

**The original documents are located in Box 41, folder “National Endowment of the Arts (3)” of the Betty Ford White House Papers, 1973-1977 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR  
THE ARTS

WASHINGTON  
D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the  
National Council on the Arts

MEMORANDUM FOR: Nancy Hanks

FROM: Barbara Otis

RE: A Proposal: White House Regional  
Dinners

Our hope is that Mrs. Ford -- in addition to showing her interest in the arts and support of the arts -- will want to find a means of exposing and exciting the people to what art is right around them.

To do this, we feel some events should be planned well ahead and actually put on the schedule.

There are numerous dinners and receptions at the White House, and most fall in the category of the "State" dinner. Not many outside of Washington know or care about them.

Would the White House consider scheduling 3 to 4 events a year (hopefully a dinner or reception) for each of the next two years? The occasions would be regional (i.e. one each for the Mid-Atlantic, the Great Lakes, the Southeast, California and the West, the Northwest and Great Plains, the Northeast, and the Southwest and South Central)? Mrs. Ford herself would hostess them, the invitations would come directly from her, the President would attend with her.

For each occasion a committee would be set up, ostensibly to plan the dinner -- with Mrs. Ford as Chairman, and the wives of the Senators and Congressmen of the region involved as members. It's conceivable Mrs. Ford might have a planning luncheon for each -- and have an impact on the Hill. Planning could heavily involve suggestions from the appropriate State Art Councils.

Those invited would be individuals of the region (the State Art Councils could be very helpful here) -- representatives of the arts, representatives of business (bankers, manufacturers, department store executives -- all of whom could





conceivably stimulate future private support of the arts in their region, and maybe the Endowment), representatives of Church and civic groups (Girl Scouts, YMCA, Exchange, Kiwanis etc.), representatives of major universities, representatives of state and local government, representatives of hospital administrators (the handicapped and the elderly), and representatives of the local press.

The decor could be as suggested by Elena (i.e. table settings etc. of the region). There would be displays of regional arts and crafts. These displays could then be at the White House for visitors to view for a specified period, perhaps 6 weeks. This might be a good time, for instance, for an on-going quilting bee (Southeast Region); another time might be an on-going display of potting (Southwest Region).

The entertainment would be of the region.

The food could be typical of the region.

All in all, there could be tremendous mileage -- locally in the region and nationally. It's not at all inconceivable that all the crafts gathered might then be displayed in each state of the region.



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Implementation  
of a Regional Dinner

An Example: The Great Lakes Region  
(Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin)

FOR DECOR

All crafts chosen to be made for the permanent collection for utilitarian use in the White House will, of course, be carefully screened. The list below is of a suggestive nature only.

The White House might like to use

- hand-crafted silverware from the Michigan Silver-smiths Guild of Detroit
- woven table linens produced by the North Shore Weavers Guild of Evanston, Illinois (or the Champaign-Urbana Spinners and Weavers Guild of Urbana, Illinois)
- hand-blown goblets made by Dominic Labino of Ohio (or by Harvey Littleton of Wisconsin)
- pottery produced by the Indiana Potters of West Lafayette, Indiana
- centerpieces made by Harry Nohr or Robert Williams, woodworkers from Wisconsin
- placecards made by papermakers of the region
- miscellaneous decorations by the Amish settlements

A listing of additional regional craft groups is attached.



## Illinois

North Shore Weavers Guild, Evanston, Ill.  
Artisans Guild, Champaign, Ill.  
Champaign-Urbana Spinners and Weavers (Gloria J. Hardiman),  
Urbana, Ill.  
Hinsdale Embroiderers Guild, Riverside, Ill.

## Indiana

Indiana Potters  
Indiana Weavers Guild  
Designer, Craftsmen - Ft. Wayne, Ind.  
Bloomington Spinners and Weavers Guild - Bloomington, Ind.  
Ft. Wayne Shuttlecraft Guild, Ft. Wayne, Ind.  
Indiana Artists, Craftsmen, Indianapolis, Ind.  
Indiana Weavers Guild, Terre Haute, Ind.  
Potters Guild of Indiana, West Lafayette, Ind.

## Michigan

Michigan Glass Guild, Detroit or Birmingham  
Michigan Potters Guild, Detroit  
Michigan League of Handweavers, Detroit  
Michigan Silversmiths Guild, Detroit  
Michigan League of Handspinners, Detroit  
Michigan Craftsman's Council, Detroit  
Potters Guild, Ann Arbor

## Ohio

Noted for glass. A famous glassblower is Dominic Labino  
Toledo Potters Guild  
Cleveland Embroiderers Guild  
Textile Arts Club, Cleveland  
Ohio Designer Craftsmen, Lyndhurst, Ohio

## Wisconsin

Also noted for glass. Harvey Littleton.  
Wisconsin-Designer Craftsmen, Milwaukee  
Jean Stamsta, a weaver, from Hartford, Wisconsin  
Harry Nohr, woodworker, Madison, Wisconsin  
Robert Williams, woodworker, from Manitowish, Wisconsin  
Audrey Handler, a glassblower, from Madison, Wisconsin



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For Entertainment

The list below indicates the diversity which is existent in the Midwest Region.

Those on the list are representative of the region's rural and urban folk traditions.

Those on the list are all a living part of the region's culture.

From Michigan:

Hammered Dulcimer Players from  
Hammered Dulcimer Society  
(rural Mich.)

Rev. C.L. Franklin, Detroit.  
Most influential black preacher  
of this century; sermon records  
since 1940's; also powerful  
singer. Father of Aretha Franklin.

From Illinois:

Ethnic group from Chicago. E.g.  
Propovich Brothers, Serbo-Croatian  
musicians from Southside Chicago.

Blues artist. e.g., Muddy Waters,  
most influential man in development  
of Chicago blues.

Covenant's Church group from  
southern Illinois - old-style  
Scots Presbyterian sect.





Regional Dinner con't.

-2-

From Ohio:

Irish-American piper,  
Cleveland.

Bluegrass group from Columbus  
or Cincinnati

From Wisconsin:

American Indian (Menomines)

Scandinavian - American  
Hardingar - fiddle player

From Indiana:

Oldtime fiddler, rural Indiana

Our hope is that the artists are invited to attend the dinner as guests, not as performers; that they are aware the dinner is in honor of them, and they are seated accordingly. They have been invited to perform briefly (perhaps 10 minutes each), and it is an honor to have them do so.



## REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF THE UNITED STATES

### MIDDLE ATLANTIC

Delaware  
District of Columbia  
Maryland  
New Jersey

North Carolina  
Pennsylvania  
South Carolina  
Virginia  
West Virginia

### GREAT LAKES

Illinois  
Indiana  
Michigan  
Ohio  
Wisconsin

### SOUTHEASTERN

Alabama  
Florida  
Georgia

Kentucky  
Mississippi  
Tennessee

### CALIFORNIA AND THE WEST

Arizona  
California  
Nevada  
Utah

### NORTHWEST AND GREAT PLAINS

Idaho  
Iowa  
Minnesota  
Montana  
Nebraska

North Dakota  
Oregon  
South Dakota  
Washington  
Wyoming

### NORTHEASTERN

Connecticut  
Maine  
Massachusetts  
New Hampshire

New York  
Rhode Island  
Vermont

### SOUTHWEST AND SOUTH CENTRAL

Arkansas  
Colorado  
Kansas  
Louisiana

Missouri  
New Mexico  
Oklahoma  
Texas



In-District Activity:

AN EVENING TO HONOR ARTISTS WITH THE MEDAL OF FREEDOM AWARD

The Appalachian Spring by Aaron Copland was commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Collidge Foundation and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1945. The work involves music, dance, and a production design. The choreography was done by Martha Graham and performed by her dancers, and the set was designed by the eminent sculptor, Isamu Noguchi.

The Directors of the Performing Arts, Music, and Dance propose that President and Mrs. Ford occasion a meeting for the purpose of bestowing the Medal of Freedom on Martha Graham, Aaron Copland, Maurice Abravanel and Isamu Noguchi, who represent high artistic attainment in their respective fields.

The event would require a dance troupe and a small orchestra, which Maurice Abravanel would conduct. Noguchi would provide the set design explicitly for the White House presentation. Mrs. Ford would act as the hostess and take the lead in introducing the artists, following which at the proper point she could introduce the President who would bestow the awards.

The occasion could be organized in such a way as to include awards to as many individuals as might seem appropriate. There is no reason why the awards need be limited to only those who are associated with the performance of Appalachian Spring.





We believe such an event would have a profound impact on the artistic community. Perhaps the occasion could be presented via television.



## In-District Activity:

### A Morning Bus Tour of Inner City Projects

This would consist of a three hour tour of inner city arts projects supported by the Endowment. The length of the tour and the number of stops could be modified to meet the First Lady's time schedule and her wishes. In a three hour tour (9:30-12:30) she could make four thirty-minute stops, followed by news media. The First Lady normally travels in her car and the media by bus, cost of which is pro-rated amongst media representatives. Morning is the best time to make evening deadlines for TV News. Advantage is national exposure for local tour. Angle is that projects located in nation's capital are examples of community based arts projects throughout country.

#### Suggestions:

1. Workshops for Careers in the Arts/High School for Performing Arts

This unique program has received national attention. Starting with a small group of high school youngsters interested in the performing arts, it has developed into the capital's first public High School for the Performing Arts.

A visit here would have a dual purpose....see workshops in progress; visit classrooms where students are studying for credit.

2. D.C. Black Repertory Theatre

This highly regarded and financially troubled black theatre has also received national attention in the media and in such trade papers as VARIETY. In addition to professional theatre, there are classes in acting, voice, and dance movement. Visit could combine visit to one of the classes and possibly a rehearsal. Noted actor Robert Hooks is director.

3. Fondo Del Sol/Saca

This is oriented towards the city's Spanish speaking population. The purpose of the organization is to heighten consciousness of the cultural heritage of this ethnic group by means of workshops in the arts, film festivals,



exhibitions, street fairs and theatre.

#### 4. Artists-In-Schools

Billy Taylor, the noted jazz pianist and lecturer, also a member of the National Council on the Arts, will be jazz musician in residence. Local jazz musicians will also participate in workshops and in-school concerts for elementary and high school students. The last concert ever played by the late Duke Ellington was part of this program for Washington school children.



