

# CULTURAL DEMOCRACY™

Issue number 25 October-November 1982

**Golly! Swell format!**  
**Think I'll make my pledge**  
**and stay the course!**

(see page 19)

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## LET'S GET VISUAL

NAPNOC needs slides, black and white photos and line illustrations that pertain to neighborhood arts work and the movement for cultural democracy. We're putting together a slideshow (and hope to take it abroad). We want to illustrate as many different types of community arts work as possible. Send 35 mm color slides, clearly labelled, and we'll copy

and return them.

We need photos to illustrate articles we write about the movement for other publications. We'll credit you and the photographer. Please label them clearly, and send duplicates or photos you can afford to do without.

Finally, CD will run cartoons, drawings, montages and the like from now on. We can't afford halftones-line art only. Don't send originals unless we can keep them. *Thank you.*

# VOICES FROM OMAHA PART 1

Community artists from Atlanta to Seattle, New York to California, converged on Omaha for NAPNOC's 6th Annual Conference and Meeting. Co-hosted by the University of Nebraska Department of Dramatic Arts (and with support from the Nebraska Arts Council), this year's meeting on October 15 - 17 offered an interesting and inspirational exchange of ideas about the state and direction of the movement for cultural democracy -- and everybody had a good time.

For all the details, you'll have to wait for December's special issue, which will feature excerpts from the Conference sessions, proposals put forward to the membership, and advice for next year's Conference garnered from participants' evaluations. For now, we'll offer the following taste of the proceedings.

The keynote session was entitled "Practicing Cultural Democracy: Cultural Work As Organizing." Most of the major themes of the Conference were introduced during this hour and one-half -- and once raised, they came up again and again (with never enough time) throughout the entire event.

The main question was of relationships: What is the artist's relation to a community? To the world community? How is it affected by the necessity for financial support? By the level of organization within the community? What about the forms we use? Our language and its sometimes staggering impact? And just what is it that artwork can be expected to accomplish, anyway?

Arlene Goldbard opened the session with some words of encouragement, saying that the panelists invited to kick off this discussion had more than 50 years combined work in the movement for cultural democracy: *"It seems to me that it is really important to begin this Conference by saying that, because many of us have to fight over and over again against the idea that we are farm clubs for the big arts institutions, 'emerging artists' -- you've heard that phrase a lot? -- that we're in the cocoon stage. We haven't become 'real' artists but we're working our way up there....Based on the experience of many in this room we either have to say that we have spent the longest time in our cocoons of any butterflies in history, or that perhaps there's nothing to 'emerge' into that's more satisfying than the kind of community work*

*that the people here are doing now.*

*"The other thing I wanted to say, for which I hope not to be accused of being a Pollyanna, is this: It's very easy, when you do this kind of work, to find yourself always in opposition. In opposition to the people from whom you might get money or other kinds of support; in opposition to a set of received ideas in the artworld that discourage the kind of work that we do; and sometimes in dynamic opposition, fruitful conflict, with the problems we grapple with in creating arts work. A lot of us are fighters. We spend time thinking about how big the obstacles are, how long the road is to travel, how hard the row is to hoe, and how much there is always left to do. It's very easy to forget how accomplished we are as a movement; how much important work has been done; how many extraordinary people have committed their lives to this kind of cultural work; and how much difference that has made to other people in society as well as to our fellow cultural workers.*

*"I hope we can think of the 50 years that this panel represents and give ourselves a pat on the back without being complacent, because nobody else is going to give us credit for it, I guarantee that."*

## With The Community

John Pitman Weber of the Chicago Mural Group pointed out that much of the impact of community arts work depends on the relationship between artists and community members: *"Speaking from a public arts perspective -- visual arts -- I think that the fact that a portion of our audience participates in the designing and execution of our work, and a slightly larger proportion participates actively in making the thing happen, is crucial to whatever effect that we have....The young people who actually do the stuff with us go through a personal transformation through this creation and that changes them -- very often profoundly. So the meaning to the larger community audience of what we do depends upon the extent to which we're able to create an identification between this larger audience and who's doing it, so they don't see it as 'those outside agitators doing this to us or for us poor slobs who are unable to create beautiful things for ourselves,' but rather as 'we're doing it.' That they will identify the people who are doing it as be-*

ing themselves, as being their folks, means regardless of the specific theme or issue, the fundamental symbolic message of all our work is that change is possible and people in that community can be active agents in changing their own world. That painted wall or sculpture or whatever proves it."

In response to a question about whether he was content with a "symbolic" relationship to a community, John continued: "Where the dividing line between 'symbolic' and 'real' is is pretty unclear, because you're always dealing with a small percentage of the people in the audience. Take a neighborhood with a few thousand people and the participants, whether they're physically doing the project or supporting it, might only be anywhere from 25 to 200 or so. The question is really how effective are the verbal and organizational and personal 'conveyor belts' that spread the experience, the feeling of it, from those people who are directly involved to the larger group...There's a whole lot of different things which could affect this...certainly in recent years we have been able to rely less on the presence of the grassroots activists to serve as part of that conveyor belt...very often, because they're not there."

Lee Hawkins from Cherry Creek theater in Saint Peter, MN, suggested that the relationship between the artist and community is always symbolic: "Work that's produced in the community can be a symbol of the people in the community if they are given the tools and skills to carry on that work independently...Or, if nothing happens, if that relationship doesn't develop, then I think that it is symbolic of something else, which is that the experience wasn't successful...The relationship of the artists and the communities that they serve is either one of dependence or liberation. If we're working with a community of people and trying to get them to take on work that they can fully participate in and begin creating themselves, then it's a liberating experience in a full sense. But I think if they become dependent upon artists as specialists, the ones who are always going to have to take the lead in creating something, then it's a relationship of dependence."

### The Personal is Political

How one theater views its relationship to its audience and community was explained by Phyllis Jane Rose of At The Foot of The Mountain in Minneapolis: "One of the hall-

marks of our company-created pieces is some commitment to always deal with the concept-- and I think this is very related to the women's movement -- that the personal is political. When we did a play on prostitution, we insisted on not seeing those women out on the street as different from us. But researching how is prostitution a phenomenon in our culture, and what does it have to do with our personal lives? And we just did a piece called JUNKIE!, on addiction and recovery. We wanted very much in that piece to focus in on not the documentary, down-in-the-gutter horrors of dependency, but also on the process of recovery -- what that could mean and where we could move. If the source of addiction is some kind of spiritual despair, how can we take courage to risk exposing that, so our audience will also confront that spiritual despair? And how can we show direction in where to go next?"

Mike Mosher, a muralist from San Francisco, suggested that artists can deceive themselves into inauthentic relationships: "Too often we have the capacity to be able to do the paperwork or do whatever needs to be done, to perhaps even fool ourselves into that symbolic relationship....I had an experience, which really made me think about these things, of getting a mural painted over. I realized that many of the same people in the tenants' organization who signed letters and petitions saying they wanted this mural were also the ones who when the movers and shakers in the organization said 'We don't want these anymore' probably signed the petitions to have them painted over. Now they weren't the same ones who signed petitions to say 'don't paint them over,' who were considered a sort of rag-tag bunch, out-of-work people who helped us erect scaffolding and so on and weren't really in the so-called positions of power in the tenants' organization. That made us muralists question the procedure that initiated those murals. Was it coming from the Art Commission having some money to throw around? And all these questions exposed the power behind artwork getting to people on anything. I mean, maybe the main difference between community arts -- the movement -- and the rest of the art world is not accepting institutionalized power as it's handed to us. Most artists try for that museum, try for this or that, rather than taking a chance that might fail but makes you realize that you have to trace back to find where these things come from."

