Anthony S. Keller

Executive Director of Connecticut *from* 1966 - 1981

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Anthony S. Keller current contact information:
P.O. Box 417
Randolph, VT 05060
860-212-1403
askeller@aol.com

Because this project is more about the first generation of state arts agency directors than about the agencies themselves, my answers to the survey questions are limited to my own work and my own perspective. But, except for the first two months of my fifteen years on the job when mine was the only desk in the office, I was surrounded by many wonderful people—staff and Commission members—without whom my efforts would have had very little impact. Their contributions are acknowledged only occasionally in this report, but it is important to note up front that when I describe what I did during my fifteen years I am really describing what we did together. There were over 75 Commission members during the fifteen years. Of that rotating board I want to mention the seven chairpersons under whom I served: Marcia Powell Alcorn, Herbert L. Cohen, June Goodman, Edgar Mayhew, Joseph Verner Reed, Belle K. Ribicoff and Mary Hunter Wolf. There were around 100 paid employees, salaried and contracted, of whom the following list of 26 represents either the longest serving or the most valuable—or both: Michael Croman, Linda Dente, Jan Devlin, Nicholas Duke, Charles Fidlar, Therese Hannon, Nancy Hileman, Lori Kardok, June Kennedy, Phyllis Krechevsky, Martin Kushner, Betsy Mahaffey, John Ostrout, Alice Martin, Stephanie Mayer, Catherine Metcalfe, Sydell Newman, Beldon Raspberry, Gayle Ritchie, Stephen Shapiro, Evelyn Smith, Gene Solon, Patricia Walker, Cynthia White Wands and Dana Wright.

1. Think back on those early days of SAA's, when you were new in your job and the whole "field" was in formation.
A. What was the "big idea" behind the formation of the NEA and SAA's?
The Arts and Humanities Endowments and their state counterparts were birthed by Congress and the state legislatures out of three "big ideas."

- One was that because, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, many established arts institutions were projecting an increasingly unfavorable future if the private sector was to be the sole source of operating and program funds. Public funding was seen as necessary, sooner or later, to their survival and public service.
- The second "big idea" was that, in a democracy, cultural resources and opportunities should be widely shared across demographic lines, and that the existing inequities in the 1950s and 60s would only be addressed through public funding.

- And the third was that, while municipalities, state and federal backing of the arts, in the form of direct subvention, special projects, tax incentives (particularly, since 1913, the tax deductibility of charitable giving by citizens, business firms and foundations through which millions of collars are derived annually by nonprofit arts organizations) had certainly been a part of the country's complex--and sometimes threadbare--fabric of arts support for a long time, the moment had come for government to become a permanent and stable resource for sustaining the arts, one that was integrated into the central structure and process of governing. This was a unique and propitious opportunity for the nation: a very big idea, bigger probably than most of us realized at the time.

It is important to remember that it took a great deal of compromise among advocates of these three big ideas to assure the enabling of government arts agencies. To some extent ideas about permanent government involvement assumed party identities in Congress and in state legislatures—and in the executive branch—and party positions were both positive and negative. The establishment of permanent tax-funded vehicles of arts support suggested a new encroachment of government into the lives of the citizenry—a conservative and libertarian worry. At the same time, while cultural equity was easily aligned with liberal and socialist philosophies, the survival of traditional institutions appealed conceptually to conservatives. Of course history tells us it was never appropriate to take these divergences to their logical extreme. There were Republican arts populists in some states and Democrats advocating a focus on traditional arts structures in other states. And the NEA's biggest growth spurt took place during the administration of a Republican president, Richard Nixon. In this regard, lobbying impact tended to be a stronger determinant of attitudes about government's role than political philosophy.