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In-District Activity:

A Series of Visits to District Museums

Mrs. Ford might invite a group of inner-city children, a group of handicapped, or a group of the elderly to join her in a tour of a museum.

The Museum Director would greet Mrs. Ford and her group and would conduct the tour.

The media would be advised in advance for proper coverage.

The Modern Dance Group of Gallaudet College

Mrs. Ford might attend a scheduled performance or make a visit to the College to watch the group in rehearsal. It could be a private visit or she might have as her guests the wives of various Senators or Congressmen.

The media would be advised in advance for proper coverage.

Tribute to Groups to Perform Abroad under the Auspices of the State Department

Mrs. Ford might want to invite to a dinner -- or at least pay some tribute to -- the various groups sponsored by the State Department to tour outside the United States.

It is anticipated the State Department will sponsor this next year a popular song group, a theatrical group, and a jazz group.





Out-of-the-District Activity:

An Example: The Attendance of Mrs. Ford at the  
Dedication of the  
Henry Street Settlement's

Arts for Living Center

..a community center, open to  
all ethnics, to all ages

;;a community center, which offers

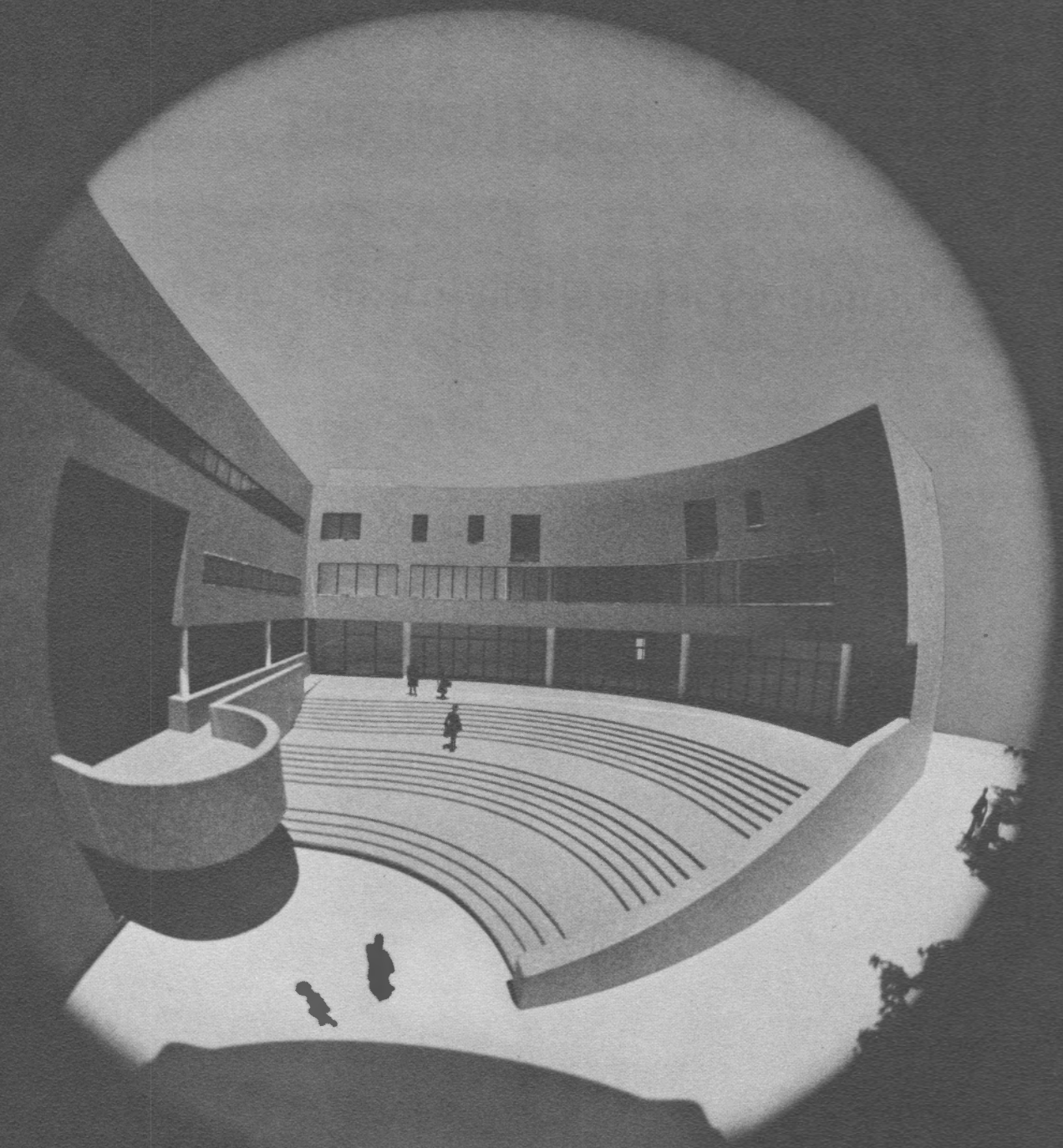
the Henry Street School of Modern Dance  
the Henry Street Music Program  
the Henry Street Sculpture Program  
the Henry Street Theatre Program  
the Henry Street Family Program

..a community center, which offers  
the finest example for the whole  
United States community to emulate.

(Their brochure attached.)



# OPEN DOOR TO THE ARTS



*A Prospectus for Re-Vitalizing a Community*



# A message from Herbert L. Abrons President of Henry Street Settlement

The Arts for Living Center — and what will be created within its walls — represent a long-cherished goal of Henry Street Settlement. This building will be the nation's first arts center designed specifically for a predominantly disadvantaged, multicultural population.

The Center will house under one roof the Settlement's distinguished programs, molded to the needs of the residents of the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

At present, Henry Street's arts programs are scattered throughout the neighborhood in cramped and inadequate quarters. The new Center will bring these programs together and provide them with the space and facilities they so urgently need.

In its programs, the Center will offer the people of the community a wide variety of opportunities to communicate their ideas about their environment, to develop their talents and to deepen their understanding of themselves and each other.

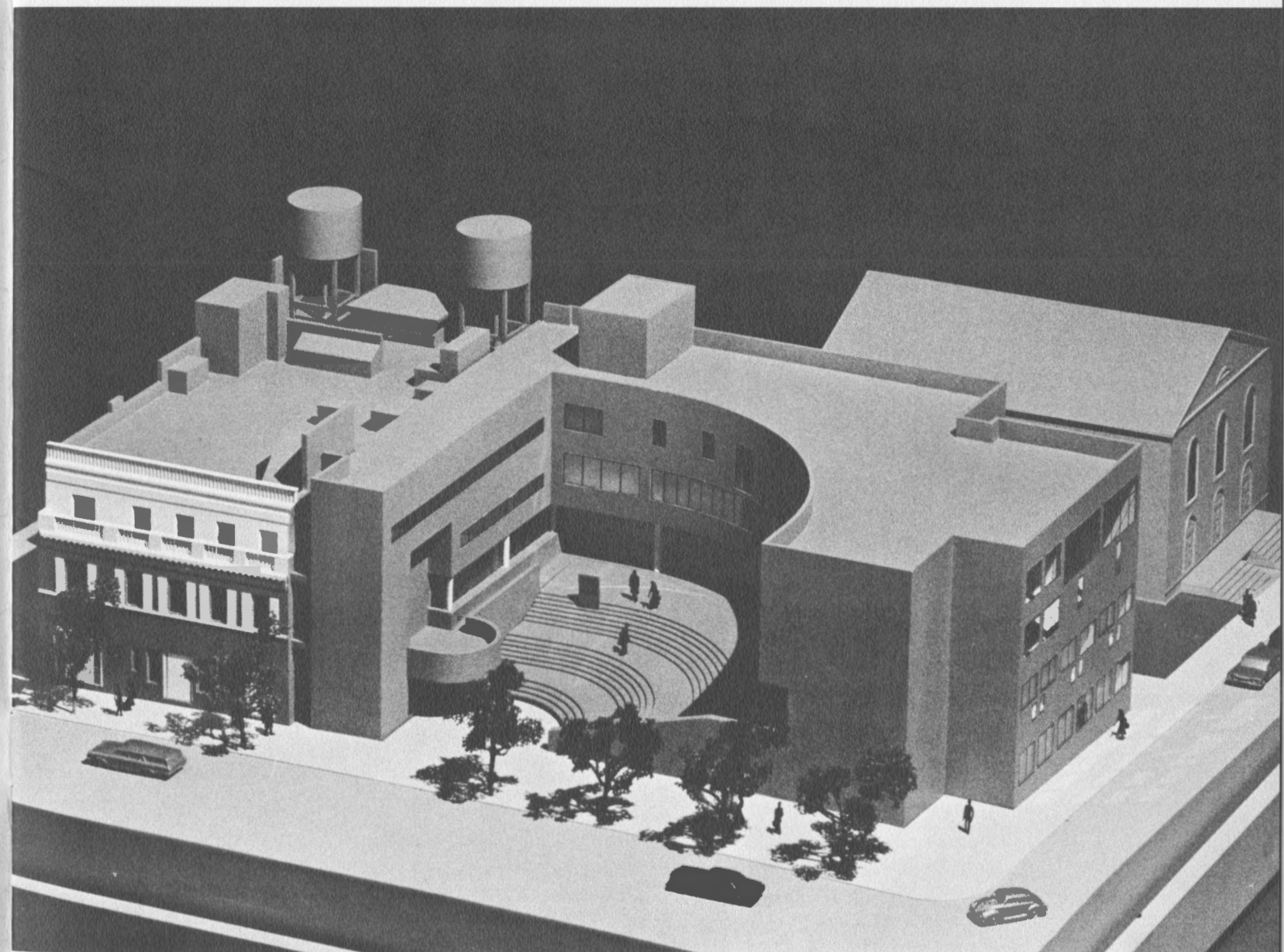
The cost of the project will be approximately \$3 million, *if funds are raised soon*, before spiraling construction costs inflate this figure. Members of the Henry Street Board of Directors and their families have already given or pledged a substantial percentage of needed funds, but additional sources of help must be found if the new building is to come into existence.

Since its founding, in 1893, Henry Street has always placed strong emphasis on the arts while taking a leading role in social reform movements and pioneering in the development of socially oriented services. Today, the Settlement's neighborhood is made up of an unusual mixture of economic and ethnic groups — a population of black and Puerto Rican families, as well as significant numbers of Jewish, Italian and Chinese people.