(continued on page four)

### Inside The Movement

John O'Neal said that for New Orleans' Free Southern Theatre, these questions were most successfully resolved at the height of the civil rights movement of the '60s: "Our overall objective in FST was to support and reinforce the aims and purposes of the black liberation struggle, which we see as a struggle of oppressed people to put an end to their oppression and help build a new society....So the most valid times -- the times when we've done best at reaching toward that objective -- is when we were part of a broad social movement, the broad movement that in fact created us and made it possible for us to exist. And I would even go so far as to say it made it possible for what is generally called 'alternative arts' to exist. I mean, the social movements initiated by the mass of the people in the '60s -- prominent among them being the black movement, but also including the effort toward peace, toward ecology, the women's movement, and so forth, all these mass movements that sort of spontaneously occurred as an expression of the people's desire to be shed of the oppressive limits that they found in their experience. When those movements were on the high tide, we had vast audiences all over the place because all we had to do was call the movement office in such and such a place and say 'Hey, we got a play, we're coming.' They'd say 'Great!' If they didn't like the play, they'd come back to us with concrete things. That's where our money came from, in spite of the fact that most of the money we spent came from grants from private foundations and government sources. But they didn't give us money because we were so good and so bright and talented and skillful and all that -- although we of course were. They gave us that money because the people demanded that these institutions be responsive to their interests....And now, all these people sitting in these nice executive jobs that are getting bounced out -- that's because the people's movement died down and so they don't need the 'spooks' sitting beside the door.

"Yet I don't think we resolve the kinds of questions on the floor here in the long term without recognizing a relationship of dependency of the artist on a vital social movement, because we don't exist in a void. The link, it seems to me, has to be some kind of organized political link between self-conscious, conscious artists working in

some community and the structures that exist in that community for it to make decisions about what it's going to do."

Arlene suggested that "interdependency" might be a better word: "We're in the midst of something right now, the movement against nuclear proliferation. I've paid a lot of attention to it in the last year or so, focusing on this theme of the relationship of a cultural worker to an organized movement because so many of the groups in NAPNOC have been doing work against nuclear weapons. Given the stage of development of that movement in the U.S. now, all of the anti-nuclear proliferation work that's done is basically consciousness-raising. So although the methods of making a television program or writing a book or handing out a leaflet or making a play or a poster are different, the function of the work doesn't differ much. It's basically all the same, and there's nothing in the movement to say it's more effective to write a book than it is to put on a play, for example. Which makes the interdependency of artists and organizers really clear and might have something to teach for other movements."

### Re-inventing Our Work

John Pitman Weber added something: "I think that we need to re-invent format. Arlene's talking about the major movement going on right now. If we look at the total cultural situation it's very different than it was 15 years ago. That means the kinds of institutions, their structures, where our audience comes from, how they actually got into the hall or got out on the street corner for the celebration at the end of a mural or whatever -- it's different than it was. If we're going to be effective we've got to re-invent the whole theory, and not simply continue doing what we've been doing."

Robb Pocklington from the Quincy (IL) Fine Arts Society suggested that the problem is much deeper than tapping into an organized movement: "It seems that perhaps the difficulty -- the reason that murals get painted over, that funding sources ignore progressive arts -- might be that we are not doing what is essential: finding the values that are deeply held within the societies that we're working in."

Doug Paterson of the Dakota Theatre Caravan agreed, pointing to the Caravan's experience with the rural people of South Dakota: "As professional artists, we want to represent them with our skill and craft, to tour

were the only government in the world to defend the Nestle Corporation against international regulation of dubious marketing practices -- in the name of freedom. But when our resolution on freedom for cultural products went down to predictable defeat, we did not actively follow up on Ambassador Gerard's remarks (the State Department professionals ran the delegation, not Reagan's appointee), and eventually the U.S. agreed to the "Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies." (*Selections from the Declaration follow this article.*)

This Declaration is supposed to guide future UNESCO programs on culture and information. It endorses but does not define a "New World Information Order." It declares that "States must take all the necessary steps" to see that citizens can freely participate in cultural life and share in scientific advancement. It says that states should establish "cultural industries in countries where they do not exist...." It was somewhat surprising that the U.S. would agree to these concepts, given Reagan's track record of opposing regulation, supporting private sector responsibility in cultural affairs, and being insensitive to the needs of the weak.

The trade-off was that the U.S. got some language in the Declaration on freedom. Cultural creativity stems "from the independence of peoples and from individual freedom." "Social and cultural conditions must be established which will facilitate...artistic and intellectual creation without political, ideological, economic or social discrimination."

Since the Soviets, not to mention our right-wing allies, voted for cultural freedom too, one can ask what all of this means. Perhaps not too much.

But two positive developments emerged from Mexico City. First, the Reagan administration, while paying lip service to "total freedom," finally accepted (at least implicitly) the need for cultural policy and regulation. Second, the U.S., in the final analysis, contributed in a reasonably positive way to the important norms governing international cultural and information programs. To be sure, the U.S. did not want to discuss the realities of cultural imperialism. But because of a strange combination of State Department professionals and outside academics on the

delegation, the U.S. did strike a balance in the official UNESCO norms.

As Gramsci so often noted, ideas affect politics more than is commonly thought. It is thus ironic that Reagan, with all of his emphasis on unilateral military efforts, has contributed -- albeit in spite of the rhetoric of his UNESCO Ambassador -- to a set of ideas in the Mexico Declaration that just might prove a reasonable platform for those -- unlike Reagan, of course -- genuinely interested in cultural democracy, cultural human rights, and improved cultural transnational cooperation.

David P. Forsythe

*The Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies is a lengthy document, comprising 54 separate provisions and a long preamble. We have excerpted some provisions that might be of special interest to readers below:*

"(T)he Conference solemnly agrees that the following principles should govern cultural policies:

"CULTURAL IDENTITY"

"1. Every culture represents a unique and irreplaceable body of values since each people's traditions and forms of expression are its most effective means of demonstrating its presence in the world.

"2. The assertion of cultural identity therefore contributes to the liberation of peoples. Conversely, any form of domination constitutes a denial or an impairment of that identity.

"5. The universal cannot be postulated in the abstract by any single culture: it emerges from the experience of all the world's peoples as each affirms its own identity. Cultural identity and cultural diversity are inseparable.

"8. All of this points to the need for cultural policies that will protect, stimulate and enrich each people's identity and cultural heritage, and establish absolute respect for and appreciation of cultural minorities and the other cultures of the world. The neglect or destruction of the culture of any group is a loss to mankind as a whole.

"9. The equal dignity of all cultures must be recognized, as must the right of each people and cultural community to affirm and preserve its cultural identity and have it respected by others."

"CULTURAL DIMENSION OF DEVELOPMENT"

that reflect the possibility of a just, peaceful and lively earth."

For more information about the conference contact NAPNOC member David O'Fallon at Continuing Education in the Arts, University of Minnesota, 320 Wesbrook Hall, 77 Pleasant Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 or call 612/373-4947.

#### SOME RELATED RESOURCES

◦We recently received notice that a group of Twin Cities people have been meeting to follow up on the conference. If you're in the area, contact either Meri Golden at 822-5483 or Ruth Jaskiewicz Caprow at 872-1558.

◦In a session on the economy we came into the possession of an exceptionally useful little publication called "We Are Not The Problem!" It's published by the Institute for Labor Education and Research, 853 Broadway, Room 2014, New York, NY 10003. The booklet is subtitled "A Short Course on What's Wrong With The U.S. Economy," and features such interesting facts as this response to those who argue that military spending creates jobs: One billion dollars spent in defense creates 75,000 jobs; construction, 100,000 jobs; consumer industries, 112,000; health care, 138,000; and education, 187,000. (The source is the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1975; as the military moves further into hi-tech, that same billion dollars creates even fewer jobs.) We paid \$2 for a single copy; prices may be cheaper in bulk.

◦We also came across an open letter to Poets for Peace. The author, David Romtvedt, says "There are two things poets can address as poets -- the use of words to hide the real nature of military planning and activity, and the necessity to imagine what a nuclear war is before we can cease preparing for it. Poets can speak out on these issues in several ways. If they teach, they can speak in their classes. They can speak at readings. They can write poems on the issues. And what if every book of poems published included a statement by the poet on his/her commitment to peace and consequent refusal to participate in preparations for nuclear war?"

This group is just in the process of formation. For more information, or to get involved, write to David Romtvedt, P.O. Box 484, Port Townsend, WA 98368.

