from administrative overhead.

There are even reports from some quarters that transition people re-
Reagan, Humanities Transition Teams Maintain Low Profile

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Bishirjian said that if this is a cor-
rect interpretation, he would dis-
gree with its conclusion, since he
sees these particular exhibits and
public television programs were
representative of NEA's mission.
Joyce's presence on his
staff, he explained, was as
long as he knew "long before"
head the Blight Heritage
Project. Nor does he
an NEH advisory
recommendations. "Our
instructions are to gather
information," she noted, "not
to impose our views." If he
should become chairman,
1111111, "I would not have
him steal his scholarly work to
A financial agreement was
Princeton University and a
Dante Scholar, Holinsell served
vice chairman of the council
until his term expired a year ago.
An educated guess as to what the
actual Reagan administration polici-
towards the arts might be, "would be
a compromise between the administra-
tion's specific policy fac-
cions in the Republican party.
Nancy Hughes, whose advice
to the充分体现 what the
transition team, says it best. "I have
no concer-
the Reagan administra-
tion is very long sighted and very
looking. They're quite
interested in making substantive
gains in the arts and humanities,
"However, she thinks the
New Republican Senate "needs
some explanation of the arts. The
members simply are not focused on
the arts," she explained. "We need
to make them more aware."