This entire population will be bid "welcome" by the Arts for Living Center, not only by way of philosophy, but by design as well. The open courtyard, the stairs extending to the street, the many windows through which passers-by can view activities . . . all these express an invitation. The building was designed by Lo-Yi Chan, a gifted young architect in the firm of Prentice & Chan.

Ultimately, the Center represents an effort to improve the quality of life where it most needs improving — in a neighborhood of urban poverty. It is, as you will see on the pages that follow, an exciting building, with exciting goals. And, with your help, we will see those goals realized.

*H L Abrons*



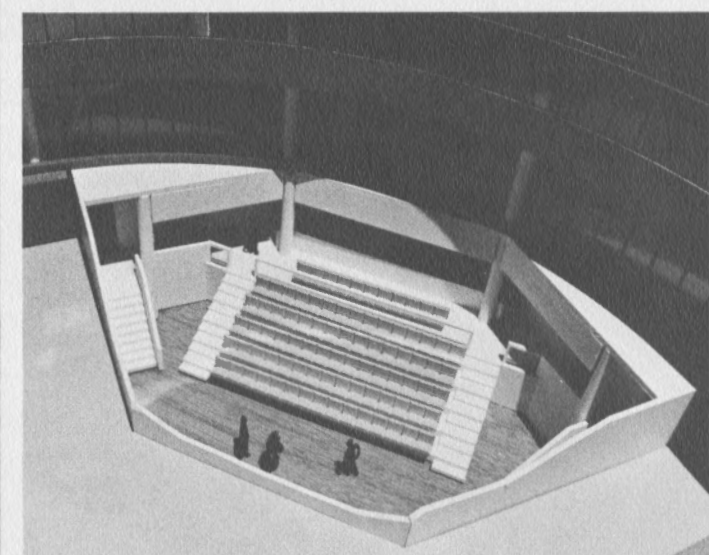




The integration of dance and drama has always been emphasized by Henry Street's school of modern dance, which has risen to national prominence since its founding in 1948. A new permanent repertory company and several choreographers-in-residence will continue to provide experience and training for dancers, choreographers and teachers while enabling non-professionals to use dance and drama as a means of expression.

Neighborhood children will grow in grace and pride under the guidance of young, gifted, enthusiastic program leaders. The Arts for Living Center will help to make the arts an integral part of many lives, thus contributing to personal development, to the advancement of the arts themselves and to the building of a healthier, more unified community.

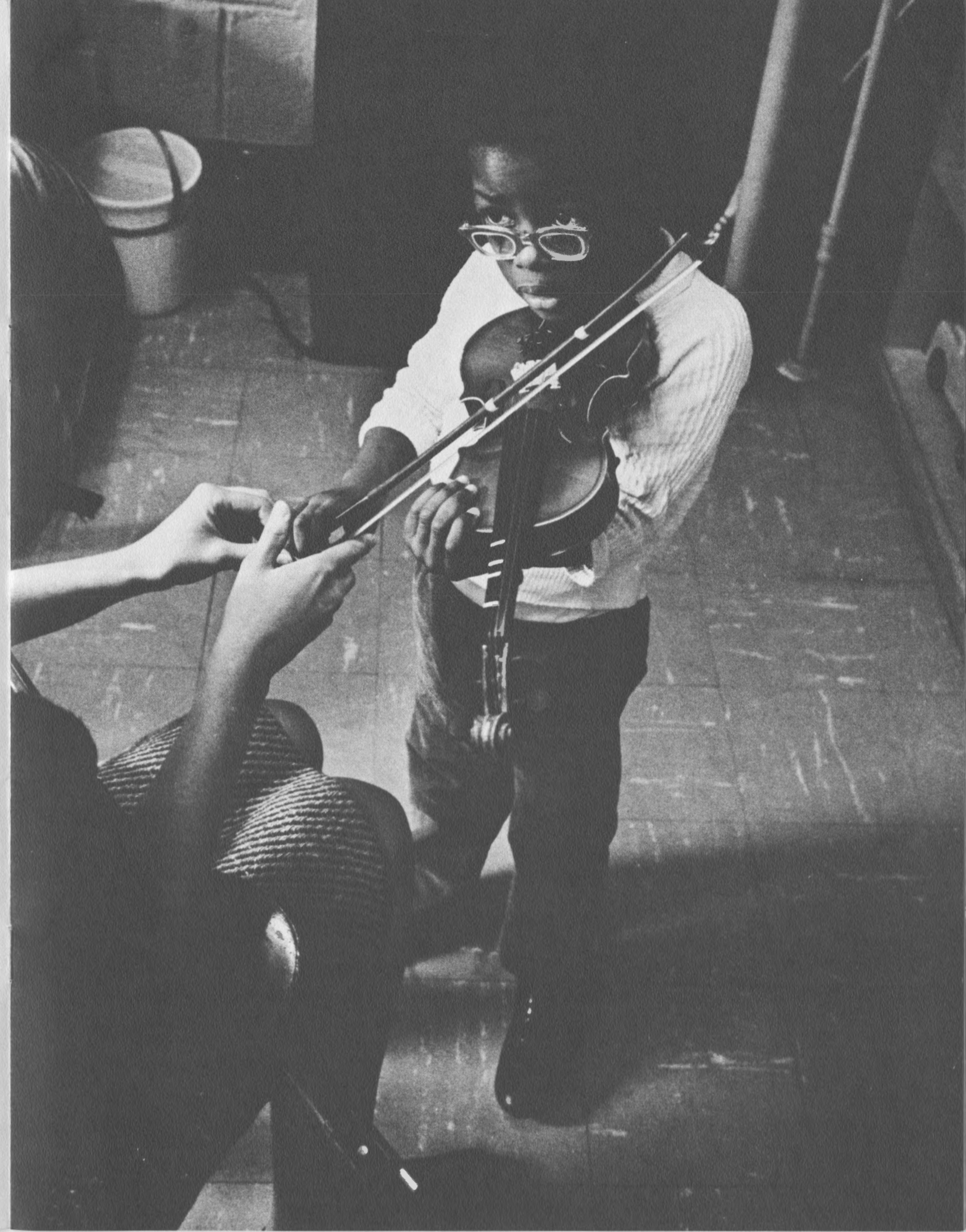
New dance and drama facilities will include a recital hall seating 80 persons and five large studios to be shared with the music program — plus a dance and drama archives.





Henry Street's music program, started in 1928, has won nationwide esteem as a community music school and as a center for experimentation with early childhood techniques such as the Suzuki violin method. The Settlement program has also successfully adapted many of these techniques for use in ghetto Head Start classes.

In addition to the recital hall and five large studios to be shared with dance and drama, 22 small studios, a music library and a number of classrooms have been designated for use by the music program.

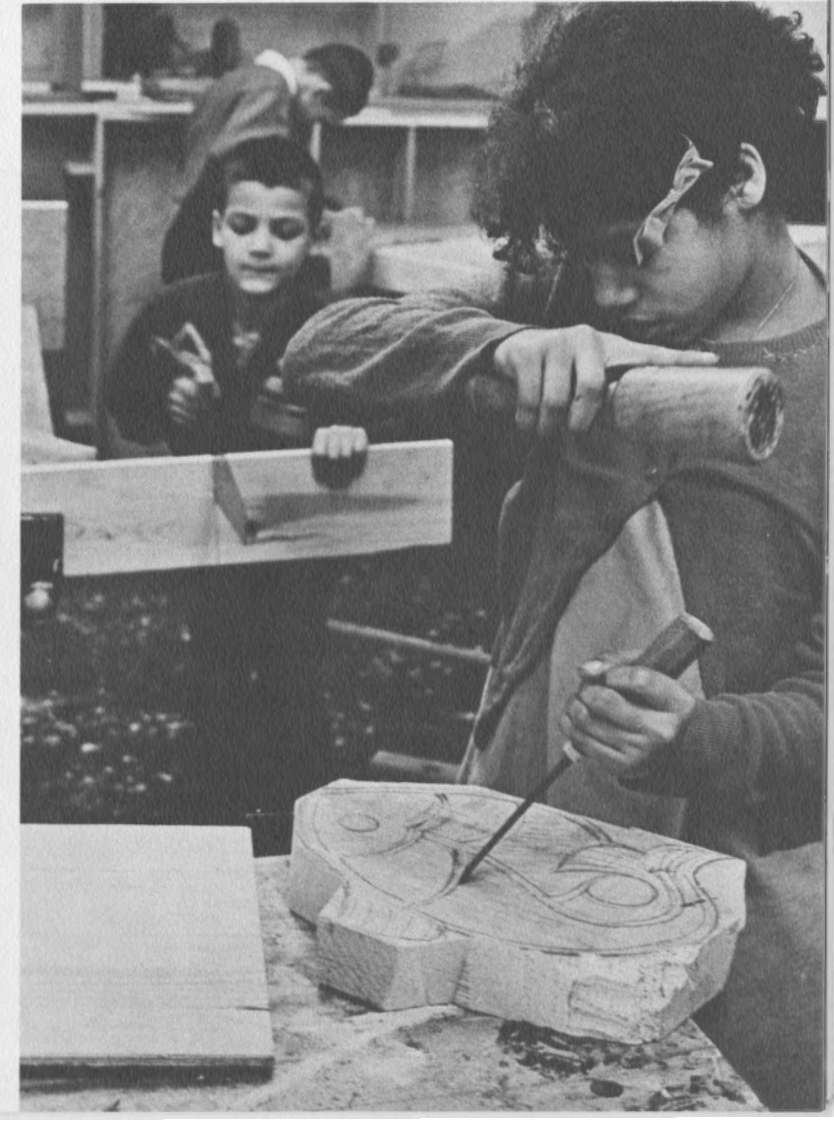
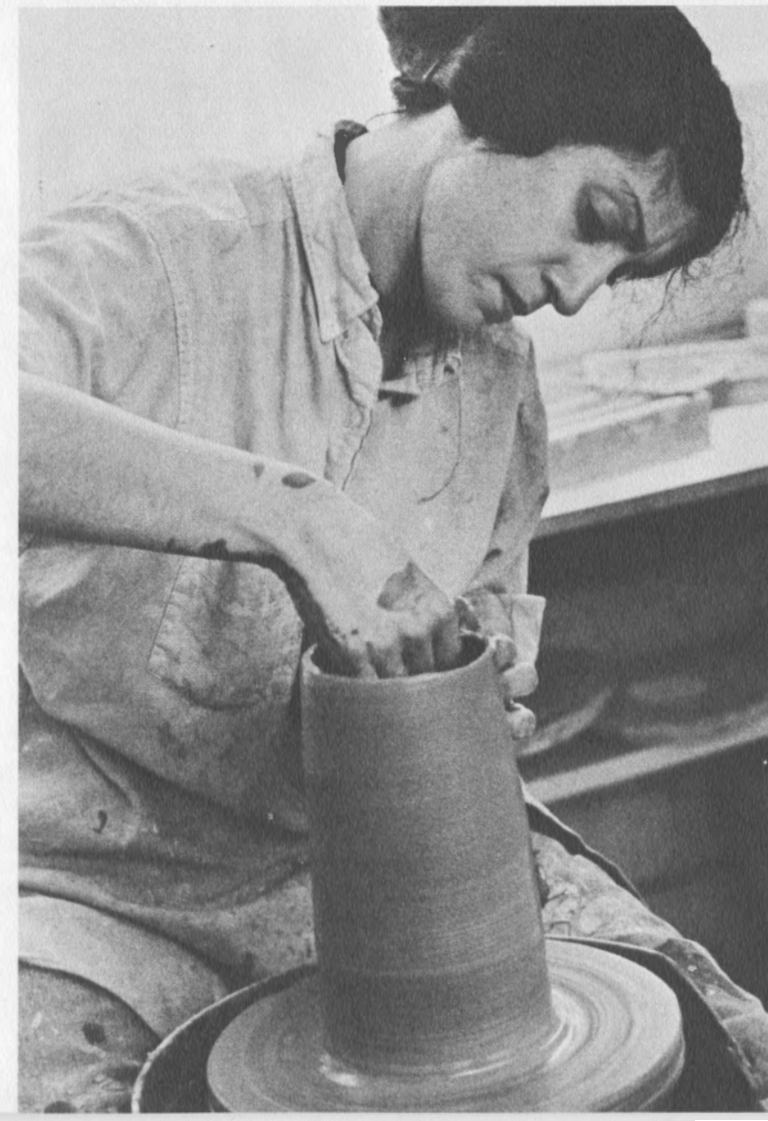