◦NAPNOC member Debra Wise writes to tell us that they've started a Boston-area group of performing artists for nuclear disarmament

-- PANDA. They began meeting late in September. Write for information to PANDA, P.O. Box 740, Cambridge, MA 02139 or call 617/864-2552. Debra's group, Underground Railway Puppets and Actors, is working on a disarmament vaudeville piece, "The Anything Can Happen Roadshow." For information write to her at 486A Main St., Melrose, MA 02176 or call Underground Railway at 617/665-7812.

DA/AG

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## REAGAN & UNESCO: Freedom & Culture

*David P. Forsythe, the author of this article, teaches political science and attended the Mexico City conference it describes.*

At the UNESCO meeting on cultural policy in Mexico City in August, the U.S. delegation tried to avoid cultural policy and international regulation by emphasizing "freedom." Said Jean Gerard, our ambassador to UNESCO, "As regards future trans-cultural relations...the United States rejects internationally imposed cultural standards or norms limiting, in any way, the rights of individuals...Our cultural policy is a policy of freedom."

The opposition to this naive view was surprisingly led by the French and backed by almost all other delegations to this first inter-governmental meeting on cultural policy since 1970. French Minister of Culture Jack Lang was pointed in his remarks: "Cultural and artistic creation is today victim of a system of multinational financial domination against which it is necessary to get organized...yes to liberty, but which liberty? The liberty...of the fox in the henhouse which can devour the defenseless chickens at his pleasure?"

France itself, of course, has not a few multinational corporations, not to mention Agence France Presse, one of the "Gang of Four" big press agencies. But it was the U.S. which tried to placate its domestic interests by submitting a resolution at the conference declaring that "the free circulation of...cultural products is a basic human right."

Thus at first glance it seemed that the U.S. was repeating the debacle at the 1981 World Health Organization meeting, where we (continued on page 12---)

pointed by the CCLM Board to its grants committee. Virginia Scott's name was not on the list of candidates submitted by CCLM. When we asked why, Jennifer Moyer had this reply: "NEA said that would mean that we would be abiding by the letter but not the spirit of the thing. I suppose they're right." Mary MacArthur confirms this: "They did ask why couldn't they just choose one of them (the tied finalists) for an appointed position, but we said we felt that was really violating the spirit of the agreement."

#### A Hint of Things to Come?

So there you have it. NEA wanted more control over the selection of CCLM grants committee members, and used the contract provisions it negotiated to persuade the CCLM Board not to follow through on its initial decision to reflect the membership's vote in its appointments to the grants committee. There is a lot of feeling that the Literature Program is becoming more conservative in outlook; Jennifer Moyer says, for instance, that "The NEA Panels have been moving in a direction of funding only magazines that are of 'national importance,' that have 'national impact'...They have a perfect right to define their purview as best they see fit, but I don't agree with it. I think that there are hundreds of regional magazines, eclectic magazines...whatever their editorial direction, that will never have a national impact but are extremely important as a contribution to our literary culture." NEA denies any biases in selecting CCLM committeemembers, saying only two considerations applied: the need for more writers on the committee (as opposed to editors and critics); and the elimination of overlap with NEA's own grants Panels.

Virginia Scott, on the other hand, is alarmed by the whole arrangement. In a memo dated October 13, she urges CCLM members to "take seriously the fact that this decision is not an 'election.' It is an appointment by CCLM in the interests of a constituency that is clearly not mine...Please fight for your right to elect 3 members to the November, 1982, Grants Panel. If you don't the erosion of our right to elect CCLM panelists will increase...This procedure is illegal and disenfranchises the membership." Ms. Scott tells us that she has received copies of many letters of support for her position sent to CCLM, and she welcomes more.

To contact the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines, write 1133 Broadway, New York, NY 10010 or call 212/675-8605. To contact the NEA's Literature Program write 2401 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20506 or call 202/634-6044. To contact Virginia Scott write Sunbury Press Books Inc., Box 274, Jerome Avenue Station, Bronx, NY 10468.

Don Adams and Arlene Goldbard

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## **DISARMING ART: Minnesotans Mobilize**

On September 24 and 25, over 200 artists, most from the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, MN, participated in a conference entitled "Artist's Response to the Nuclear Arms Race." The conference was cosponsored by a number of groups: The University of Minnesota's Departments of Conferences and of Continuing Education in the Arts, the Women's Art Registry of Minnesota, At The Foot of The Mountain, The Loft for Writers, Illusion Theatre, Sideshow Productions and the Neighborhood Media Project. Participation was similarly broad: painters, writers, film makers, performers, and many others.

From the conference description: "Ideas have power to determine action. How you think of the arts and role of the artist will determine your response to questions raised by the presence of nuclear arms. If you think of the artist as a Romantic figure you may not see the connection between the work of the artist and the threat of a nuclear war. The Romantic Image pictures the artist as a gifted and passionate child, committed only to the pursuit of a private vision. The 'Romantic' artist is often perceived as opposing and being alienated from all that others hold dear. There is an older and deeper tradition that the artist -- and those concerned about the arts -- can refer to: Artist as Citizen. This tradition places the artist within the circle of the community, the neighborhood, the nation. The citizen artist works to renew and transform the community that supports her or him. This tradition is as old as the artist/craftsman of pre-history and is now the model for many artists in many settings. This conference seeks to renew the concept of the Artist as Citizen, specifically in response to the Nuclear Arms Race."

tor of the Program, explained it somewhat differently. She said the Panel was "slightly uneasy about its relationship with CCLM," explaining that "under the terms of a grant, if the grantee does something that is not really in keeping with the goals or the policies of the Program, the only response that the Panel can have is to take that into consideration in the next grant application period and say, 'We are not funding you because of what you did before.' That was unacceptable." So the contract idea "was a way in which the Panel could make sure that CCLM's policies and procedures were in keeping with those of the Literature Program."

As an example of the cause of the Panel's uneasiness, MacArthur said that "One CCLM grants committee decided just to divvy up the money among what they considered all the eligible applicants. Since our mandate is to fund those of artistic excellence, that really was something that was not in keeping with the policies of the Program."

Jennifer Moyer, Executive Director of CCLM, speculated that there were other reasons for this switch: "I think in fact that because we are so vocal for the underdog, the minority, the feminist, that's exactly the reason why the NEA gave us a contract this year instead of allowing us the freedom of a grant."

Whatever the NEA's motivation, the key difference between the previous years' grants and this year's contract is the NEA's role in the appointment of CCLM's grants committee. The contract states that "key personnel and appointed grants committee members will be chosen in consultation with the NEA." Jennifer Moyer says that the NEA "chose to interpret 'in consultation with' a little more rigorously than my understanding.... They stated they must approve of our appointed grants committee members." Frank Conroy says that in practice this means that "each party has veto power." The question of who chooses grants committee members and how is at the heart of this controversy.

#### "Congratulations, But..."

On September 23, Virginia Scott received a letter from CCLM congratulating her on her election, by the membership, to the 1982 grants committee. The letter outlined some procedural considerations and mentioned that she should expect to receive more information some time in October. On October 13, having heard nothing further, Virginia Scott telephoned CCLM. Staffer Dallas Galvin told her

that the members' vote had produced a tie for third place; that the Board had voted to break this tie; and that Ms. Scott had lost the vote and was removed from the committee. Ms. Scott subsequently received a letter from Galvin reiterating this explanation (though this letter was dated October 4, it wasn't received 'til 2 weeks later).

Ms. Scott, meanwhile, had heard another version of these events. She prepared a press release, dated October 18, which read in part as follows: "Frank Conroy, Reagan appointee to the Literature Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, has overturned a duly-held constituent election... to insure that a progressive literary editor would not influence the flow of federal funds..." Ms. Scott believes that Conroy was responsible for her dismissal from the committee.

Conroy says that the fault is CCLM's: "The fact is that there has been no difficulty or dispute about anything that the NEA has done or that I've done. What I'm afraid has happened is that Virginia Scott, unhappy at CCLM's procedure, unhappy at the way that they solved their problem, is attempting to spread the blame around.... Since I had nothing to do with it, I can't accept the blame."

