

CULTURAL DEMOCRACY™

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ANIMATION: WHAT'S IN a NAME?

It goes without saying that the movement for cultural democracy is world-wide. With or without official encouragement, artists all over the world -- in rich nations and poor, capitalist and socialist, industrialized and agrarian -- have been working on the same kinds of community cultural projects. For most of the world, this has led to an active international exchange and an increasing consciousness of shared opportunities and problems.

The United States has been peculiarly isolated from this exchange. With official cultural policy-makers attending to the establishment forms and institutions they promote, you have to look for discussion of neighborhood arts issues between the lines. If the term *cultural democracy* is used at all outside of neighborhood arts circles, it's invoked as a "domestic enemy," in the words of National Council on the Arts member Theodore Bikel (see NAPNOC notes #6).

With little chance for international exchange, community cultural workers in the U.S. have had to grapple alone with even such basic questions as nomenclature. A favorite topic of NAPNOC's correspondents is naming: what do we call our work, how do we describe it to others?

Neighborhood arts doesn't sound exactly right to people who work in rural communities or don't see themselves as tied to a particular neighborhood. *Community arts* might be a little better, but that title has been pre-empted by the local arts councils. Some neighborhood arts people characterize their work as *alternative*, and while accurate, that term denotes only opposition, so fails to take into account the affirmative, culture-building aspects of our work.

This is not a petty question of labeling, but of *naming* in a more fundamental sense. The fact of naming -- recognizing the need for a self-chosen description of the work of the neighborhood artist -- is what's most important. With it will come the understanding that neighborhood arts work is not something to do while you're practicing to make it in the big time, but a vocation in and of itself, with its own aims, values and ethics. This understanding is held by many dedicated neighborhood artists. But for others, this idea will come

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GUNS & BOMBERS: Reagan's 1983 Budget

Last year Ronald Reagan was the "Great Communicator" -- able to galvanize support for his "Economic Recovery Package" (see NAPNOC notes #10) and push much of it through Congress with only token opposition. This year he could become the "Great Procrastinator," since no one in Congress appears eager to stand behind the budget proposal he submitted early this month and his advisors now counsel a "strategy of patience."

Reagan's budget proposal for Fiscal Year 1983, which begins on October 1, is the largest in history at over \$757 billion. It calls for further deep cuts (over \$40 billion) in human services budgets and an after-inflation increase of over 14% in the military budget. Just back in Washington after a long year-end recess in their home districts -- and facing mid-term elections (continued on page seven---)

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as news: Neighborhood arts work has dignity and deserves respect, in and of itself, and not as a means to "graduate" into the world of establishment arts.

What Is Animation?

In the international sphere, where serious discussion of cultural development work has been carried on for some time, the word used to describe this profession is *animation*.

Animation and its variants -- "community animation theater," for instance -- have lately begun to be used by North American arts workers, borrowing from Europe and the Third World, where the term is in common usage. Animation is derived from the French *animation socio-culturel* and refers to the work of the *animateur*, a community worker who helps people to build and participate in community life, to articulate their own grievances and aspirations in a public context, and often, to make art from the material of their daily lives.

Not everyone is thrilled with the term: British arts worker Su Braden prefers "community artist," saying that animation "is evidence of the persistence of the paternalistic attitude still held by many artists and arts funding bodies" because the root word *animer* implies a "moribund situation, ready for the 'animateur' to administer the kiss of life."

Moreover, animation has come to take on less specific meaning as it has been more widely applied. French classified ads, for instance, might now call for an *animateur* for a shopping center or an insurance office, meaning, roughly, a public relations agent. And in one of its first uses in more official U.S. circles -- by Partners for Livable Places, funded by the National Endowment for the Arts' Design Arts program to provide technical assistance to planners and architects -- the term takes on a disturbingly non-human meaning: "Animation is the term used...to describe how creative zoning, imaginative street planning, public art, good architectural design, mixed-use development, and festivals and celebrations make cities prosperous and exciting places to live."

Working for Cultural Democracy

Needless to say, animation work was going on long before the term came into use. The concept of *animation socio-culturel* became current when researchers and policymakers began taking community cultural work seriously and debating its importance to society.

One force in this continuing dialogue has been the Council of Europe, a regional association of European governments. Its Council for Cultural Cooperation (CCC) is the principal body through which research projects and international symposia on animation have been carried out. After a lot of fighting the CCC came in 1973 to a working definition of animation, as follows:

"Animation may be defined as that stimulus to the mental, physical and emotional life of people in an area which moves them

to undertake a range of experiences through which they find a greater degree of self-realisation, self-expression and awareness of belonging to a community over the development of which they can exercise an influence. In urban societies today this stimulus seldom arises spontaneously from the circumstances of daily life, but has to be contrived as something additional to the environment."

This cautious and tortured prose attempts to bridge the gap between community cultural workers who see themselves as helping to transform consciousness so that people can act to change the culture and the society, and bureaucrats who see animation as a kind of activity-boosterism which should present no threat to the status quo.