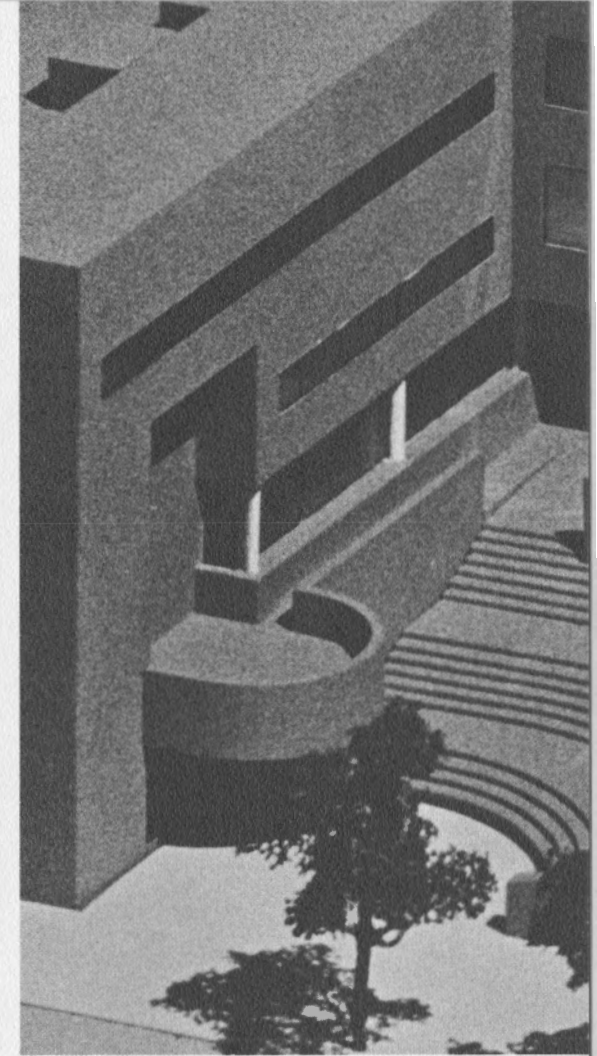


Children, as well as young people, adults and the elderly, learn ceramic work and clay sculpture from the gifted potters and artists who come to Henry Street from all over the city. The Settlement's pottery and art program also offers classes in painting, drawing, life sketching, wood carving, batik and tie dyeing, and block printing on fabric.

New pottery and art facilities will include two pottery workshops, damp room, kiln room, exhibition gallery, sculpture studio, textile printing workshop, large studio for fine arts instruction and children's experimental workshop.







Children of all races and backgrounds will come to know each other through the Arts for Living Center. In addition, special family programs will draw together many neighbors who might not ordinarily meet. A child care service will take care of youngsters while mothers participate in arts programs.

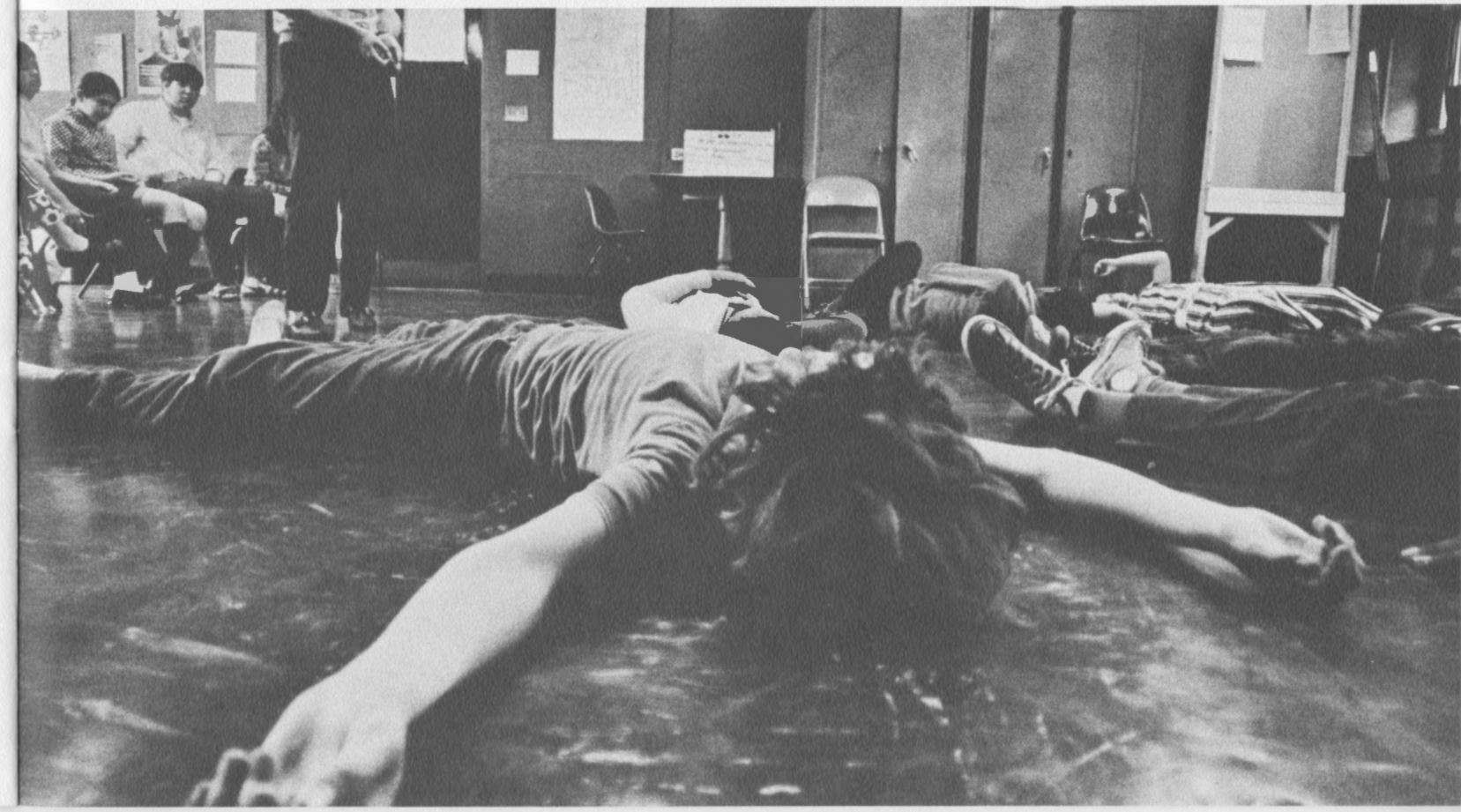
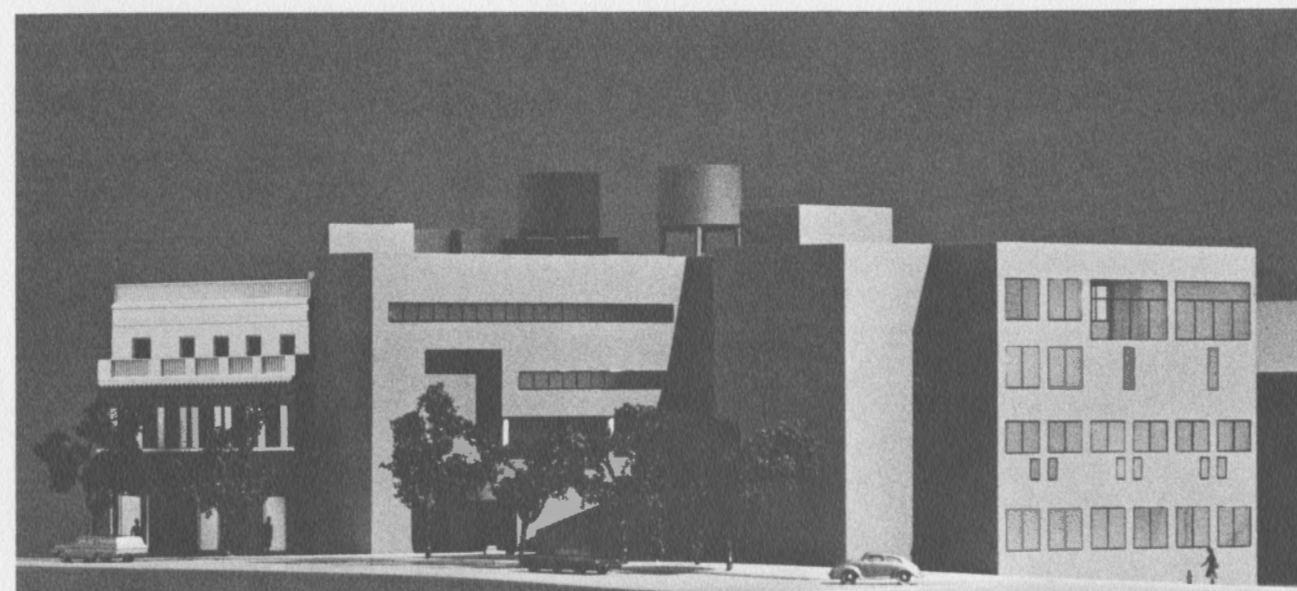
As its physical design suggests, the Center will be an open door to the arts for all who wish to enter. Its programs will offer dignity, self-esteem and the means of self-affirmation to participants, many of them long cut off from the arts — and from avenues of advancement in general — by the roadblocks which poverty has placed in their way.