According to the NEA Literature staffers and CCLM, the story is as follows: Finding themselves with a tie for third place in the grants committee election, the CCLM Board voted to accept the election of all 4 finalists, thereby foregoing one of the appointments the contract with the NEA specified. Conroy and MacArthur at NEA refused to accept this arrangement; in Conroy's words, "It changes the ratio of the elected to the appointed members of the panel, so that it seemed to me, as the guardian of the NEA Panel's money, I could not in good conscience let that occur. The Panel specifically said the ratio should be 3 to 2 (elected to appointed), and presumably they did this for a reason, then a ratio of 4 to 1 is unacceptable.... That's all I said to CCLM. I didn't say who should be on. I didn't name any names... I certainly brought no pressure to bear on anyone about who should be on that panel."

CCLM accepted this interpretation of its contract obligations, and submitted to the NEA staff a list of 13 candidates for the two appointed positions. The NEA rejected 5 of these, and 2 of the remaining 8 were appointed (continued on page 8---)

(VOICES FROM OMAHA, cont'd from p. 5)

*shaped or rough edges honed down in ways that are blunting its effectiveness."*

Cricket Parmalee of Los Angeles' Provisional Theatre had this to say about the "sales" mentality one can be forced into and how different it is from the sensitive community relations being discussed: "For years I was on the phone selling for tours, right? I had to convince the person who was going to sponsor us that this even was going to be an earth-shattering event so that they would buy it....It's like if you're taking your pulse, you have to take it lightly as opposed to 'mooshing' it. And somehow in the selling of it, we have to 'moosh' it -- and you can't; it becomes overloaded."

In her introductory remarks, Phyllis Jane Rose touched on an issue that was to come up again and again: language. "We are a radical feminist theater. Lately, we've taken 'radical' and 'feminist' off the public label because they're such jargon words and if people don't want to support you, they use them against you. It became a controversy that wasn't worth the maintenance of those words. It was often easy for people to use those words as dividing words, creating division among women, and we've always been very committed to working for the health and support of all women,...so it's seemed real important not to be creating divisions that have nothing to do with us."

Phyllis distributed At The Foot of The Mountain's newsletter, featuring a self-definition and a discussion of the root meaning of the words it employs, for example: "RADICAL -- from the Latin word 'radix' meaning 'root.' A 'radical' gets to and proceeds from the root....POLITICAL -- from the Greek word 'polis' meaning 'city.' Anything that affects the relationships and quality of life among the people in a community is 'political.' Art can reinforce the values in a community or it can change them. In either case, ALL ART IS POLITICAL." She went on to say that "We spend a lot of time trying to educate funders about that because only those works that specifically name issues are seen as political, which is nonsense....In conversation, we always get a lot farther in discussing this basis of our work than we do just by using the phrase 'radical feminist theater' up front."

See December's CD for much, much more on the Conference and Meeting.

## FREEDOM of the SMALL PRESS

*This is one of those byzantine stories where everyone denies all allegations, and you need a scorecard to know the players. We print it here because it raises -- but does not resolve -- a number of questions that will be much-discussed over the next few years as the Reagan administration makes its influence felt on federal cultural policy; as nonprofit organizations feel increasing pressure -- however subtle and indirect -- from funders, and as the outcry against these influences -- whether they are made explicit, merely suggested, or perhaps imagined, continues to grow.*

Virginia Scott is the publisher of Surbury Press, a small press located in the Bronx and devoted to the publication of material by women, third world writers and worker-writers. Ms. Scott contacted NAPNOC a few weeks back to draw our attention to what she sees as a breach of democratic process involving the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines (CCLM) and its grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Literature Program.

For several years, NEA has made a large grant to CCLM which it in turn subgrants to a variety of literary magazines and related services. In Fiscal Year 1981, this grant amounted to \$496,830. CCLM's membership (representing small magazines across the U.S.) has traditionally elected 3 representatives to a grants committee which dispenses these funds; 2 other panelists have been appointed by CCLM's Board of Directors. In essence, through this grant the NEA has shifted the bulk of its literary magazine support to CCLM. In FY 1981 the NEA made 62 other literary magazine grants, ranging from \$600 to \$30,000; CCLM's grant amounted to nearly 60% of the Endowment's literary magazine support.

### Tightening The Reins

This year, the NEA decided to change its relationship to CCLM. Instead of a grant, it offered CCLM a contract. Frank Conroy, head of the Literature Program, told CD that the Literature Panel made this decision because they "...no longer wanted to give a grant to a subgranting organization; they felt they could give grants themselves. On the other hand, they didn't want to abandon CCLM entirely, so they gave them a contract, which is slightly different." Mary MacArthur, Assistant Direc-

and be part of these people. We believe we have something genuine that they would want ...it would be useful to them. They will come up afterwards and say 'Thank you, I just didn't understand it that way,' or 'Boy, my grandmother used to talk about those things.' And so you begin to play a very practical role in their lives....I think that comes about through a very concrete relationship -- through knowing people, knowing their humor, knowing what their words are -- and not to sort of know them from having studied them in textbooks but having been around them and learned their language, or seen the images, seen the paintings, seen the colors, the textures....That's one of the things that a progressive cultural worker is committed to-- trying to understand what forms, images and words are. There's an incredible amount of creation going on all the time; and there's so much life experience that needs to be re-understood, re-formed, re-cast, seen again, put in new perspectives all the time. And I do believe that those things live not just in the heart of the artist, but in the heart of the community and can be found."

#### Choosing the Future

John O'Neal raised the question of which values the artist taps into: "It seems to me that we have to recognize that there is indeed a great deal of oppression in society and exploitation, and that some people benefit from it and some are victims of it. I don't think that you're going to get the people who are benefiting and the people who are victims to agree about what should be done about it. So how you go about answering the question of how you get plugged in depends on who you're plugging into and how you see your interest in regards to them."

Phyllis Jane Rose suggested that's not always so simple: "It's an enormous challenge for us. Our audience never consisted of wealthier people...until we did this play about addiction. Suddenly, our audience demographics changed to include a lot of wealthy St. Paul matrons because they've all been through treatment. Now they have an interest in the theater; they have an interest in women's issues; but they have this primary commitment to addiction and the necessity of recovery. Past that issue, what is our bonding? Hardly anything, because the class difference is so enormous....I feel that's a conflict every single day."

John O'Neal, noting how few of NAPNOC's non-white members had attended the Conference,

urged people to look toward their own community of artists in relation to the world they want to help build: "I don't raise it as a stick to beat anybody's head with, but as a question that somehow we need to take seriously. What is the nature of the world we're trying to create? Somehow, what we're doing now has to, at least to some extent, foreshadow that world. The future comes from today, from the past; so if this is the seed of the future, what kind of future are we talking about? That's one way of looking at it. The other way is this: Clearly, the future is not going to be white. The numbers tell us that. What we're talking about is building a world culture, a world society.... So something's got to happen to start preparing for that. If we were the seed from which the thing was going to grow, I think that projection would have to bring us to the conclusion that the world is going one way and this group would be going another. We are fragmented now, and if we take action right now, we can bring ourselves back into alignment with what the world is really like."

Martha Boesing from *At The Foot of The Mountain* agreed: "For me, the question that is really important is the question of who exactly is our community and when are we going to take responsibility for identifying that? I think as artists we do serve a community; if we don't we might as well quit. On some level, we must meet that need....But the question that's really interesting to me, and that I think you're raising, John, is: Who is this community we're serving, and are we consciously choosing this community, or can we do anything about enlarging it?...To me, the vital question is how can we become part of world culture? How do we move out of serving some very specific little community that we in our work are able to connect into, and make that a more vital world community? I don't know the answers, but to me those are the questions that people have got to explore and fight through together."

#### The Big Obstacles

Mike Mosher pointed out that the struggle for support can be an obstacle: "I also wonder if all the questions of funding might have a lot to do with it. The observation that 10 years ago pressure could be put on funding sources from a position of strength-- whereas now unfortunately I think consciously or unconsciously many groups like ours are approaching them hat in hand. I wonder to what extent the content of the work is being (continued on page 6---)

Thus, while the explicit subject of the meeting was the peril of nuclear proliferation, the occasion was most useful and interesting as a forum for artists, who, like their fellows everywhere, are rethinking their relationships to work and society.