At the point when this definition was accepted by the CCC, Europe was in the midst of a debate on the proper role and direction of public cultural policy. Research had shown that regardless of the techniques used or the large sums of money invested, efforts to build establishment arts audiences never succeeded in involving more than the few well-to-do, educated people already interested in concerts and galleries. It became necessary to distinguish between this concern with "democratizing" established arts institutions' programs and appeal through audience development on the one hand, and promoting cultural democracy on the other.

These contrasting themes -- democratizing existing arts programs and promoting cultural democracy -- underlie most cultural policy debate around the world today.

Here's how Augustin Girard (a French cultural official active in UNESCO) has explained the first concept: "Two assumptions are implicit in the idea of the democratization of culture; first, that only high culture of sacrosanct value is worthwhile; secondly, that once the (undifferentiated) public and the works are brought face to face, cultural development will follow. These two axioms entail as a corollary that priority should be given to professional writers and artists and to decentralization of the major cultural assets."

Girard notes that this policy "results in the creation of vast 'machines,' whose 'operators' acquire excessive influence and whose fixed costs eventually dictate the nature of their artistic output; we have seen this with opera houses throughout the world and with a great many national theatres."

The alternative policy is to build cultural democracy. Francis Jeanson describes this in another UNESCO-published essay "On the Notion of 'Non-Public'" (by which he means those who don't form part of the audience for establishment culture): "(Cultural democracy) points to a culture in the process of becoming, as opposed to one that is stagnant, already there, ready-made, a sort of sacred heritage which it is only a matter of conserving and transmitting. It even rejects -- or at any rate goes way beyond -- the naive idea of a more just, more 'egalitarian' division of the cultural heritage, so far as the non-public distinguishes itself precisely by its more or less marked

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indifference to 'cultural values,' which do not seem to it to bear the slightest relation to its actual problems of existence.

"But, all the same, it doesn't go so far as to condemn out of hand a cultural past on which it is itself dependent and whence it draws its deepest motivations. On the contrary, its aim is to arrange things in such a way that culture becomes today for everybody what culture was for a small number of privileged people at every stage of history where it succeeded in reinventing for the benefit of the living the legacy inherited from the dead..."

Policy Imitates Art

Needless to say, these European social theorists and bureaucrats were not creating from whole cloth a new way of looking at culture: they were observing the failures of their own governments' programs, and beginning to articulate some of the characteristics a new and more potentially successful policy should have. But if the policy of "democratization" was to be abandoned, what forms of cultural action should take its place? To answer these questions, the policy-makers and critics looked to the grass-roots experiments in which artists and other community workers were already engaged.

These encompassed a wide variety of projects. Some animateurs worked as "town artists," described by John Pitman-Weber in NAPNOC notes #5 and Cultural Democracy #17. A typical town artist might work in a "new town" setting, employed by a development corporation or city council to help local people create amenities and arts projects where they have not had the time or impetus to evolve gradually. A town artist might be a sculptor/community organizer, for instance, who lives in a house and uses a studio provided by the community, and over a period of years helps people design and build playgrounds, public squares, decorative elements for buildings, floats for local pageants, and so on.

Or an artist/organizer -- a theater worker, for instance -- might work with a tenants' group in public housing in an older community, helping to create theater that raises issues of concern and involves tenants in cultural activities with their neighbors. A resident company might evolve from this beginning.

Some animation projects undertaken by groups of organizers and community members focus on facilities which combine resources for cultural participation -- perhaps a library, meeting rooms, theater and workshop space, a bar or restaurant -- with community services like a day-care center or clinic, and places for gardening and amateur sport activities. The facilities give concrete expression to the integration of arts activities with daily life.

The idea of animation has not been restricted to arts work. Animation projects may focus on sports, after-school activities for children, adult education, health care, or city planning and public housing. Literacy education has been a big focus

of animation work; learning to read means acquiring tools that can enable people to understand and act in their lives where before they had felt themselves only to be acted upon.

Animation International

In practice animation projects today run the gamut of possibilities. Readers will recall our interview with Jacob Sou of the Regional Cultural Action Center in Lome, Togo in NAPNOC notes #7. RCAC trains animateurs who then return to work in their home countries throughout Africa, where the need for trained cultural workers and administrators is seen as acute. In independent countries of the Third World, programs of local cultural development are often enthusiastically supported by government because they help to advance the aims of public policy by building literacy and developing indigenous cultural enterprises. As Jacob Sou explained to us, a student at RCAC might in the course of training prepare a project that involved designing a model cultural ministry and a program of cultural action. When training is completed the student may well go to work back home translating this project into action.

The new Cuban theater described by Cricket Parmalee of the Provisional Theatre in NAPNOC notes #16 is another example of animation work supported by government. This month's Theaterwork contains an article on post-revolutionary Nicaraguan theater and its educational aims. The November/December issue of FUSE, a Canadian magazine that covers culture and politics, contains an article on Sistren, an animation theater company of women who met while employed as street cleaners under a CETA-type program in Jamaica.

Liz Leyh is a sculptor who works as a town artist under the auspices of Inter-Action, a big community arts program centered in London. One of Liz' projects in the Milton Keynes new town was a 70-foot-long concrete painted giraffe, a play sculpture, built over a period of 6 weeks by some 200 children and adults from the neighborhood.