Out of the civil rights movement and the search for social justice by minority groups has come heightened interest among black and Puerto Rican people in their own cultural heritage. Henry Street has been quick to respond to this development and to provide arts activities which enable participants to draw on their own backgrounds and to communicate their particular points of view.

Through films and still photography, young people can communicate their ideas vividly and present significant points of view about themselves and the world around them. Films made by teenagers at the Settlement have been featured on national television networks, and one film was a prizewinner at a citywide film festival.

Young people in particular are drawn to classes in dramatic improvisation and street theater techniques, playwriting on social issues, instruction in Latin American music and to experimental programs using multi-media resources. Activities in these programs frequently grow out of the life experiences of group members.





For those who may be interested in financing the building or equipping of specific areas of the Arts for Living Center, a list of some approximate costs follows:

Children's Experimental Art Studio	\$ 37,000
Child Care Center	28,000
Pottery Studio	85,000
Recital Hall	150,000
Exterior Court	120,000
Photo Studio	25,000
Electropiano Laboratory	30,000
Alterations to Existing Playhouse	150,000
Exhibition Gallery	40,000
Lounge	70,000
4 Music-Dance-Drama Studios	@ 25,000
1 Music-Dance-Drama-Studio	65,000
Sculpture Studio	42,000
TV/Film Studio (less equipment)	26,000
Painting and Drawing Studio	85,000
Music Library (less collection)	40,000
Textile Studio	35,000
Lobby	35,000
Music Rooms	from 4,000 to 13,000
Electropianos	10,000
Lounge Furnishings	3,000
Furnishing and Equipment, Child Care Center	2,000
Furnishing and Equipment, Sculpture Studio	1,600

With your permission, Henry Street Settlement would take great pleasure in honoring your gift with a plaque to be placed in the appropriate area.

Donors of non-specific gifts of \$100 or more will also receive recognition, if they so consent.

Contributions may also be made to a fund established in honor of Miss Helen Hall, who was the Settlement's Executive Director for 34 years, and under whose leadership the new Arts for Living Center was conceived.

GUIDE TO PROGRAMS  
HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT URBAN LIFE CENTER  
GENERAL TELEPHONE NUMBER: 766-9200

ARTS FOR LIVING PROGRAM: 466 Grand Street  
Director — Mark Tilley, 766-9336

*Adult Drama, New Federal Theatre:* There are workshops and productions in Black, Puerto Rican, Jewish theatre; also play writing workshop, theatre management workshop and technical theatre workshop. Contact Woodie King — 766-9296.

*Art and Pottery:* Workshops in pottery, painting, drawing, batik and crafts are open for all ages from September through May. Contact Bess Schuyler — 766-9216.

*Film, Photography and Videotape:* There are workshops in film making, photography and videotape for all ages, at every level of proficiency; also a 16 mm b&w film developing service for individual film makers and non-profit organizations. Contact Ted Glass — 766-9339.

*Music:* Individual and group instruction in most instruments and voice is offered to people of all ages and at all levels of proficiency; workshops in jazz, chamber music, chorus and opera also available. Contact Paul West — 766-9340.

*Theatre for Children:* Saturday and Sunday 3:00 p.m. performances of plays for children are presented throughout school year and Friday 10 a.m. performances for school groups; opportunities for community residents to perform in many of these productions. Contact Adna Karns — 766-9338.

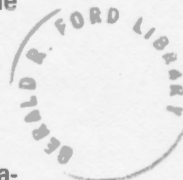
*Young People's Dance and Drama:* Workshop instruction is offered to young people age 3 — high school in dance, drama, writing and speech; adult dance also available. Contact Steve Tennen — 766-9337.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS: 40 Montgomery Street  
Director — Ora Dorsey, 766-9255

Any adult group in the community may join the department and use its resources; the program is especially concerned with issues that affect families in the community.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION CENTER: 40 Montgomery Street  
Director — Bernard Danzig, 766-9237

Counseling and psychiatric services are available to individuals and groups, and consultative services are available to groups and organizations within the community.





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CREDIT UNION: 265 Henry Street  
Director — Roy Wenitt, 766-9209

This savings and loan association extends credit at low interest rates to its members. Open Mondays 10 a.m. — 5 p.m. and Tuesdays 10 a.m. — 7 p.m.

DAY CARE CENTER: 301 Henry Street  
Director — Ethel Singleton, 766-9291

The Day Care Center for 3-5 year olds whose parents are working operates year round from 8:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, at 301 Henry Street. After School Day Care services are also available for 6-8 year olds at 40 Montgomery Street.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: 40 Montgomery Street  
Director — William Spiller, 766-9252

*The Henry Street School:* This co-educational junior high school is for students who have had difficulties learning in school.

*Counseling:* Counseling around any phase of school work or college entrance and help with school subjects are available.

GOOD COMPANIONS: 334 Madison Street  
Director — Arthur Geller, 766-9263

This is a program for persons 60 years of age and over. Hot lunches are served free of charge Monday-Friday in the Center. Additionally, the program includes counseling services, recreational activities and opportunities to its members to participate in community and civic activities.

GROUP HOME: 301 Henry Street  
Director — Atkins Preston, 766-9280

Teenage boys who live away from their families may be referred to this residence program. In addition to living facilities, counseling and a full range of services are provided.

HOME PLANNING WORKSHOPS: 334 Madison Street  
Director — Ruth Taube, 766-9266

This workshop provides instruction, equipment and supplies to neighborhood residents who wish to make and repair their own clothing, build furniture, repair television sets, appliances and shoes. Open afternoons and evenings, this program also offers information and self-help services with regard to many aspects of family life.

MANPOWER: 301 Henry Street  
Director — Miguel Rios, 766-9288

A Housekeeper Program employs neighborhood residents to work on a flexible schedule in the homes of people in the neighborhood who need help with home making. Additionally, employment guidance and placement services are offered to persons 16 years old and over.

RESIDENCE: 265 Henry Street  
Director — John Lubey, 766-9218

Rooms and meals are available at reasonable rates to individuals wishing to live at Henry Street.



**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: 301 Henry Street**

Director — Jim Robinson, 766-9276

There are a variety of activities and programs open to young people from 6-21 years of age. Besides activities like fencing, cooking, basketball, heritage groups, there are many opportunities for educational development and participation in community projects.

**URBAN FAMILY CENTER: 128 Baruch Place**

Director — Daniel Kronenfeld, 766-9311

This is a group of apartments at Lavanburg Houses where families in need of emergency housing may be referred. A full range of services is provided to families who live here. The Center is open every day year round, twenty-four hours a day.

**URBAN TRAINING: 301 Henry Street**

Director — Donald Parker, 766-9282

This program provides technical assistance in organizational and awareness skills to staff and community groups. Additionally, there are training programs for students and industrial management personnel from all over the country in the areas of human relations.

**SUMMER PROGRAMS:** In addition to the regular programs, most of which run year round, some special summer opportunities are available:

*Camp Henry:* Mahopac Falls, New York. This is an in-residence camp for boys from 8-13 years of age. There are three camping periods during the summer, each one lasting three weeks. Besides this camp experience for younger boys, there is a Counselor-in-Training program for boys from 14-18 years of age who supervise the activities of the younger children. Under the guidance of the Youth Development Program, the counselors participate in leadership training. Contact James Robinson — 766-9276.

*Day Camp:* 40 Montgomery Street. This is a program for boys and girls aged 7-12; it is staffed by junior and senior counselors from the neighborhood. Sports, swimming, music, arts and crafts, dramatics, dance, and day trips to places of interest are offered to the campers who learn something while they have a good time. Contact Emma Philip — 766-9270.

*Echo Hill Farm:* Yorktown Heights, New York. Every day, except Monday and Tuesday, during the summer, families may take an hour's bus trip from the city to spend the day in the country. The program offers families swimming, cook-out facilities, arts and crafts, and woods to explore. Contact Ruth Taube — 766-9266.

*Festival:* Henry Street, near P.S. 134. This is a two-day festival at the end of August at which all neighborhood groups and agencies are welcome to sell hand-crafted items or food, inform the community about what they are doing, perform or participate in any way. Contact Jacqueline Nowak — 766-9290.





SPACE AVAILABLE TO COMMUNITY GROUPS: Space is available on a first come, first served basis to community groups interested in holding meetings. Contact Emma Philip — 766-9270.

Space is also available to community residents for special events such as wedding receptions, dances and other occasions. Persons interested are asked to pay only for maintenance costs. Contact Emma Philip — 766-9270.

— — — — —

THIS "GUIDE TO PROGRAMS" AVAILABLE IN SPANISH. CONTACT EMMA PHILIP, 301 HENRY STREET, 766-9270.