In any case, from the start, the diversity of opinions about the aptness, the nature and the priorities of public support of the arts was very wide, and continued to be throughout the first two decades of this remarkable innovation in governmental responsibility. Indeed a close look back at those two decades, 1965-1985, reminds us that, once mandated at the state and national levels, government arts support was anything but a sure bet. At one time or another state arts agencies and the national Endowment for the Arts found themselves facing very sobering conditions. Governors, legislators, members of Congress and even a President (another Republican!) tried to unmandate these new agencies or dump their budgets.

In 1983, two years after I left the Connecticut Commission on the Arts, I had a chance to sharpen my thinking about what had transpired during my fifteen-year piece of those two decades by guest-editing a book-length special issue of the Journal of Arts Management and Law, entitled *The Arts and Public Policy*. 26 commentators—artists, economists, educators, political scientists, researchers and people who were shaping the field—contributed thoughtful articles on government and the arts. The text was used in graduate arts administration courses in the 80s and is still referenced, from time to time, today. I pulled it out of the bookshelf and re-read sections of it as background for answering the

questions being asked in this 2005 study, and have interlaced my commentary with quotations from that book.

The dramatic differences of view about the need of government to be a participant in the evolution of the arts in the Untied States—or not to be—is striking in these commentaries, as is the wide variance of philosophy among those who advocated government participation about why government *should* participate. Here are quotes from four of the articles:

> In the end…cultural policies will reveal government subsidies to be unneeded and counterproductive, even though they may become harder to eliminate. Ideally cultural policies should consist of keeping hands off, neither subsidizing nor prohibiting. Museums and opera houses should charge the actual cost to those who attend. If people want art they will pay for it. The government might subsidize preservation which is indivisible and protects future generations; but not creation, performance, or exhibition, all of which are divisible and for which the direct beneficiaries, not taxpayers, should pay. (Ernest van den Haag, then Olin Professor of Jurisprudence and Public Policy at Fordham University)
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> The American who possesses the "republican virtue" of which [Madison's] Federalist No. 55 speaks, acquires his attitudes, opinions, and desires from his shared culture—from what T.S. Eilot called "those goods of which we are the common trustees, the legacy of Greece, Rome and Israel, and the legacy of Europe throughout the last 2000 years." In contemporary American society, this common culture must be understood as something more than popular entertainment for some citizens to be paid for by all. Nor should it be thought of as an instrument for securing entitlements for the undisciplined self-expression of any assembly of citizens calling itself a group. Rather, the proper aim of cultural patronage is to keep alive the essential ideas, values, perspectives and dimensions of Western Civilization. (Michael Joyce, then executive director of the Olin Foundation in New York City, former director of the Institute for Educational Affairs and director, and member of the Bush-Reagan Transition Team)
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> An entire school of sociology developed in the mid-twentieth century which espoused the view that the Negro was devoid of any culture, and that black children were "culturally deprived." Yet the Cultural Establishment promulgates the myth that the society is a democratic "melting pot." Black cultural critic Harold Cruse determined that "America is a nation that lies to itself about who and what it is. The white Anglo-Saxon ideal, this lofty dream of a minority at the summit of its economic and political power and the height of its historic self-delusions, has led this nation to the brink of self-destruction. And on its way, it has effectively dissuaded, crippled, and smothered the cultivation of a democratic cultural pluralism in America." (Manning Marable, then professor of Economics and History and director of the Race Relations Institute at Fisk University in Nashville and vice-chair of the Democratic Socialists of America)

> Under a policy of cultural democracy, the government's role would be evenhanded, establishing no hierarchy of tastes, though more resources would go to those which have been deprived by its previous bias toward the culture of the rich. The government would support means instead of ends…. To advance democracy in cultural policy government must first articulate its cultural aims. In the society we envision, these broad aims are to create a forum for democratic practice and to guarantee the right to culture. . . . Government would support experiments in reviving artisanship, decentralizing distribution systems, and establishing multicultural education programs. Action would be taken to remedy incredibly high unemployment among cultural workers; a new Works Progress Administration would employ them in theaters, schools, studios, public works and history programs,… Devolving cultural authority would begin with measures to counter undemocratic tendencies that skew local authorities toward establishment culture. The rule of central authorities would be to support research, exchange, and experimentation, and to protect minority interests. (Arlene Goldbard and Don Adams, then consultants, artists, writers based in California, co-directors of the Neighborhood Arts Program Organizing Committee and co-editors of the bimonthly publication, Cultural Democracy)