Video artist George King was another Inter-Action town artist. One of the projects George worked on was "Sweet Sixteen," in which a group of community arts workers used the device of interviewing residents concerning their own stories of life at 16 years of age to help create block clubs that generated publications, theatrical presentations and video programs and gave old and young the opportunity to collaborate and interact. George is English, now living and working in San Francisco.

The Cultural Commonwealth

All these projects share certain characteristics: They encourage critical thought and action, whether the object is to remedy the lack of play areas for children or to raise consciousness among poor working women. They are based on the idea that ordinary people can take an active role in building culture; they take it as given that culture is dynamic and non-artists can't be consigned only to consumption of professional arts events and mass media entertainments.

They see the artist's role as social -- (continued on page four---)

not as a person set apart to be admired from a distance, but as someone with special skills whose own creativity and commitment can find expression and meaning working with others. And these projects have continuity: a single event or exhibit is not animation. All of the projects described aim to be integral, ongoing parts of community life.

Because of these common characteristics, animation projects are supported by agencies or organizations that take some responsibility for the cultural commonwealth. Government (and intergovernmental agencies like UNESCO -- the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is most supportive in the Third World countries which take cultural development as a priority. Government agencies in Europe have also established programs of training and support for animateurs. This month's Theaterwork also contains an article on "Community Animation Theatre" in Canada and the Third World, focusing on a workshop that was held last May. The authors describe the differing economic situations facing various participants: *"The Canadians had to worry about the survival of their theatre groups and had to compete with large theatre organizations for funding and audiences. In the third world, funding was either assured (in countries with supportive governments) or impossible."*

In some countries non-government organizations have supported animation projects; for instance, several foundations and religious groups have provided grants in the United Kingdom. Unions have been involved in animation projects throughout Europe, but their role has been to plan and participate since in such cases government support is generally adequate.

Finally, some support for animation projects has come from earned income. Especially in projects which revolve around neighborhood facilities, people have been able to earn money from bars and restaurants to support community programs.

Public Support in The U.S.

The biggest obstacle to the development of animation-type projects in the U.S. has been the lack of public funding. Public arts agencies here generally support individual artists through fellowships or the traditional artist-in-residence model. Even in residency programs artists are more often chosen for their slides or reviews than their commitment to or experience in community work. Those chosen are generally supported for a period of months -- almost never for more than a year -- and often the artists selected are assigned to unfamiliar communities. The conventional residency model is based on the notion that when the artist and public are brought into mere proximity the public will be edified by the encounter. Committed neighborhood artists are sometimes able to transcend these constraints -- but to succeed despite the exigencies of government support can hardly be the best situation.

Similarly, most public arts agencies still see their first purpose as supporting establishment cultural institutions and programs of "democratization," and don't design their programs with larger cultural goals in mind. Neighborhood arts groups have so far not been able to count on ongoing support for their community work. Like individual artists who are funded through residency programs, they may be able to receive project grants, generally for a year or less at a time. And like some resident artists, they may be able to transcend, through hard work and imagination, the insensitive constraints these support programs place on their work.

It seems unlikely that the Reagan administration will inaugurate programs of federal support for animation projects -- under that name or any other. But this does seem an appropriate time for neighborhood arts people to turn their attention to state and local public agencies -- in arts, recreation, education, housing, planning and so on -- in the hope of building understanding of neighborhood arts as the sort of cultural action they should be supporting.

Part of this effort will be to offer an understandable explanation of the goals and purposes of neighborhood arts work, and of community animation as a vocation.

The Vocation of Neighborhood Arts

To offer such an explanation we need a lot more dialogue within the movement. Which one of us hasn't had to rely on expressive shrugs and grimaces when faced with explaining neighborhood arts work to a new person?

One issue is accountability. This is a question that is of great interest to animateurs around the world. J.-M. Moeckli in a CCC essay, "The deontology of animateurs," put it thusly: *"There can only be animation in a group or in a community; the mandate of the animateur concerns a given community (a district, block of flats, the young or the elderly in a given town, the readers of a library, etc.) or a smaller and better defined group (a group of young people, a company of amateur actors, etc.). His moral contract is concluded with this community or this group, within which he is active; he is answerable to the group... This can be the unit in which cultural democracy is exercised.*

"In practice, neither the group nor the community signs the formal contract...; although they are the true employer of the animateur, he is recruited, paid, kept where he is or sent elsewhere and given notice by a third party...."

"It can be seen therefore that the animateur has two employers: the one who engages him and the one for whom he is engaged... It is hardly possible to avoid an eventual conflict."

While the situation of neighborhood artists in the U.S. is different from that of the paid animateur Moeckli describes, the conflict is the same: by and large, the neighborhood artist's moral contract is not with those who provide the money which supports neighborhood arts work. This can mean conflicting loyalties and conflicting definitions of role and responsibility. In the

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establishment arts world, the artist who works in public programs derives authority from funding sources (for instance, there's been much talk at the NEA lately about the "imprimatur" of Endowment funding) and from reviews, awards and credentials from prestigious sources. But the neighborhood artist/animateur derives authority from practice, from acquiring and utilizing skills, from being of use, from working with others. From Moeckli's perspective, the animateur's role is to multiply this authority, to help others acquire and utilize their own skills in exercising cultural democracy.