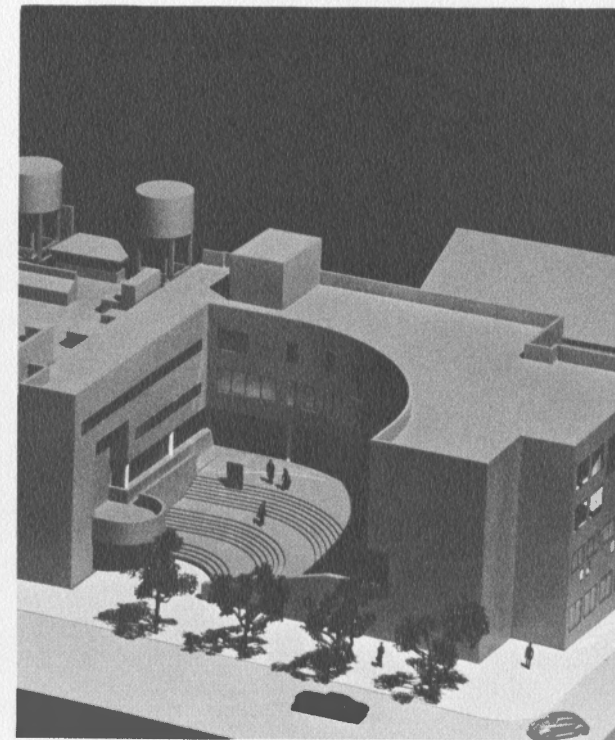
FOR INFORMATION ABOUT MEMBERSHIP IN THE URBAN LIFE CENTER, WHICH IS FREE TO ALL THOSE REGISTERED IN ANY HENRY STREET PROGRAM, CONTACT EMMA PHILIP, 301 HENRY STREET, 766-9270.

June 1974



**But the dream  
is not yet  
a reality...**

**And only your  
contribution  
can make it so.**





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265 Henry Street, New York, N.Y. 10002

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# New York Times



SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 1973

## National Endowment Puts Government Into Role of Major Patron of the Arts

By MEL GUSSOW

When the National Endowment for the Arts began in 1965, Representative Gerald R. Ford was one of many conservative Congressmen who opposed it. Now he is one of the Endowment's most ardent supporters, and one of the reasons for his conversion was Alexander Calder.

With the help of an Endowment grant, Representative Ford's home city of Grand Rap-

ment support of the arts is now such a fact of life that scarcely anyone in Congress questions the existence and the importance of the Endowment.

Lingering reservations are largely about the amount of the support. As Michael Straight, deputy to Nancy Hanks, the Endowment's chairman, said recently, "our 'enemies' only want to increase our appropriations by 30 per cent."

¶Since January the Artrain, a traveling art exhibition, prepared by the Michigan Council on the Arts, under the auspices of the Endowment, has visited 26 communities in the Rocky Mountain states—many of them remote communities—and has been seen by 165,000 people, many of whom have never before been in an art museum.

¶Partly through the Endowment's Coordinated Residency Touring program, which puts

ers, sculptors, photographers, craftsmen and art critics. Projects included Works of Art in Public Places (like the Alexander Calder in Grand Rapids, Mich.), an inner-city mural program (on a \$1,200 grant Dana Chandler painted a full-length portrait of Malcolm X at the Dudley Station in Roxbury, Mass.) and crafts workshops (such as Pottery Northwest in Seattle, Wash., which received a \$2,000 grant).

In its theater program, the

September 4, 1974

Note for Betty Ford

From: Nancy Hanks 

Subject: The National Council on the Arts: Best Meeting Ever!

The Council meetings got off to a wonderful start yesterday afternoon. The members were absolutely delighted with the eight new members appointed by the President. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~  
~~see list attached.~~

I gave a few remarks (talked 45 minutes!) tracing the history of the Council. In this regard, in line with our conversation, I mentioned our discussions. I thought you might like to read my notes since I understand you will have a press conference this afternoon. So....

"It seemed to me, as we complete the first decade of the National Council on the Arts, it would be a good time to reflect on what the Council is, and what it has accomplished -- and project our hopes and desires for the next decade. I will take on the first task and leave the latter to you for discussion over the next 3 days.

→ "In this regard, I might mention Mrs. Ford's own personal interest in the arts. In talking with her the other day about a whole variety of matters,\* she asked me if the Council would think it appropriate to advise her on how she and the President, or the Council itself,\* might honor some of our great older artists. She, of course, was thinking of wonderful people like Martha Graham.

→ \*Phrases preceding the \* were put in so as not to commit you to anything.

*Council enthusiastic about your interest. Offers all possible help.*



"Mrs. Ford also went on to inquire as to whether the Council had any programs of benefit for the handicapped. She recalled, as a young person, visiting some of the hospitals where she found dance to be of such interest. I told her that we had a Council Committee, chaired by Jamie Wyeth (thepainter, son of Andrew) Roz Russell, and Charles Eames (the great designer, filmmaker -- Eames chair, etc.). And, I also mentioned that we hoped soon to have extensive discussions with HEW on the subject.

"Mrs. Ford also mentioned that she used to teach dance a bit in the schools and mentioned how important she felt it was for the artists to work with our children. I told Mrs. Ford about our Artists-in-Schools program -- and it just occurs to me now, she may have been one of our first Artists-in Schools!!

"Mrs. Ford also expressed interest in our thoughts on the bicentennial. She hoped we were including all Americans, and noted that in the listing I mentioned to her about our program that I had omitted some, including Indians. "

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Incidentally, the bicentennial programs that I mentioned to you ("City Spirit," the various films and television programs, the newsletter, and the exchange fellowships with Great Britain-- think I forgot to mention those) all passed the Council with flying colors.

P.S. The Post just arrived; attached is the article. The show we are going to see tonight got bad reviews, but if the "party spirit" is like last nights you'll have a wonderful time!



National Council on the Arts



National Endowment for the Arts

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

Office of the Chairman

November 16, 1973

Dear Betty Ford:

Naturally, I have been very pleased to read in the press of your hope to concentrate some of your time in the area of the arts. Heavens only knows that Jerry, as Minority Leader, has been a strong lifeline to the effective development of the Endowment. And, now, to have your expression of interest, is wonderful news indeed for all of us -- the Endowment and the arts community itself.

I would welcome an opportunity to brief you on the Endowment at your convenience and to talk over ways in which you would like to be involved if you think this might be helpful. In the meantime, I am enclosing the recent New York Times and House and Garden articles on the Endowment. Those two pieces along with the Guide to Programs give the fastest overview in writing. However, your time may be too limited to read even one paragraph, let alone fifty of them -- and I will be able to tell you about us very quickly. Perhaps you might join me for an office-sandwich-lunch someday.

My best,

Sincerely,

Nancy Hanks  
Chairman

Mrs. Gerald R. Ford  
514 Crown View Drive  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Enclosures

P.S. My telephone number is 382-6361, and our offices address is 1425 K Street, N. W.





NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR  
THE ARTS

WASHINGTON  
D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the  
National Council on the Arts

Resolution  
of  
The National Council on the Arts  
at its  
Thirty-Sixth Meeting  
September 3-5, 1974  
Washington, D.C.

RESOLVED, that the National Council on the Arts wishes to thank President Ford for his assurance of continuing advocacy for public support of the arts, given on the occasion of the celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of the creation of the Council on September 3, 1964. It wishes further to record its appreciation of Mrs. Ford's personal commitment to the arts. It requests that the Chairman convey to Mrs. Ford its hope that she will continue to see the arts as one of her special interests and its desire to be of the fullest assistance to her in this regard.

Nancy Hanks  
Chairman  
National Council on the Arts  
September 5, 1974





NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR  
THE ARTS

WASHINGTON  
D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the  
National Council on the Arts

September 11, 1974

President and Mrs. Gerald R. Ford  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President and Mrs. Ford:

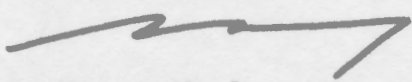
Your participation in the celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of the National Council on the Arts made the occasion truly historic and one of significance to the entire country.

There is no way I can adequately express the appreciation of the members of the Council for your presence and your warm greetings. They were thrilled and awed by the dramatic evidence of your interest in and support of the arts. It will inspire them to even greater heights of creativity and activity in their efforts to bring the arts to all the people.

On behalf of the members, I am enclosing a resolution adopted unanimously at the meeting of the Council on September 5, 1974. I do so with enormous personal pleasure and pride in your friendship and in your endorsement of our programs. The Council has expressed its desire to work with the First Lady, both collectively and individually, on a "long range plan" for her consideration. As you know, Betty, we discussed this during our meeting and we are working on proposals.

Many thanks and all the best.

Sincerely,



Nancy Hanks  
Chairman

Enclosure



## THE QUALITY OF LIFE

# *The Seattle Symphony thinks so, the town of North Adams, Mass., thinks so, and 50 states do too— the National Endowment for the Arts is a good thing*

**An interview with Nancy Hanks by Sandra Oddo**

EDITOR'S NOTE: The National Endowment for the Arts is the agency of the United States Government charged with providing financial aid to culture in America. Its chairman for the last four years has been Nancy Hanks, a trim, deceptively easy-going lady from Texas who was president of the Associated Councils of the Arts and, before that, executive secretary and project coordinator for the Rockefeller Brothers Fund Report on the Performing Arts, a seminal study that marked the beginning of greatly increased government and foundation aid to an area of national life that is heavily subsidized in almost every other country but that was, until recently, a forlorn left-over of free enterprise in this country.

Miss Hanks, who was nominated by President Nixon for a

second four-year term of office this fall, has been a deft and able administrator. She has superintended a period of strong growth for the Endowment, during which most of the world of the arts would agree that government aid has been fair, unbiased, free from the interference many artists feared at first, and in many cases essential to our continued cultural life.

**Q:** Miss Hanks, what is the National Endowment for the Arts?

**A:** We're an independent agency of the executive branch of the Government, not part of one of the major departments. We report directly to the President. We were established in 1965—and sometimes we forget how young we are because we're trying so hard to do so much. Basically, we're a grant-

making organization. In other words, we spend most of our time developing programs within which people can apply for grants in all the fields of the arts. In the performing arts we are in dance, music, film, and theatre. We have a program in public media. We have programs for the museums, for the visual arts, programs in literature . . .

**Q:** For both organizations and individuals?

**A:** Yes. And then we have three programs that cut across the lines, one in education, one for special projects, and one—our newest—that we call Expansion Arts. I must say I welcome an opportunity to talk to people about us because there aren't that many people in the country who are even aware that the National En-

*Continued on page 54*

### **HOW TO GET A GRANT; HOW TO GIVE A GRANT; HOW TO HELP THE ENDOWMENT**

\*The first step toward getting a National Endowment grant, or any other foundation grant, is to **study a copy of the annual report** that tells what programs exist and what kind of thing, in general, interests the foundation. The second step is to **write for an application** and for a copy of the guidelines for the specific program that interests you, which also will give deadlines for applications, to the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C. 20506. If your library doesn't have a copy of the annual report you can write for that too.