Not even the arts community was unanimously enthusiastic about the creation of government arts agencies, or about the ideas in circulation for its *modus operandi*. At the outset in the early 1960s, as I recall, the American Symphony Orchestra League, fearing the local orchestra's central position in the cultural landscape would be undermined by a system of public support, opposed establishing the National Endowment for the Arts—and, though certain orchestra board members with close connections in Congress tried to sink the public funding concept, once passage of the enabling legislation was inevitable, they jumped on the wagon and assumed leadership positions. Ideologically the two cultures had strong arguing points. Many board members (and some directors) of museums, opera companies and orchestras, and, to a lesser extent, theatres and dance companies, felt that they were the essential core of a vital national cultural life. At the same time, many community leaders articulated a need for cultural expression and the organizations that support it to rise form communities of people.

And within the field itself there was controversy over what was the most productive relationship between arts agencies at the federal, state and local levels—and the compromises necessary to establish effective partnerships. Were the SAAs simply to become microcosms of the NEA—or did they have a different function? A complementary function? A competitive function?

In July of 1981, at a meeting of arts service organization directors (Chamber Music America, American Symphony Orchestra League, Opera America, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, the American Association of Museums, the National Assembly of Community Arts Agencies, Theatre Communications Group and the American Council for the Arts), the role of the NEA was discussed. My notes from that meeting reflect a prevailing attitude among those who considered themselves stewards of

the arts about how the federal agency should serve and how the state and local agencies should serve:

> There was a strong feeling expressed by the arts discipline representatives at the meeting that the NEA is an *arts* agency, not a *cultural development* agency. Its *raison d"etre* should be to build the nation's arts resources. Recently it has concerned itself increasingly with numbers, quality of life, participation. These are important considerations for the arts as well as the public, but inclusion in the agency's funding strategies should be entirely through the Endowment's primary clients: the arts disciplines themselves. The public arts consumer should not generally be seen as an Endowment client, but should be related to the agency's work through the expressed priorities of the arts clients. The National Science Foundation does not give grants to promising teenagers who show an early flair for building rockets; it gives grants to professionals and institutions of proven quality and accomplishment in their disciplines. There is confusion in the Endowment's programs between participation and accessibility. The federal agency's role should be to build the art forms; the state and local governments should deal with development and participation. During the discussions on this matter, the state and community arts agency leaders were silent.

When I was new in the job, I found the institution vs. equity tension particularly interesting. "Raise and Spread," Ralph Burgard used to peach, his hands pointing first heavenward and then outward to the horizon, usually with a detectable bit of salacious amusement in his voice. If we can do both, many of us felt, the country's cultural life will become profoundly enriched. If we can't, we may be remembered as the guys who blew a golden opportunity.

But how could we do so much with so little? We knew the combined national public arts budget—federal, state and municipal—would never meet the needs of artists, arts organizations and consumers in the U.S. And more daunting, an unprecedented emphasis on local development would inevitably create more institutions and programs that would need additional support. The caveats of caring critics that the new government arts agencies might end up creating an even more unstable arts economy were certainly legitimate. Many (not just those with vested interests) urged us to leave the structure alone and funnel tax dollars into the existing organizations with reliable management, and do everything possible to improve connections between those organizations and the evolving audiences which had been deprived of cultural opportunities in the past.