The traditional idea of the artist's accountability is not nearly so complex: the artist is responsible to the patron according to the terms laid down, to a personal vision and inspiration, and to the abstract idea of art, as in "I owe it all to the theater." To whom are you accountable?

Training for Cultural Action

One of the reasons these questions are new territory for neighborhood artists in our country is that we have no special training opportunities for animateurs.

In our work for NAPNOC we speak to groups of students, and never have we encountered a class of theater students or painting or sculpture students whose formal education even touches on community work. All of these students are trained as if they will work after graduation in a resident theater or as gallery artists in some ideal, imaginary setting. People who chose neighborhood arts work generally make that choice when they become dissatisfied and disillusioned with the traditional artist's role for which they were prepared.

Neighborhood arts workers in the U.S. have by now acquired ample skills in both practice and teaching. We should be discussing and deciding for ourselves the sort of training people in our line of work need. We should be encouraging students to seek this training to prepare for neighborhood arts work without enduring the usual fruitless and unsatisfying attempt to fit into the establishment arts model.

This doesn't mean professionalization in the sense that doctors and lawyers are professionals -- credentialed, self-policed, high-status, mystified and mystifying. Animation is less a set of techniques or a job description than it is an outlook, a framework. As G. van Enckevort has written for the CCC, "*Animation is the anti-institutionalisation of cultural work.*" He has proposed this definition of professionalization: "*a process in which activities previously carried out by volunteers or part-time workers, for a wide variety of reasons and in addition to their usual work, come to be the principal activity of paid full-time workers appointed for the purpose. This development is judged to be a positive one because through it the community discharges an essential responsibility.*"

The question for Enckevort, as it should be for neighborhood artists in the U.S., is how to achieve this sort of professionaliza-

tion -- which would allow us to collate and share our theories and experiences, establish needed training programs, come to an agreement on questions of ethics and accountability, and earn the respect to which all dignified work is entitled -- without falling into the trap of seeking privilege and authority at the expense of others.

In another CCC essay, J. Hurstel suggests that training for animateurs should be integrated with action. Essentially, animateurs should be trained through practice. Their training should be permanent and ongoing, in contrast to the idea that at some point, education stops and one emerges as a complete expert.

Thus described, we know many neighborhood arts workers in the U.S. who take their training as animateurs seriously. Our task now is to describe the training and practice which has been going on to advance the self-definition of the movement -- and so that potential supporters could be persuaded to make an investment in neighborhood arts work for its own sake, and to evaluate projects by the values and purposes on which they are based.

We doubt that substituting the word *animateur* for *neighborhood artist* would do much to clear up our irritating problems of nomenclature. But whatever names are used, we think neighborhood artists in the U.S. have much to gain by joining our colleagues around the world in advocating policies of cultural democracy and programs of support for cultural action that will help it into being.

Don Adams & Arlene Goldbard

A Few Resources ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ←

We can't unequivocally recommend all of these books; some are too expensive and insufficiently rewarding. If you want to read more about animation, drop us a note and we'll send you more detail on resources. But for now, these are the books and publications mentioned in the above article.

Su Braden, Artists & People, Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd, London 1978

Socio-cultural animation, Council for Cultural Cooperation, Strasbourg 1978

Augustin Girard, Cultural development: experience and policies, UNESCO, Paris 1972

Theaterwork, published bimonthly by Cherry Creek, 406 S. 3rd St., St. Peter, MN 56082; 1 year \$5; 2 years \$9.

FUSE, published bimonthly by Arton's Publishing, 31 Dupont St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5R 1V3; subscriptions \$12 per year in Canada; \$15 per year in U.S.

Who do YOU know
who'd like to know
about animation?

Send us their names and addresses
and we'll send them a copy
of this issue.

AT THE NEA

1: PRIVATE LESSONS

National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Frank Hodson seems to consider his ignorance a virtue. Now he is planning to spend up to \$350,000 in Endowment program funds to conduct a series of seminars designed to educate him on various arts fields.

From February to October of this year, Hodson wants to hold 14 seminars -- one for each program area of the NEA plus one each for "states, regions and localities," museums, and education.

According to the descriptive material distributed to the National Council on the Arts at its February 5 - 7 meeting in Washington, DC, these seminars will aim to "contribute to a base of knowledge on:

"1. the arts in America. This will include needs: on a general basis to develop new art and assure preservation of the existing body of art. Specifically, we will address the needs associated with creation (including education, training, and development of a creative idea), production, presentation/exhibition, distribution, preservation, and appreciation/audience development; and

"2. the most effective means of support for (the above): partnership among the private sector (individuals, corporations and foundations), state and local government, and Federal government."

Each seminar will last for two days and include approximately 20 invited guests. According to the NCA material, these will be "chosen from among the leaders in the field with representation from: diverse aspects of the field (e.g., artists, managers, supporters, critics, educators, consumers); varied categories within the field (e.g., in music: orchestra, jazz, chamber, etc.); state/local arts agencies; and NEA Council and panels."