The Endowment has certain basic policies—for example, money can only be given to professional artists or to tax-exempt organizations, is never given to erect buildings or buy equipment, and cannot be guaranteed for more than one year—but **it is also highly flexible and open to innovative ideas**. If your proposal doesn't fit

a standard application or an established program, write or call. Somebody there will listen.

\*The legislation establishing the Endowment includes a unique provision to enable it to work in **partnership with private donors** to the arts. Congress appropriates money for a special Treasury fund, which can be used to double the amount of a donation received from any source outside the federal government. So far, private donations have totaled about \$16.6 million, making an extra \$33.2 million available to the arts.

\*You can help the Endowment **help the arts by supporting your state arts council**. In 1965, when it was established, the Endowment got funds to pass on to official state arts agencies—but only seventeen states had them. By 1968, all fifty states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, and Guam all had councils active in the

arts to some degree. Some, like New York's, have healthy budgets of their own, but they all need the demonstrated interest and support of citizens to continue receiving favorable attention from state governors and legislatures. The Endowment has provided more than \$24 million to these arts agencies on a matching basis for projects initiated by the states, to be developed for the benefit of their citizens.

\*Encourage your local schools and parent-teacher organizations to be more aware of the arts. Universities, often under student pressure, are **starting more and more arts programs** and, says Miss Hanks, "everywhere I go, I see universities building performance halls." But elementary and secondary schools are less responsive. In spite of strongly increased student interest, arts curricula have been consistently the first things cut in any financial pinch.



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**"We should use the money  
to stimulate and encourage other  
money, not replace it"**

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**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS**

*continued from page 52*

dowment exists. It took the United States practically 200 years to establish a federal agency that has any concern for the arts in the country and for the people's benefit from them. We're a little bit less than eight years old now—the legislation that enables us to exist comes up for renewal this year—and I think we're doing pretty well.

Q: What is the basic structure?

A: The National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities, a sort of parallel to the National Science Foundation, provides the basic framework. The Endowment for the Arts, advised by the National Council on the Arts, makes up half. The President recommends a budget for us to Congress each year and after hearings Congress first authorizes a certain amount of money, then makes the appropriation—and we hope and pray it's as much as was authorized.

Q: How do you decide on what to spend the money?

A: Fortunately, I don't have to make those decisions. We feel very strongly that we are administrators of the National Endowment for the Arts and our job is not to make decisions in terms of artistic quality. We depend totally on our panels for that. We have ten panels of advisors now, one for each program. They're made up almost entirely of professionals who've been in their particular fields all of their lives. Many of them, of course, are artists themselves and know about art. There's also, always, the question of personal taste—to me, a very important judgment. We rotate at least a third of each panel every year just so we have a constant influx of different measures of professional judgment, because there's absolutely no way in the world you can make a totally objective decision on grants to the arts. It's a subjective area. And, of course, the National Council on the Arts makes the final recommendations.

Q: And I suppose from your point of view intention is very important, whether or not the applicants for grants are serious people, capable of doing something significant?

A: That is a basic criterion. The arts are highly disciplined. You're no good at all as an artist unless you dedicate your life to the arts. People who think artists are people who just go off and do their own thing don't know what they're talking about. So we take a good hard look at the applications coming from institutions, as well as from individual artists, to make sure the intention is serious, and responsible. To give you an example: If an orchestra applies for money to give a series of performances of contemporary music for school children, and its budget does not show adequate rehearsal time for good performances, that application will be turned down. Not that children don't need an opportunity to hear contemporary music—but if that orchestra isn't realistic enough and serious enough to know that it needs more rehearsal time, it should be turned down. Another example: XYZ institution applies to us saying it has this absolutely marvelous idea: it's going to take its art into the streets or on the road, or wherever. If it has no backup evidence that the community it intends to visit really wants it, that application will be turned down.

Q: Most of your grants to organizations have to be matched by community money, don't they?

A: That's written into our legislation. Someone on Capitol Hill asked us recently if it wouldn't help to have a provision so that we could give grants that were not 50/50 matching. Speaking for the National Council, I said that one of the most important things we do is to support programs that people are already involved in and committed to. My own view, and it's certainly the view of the Council and the Congress and the President, is that we should use the money to stimulate and encourage other money and not to replace it.

Q: Yet I know that most of the country's major arts organizations—operas, orchestras, museums, dance companies, theatres—and many of the smaller ones now depend upon the Endowment for at least part of their annual support.

*Continued on page 56*





**"... federal funds have basically been used to get the arts to people who have not had an opportunity to enjoy them before."**

## NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

*continued from page 54*

And you are increasingly important to individual artists, too.

A: That's true. But you know, 70 to 75 percent of the funds for cultural activities in the United States—and this is totally unique in the world—still come from individuals. The governments, federal, state, and local, are very junior partners. The budget for the National Endowment has increased from less than \$2½ million for our first fiscal year, 1966, to the more than \$50 million that was just appropriated for fiscal 1974, but it's still a very modest sum when you consider the need, and the growing public interest in the arts. More than 600 million people were visitors to museums last year, for instance, and the audience for dance alone has grown 600 percent since 1965—most of it outside New York. I think one of the proudest achievements of the federal government is that the very modest funds have basically been used to get the arts into areas and to people who have not had an opportunity to enjoy them before.

Q: Speaking of new areas, earlier you mentioned Expansion Arts. What are they?

A: We had to laugh when we set up the program because nobody could think of an appropriate name for it. Some people have called them grass-roots arts, some call them decentralized art, art at the community level, in the neighborhood. Basically these are the arts off-stage, out of museums, out of concert halls. The old granddaddies of the field would be places like the Henry Street Settlement in New York, Karamu House in Cleveland, Hull House in Chicago. Since about 1968 we've seen a tremendous growth in numbers of groups and individuals working in this field, all over the country. It's not only our newest program—I think in terms of the cultural development of our nation, it's about as exciting as anything we have.

For example, there's the Michigan Artrain. The Michigan State Arts Council got unions to fix up old railroad cars, and the Detroit Institute of Fine Arts equipped them. One car shows something of

the history of art, two more are filled with very fine art works, then there's a car full of good designs, and the last car has live artists working. It comes to a town, usually a very small town, and around the train local activity develops. Local artists come and have shows or music or dance performances. It comes to a town of, say, 7,000 and in three days 7,000 people show up. It was highly successful but it was also very expensive. Michigan couldn't afford it for 12 months of the year. So, with our help, a plan was developed to take it out of the state for six months. It's been in the Rocky Mountains and it will tour parts of the South during the winter. That Artrain is what the National Endowment is all about.

You know, there's a big rise in participation in the arts. This has been the major change in the last couple of years. I have the feeling that people got tired of just looking, got tired of being spectators. Now they want to do something on their own, to create something themselves. Everybody's potting or weaving. Everybody's got a camera. And they're taking pictures—not just pictures of grandmother and the children, but pictures they view as important pieces of beauty, significant things in their lives. Well, that's an expression of art, and I think it's absolutely wonderful that today we don't think of art as just the Picasso hanging on the museum wall.

Perhaps it's a question of joy that was needed. Just a few years ago you saw all those very serious, very intent young people on campus who were not smiling very much, really. It was basically an unhappy generation. But it's awfully hard to be creative if you're frowning all the time. We may not be raving with joy right at the moment, but things are basically better.

There has been a particular thrust from young people. They want the arts in their schools, they want them in their universities. Universities have been forced, many of them, to change their cur-

*Continued on page 58*



**"I have the feeling that people  
got tired of being spectators.  
Now they want to do  
something on their own"**

## NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

*continued from page 56*

ricula because the students want to participate in a performance of Shakespeare, for an example, instead of just reading Shakespeare in class.

Q: Mightn't too many amateurs lower the general level of quality in the arts?

A: Quite to the contrary. People used to worry about that, but when someone participates in the arts, he knows how difficult they are, how hard it is to achieve full quality. So the more people you have working in the arts, the more who will understand quality, the difference between good and bad. Now, very frankly, I know that federal funds have been very helpful in this happening, but I think it would have happened anyway. People, particularly young people, want more art in their lives. The polls all show this. No program in the Endowment has received more response than Architecture and Environmental Arts. Five years ago when people talked about the environment they meant only air and water pollution. Now many of them are talking about the visual environment too. They want our cities to be more beautiful. They want to preserve lovely old buildings and to turn them to new purposes.

Q: What about buildings for the arts? People used to worry that money for arts centers seemed to come way ahead of money for arts programs.

A: There was a tremendous amount of building—because it was needed, the old buildings were falling down—ten years ago. People called it the Edifice Complex, remember? Perhaps the building process was a little bit ahead of the demand for performance and use, though I have never been aware of a case where a good building with a good stage, one on which a dancer wouldn't permanently injure himself if he fell, drove away dance performances. Or a hall where good acoustics drove away a good symphony performance. Today the big construction is basically going on at universities, because of student demand. Trustees around the coun-

try are finally, and wonderfully, realizing that this is important for their university communities. They're building facilities for whole regions. Because the facilities are wanted and needed.

Q: Is the increased interest in the arts part of growing affluence?

A: No. Because some of the most exciting work is going on among people you would ordinarily call disadvantaged. In our Artists-in-Schools program we see example after example of children who are disadvantaged economically, maybe disadvantaged in their ability to communicate with their friends. Or perhaps they have no friends. Then a poet comes in to work with them, for example, and the child who may be inarticulate, who may be unable to read or write, suddenly hears the beauty of the sound of words and finds that words have meaning. And he begins to learn. Just through poetry. This is a tremendous thing, and it's just beautiful to watch. We're in 2700 schools. But there are about 190,000 schools in the country. You might think everyone would leap forward to insist on having artists in his schools too, but that won't happen. It will take a very long time. It's a very big thing to move a whole educational system. Still, people learn. They're responsive when they are doing creative things, there's no question about it. Art is just the greatest communication of all time. And communication is the basis of life.

Q: In other words, the phrase "quality of life" as it applies to the arts doesn't mean decorating a life you already have. The arts are involved with some of the basic tools of life.