The trouble with that approach, many of us at the state level felt, was that, once we examined the relationship of traditional economic, social and political structures to levels of exposure to the arts in society, we knew there would have to be some profound adjustments in the support structure if government arts funding was to reflect the country's earliest and continuing democratic aspirations. To have yielded to the generally well-intentioned recommendations within the arts community that we use tax money to enable existing institutions to serve more people, especially those who were perceived as have-nots, would have been simply to deepen some significant unaddressed

inequities in the nation's cultural life—and, because culture and social and economic opportunity are so wickedly interlaced, would have widened the social and economic gaps that were already institutionalized in our evolved expectations as a people.

Furthermore, it was obvious that so much of the vibrancy of American culture was not at the power centers but at the margins, and it seemed to be as important to help people of privilege discover the many ways they had been deprived of cultural opportunities (and to offer them a chance to deepen their cultural vocabularies) as it was essential that, in a democracy, cultural policy deal clearly with a systemic tendency to relegate the have-nots to class-based lower cultural status.

There were other considerations for fledgling state arts agency directors to include in their growing understanding of their role in a quickly changing society. There were, for example, in the seventies and eighties, the sometimes standardizing impact of a facile, user-friendly global commercial culture and a pervasive postmodern similitude that we could observe both widening and censoring cultural diversity within our own constituencies. An unprecedented ubiquitous international "common culture" was making it difficult for people to find an easily identifiable center in their lives, a center that wasn't already central in many other places in the world, and that—driven by commercial hyperactivity and fashion—subtly compromised their sense of a unique identity. At the same time it was getting easier to connect with cultural identities that might have seemed foreign and incomprehensible a decade or two earlier. It was important for those of us in leadership positions to ask what was this new, seemingly comfortable and homogenous culture? What we often found was that the predominant language was English and the predominant icons were from the Capitalist West—or if the root was Tibetan or Nigerian it was subjected to a contextual transformation that played well in the West, and, particularly in the U.S. The evolution of global culture in juxtaposition with a continuing undercurrent of cultural exclusion was a paradoxical conflict of realities peculiar to the late twentieth century—one which was often in my thinking when I tried to design programs and establish priorities.

With this complex history and condition as background, many of us in our new jobs in the state arts agency movement assumed a philosophical posture that was antithetical to the "way things worked," while, at the same time, giving full acknowledgement to the major importance of the existing institutions (most of which had fought hard to establish themselves and were still fighting hard to survive). For me, and, as I recall, for many of my colleagues in the beginning, maintaining a healthy balance between established and emerging constituencies was one of our greatest challenges. The pressure from both sides was sometimes very strong, and we were often reminded that it was not really in our job specs to be social engineers, nor was it in our job specs to be protectors of the status quo.

Later I learned that some of the same issues were confronting our colleagues in Europe and elsewhere in the world. Andre Malreaux, during the years after the second world war, when he was France's minister of culture, reorganized French government spending on the arts so that the country's cultural patrimony would be "decentralized." To

Malreaux, decentralization meant exporting the great musical, theatrical and visual treasures of Paris to the provinces. *Maisons de la Culture* were established at great cost in most of the regions of the country as sites that could host tours of work from the Louvre, the Paris Opera, the Comedie Francais and other Paris-based resources. This was, in some respects, a democratization of the cultural resources of France but it failed to recognize the diversity and quality of local artists and culture or the degree to which it was important to respect and encourage regional differences—and in the long term the idea of a national culture beholden to the Paris institutions failed. By the 60s, when we were just getting started in the U.S., some of the "maisons" were closed but others succeeded by focusing more assertively on developing cultural and educational opportunities closer to home.

At the beginning, the NEA embraced the Malreaux model to some extent by strengthening the touring capability of important national companies in the U.S., but avoided the shoals French policy had encountered by respecting state and local initiatives and priorities. Particularly successful was the NEA/State Arts Agency partnership in the touring of some of the country's leading dance companies to cities and towns from coast to coast—and, with subsidy and a lot of heroic local sponsorship, Paul Taylor's, Alvin Ailey's, Merce Cunningham's and Twyla Tharp's dancers and many others were able to be contracted for most of the year for seasons in New York and on the road. For us at the state level, and the communities we were trying to cultivate, this program and the subsidy that came with it, was a gift.