The NCA discussed these seminars in closed session (more than half of this month's meeting was conducted behind closed doors with no attempt even to pay lip service to federal sunshine regulations). But rumor has it that some NCA members were unhappy about spending so much program money to educate the Chairman when support for artists is being cut, and there was reportedly heated criticism of the choice of participants for the first session on Design, held February 19-20 in Charlottesville, VA and loaded with big names.

Other seminars are scheduled as follows: Music, 2/26-27 in Philadelphia, PA; Inter-Arts, 3/19-20 in Minneapolis, MN; States, Regions and Localities, 4/6-7 in Washington, DC; Theater, 4/30-5/1 in New York, NY; Expansion Arts, 5/21-22 in Atlanta, GA; Dance, 6/4-5 in New York, NY; Opera/Musical Theatre, 6/18-19 in Houston, TX; Media, 7/16-17 in a location to be determined; Folk Arts, 8/6-7 in Knoxville, TN; Visual Arts, 8/27-28 in Los Angeles, CA; Museums, 9/23-24 in Chicago, IL; Literature, 10/1-2 in Boston, MA; and Education, 10/15-16 at a location to be determined. If you want to find out who's invited we suggest you contact the appropriate program

director at NEA, 2401 E St. NW, Washington, DC 20506 or call the main number, 202/634-6369.

DA/AG

2: EXPANSION and CONTRACTION

According to the Federal Register it was to be an all-day meeting, open to the public, of the "Expansion Arts Special Policy Committee." The topic was to be "Future Program Directions," but as it turned out the meeting was less than public and the real agenda was an embarrassment of riches.

A special panel, mostly made up of former panelists -- long time Expansion Arts insiders and grantees -- was convened to decide how the program should spend two-and-one-half million dollars which became available when Congress decided the NEA should receive an appropriation of \$143 million this year, instead of \$88 million as President Reagan had originally proposed.

The first few moments of the meeting were spent reporting on the NCA's February meeting. Readers will recall that NEA Chairman Hodson has been reviewing all grant applications personally (*after* they'd been approved by "peer review panels") and returning numbers of them to staff and panels for justification. The NCA discussed some of the Chair's reservations in closed session.

According to Expansion Arts staff, Hodson intended to present a list of questions before the NCA reviewed applications in each program area. He began with Expansion Arts and was met with inquiries as to whether staff and panels might not be more appropriate for such discussion. Nevertheless, the Council went on to take up Hodson's questions with respect to Expansion Arts, one NCA member suggesting that a group of Council members might review applications in tandem with Expansion Arts panelists.

In the end, the Expansion Arts grants were approved. Hodson's questions--which had to do with the proper scope of the program -- were forgotten as other grant programs came up for review, leading one staff member to note that even though the NCA expressed strong support for Expansion Arts its members always seemed ready to subject the program to close scrutiny and let the hard questions go when other programs were discussed.

Then Hodson entered and was introduced. He sat in throughout the meeting. Hodson's arrival touched off an hour or two of speech-making which sought a balance between impassioned defense of Expansion Arts' crucial role (especially as a supporter of minority arts organizations), and a measured attempt to downplay the idea that grantees were dependent on Expansion Arts for support--the Endowment having shifted gradually to a kind of survival of the fittest philosophy in which the notion that a group might *need* public money to survive is taken as an indication of its weakness and unworthiness.

Chairman Hodson then told the Expansion Arts panel about next year's budget request --\$100.8 million overall for the NEA, in-
(continued on page seven---)

cluding \$5.25 million for Expansion Arts. If Congress approves the budget at this level, Expansion arts will have its lowest budget since 1974.

We didn't get to see the whole panel meeting: a number of decisions were made concerning the allocation of funds and we, being the only members of the public present, were shunted in and out of the meeting room when the subject of grant funds arose. (NEA makes its claim for closing meetings in which grants are discussed under the federal code provisions which allow agencies to protect the 'trade secrets' of their clients and applicants.)

But we were able to make one observation that might be of interest to readers. The special Expansion Arts panel decided to put \$990,000 into funding for its City Arts grantees in FY 83, to make \$81,000 in grants at that day's meeting, to set \$1,000,000 aside for new grants to organizations in FY 83, and to put \$218,000 into a contingency fund; in addition Expansion Arts, like all NEA programs, was required to put \$64,000 into the Chairman's contingency fund.

Why did Expansion Arts reserve such a large chunk of current-year funds for granting next year? One reason surely must be the puzzlement expressed by panelists and staff members concerning the current economic condition of neighborhood arts groups.

Expansion Arts director A.B. Spellman talked about the decision to reduce the number of Expansion Arts grants categories open to application and the number of applications funded, saying there had "been a measure of evolution in the field," so that the old categories no longer fit, and that Expansion Arts had been "oversubscribed, funding too broadly." Several times he noted that the program had "pulled out of nickel-and-dime grants," noting that they "probably ought to do more in that direction -- identify principal organizations and give them principal support." The demise of CETA was mentioned a couple of times to explain why 1980 budget figures couldn't fairly be compared with applicant organizations' current budgets, and staff did speculate that some groups may have lost a good deal of support that way.