There were films, slideshows, performances, panel discussions, lectures, poster competitions and exhibits, literature tables and so on at every turn. And as a thread woven through each moment was the inquiry of artists asking "Who and what am I for? What can artwork do? Where do my responsibility, and my greatest effectiveness, lie?" Not all of the conference events helped advance this inquiry; people complained that too many of the sessions were professorial lectures when the occasion called for dialogue. But there was basic agreement on the problems to be faced, and that was sufficient to carry people forward.

Madge Micheels-Cyrus of Friends for a Non-Violent World delivered opening remarks that brought the principal contradiction into high relief: "It's been estimated that \$17 billion per year is required to adequately care for all the people in the world -- to provide adequate food, water, shelter and so on where it is needed. The world-wide military establishment spends this much on arms every two weeks." She urged artists to help "bring these horrors to human dimensions," making them more comprehensible than mere statistics on paper. "Remember, what we're talking about is the beauty of human beings and the life of the planet itself."

#### The Artist as Citizen

A panel on "Artist as Citizen" introduced some of the themes which pervaded the two days' discussion. David O'Fallon of Continuing Education in the Arts moderated; panelists were Martha Boesing of At The Foot of The Mountain; Arlene Goldbard, NAPNOC Co-director; Ileana Rodriguez of the University of Minnesota and the Nicaraguan Cultural Ministry; and Alan Burns, also of the U. of MN.

Martha Boesing opened the panel by looking at some of the myths which plague artists: the myth that one is either a starving artist or a star, when in reality most do survive, do get by; the myth that competition should be our modus operandi, when "making it" is such a slim possibility that even if it is the goal, collaboration is a superior way to live; the myth of official experimentalism-- "It must be great; I didn't understand it"--

that great art makes you feel dumb, and art that is understandable is the product of a cop-out; and finally, the myth that artists are terrible at figures, when "as small businesses go, artists are brilliant at managing well, even against incredible odds."

Alan Burns, a novelist and teacher, offered a list of 12 points to help guide the work of artists as "workers who need to identify with other workers' struggles for a decent life and a peaceful world." Some of his points:

"1. Stay sane. Those most aware are most likely to go crazy these days. We must produce sane art and steady, while others are frantic, fearful, hysterical. Sane doesn't mean calm or detached. It's sane to be strident when our lives are at stake.

"2. Stay hopeful. Follow Meridel Le Sueur's example and Neruda's too. Barbaric war-making policies aim to demoralise by the extremity of their inhumanity. Our response must be vigorous, confident in the future which is ours not theirs.

"3. Counter apocalyptic art, suicidal, pessimistic art. These would accustom us to acceptance of the destruction of ourselves and of the world.

"6. Think it out!...We should not settle for the notion that nuclear arsenals are produced by a 'crazy system run by madmen.' It's more dangerous than that. A system based on production for profits rather than needs is trapped by its own logic that drives it towards war. It is artists, among others, who must unravel the contradictions, and envisage a way through to a world at peace.

"8. Collaborate, one artist with another, to combat the ego trip, foster comradeship, test ideas, and (a bonus) to introduce an arbitrary unpredictable element into the work.

"9. Organise into artists' unions for mutual support and greater impact.

"10. Support alternative networks, small presses, community radio, etc....."

Arlene's topic was citizenship --not as a special problem of artists, but a dire problem for us all. She pointed to the powerful forces that would have us lead completely private lives, leaving public concerns to "experts," who "have all the information." She called for the practice of authentic citizenship and authentic democracy, exhorting artists to fulfill their special role in (continued on page 10---)

bringing this practice about.

### For or Against the State

Ileana Rodriguez is a professor in the Spanish Department at U. of MN. She had just returned from Nicaragua in time for the conference, and spoke about the transformation in roles -- for the artist, the critic, and others -- that the revolution in that country had made possible. She talked about the importance of organization among cultural workers, explaining the union structure in Nicaragua, the existence of organizations that facilitate collective work and help set cultural policies.

Ms. Rodriguez' comments about this change in roles (*"An artist works for one's self; a cultural worker for others....I cannot do what I want, but must do what needs to be done"*) prompted an extended discussion about freedom. One questioner asked whether she believed *"you must perform a task whether you totally agree with it or not."*

Ms. Rodriguez replied that all artists are affiliated with a state, in simple terms, *"either for it or against it."* The conference was for artists who disagreed with state policy on militarism, and *"When you decide as an artist that you're against the state, you organize art against it."* But, she said, *"I am in general agreement with the values of my state. I seldom disagree, and then only partially. I would like to do what they want me to do. There is a relationship in a developing state where the well-being of the state and the artist coincide. Perhaps that was true here in 1776."*

This issue -- the idea of the artist as a totally independent, inner-directed creator, in contrast with the the artist as one with a people and a larger cause -- carried over into Ileana Rodriguez' workshop on the role of artists in Nicaragua. Censorship was discussed in its many permutations: how is control exerted by the state different from control exerted by the marketplace, by the owners of cultural production and distribution systems? How pervasive is self-censorship? Where it is strong, does it render official censorship unnecessary -- and thereby mask its existence?

Though everyone was speaking more or less the same language, this discussion seemed a bit like aliens trying to communicate. Most participants found it impossible to con-

ceive of a situation in which they felt at one with the official social and cultural institutions. Though Ileana Rodriguez insisted that the situation of an artist changes totally with a radical change in the artist's relationship to the state, it was obviously difficult to grasp her meaning without experiencing it.

### Art and Activism

Along with other issues, a panel of writers on "Art and Social Responsibility" took up a question posed by moderator Margaret Hasse: Do writers have to be political activists, or is writing enough? The range of opinion offered on this question is an indication of the extent to which it is a vital one for artists now. One person expressed frustration at the feeling that one had to participate in marches and demonstrations to prove sincerity; another said exactly the opposite -- that it was important for artists to put their bodies on the line, just like other people. One said that good political poems come from political action; another that you need to be integrated, so that everything you do is part of your artwork; a third that one can be an activist within the poem -- moving, surprising, learning something through the act of writing.

Jim Dochniak, publisher of Sez magazine, talked about the extent to which artists have been deprived of knowledge of our historical antecedents, the extent to which political artwork appears as a particular style or fad. He was annoyed with poets who say *"Now I'm going to read my political poem,"* as if it were different from the others. *Every piece of art is political."*

These questions will not be resolved with words alone; they will be resolved -- certainly in a variety of ways -- in the lives and actions of those concerned. What's most important for the movement for cultural democracy is that the discussion is hot and heavy right now; not abstract but vital; not dogmatic and doctrinaire but extremely fluid and open; and most happily, not with a penchant for "correctness" but with the recognition that experimentation and diversity of approach will prove most fruitful.

At the close of the two-day meeting, the assembled participants adopted the following statement: *"Artists of many disciplines met with other citizens out of concern for all our futures to make an official and public declaration of our opposition to nuclear weapons. We pledge to create alternatives*

"10. Culture constitutes a fundamental dimension of the development process which helps to strengthen the independence, sovereignty and identity of nations. Growth has frequently been conceived in quantitative terms, without taking into account its necessary qualitative dimension....

"11. It is vital to humanize development, the ultimate aim of which should be the individual dignity of the human being and his responsibility to society. Development implies for every individual and every people access to information and opportunities to learn and to communicate with others.

"15. Any cultural policy should restore to the development process its profound, human significance. New models are required. And it is in the sphere of culture and education that they are to be found."

#### "CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY"

"17. Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims the right of everyone freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. States must take all the necessary steps to attain this objective.

"18. Culture springs from the community as a whole and should return to it: neither the production of culture nor the enjoyment of its benefits should be the privilege of elites. Cultural democracy is based on the broadest possible participation by the individual and society in the creation of cultural goods, in decision-making concerning cultural life and in the dissemination and enjoyment of culture.

"19. The aim, above all, should be to open up new channels of political democracy through equality of opportunity in education and culture.