Had the NEA gone no farther than providing venues around the country for nationally recognized performing ensembles, the agency would have been able to preserve a certain old-world purity, but, with strong encouragement from the state and local level, the federal direction began to shift somewhat in the 1970s. By the end of the decade, the arts disciplines and criteria of "excellence" were still on top, but, at the same time, the Endowment was giving much greater attention than before to previously disenfranchised constituencies. The Expansion Arts Program (for which I served as the state panelist for four years) was born, and found ways of addressing the manifest inequity of national arts funding. By the end of the 70s conservative criticism was growing.

> Despite protestations to the contrary, under its current leadership, the NEA is more concerned with politically calculated goals of social policy than with the arts it was created to support…. The arts are asked to be everything for everybody, at one and the same time to remedy the perceived ills of society, employ all who want to be artists and fill up the leisure hours of an entire population…. The NEA spends millions of dollars yearly to fund programs and policies which are unconcerned in any way with enduring artistic accomplishments; the best of these projects do no more than fossilize the popular culture of the past, and the worst are little more than high-flown welfare and employment schemes…. It is recommended that in the next administration, distinctions be made between serious art for art's sake and art for the sake of social service; and that the NEA set a priority on—indeed exist for—the cultivation of serious culture. (1980 Heritage Foundation report "Mandate for Leadership")

B. What was your "big idea" when you took your job – what was the situation in your state, and where were you hoping to go?

What I envisioned when I became the first executive director of the Connecticut Commission was an activist agency, one which was willing to stir up creative, constructive trouble—one which got pleasure out of helping to foment little revolutions, when appropriate, in the way things were done, in the way people, and the institutions they care about, valued the arts in their lives.

It's not that I had a chip on my shoulder. But I was young, 26 (at the time, the youngest of the state arts administrators in the country), ambitious, and unencumbered by precedent either in the field or in my career. Ignorance was bliss. I was confident that, somehow or other, the public, the institutional leaders, the local arts patrons, the legislators, the members of my board and I were going to seize on this extraordinary new opportunity and, like one happy, trusting family, learn to do what was best for everyone by raising the condition and the acceptance of the arts to a place of primacy that had never been experienced in the state before. Such optimism is useful, though not always practical, when starting a new state agency. Of course, I soon learned that the happy, trusting family was a Platonic ideal and that my real world would consist of behaviors and expectations that, while sometimes heroic, could also be divisive, competitive, small-minded, and even downright nasty. I learned that, in the political realm, ideals are important but compromise is necessary. My optimism survived fifteen years of building but the path was often circuitous and lonely. My admiration for my colleagues across the country was always informed by the knowledge from my own evolution in the job that their triumphs were never very far from their disappointments. We were a new breed—fifty men and women from a diversity of backgrounds all dedicated to teaching an infant to walk while we were ourselves still infants.

Not only was the government arts agency field in its infancy in the United States; the context in which it was taking its first steps, as suggested above in my answer to the first question, was changing dramatically and quickly. In 1966 I was aware that the non-profit arts sector in the U.S., during the decade prior to my beginning the job in Connecticut, had been affected by a significant expansion in volume, in accessibility to the public, and in financial need. Paradoxically, however, as more and more people—in rural, suburban, and urban settings and across the socio-economic spectrum—were articulating the importance of the arts in their lives, providers of the arts (supply) were less and less able to respond to consumer interest (demand), and the gap between fixed costs and income was widening at a rapid rate. Projections that were made in a state one year might be invalid the next.

In a 1970 survey of large Connecticut arts organizations the Arts Commission discovered that, on average, only 38% of their total annual operating costs was being covered by earned income (ticket sales, performances fees, etc.); the rest came from contributions from private donors and foundations, and, in considerably smaller measure, from federal, state and municipal governments. And, in almost every case, the year-end deficits were

cumulative, necessitating bank loans at (especially in comparison to the present lending picture) very high interest rates. In some sectors capitalization of a product is the answer, but, in the nonprofit arts, that kind of investment with the projection of probable return wasn't even in the vocabulary.