But we heard none of the domino-type horror stories of funding losses we've been getting regularly at NAPNOC. You know the tale: an organization loses CETA and perhaps NEA money as well, state and local agencies cut their support since they begin to doubt the group's capacity to raise matching funds, and foundations follow suit when the grapevine hints that failure is around the corner.

Since the entire Expansion Arts staff was present at this meeting we can't hold out hope that someone in the agency is picking up a telephone and getting frank answers about current money problems. But those nickel-and-dime grants the agency now disdains at one time meant survival for some pioneering and significant artists, and we suspicion the same money could mean just as much today. We doubt the social Darwinism the NEA is embracing is the proper philosophy for Expansion Arts. DA/AG

in November -- even Reagan loyalists in the Congress are unprepared to support the President's budget proposal as it stands. Many members now feel that social service cuts made in the 1982 budget were too severe and should be moderated.

Compounded by recent public opinion polls which show substantial disapproval of Reagan's economic policies, the coming budget deliberations are impossible to predict. Some Washington budget-watchers even speculate that no budget bill will be passed before Congress adjourns for its election recess next fall, because members fear the wrath of voters. (No budget bill has yet been passed for the current fiscal year, as we reported in Cultural Democracy #17.) This could mean a lame-duck session, with retiring members of Congress participating, so those who actually vote on the federal budget might not be held accountable by voters. Many of these lame ducks could be Reagan supporters if the predictions of a Reagan official quoted in the NY Times come true: "If we don't see an upturn (in the economy), anything less than a 38-seat loss should be seen as a major victory for us."

In preparing his 1983 budget Reagan apparently hoped to divert attention from the substance of his spending proposals by introducing a new theme in his State of the Union speech last month: "New Federalism."

New Federalism

"New Federalism" describes the administration's "lump-and-cut" block grant strategy -- reduce funds available for social service programs, lump them into block grants, deregulate administrative accountability, and shift them to the states. Briefly, Reagan's plan calls for swapping Medicaid (now run by the states) for AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and Food Stamps (both run by the federal government). The states would also run some 40 other social programs currently administered from Washington. A trust fund would be set up to help states finance these new program responsibilities through 1991.

States could elect to abandon some or all of the formerly-federal program responsibilities now lumped into these new block grants, in which case the funds would go into a "Super Revenue-Sharing Payment"--usable for any purpose, either by the state or passed through to local government. From 1988 on, the federal contribution through the trust fund would decline and it would all be used as "Super Revenue Sharing."

State and local officials claim that the "New Federalism" proposals will stick them with much higher expenses than Reagan asserts, and that trust fund income has been over-estimated: where Reagan predicts a surplus for the states in the first year, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees projects a cost to states of at least \$17 billion. Social service groups criticize the additional cuts these new arrangements obscure, the absence of any controls on state spending, and the total pull-out of federal effort proposed by 1991. (continued on page eight---)

Hoist By His Own Petard

Reagan's budget calls for a deficit he projects at \$91.5 billion in 1983; it will be even higher if the economy continues to decline. While Reagan promised to balance the budget by 1984, Office of Management and Budget director David Stockman now predicts that won't be possible 'til after 1988. Even then a balanced budget would be a neat trick: Reagan has pledged to double the military budget in the next five years and reduce tax revenues from corporations and rich individuals. Even if Reagan eliminated all social service expenditures by the federal government the budget would still be solid red.

This is an ironic state of affairs, since few economists see a balanced federal budget as key to economic well-being. Reagan brought up the balanced budget red herring himself, though, and now he's stuck with its stench.

This already complex picture will be complicated by a number of other budget-related contingencies: by March 30 Congress must provide for future funding for those federal programs now operating on continuing resolution; Reagan may use that opportunity to propose deeper current-year cuts (i.e., rescissions and deferrals), thus appearing to reduce the depth of 1983 cuts. A higher debt limit will have to be passed to enable the government to continue to borrow more money as the deficit deepens.

The dominant feature of the 1983 Reagan budget proposal is the record military budget--some \$255 billion. If this proposal is approved, a huge array of new, high-technology offensive weaponry will be authorized and procurement set in motion. Reagan wants some \$1.644 trillion to go to the Pentagon from 1983-87 -- equivalent to \$900 million each day.

Early in January the press leaked Pentagon expectations that military spending would actually reach \$2.4 trillion for this period; then the Defense Dept. instituted a new policy requiring planners to submit to lie detector tests in order to discourage future leaks.

So far no serious Congressional opposition to the military budget seems forthcoming; weapons authorization is the business of the strongly pro-Pentagon Armed Services Committees in each house.

Arts & Humanities

Federal cultural agencies will not fare well in next year's budget if Reagan's proposals are accepted. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is budgeted at \$100.875 million (down from this year's \$143.04 million); the National Endowment for the Humanities is projected at \$96 million (down from \$130.56 million this year). The Institute of Museum Services would be axed (it was saved from proposed elimination in 1982 with a budget of \$11.52 million).