"20....More opportunities should...be provided for contact between the public and cultural bodies.

"22. The participation of all individuals in cultural life requires the elimination of all inequalities based on social background and status, education, age, language, sex, religious beliefs, health or the fact of belonging to ethnic, minority or fringe groups."

#### "CULTURAL HERITAGE"

"24. Every people therefore has a right and a duty to defend and preserve its cultural heritage, since societies recognize them-

selves through the values in which they find a source of creative inspiration.

"25. The cultural heritage has frequently suffered damage or destruction as a result of thoughtlessness as well as of the processes of urbanization, industrialization and technological penetration. But even more intolerable is the damage caused to the cultural heritage by colonialism, armed conflict, foreign occupation and the imposition of alien values. All these have the effect of severing a people's links with and obliterating the memory of its past...."

#### "ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL CREATION AND ART EDUCATION"

"28. Social and cultural conditions must be established which will facilitate, stimulate and guarantee artistic and intellectual creation without political, ideological, economic or social discrimination."

#### "RELATIONSHIP OF CULTURE WITH EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND COMMUNICATION"

"30. The overall development of society calls for complementary policies in the fields of culture, education, science and communication with a view to the establishment of a harmonious balance between technological progress and the intellectual and moral advancement of mankind.

"36. The free flow and widest and most balanced dissemination of information, ideas and knowledge which are among the principles of the new world information and communication order imply for all nations the right not only to receive but also to transmit cultural, educational, scientific and technical information.

#### "PLANNING, ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCING OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES"

"41. Culture is the essential condition for all genuine development. Society must make substantial efforts with respect to the planning, administration and financing of cultural activities. For this purpose account must be taken of the needs and problems of each society, always guaranteeing the freedom necessary for cultural creativity, as regards both its spirit and its content.

#### "INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CO-OPERATION"

"46. International cultural co-operation should be based on respect for cultural identity, recognition of the dignity and value of all cultures, national independence (continued on the back page---)

# One Big, Happy Family

The National Council on the Arts (NCA) traded its posh headquarters at the Four Seasons Hotel for a slightly-seedy meeting room at the Hotel Washington for its November 5-7 meeting — a far smaller room, in a characteristic display of concern for the public. Dozens of National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) employees packed the hall, and members of the public had to make do with standing room, if indeed they were able to squeeze inside.

The atmosphere was more reminiscent of an Academy Awards presentation than a business meeting. Aside from approving a long-postponed experiment in supporting local arts agencies, the sessions were suffused with a glow of mutual appreciation and congratulations among the participants. Gone was the tone of strained suspicion that marked Chairman Frank Hodsoll's early meetings with his advisory Council one year ago. NCA members congratulated the Chairman on having become "one of us."

## LOCAL ARTS AGENCIES: A TEST IN '84

The NCA voted to let "the nose of the camel into the tent," in one of the mystical phrases understood by insiders: it voted to approve direct financial support for local arts agencies (LAAs) from the NEA. The "LAA Test Program" will be implemented in Fiscal 1984 by the Endowment's Office of Partnership.

The LAA issue has been alive in the files of the NEA's planning department at least since 1969. The agency's fear of "opening the floodgates to mediocrity" has kept the NEA in irons on this issue — in the words of Bob Canon of the Arts Council of San Antonio, who offered its capsule history at the meeting. The words "professional" and "excellence" pepper the pages of the guidelines approved by the Council, talismans against such a threat. Canon mentioned in passing that this issue had been "dodged" for too long, which prompted a flurry of denials from Council members: Nothing had been dodged, they just weren't ready yet.

Canon appeared before the Council as Chair of NALAA, the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies. NALAA's definition of LAAs is written into the guidelines of the new Test Program: *"a community organization or an agency of city or county govern-*

*ment which provides financial support, services or other programs for a variety of arts organizations and/or individual artists and the community as a whole. Included under this definition are regional organizations within single states."* Such agencies are eligible to receive NEA funds directly under this program or, in conjunction with other LAAs in their state, through their state arts agency (SAA). Minimum grants of \$50,000 will be awarded to 10-15 grantees for up to three years (bringing each project total to at least \$150,000). The overall LAA Test Program budget will be \$1-2 million, depending upon the budget Congress allocates to the NEA.

## "Leveraging" Local Governments

The main object of the LAA Test Program (sometimes called the "Local Initiatives Program") is to generate new and higher public sector appropriations for LAAs at the state and local levels. SAA applications will "generally" have to be matched first at the state level, with at least one "new" state dollar for every federal one (thereby yielding \$2); then at the local level with funds from municipal governments (thereby yielding an additional \$2, for a total of \$3 state and local for every \$1 from NEA). Direct grants to LAAs will have to be matched with a new \$2 in municipal funds for every \$1 from NEA.

Secondarily, the Program "encourages" applicants to exercise their "option" to raise still further funds from private sector sources — in addition to the public matching funds outlined above. To assure that these funds won't, in effect, be taken away from other arts groups by LAAs, the grantees will be required to pass all such private matching funds on to local groups and artists through re-granting schemes.

The Program's emphasis on new state and local public monies raised two NCA members' hackles. Art collector and museum trustee Norman Champ complained, *"I don't feel putting all the (matching) burden on the public sector is fair."* Champ noted that these governments were already having to close hospitals and cut back services of all kinds, and called it *"unfair to add this pressure."* Bernie Lopez, director of the New Mexico Arts Commission, shared this feeling, saying that *"In these times, the*

match requirements should be reduced" and that private and public funds should be considered acceptable. He added, "I know from our own experience in New Mexico we wouldn't have had many takers starting out this way."

Such concerns were brushed aside by Chairman Hodsoll, who emphasized the modifier "generally" in the statement of matching requirements for the SAA component of the new Program. Hodsoll said it was there "to allow for exemplary smaller projects."

#### Who Will Benefit?

How will the LAA Test Program affect community-based cultural groups and artists? This will be left, in keeping with Washington's current block grant craze, to local authorities. Several elements within the guidelines are leverage points for local advocates of cultural democracy:

For both SAA and LAA applicants, one of the 12 review criteria is "responsiveness to local needs identified through a planning process involving broad, representative participation." For many public arts agencies, "representative" has meant making sure to invite the ballet along with the symphony. But applied literally, this should call for including cultural groups and artists not already served by public arts agencies. The LAA Test Program's objectives state that regranteeing programs should support particularly "those (professional artists and arts organizations) with limited access to other sources of funding." However, this objective is not reflected in the review criteria; so it will be up to local people to make sure it's realized.

The special importance of minority cultural groups is another of the 12 criteria used to screen applications for LAA Test funds: applicants must demonstrate "plans to integrate minority and special constituencies into decision-making at all levels of planning and programming."

As for the substance of the programs which will ultimately receive support, little guidance is given. An "overall objective" of the Program calls for "advancing significantly the diverse work of LAAs in arts programming, providing services, and/or broadening audiences for the work of professional artists and arts organizations." A slightly more substantive statement is made, though in footnotes explaining section 5(c) of the NEA's enabling legislation, with which agencies must comply

in order to be eligible: Funds must be used to support "projects...which have substantial artistic and cultural significance, giving emphasis to American creativity and cultural diversity and the maintenance and encouragement of professional excellence...and which, without such assistance, would otherwise be unavailable to our citizens for geographic and economic reasons."

A point made often in the National Council's discussion of the LAA Test Program — and one reflected in objectives and guidelines — is the NEA's interest in supporting models that can be replicated. Collaborative planning involving broad local arts agency publics is described as a priority here; suiting program plans to local cultural characteristics is supposedly another. Though the guidelines read as if regranteeing to local arts groups is of special interest to the NEA, Hodsoll denied this when Lopez protested that many local arts agencies didn't want to become fund dispensers.

We will continue to monitor the development of this program in the coming year. Please let us know about local developments in public arts agency support in your area.

#### HODSOLL PLANS AHEAD

Chairman Hodsoll opened the generally jovial November Council meeting with a report on his first year as head of the NEA and an outline of the issues he will be working on in the year ahead.