A: That's it, right there. When the Rockefeller Report was published in 1965, the first recommendation stated that the arts are central to life. To quote: "The panel is motivated by the conviction that the arts are not for a privileged few but for the many, that their place is not on the periphery of society but at its center, that they are not just a form of recreation but are of central importance to our well-being."

*Continued on page 60*





ack

**"The more people you have working  
in the arts, the more who  
will understand the difference  
between good and bad"**

## NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

*continued from page 58*

ing and happiness." It was put first because it was the very highest priority, the most important thing that panel wanted to say.

There were not that many people saying it nine years ago. Today, I think not only are people saying it they're living it.

### FROM COMMUNITY GROUP TO SOLITARY ARTIST, HOW THE ENDOWMENT HELPS

A random sampling of grants, most of these listed below show the Endowment's concern for getting the arts out to communities, getting communities into the arts.

#### **In Architecture and Environmental Arts:**

\*To the Hoosuck Community Resources Development Corp. in fiscal 1973, \$20,000 to help revitalize the 19th-century town of North Adams, Mass.

\*To Historical Green Springs, Va., Inc., \$8,000 in fiscal 1973 to assist planning for use of its three centuries of architecture, to help its establishment as a historic district, now the largest in the United States.

#### **Visual Arts:**

\*To Wichita, Kans., \$45,000 in fiscal 1970 to match funds raised by school children and townspeople for a James Rosati sculpture for the town.

\*To Joplin, Mo., \$10,000 in fiscal 1972 to add to the \$50,000 raised by the town for a mural by Thomas Hart Benton, native of Missouri.

#### **Theatre:**

\*To the Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis, Minn., \$53,000 in fiscal 1973 to tour five states, Iowa, Wisconsin, North and South Dakota, Minnesota, and Nebraska. As a result, one town, which had never had a theatre, established an amateur group.

#### **Dance:**

\*To the Coordinated Residency Dance Touring Program (which began in 1968 with \$25,000 for four companies to tour two states), \$820,000 matched four to one by outside sources to enable sixty professional companies to tour forty-eight states, three jurisdictions.

#### **Music:**

\*To the Seattle Symphony, \$34,500 in fiscal 1972 for a tour of Alaska.

\*To the Western Opera Theatre, part of the San Francisco Opera, \$150,000 in Treasury Funds (matching a private donation) for a tour of the Southwest including Indian reservations. As a result, some of the young performers have been invited to make guest appearances.

#### **Special Projects:**

\*To Hospital Audiences, Inc., N.Y., \$30,000 in both fiscal 1972 and fiscal 1973, to promote cultural activities in rehabilitative facilities like nursing homes, veterans' hospitals, and prisons.

#### **Expansion Arts:**

\*To the Dance Theatre of Harlem, Arthur Mitchell, director, \$25,000 in fiscal 1973 to expand his technical workshops with the community.

\*To the Mississippi Intercollegiate Opera Guild, \$12,500 in fiscal 1973 to expand the season of the Opera Society, a touring group of black singers.

#### **Public Media:**

\*To Allan Miller, a young filmmaker in Denver, Colo., \$21,300 for the television film *Bolero*, featuring the Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by Zubin Mehta.

#### **Museums:**

To the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, \$56,533 in fiscal 1972 to expand its program of workshops in environmental education and black studies, its Saturday children's schedule, and its training of adults as volunteer tour guides, and to send mini-exhibitions on tour.



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR  
THE ARTS

WASHINGTON  
D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the  
National Council on the Arts

November 20, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Nancy Hanks

FROM: Elena Canavier

RE: A PROPOSAL: THE WHITE HOUSE COLLECTION OF  
AMERICAN CRAFT

Mrs. Ford might consider inaugurating a craft collection for the White House with the intention that this program would be continued by each subsequent First Lady. Although antiques have been purchased for the White House previously, this project would have a different emphasis -- it would recognize and encourage fine craftsmanship in our own era and that of future generations. Thus the White House would become a repository of our cultural history in a viable ongoing way, absorbing the fruits of each generation's skilled artist-craftsmen and utilitarian craftsmen in its ambiance.

The programs should be two-fold:

(1) There should be a collection of traditional American utilitarian crafts to be used, not just displayed. These crafts could be largely confined to tableware: pottery, place mats, silverware, glassware, etc., to be used at state dinners, press luncheons, and the like.

Mrs. Ford's example would greatly influence the women of the Nation to support local crafts in preference over imported wares. Businessmen who attend White House dinners where they see crafts from their state being used in the table setting would also be stimulated to support the craftsmen of their region. This would in some measure channel American money away from foreign imports and back to American craftsmen who are in dire need of both moral and financial acknowledgement.

To facilitate the acquisition of these utilitarian crafts, a program could be planned whereby the State Arts Councils might donate selected crafts from their regions to the White House -- thus saving the White House any direct expenditures.



The use of traditional American crafts in the White House would, of course, generate a good deal of publicity in the home decorating, food, and women's magazines. It would also gain considerable favorable press coverage in the regional newspapers of the craftspeople represented.

(2) The foundation should be laid for a White House collection of contemporary decorative arts -- i.e., unique, hand-crafted, one-of-a-kind, highly skilled and expressive works of art created in a craft medium (glass, clay, wood, textiles) by America's best artist-craftsmen. If each First Lady, beginning with Mrs. Ford, were to select one or two exquisite pieces of decorative art from the best that our Nation's artist-craftsmen have to offer, the White House would, in time, have a collection of historic as well as aesthetic importance.

The White House collection of contemporary American decorative art could be implemented through a national invitational exhibition held biennially at a national museum such as the Renwick Gallery. Top artists-craftsmen would be invited by a professional panel of jurors to exhibit their work; a number of works of exceptional merit would be given prize awards (funded by various sources), and from these prize awards the First Lady would make her selection of a piece(s) for the White House collection. The inaugural exhibition might be called: The First Presidential Crafts Invitational Exhibition.

Although the White House is largely furnished with period pieces, it must be remembered that objects of quality transcend the limitations of historical style and can happily co-exist in a room together. Like the great Gothic cathedrals of Europe which were added to by each generation of builders, each in their own style, yet harmonizing with the overall concept of the building, so fine objects of art can represent their own generations of artist-craftsmen and contribute to the total beauty of the White House.

There are several reasons why I feel that Mrs. Ford should make crafts her particular area rather than the fine arts. One is that the larger segment of our population has never totally accepted the fine arts, painting and sculpture, as being for them. They (the people of the Nation) could admire Jacqueline Kennedy for being very art-conscious and cultured, but they couldn't identify with her. President and Mrs. Ford have a different kind of appeal. It would be incongruous, for example, for them to suddenly support avant-garde art (anyway, Nelson Rockefeller is already doing that and one would be enough in



the Administration). The public which feels vaguely alienated when confronted with painting and sculpture responds quite positively and without self-consciousness to crafts and art works in craft media. The person who blanks out in front of an abstract painting and admits, "I don't know anything about art ..." has no problem in admiring the same abstract elements (line, shape, color, texture) in a large clay pot or a geometrically patterned quilt. Thus Mrs. Ford's example of supporting American crafts would be emulated by the women of the Nation, and not just passively admired as something beyond their reach.

An additional and most important consideration at this time, is that this project, although potentially very dynamic in its impact on the Nation, would not physically tax Mrs. Ford's strength as might projects that would involve travel, entertainment, etc.





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A Federal agency advised by the  
National Council on the Arts

Implementation  
of the  
First Presidential National Crafts Exhibition

November 20, 1974

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The exhibition can involve all the 50 states quite directly right from the beginning. States Arts Councils can be asked to select two or three professional craft-oriented jurors to judge a statewide juried crafts competition, by slides. They would select the work of three or four top craftsmen to represent the state; the selected work would then be sent on to the national museum hosting the exhibition (e.g. Smithsonian). In this way the competition is open to all craftsmen in the U.S., and yet does not overburden any one set of jurors. Also it allows for equitable representation of all states.

The National Crafts Exhibition may be confined to only one museum, e.g., the Smithsonian. Or we might think in terms of a traveling exhibition starting in Washington, where Mrs. Ford would select the White House Purchase Award, and then proceeding to 4 or 5 major museums throughout the country, for the space of one year. This would spread out the publicity and good-will effects throughout the bicentennial year (probably dates: November 75 to November 76). It would generate much grass roots press coverage over the yearly period as well as the initial coverage by major publications.

SIZE OF EXHIBITION: Of necessity, each state would have to be limited to about 4 or 5 pieces of work. 200 pieces constitutes a good medium sized show, 300 pieces is considered a large exhibition (4 x 50=200..... 5 x 50+250 pieces, etc.)



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Proposed Scheduling  
of the  
First Presidential National Crafts Exhibition

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- 1974 - December: Contact participating museums and schedule travel. Contact State Arts Councils re: local jurors, etc. Send out press notices on entry deadlines, etc. (2 mos. advance notice to magazines).
- 1975 - February & March: Juried state competition; send selected work to national museum.
- 1975 - April: Start catalogue (takes 6 mos to complete); begin organization of display cases, crates, etc. and publicity. (professional exhibition organized as recommended by the museum.)
- 1975 - November: Opening Reception for the First Presidential National Crafts Exhibition with award by Mrs. Ford.
- 1975 - to November 1976: Tour of five major museums (allow 3 weeks travel time between museums, allow 5 to 6 weeks for show).

Possibly the NEA would want to help fund the catalogue, etc. Remember that this exhibition will concentrate on a very high individual level of craftsmanship (utilitarian crafts will be represented at State dinners, etc.).



NATIONAL  
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D.C. 20506



A Federal agency advised by the  
National Council on the Arts

November 20, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Mrs. Ford

FROM:

Nancy Hanks  
Chairman  
National Endowment for the Arts

SUBJECT:

Possible Plan for 1975 and 1976

PURPOSE:

ENCOURAGEMENT OF CREATIVITY AND  
PRIDE IN THE COUNTRY  
through the  
Arts and Cultural Activity

GENERAL FRAMEWORK:

It is important to settle on  
one "theme" and then to fit into  
that "theme" a variety of  
activities.

ATTACHMENTS:

Memorandums, designed for idea  
stimulation:

- 1) The Establishment of the  
White House Collection of  
American Crafts (the proposal,  
the implementation, and a  
schedule)
- 2) The White House Regional Dinners  
(the proposal and an example  
of implementation)
- 3) Some suggestions for In-District  
Activities
- 4) Some suggestions for Out-of-the-  
District Activities