In addition Reagan has recommended eliminating the Department of Interior's support for historic preservation as well as defer-

ring unobligated current-year funds so they could be used to close up the historic preservation grant program next year (\$21 million was allocated for grants to states this year, with \$4 million to the National Trust for Historic Preservation). Washington's own cultural institutions -- the Smithsonian and the National Gallery of Art -- are scheduled for modest increases.

Active lobbying by big arts institutions and Congressional leadership saved the Endowments from much lower Reagan proposals (around \$88 million) for the current year. But Washington arts lobbyists are not sanguine about this year's chances--especially since NEA Chair Frank Hodsoll has stated he will not support requests for any increases.

Hodsoll said he would be defending the President's \$100 million request and not attempting to fight for more money, though the National Council of the Arts has already declared its intention to oppose this. "Being realistic," he said, "at least for the next three years it is inconceivable to me that the Endowments won't be in a period of declining budgets."

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), which receives its appropriation two years in advance, is targeted for a rescission of \$20.5 million from its already-approved 1983 appropriation, which would bring it down to \$116.5 million (compared to \$172 million this year). Reagan would have CPB funded at \$96.5 million in 1984, before sinking to \$85 million in 1985. The CPB Board has proposed cutting off all programming support grants to independent program producers, limiting future funding to major public radio and TV stations; this new policy will be considered early in March.

Other Social Programs

There are few programs of direct support to community cultural groups left in the federal budget, as a brief run-down of the proposed fates of formerly helpful programs will testify:

Employment and Training. At its peak, over \$200 million in CETA funds (the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) went to support arts groups, mainly through public service employment titles terminated last spring--even before the budget had moved through Congress, when local governments spent CETA funds on unemployment benefits for laid-off CETA workers.

There is no prospect now for restoration of public service job support: the notion of public service work has become virtually taboo in Reagan's Washington. Reagan's budget calls for \$1.8 billion in "job training block grants" to the states to replace CETA; no stipends would be paid to the trainees under this plan. (In 1981, CETA programs received over \$6 billion.)

Three bills have been introduced in Congress to establish new employment training programs: Rep. Gus Hawkins' (D-CA) bill would direct \$5 billion through the existing local government delivery system, but with new private industry councils sharing control of funds; Sen. Quayle (R-IN) has proposed a \$3.9 billion program with 70% allocated in block (continued on page nine---)

grants to states (with private industry councils drawing up each state's training plan) and remaining funds going to national programs and limited job search assistance; and Rep. Jeffords' (R-VT) bill calls for \$3.6 billion to be allocated among the states on a needs-based formula, with subgrants to local "labor market jurisdictions" identified by governors. Jeffords' bill alone allows stipends for trainees.

The Title VII private sector initiative program of CETA, which expires this September, has been recommended for zero funding; this was the only CETA title to receive an increase in Reagan's FY 1982 budget.

Community Economic Development. The Economic Development Administration (EDA), which has supported the construction of some cultural facilities, is recommended for elimination in 1983. The same recommendation was overridden by Congress last year.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has been recommended at the same level as 1982 -- \$3.456 billion, down from \$3.67 billion in 1981. CDBG funds have been allocated by some local governments to support cultural programs, usually in lower-income communities targeted by the CDBG legislation, but new HUD regulations fail even to define "low-income" communities. And UDAG (the Urban Development Action Grant program) is also recommended for continuation at the same \$440 million level as 1982, down from \$676 million in 1981.

Education. Sweeping changes are occurring in the Department of Education, where plans are being made to reduce the Department to a "Foundation for Education Assistance" and to disperse most of its functions either to states or to other federal departments.

Nearly \$3 billion in cuts are being recommended for 1983, bringing the Department's proposed budget to \$9.95 billion; Reagan has also proposed rescissions of \$1.44 billion this year, bringing the FY 82 budget down to \$12.858 billion.

Most of the education funds that once helped support cultural programs have already been lumped into a block grant program for states, slated for implementation in the school year beginning this fall. Under Reagan's new plan, vocational, adult and other education programs would also be combined into block grants. Indian education would be moved to James Watt's Interior Dept. College aid for lower-income students is slated for deep cuts, with complete elimination of graduate student support. Only 1/3 of Bilingual Education will remain, with regulations allowing even this support to be treated as "English as a Second Language" funding.

Fair Budget Action

Organized public opposition to Reagan's policy and budget plans appears much greater than in the first year of his administration. On February 18-19, over 500 local activists from 46 states met in Washington for a budget briefing by the Fair Budget Action Campaign, a national effort endorsed by NAPNOC's Executive Committee in December,

The Campaign is helping coordinate the efforts of local organizers nationwide and helping to provide information on new budget proposals and organizing strategies.

If you are in need of further information about any aspect of the proposed budget, about making contact with other coalitions, or about Reaganomics in general, contact NAPNOC. We can direct you to organizations and publications that can help.

To get a copy of the Fair Budget Action Campaign's "Organizer's Manual," which discusses the budget proposals and outlines local lobbying and organizing strategies, send \$5 to: FBAC, P.O. Box 2735, Washington, DC 20013.

A Stockman Ballet?

Only NBC could be dorky enough to call it ballet, but when NAPNOC member Liz Lerman put her Dance Exchange performance group to work on a piece presenting the economic realities of the Reagan regime she touched off a media splash of major proportions.