The first broad area was to develop "a beefed-up version of goals, objectives and strategies" to serve as a basis for NEA budget planning for 1985. (Council budget decisions are made in August each year.) Part of this process will be to implement an "information management system" which can yield up data from "parameters of analysis of the state and economics of the arts," which data will be gathered between February and May. (Perhaps by then we will have found a translator to help us understand what the Chairman is talking about.)

Second, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies is submitting a report on touring and presenting programs in February. It will be further discussed in May, prior to budgeting in August.

Third, the Chairman expressed his interest in the "private sector." He reminded Council members of a report on this topic circulated in the spring; noted that the

President's Committee on the Arts & Humanities (see CD issue 23) is talking about it; and promised to "announce plans" in February.

Hodsoll also stated that he expected more work in international programs through interagency cooperation involving the NEA and new "mid-level leadership" at the U.S. Information Agency (recently known as the "International Communications agency"); and in the area of film preservation.

#### TAKING STOCK OF EXPANSION ARTS

The NCA's November meeting also occasioned the annual program review for Expansion Arts, the NEA program begun in Fiscal 1971 to assist arts groups "*extending the impact of art into communities that were economically or socially depressed and geographically isolated,*" according to the written report given to Council members. The report went on to note that, while the development of these groups had been promising, "*the 'storefront' visage of these organizations described a paucity of financial means which threatened to abort the promised artistic development.*" This official version sees the Expansion Arts program as an experiment to determine whether these groups could "*transcend community boundaries and affect the overall evolution of the arts*" — quite a revision from the official line of even three or four years ago.

The emphasis in recent years has been on "institutionalization" — awarding fewer grants for larger amounts of money to what the program calls its "*principal organizations.*" They've halved the number of grants given in the past two years: Over 300 grantees have been cut from the 677 that received support in FY 1981.

The report offers a Darwinian look at community arts history, explaining that the NEA had "*anticipated a measure of attrition...which we have indeed witnessed....The question was whether a body of strong artistic structures could be identified, sustained, and helped to move toward more institutional behaviors.*"

These "institutional behaviors" were exemplified by the oral presenters at the November Council. The program was opened by director Edmundo Rodriguez of Los Angeles' Plaza de la Raza, which just dedicated a \$2 million building with all the attendant razzle-dazzle of a Hollywood opening, com-

plete with stars. There was much emphasis on what Barry Gaither of the National Center of Afro-American Art called "*the right container*" — the building necessary for a "*quality product*" to generate funds: "*People need to see what's being supported.*" Gaither, also chair of the Expansion Arts policy panel, praised program director A.B. Spellman for his "*clarity of vision in seeing the task of institution-building and...buttressing the institutions we need by the end of the century.*"

The oral presentations were followed by a 7-piece recital of Christian music (3 in Latin) by the Harlem Boys' Choir. It drew a standing ovation and a spontaneous \$200 check from Council member Roz Wyman, producer and fundraiser for various LA arts institutions. So enthusiastic was the Council in praising the presenters, staff and Council member Margo Albert (who has worked with Plaza de la Raza since 1969) that it almost forgot to vote to approve the Expansion Arts guidelines for FY 1984 — unchanged since the prior year.

#### Overlooking the Field

Missing from the Expansion Arts report was any discussion of those community arts groups not among the program's "principal groups." Though it noted that "*we do witness a kind of triage among the supporters of our field,*" there has been no inquiry into the question of what has happened to the hundreds of projects that have not received NEA funds in the past 2 years. Plans for the future call for continuing NEA support for the "principal groups," which will be boosted by the program's "*advocacy for the support of its grantees with decision-makers in the private sector.*" But there is no direct consideration of what will happen to groups which no longer meet Expansion Arts' standards as "principals" nor for those new groups which are now at the "storefront" point that the current "principals" occupied 10 or 15 years ago. For these, NEA staff point to the CityArts grant program, administered in a dozen or so cities for 3-year periods; and to the promised fruits of an Expansion Arts-funded survey of private support now being done by the Foundation Center.

An even larger question, in terms of overall NEA policy, was suggested by the Expansion Arts presentation: The early justification for Expansion Arts' emphasis on institution-building was to prepare groups to "graduate" into regular discipline pro-

grams at the NEA. But in this year's NCA presentation, there was much talk about how valuable continuing Expansion Arts support has been, and how important it is to continue institution-building into the twilight of the 20th Century. No one responded to the Harlem Boys' Choir performance by asking why that group is not supported by the NEA's regular Music Program; no one suggested that perhaps the museum being developed by the National Center for Afro-American Art might warrant equitable support from the Museum Program.

If federal policymakers are content to ghetto-ize minority cultural support in a single NEA program, this is certainly not the fault of Expansion Arts — and you certainly can't blame Expansion Arts for consolidating what it has. But it's pretty chilling to sit as observers at NCA meetings and see what was at best a token commitment to small-scale, community-based arts work slip away unremarked.

—Don Adams and Arlene Goldbard

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## RESOURCES

*NAPNOC member Lincoln Cushing (known to some of you as "The insurgent Squeegie") has put in a plea for more resource reviews, and set a good example by sending in the review of FUSE magazine which follows. Inspired by Lincoln, we've inaugurated this column of resource information: things to read, publications in the making, films and videotapes that pertain to the movement for cultural democracy.*

*Send your resource reviews to CULTURAL DEMOCRACY, PO Box 11440, Baltimore, MD 21239.*

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### FUSE

Arton's Publishing, Inc., Suite 202  
379 Adelaide Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M5V 1S5  
CANADA

6 issues a year: U.S. subscriptions —  
\$15 for individuals, \$21 for institutions

This is quite simply the best single English-language progressive cultural news magazine available. There are other publications which cover specific forms better (Jump Cut, Community Murals Magazine) or

constituencies (Heresies); but none provide the breadth of information on a consistent basis that FUSE does.

Although its primary focus is Canadian culture, it regularly carries articles about groups, performances and exhibits in the U.S. It is, in fact, its non-American orientation which accounts for much of its impact. Not only does it deal with developments in English-speaking Canada, England and Australia, it also carefully includes French-Canadian, Australian aboriginal, and international cultural news. There is an awful lot going on in other countries that deserves our attention. "Inside the beast," we often lose sight of the fact that problems which face the oppositional arts community here are also being struggled with — and sometimes won — elsewhere.

Recent issues have included articles on the status of women in Canadian theater, a panel discussion on Judy Chicago's "Dinner Party," Australian artists and the Left, and music in Cameroun. Each issue is jammed with book and exhibit reviews, surveys of video offerings, critical perspectives, poetry, and interviews.

—Lincoln Cushing

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### WE ARE STRONG

#### Theaterwork

406 South Third Street  
St. Peter, MN 56082  
507/931-3810

We Are Strong is a guidebook of progressive theaters, dance companies, and solo performers now being prepared by the staff of Theaterwork magazine. It will offer company histories, touring and residency information, essays and resource listings.

You can obtain a listing in We Are Strong by calling Theaterwork as soon as possible, as the original mid-November deadline is upon us. They'll send you a form to fill out and return with a registration fee of \$35. (The fee also entitles you to a free copy of the guidebook when it's published.) Publication is now targeted for February, 1983.

We Are Strong will be an extremely important document, useful to presenters, educators, researchers, organizers and many others. You can help support this seminal project by reserving a copy now at the pre-publication price of \$10.95 (it will go on

sale at \$14.95 in the spring). Send a check or money order payable to Theater-work at the address at the head of this notice. And call 507/931-3810 today to obtain a listing in We Are Strong before the deadline has passed.

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### POLITICAL ART DIRECTORY

#### Cultural Correspondence

505 West End Avenue  
New York, NY 10024

Cultural Correspondence is a new York-based magazine on art and politics that re-emerged, after a change in editors and a hiatus in publication, with a special issue on radical humor timed to coincide with the conference and exhibit it cosponsored this year.

Cultural Correspondence is about to publish a Political Art Directory, which editor (and NAPNOC member) Jim Murray describes as "as comprehensive as possible, including groups and individuals in all the arts, all across the country." The Directory's purpose is to improve networking ability; the plan is to publish this spring.