In 1966, William J. Baumol and William G. Bowen had come out with an important book, Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma, which, for many of us, was a companion piece to McNeil Lowry's later Ford Foundation report when we needed juicy gloom-and-doom quotes for our appearances before Legislative and Congressional authorizing and appropriations committees. Baumol and Bowen explained why music, theatre and dance companies trying to serve the public were always going to be on the edge of financial failure—to which the remedy was seen to be either price discrimination (which, in many cases, was as unpopular a strategy with donors as it was with consumers) or subsidy. Baumol and Bowen weren't telling us a lot that we didn't know at some level, but they were providing the field with objective economists' views of a very deep problem, and their text was important confirmation of the fact that it really wasn't the nonprofit arts sector's fault that its work was so marginal. It wasn't bad management, although there certainly was some; it was a bad fit between purpose and resources.

Shifts in patronage were cause and outcome in that period. In turn, the Ford, Rockefeller, JDR III (which linked the economic crisis to generations of neglect of the arts in schools), and other foundations launched imaginative programs to lessen the economic fragility Baumol and Bowen had put in perspective. The Ford Foundation, citing the growing cost/income gap of 166 performing arts organizations around the country between 1965 and 1971, projected a tripling of the gap during the 1970-1980 decade and additional damage from a galloping inflation, initiated a major program of funding in the performing arts, setting new standards of expectation and accountability in the field. The creation of the NEA and state arts agencies followed and, soon after that, the corporate community began to invest aggressively in the arts as a reflection of corporate good will and as a source of institutional advertising.

This was all very new territory. Suddenly the individual private patron, though still essential, was not calling the shots. Museum trustees and theatre boards were answering to a new level of financial decision-making and criteria, generally more public-minded than before. During previous decades stretching back into the nineteenth century (with the exception of a remarkable and all too short-lived government arts employment program through the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s), trustees paid the bill and made the rules. Now there was strategic planning, fiscal management, and much more competition between cultural institutions for recognition by the funding sources. I found this level of research around the arts and a new trio of formerly incompatible bed-fellows very invigorating and hopeful—as well as problematic. (That the primary purpose of Phillip Morris's exemplary support of the performing arts was to sell cigarettes always took my—and, in a clinical sense, many others—breath away.)

For me establishing cultural policy was always a priority. There was so much murk in the field, I thought the early arts council directors had a particular need to clarify issues and codify solutions. I opposed *arts* policy which I thought too narrow for agencies responsible for fostering a *public* good, and preferred *cultural* policy. Private institutions were a critical part of the nation's cultural life, but not the only part. Arts Policy suggested policy-making around what already *was*, not what needed to be *added*. If we were really to have a significant development role it was going to be important to get under the surface of art-making and presenting, and discover the widely various cultural roots from which the arts, and the motives for creating and sharing the arts, emerge. And we were going to have to understand the contexts in which the arts had difficulty emerging as well as those in which they were culturally, socially and politically sanctioned to emerge.

The convergence of the diverse components of a new system for serving the arts and the public was a perfect time to enter the field. I felt very fortunate. There were many more questions than answers, and opportunities to generate both. Connecticut's challenges were interesting. In some areas of the arts we were anything but resource-poor, as some states were. We had some well-grounded arts institutions—such as the Wadsworth Atheneum and a number of other strong museums and craft centers; the American Dance Festival, in a class of its own, some aspiring ballet and modern dance companies, and, later, Pilobolus; there were metropolitan orchestras, chamber ensembles, opera companies and summer music festivals; and some unique theatres with national reputations; the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre, the Long Wharf Theatre, the Hartford State Company, the Yale Repertory Company, the Goodspeed Opera House, and the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theater Center. Our proximity to New York and Boston, which could be its own kind of problem was generally a great asset. So the density of arts resources was not really a concern. What did need to be addressed by a public agency was the balance of arts resources and the availability of appropriate arts resources for a statewide population that was becoming increasingly diverse culturally. And we were well aware that the depth of involvement of the general public with the arts, even with the established arts institutions, was not nearly as robust as it could have been if certain changes in perception about the importance of creative endeavor at a personal level in and the appreciation of what artists do and communicate in society could be encouraged.