"Docu-Dance" is a framework Liz first used in 1980 to address the question of art and politics; it juxtaposes semi-abstract movement and spoken text. In its latest incarnation, presented in mid-February in the Dance Exchange's Washington, DC home, the dance includes graphic representations of the relative impact of Reagan's policies on the rich and poor, cuttings from OMB director David Stockman's controversial December interview in the Atlantic Monthly, and comments on the economics of the stage.

A reporter from the Wall Street Journal viewed a rehearsal and was struck by its satirical presentation of the depressing facts of Reaganomics, especially of Stockman's doubts: "None of us really understands what's going on with these numbers."

When a Journal article appeared on February 12, Lerman's switchboard lit up with calls from NBC (both TV and radio), CBS, Time, Newsprint, the L.A. Times, National Public Radio and others. A crew from NBC taped part of the dance for its Saturday night news and billed it as "the Stockman Ballet" in teasers before each commercial break; clips from the dance were interspersed with clips from Stockman's press conference after the Atlantic interview was published.

Liz sees the piece as a way of "waking people up rather than hitting them over the head," presenting hard facts with a sense of humor. The "Docu-Dance" framework evolved from Liz's interior dialogue over the problem of presenting political content through dance. It's ironic that while the establishment arts world continues to insist that art and politics don't mix, breaking this taboo has meant attention and enthusiasm for the Dance Exchange's work far beyond their wildest imaginings.

Washington readers can see the piece and other political dance on March 26. Call 202/783-8900 or write the Dance Exchange at P.O. Box 50308, Washington, DC 20004 for information.

DEMOCRATIC COMMUNICATIONS

The February issue of The Independent, published by the Foundation for Independent Video and Film in New York, reports on "The Willow Declaration," a statement by a group of media people who met in Willow, NY, last August to discuss the implications of UNESCO's call for a "new world information order" (discussed in Cultural Democracy #17). We reprint the declaration, which has been endorsed by FIVF's Board, below; for more information about it, contact Karen Paulsell, NYU/TITP, 725 Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10003. For more information about FIVF and The Independent write to John Greyson or Wendy Lidell, AIVF/FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012.

"We are a group of artists, educators, researchers, film and video producers, electronic technicians, social scientists and writers united in our support for democratic communications. The economic, cultural and spiritual welfare of humanity is increasingly tied to the structure for production and distribution of information. Most communications today is one-way, from the centers of power to passive audiences of consumers. We need a new information order here in the U.S. to give the power of voice to the unheard and the disenfranchised. We strongly support freedom of the press, but we see that in our country, this freedom now exists mainly for corporations to make high profits, to promote socially useless consumption and to impose corporate ideology and agendas. As workers who produce, study and transmit information, we pledge to change this reality. We will work to preserve and encourage face-to-face communication: people can speak best for themselves without the intervention of professionalism or technological mediation. We support that technology which enhances human power and which is designed and controlled by the communities which use it. We use it. We support the participation of workers and trade union and community organizing. We support the development of community channels for programs, news flow and data exchange. We support popular access to and control of media and communications, and criticize and deplore the fact that this right is being attacked now in the U.S. by efforts in Congress to eliminate the Fairness Doctrine and public interest broadcast regulations. While these laws have been underutilized and difficult to apply, they have been the principal tools for forcing even token public de-

bate. We who live and work in the U.S. pledge ourselves to struggle for the democratization of communications within our communities, our places of work and our political institutions. We support further inquiry by international organizations such as UNESCO into the social relations of the electronic environment. We hope that these discussions will continue and will resonate among and between nations and peoples.

STORYTELLERS ALERT

NAPNOC member Debra Wise of Underground Railway Puppets and Actors in Melrose, MA, has asked us to run a couple of announcements. First, Underground Railway is planning a story-telling concert on April Fool's Day to benefit The Gathering (read about it in NAPNOC notes #15) and to serve as a memorial for Ken Feit who died shortly before The Gathering in August. Debra is looking for storytellers and clowns--especially those who knew Ken--to perform. And of course everyone is invited to attend.

Second, Underground Railway is beginning an oral history project with intergenerational groups and wants to hear from others who've been involved in similar projects. Contact Debra Wise at 486A Main St., Melrose, MA 02176 or call 617/665-7812.

HELP YOURSELF

Readers may not know that NAPNOC staff is available to consult with neighborhood arts groups or public agencies needing advice and assistance. Some of our clients have been: The Chicago Mural Group; Illinois Arts Council; Colquitt County (GA) Arts Council; Rural Arts Services (Mendocino, CA); and Appalshop (Whitesburg, KY).

We specialize in helping arts groups solve problems of organization, staff, and planning (especially where corporate-style technical assistance doesn't fit) and in helping public agencies plan community programs and involve the community in their work. Write to us about your group's problems and we'll send you some information on similar work we've done, the costs involved, and the kind of help we might offer you.

Contact NAPNOC, P.O. Box 11440, Baltimore, MD 21239; telephone 301/323-5006.

NAPNOC

neighborhood arts programs
national organizing committee

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