Right now, they want to hear from anyone who would like to be listed. Drop a note to Directory coordinator Susan McCarn at Cultural Correspondence's address (listed above); or call and leave a message at 212/787-1784. Susan will send you a form and more information.

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### CARTA ABIERTA

Center for Mexican American Studies  
Texas Lutheran College  
Sequin, TX 78155  
512/379-4161

Carta Abierta, subtitled "Keeping an Eye on the Chicano Literary World," is another publication that has been revived after a lengthy hiatus. Written in a very lively and charming style by editor Juan Rodriguez (who describes his persona as "El Lowwriter con Cora"), Carta Abierta number 18 includes numerous short reviews of other publications and newsbriefs on writers and projects of interest to the field. Carta Abierta appears as a quarterly insert to La Red/The Net, the newsletter of the National Chicano Research Network, which focuses on grants, fellowships, abstracts, and announcements of interest to researchers.

Write to Juan Rodriguez at the Mexican American Studies Center if you're interested in receiving Carta Abierta

—Don Adams and Arlene Goldbard

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### LAST TRAIN FROM WASHINGTON: The State of the Arts

Victoria Keith and Jerry Rochford  
Windward Video  
PO Box 1033  
Paia, HI 96779  
808/579-9313

This is an hour-long, 3/4" color videotape that ought to be shown regularly by anyone who has encountered the problem of explaining the idea of cultural democracy to people who haven't had a chance to see much community arts work. These NAPNOC members traveled from their home in Hawaii across the mainland U.S. in the summer of 1981, visiting with cultural groups and government spokespeople with the aim of investigating the potential impact of cuts and shifts in federal cultural spending. Vicki and Jerry spent time with SPARC (the Social & Public Art Resource Center) in Venice, CA; the Dakota Theatre Caravan, then in Faith, SD; Lakota Communications in Pine Ridge, SD; the Pickle Family Circus in San Francisco; CityArts Workshop and the Association for Independent Video & Filmmakers in New York; and others as well. Show it! Broadcast it!

—DA & AG

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### THE GATHERING: thoughts of harvest, acts of planting

Blue Heron Productions  
2429 11th Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
612/871-3728

A highlight of NAPNOC's Omaha Conference was the showing of this half-hour, 16-mm. color film documenting The Gathering, the seminal festival/conference sponsored by NAPNOC member Cherry Creek in St. Peter, MN, in August, 1981. For those who went to The Gathering, the film was a wonderful souvenir of the people, ideas and artwork that dazzled us that summer. For others, it was a condensed and exhilarating surrogate of that experience. The film rents for \$60 (plus \$15 postage, handling and insurance); prints sell for \$425. Contact NAPNOC member and producer Bob Foucault at Blue Heron.

—DA & AG

Martha Boesing, At The  
 Foot of the Mountain  
Cultural Correspondence,  
 Susan McCarn/Jim Murray  
 Tim Drescher, Community  
 Murals Magazine  
 Bob Feldman, United  
 Mime Workers  
 In the Heart of the Beast,  
 Steven Epp/Lucinda Anderson  
 Catherine Jordan, WARM  
 Art Gallery  
 Doug Kahn, X-Change  
 Nannette Kiheri,  
 Minneapolis  
 Ken Larsen, Rural Arts  
 Services  
 Liz Lerman, The Dance  
 Exchange  
 Lucy Lippard, PADD  
 David Olson, Theaterwork  
 Cricket Parmalee,  
 Provisional Theatre  
 Doug Paterson, Dakota  
 Theatre Caravan/UNOmaha  
 Katharine Pearson,  
 Appalshop  
 Bill Pratt, Montana Arts  
 Council  
 Roger Schmitz, Blue  
 Heron Productions  
 Beth Siebert, Cherry  
 Creek  
 Jon Spelman, Washington  
 Holbrook Teter, Zephyrus  
 Image  
 Nancy Timmins, Omaha  
 Metropolitan Arts Council  
 John Pitman Weber,  
 Chicago Mural Group  
 Fred Whitehead,  
 Midwest Distributors

Dear Friends,

Those of us who attended the October '82 NAPNOC Conference in Omaha laughed a lot, learned a lot, and left empowered by knowing there are so many of us working for cultural democracy throughout the United States — and around the world.

We also left with an acute awareness of our reliance on NAPNOC to keep us all in touch with each other and to stretch us with radical analysis of the current economic and political state of the arts. In the past, Arlene's and Don's salaries have been funded by earned income supplemented by grants; today, the grants are becoming even harder for NAPNOC to get than for community arts organizations.

Because NAPNOC's fulltime work is an asset to all of us, many of us at the Conference decided it was to our advantage to participate in the responsibility of raising fulltime salaries. At the members' meeting, therefore, 23 organizations and individuals — listed to the left — pledged to raise \$125 each (through subscriptions to Cultural Democracy, memberships in NAPNOC, or hard cash) by September, 1983 — though of course, the sooner the better!

We encourage you to make a pledge of your own — you can use the form below, or simply send a note to NAPNOC's office. We hope to raise most monies through subscriptions and memberships — because the more members we have the stronger we are; and the more subscriptions we have, the faster new ideas and passions for cultural democracy will spread. The task of soliciting members and subscribers will also motivate each of us to talk out loud about cultural democracy in our own communities and thus make our work and our networks more and more visible.

Yours in struggle,



Phyllis Jane Rose, At The Foot of the Mountain  
 NAPNOC Membership Committee

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 I PLEDGE to raise at least \$125, or an equivalent amount in new memberships or subscriptions, for NAPNOC between November 1, 1982, and September 30, 1983.

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the NEW member brochure. \_\_\_\_\_ Your signature

I want to join NAPNOC myself, & get a free year's subscription to Cultural Democracy.  
 I am enclosing a check or money order for \$25 to "NAPNOC" for a year's individual dues.

I am enclosing a check for one year's Cultural Democracy subscription, in the amount of (check one): \_\_\_\_\_ \$15, Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$25, Organizational

\_\_\_\_\_  
 name organization name, if any daytime phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
 mailing address city, state, zip

Detach and mail to : NAPNOC, PO Box 11440, Baltimore, MD 21239, USA...Phone 301/323-5006

(REAGAN AND UNESCO, cont'd from p. 13)

and sovereignty, and non-intervention. Consequently, in co-operative relations between nations, all forms of subordination or the replacement of one culture by another should be avoided. It is also essential to rebalance cultural interchange and co-operation in order that the less-known cultures, particularly those of certain developing countries, may be more broadly disseminated in all countries.

"47. The expansion and exchange of culture, science and education should strengthen peace, promote respect for human rights, and help to eradicate colonialism, neocolonialism, racism, apartheid and all forms of aggression, domination and interference. Similarly, cultural co-operation should help to create an international climate conducive to disarmament, so that the huge sums earmarked for armaments can be used for constructive purposes, such as programmes of cultural, scientific and technological development."

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## Help Rename Us

At this year's Annual Meeting the membership decided it was time to find NAPNOC a new name, one that doesn't use hard-to-pin-down words like "neighborhood," and, it is hoped, one whose acronym doesn't elicit a chuckle. A couple of suggestions have been made so far: "Alliance for Cultural Democracy" and "Union for Cultural Democracy." Send in your ideas before December 31, 1982.

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# NAPNOC

neighborhood arts programs  
national organizing committee

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P.O. Box 11440, Baltimore, MD 21239

We'll poll the membership in January, hold a run-off in February if necessary, and have a new name by the March-April issue.

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### A NOTE TO READERS:

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The membership also approved a new schedule of publication for Cultural Democracy. We will produce a special December issue devoted to the Conference, and from there on CD will come out bimonthly, six times a year. Note the new subscription fees below.

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NAPNOC welcomes letters, comments and suggestions for articles. Please put NAPNOC on your organization's mailing list.

Cultural Democracy is distributed free-of-charge to NAPNOC members. Individual subscriptions are available for \$15/year; organizational subscriptions at \$25. For information on subscriptions or memberships, please write to NAPNOC, P.O. Box 11440, Baltimore, MD 21239 or call 301/323-5006.

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