With this general perception of a "Connecticut profile," the newly appointed Commission of twenty-five members and I evolved a set of principles which were either adopted or implied in our early approaches to priority-setting.

> We saw education as the area of our greatest concern during the first few years—education within the formal educational structure and public education in the wider sense.
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> Our state was richly endowed with creative and interpretive artists. We were concerned with the relationship of artists to society, with how to encourage meaningful employment for artists and how to enhance the attractiveness of the

state to artists so that the exigencies of their lives and the pursuit of their creative media would not be in conflict.

We saw the role of a government arts agency in the state's artistic development as catalytic: stimulating activity and sources of support, not supplanting them, and avoiding being dominant in terms of finance, control or local programming decisions.

We wanted to expend much of our effort in developing sponsorship at the community level, knowing that without sensitive community administration there was little likelihood of a healthy extension of the work of existing arts resources or of the creation of new programs in response to community need.

We put considerable emphasis on working with as many related non-arts agencies as possible, trying to establish an easy liaison between the Commission and other agencies that might become willing to incorporate the arts in their own programs. The search for partners ended in valuable early collaborations with the State Department of Education, the Connecticut Society of Architects, the State Development Commission, the Department of Community Affairs, and the Connecticut Prison Association.

While we did not feel, as agencies in some other states did, that we needed to aid in the establishment of new institutions that presented Western traditions and canons, helping bring the public into meaningful engagement with the existing arts-producing and arts-exhibiting resources was a basic goal.

On the other hand, we were interested in fostering an environment for incubating new ideas and institutional structures, especially for population groups that had tended to be ignored by old line financial resources.

We considered it essential that a state arts agency maintain a flexible position with regard to local arts programming and support. In this respect, the amateur vs. professional argument seemed far less relevant than the question of how a willingness to accept an involvement in the arts could best be stimulated in a community or individual. Our programming objectives therefore moved away from rigid definitions of who is qualified to receive a "cultural service" and who is qualified to render it. What was most at issue to us was *the quality of the arts experience* itself.

We considered our involvement in urban neighborhood arts programs and community projects in rural areas of the same validity as our support of the state's more established and visible cultural activities and organizations.

These principles probably seem unremarkable now, but at the time, with an open field, all commitments, because they were unprecedented, were significant.

I was invigorated by the idea that uplifting the arts in the country could be driven by government programs that acknowledged the ideals of cultural democracy. Of course I knew that cultural democracy would be a far-away dream until the country was really ready to democratize democracy itself, that the arena was much bigger than the arts. I knew enlightened arts programs, even if they emanated from an understanding of the country's longstanding inequities would not, on their own, alter the historic context. But I was convinced they would encourage people to be more sensitive to alternative attitudes and life styles, and could be a strong component of a much larger revolution of thought and action. I listened, with great interest, to Don Adams and Arlene Goldbard trying to describe what the process of change would entail:

> Perhaps most important, a government committed to cultural democracy would assess and act on the cultural impact of public policies and private initiatives. Tax policies that favor the rich and investment practices that hasten deterioration of inner cities were examples of the damage to be done when cultural impact is ignored… In short, cultural democracy would mean putting authentic democracy into practice where government-by-big-business now administers policies advancing its own political interests. In analyzing cultural decisions and initiatives, we find it useful to ask at each turn, "Who is served?" (from "The Right to Culture" by Goldbard and Adams, in the *Journal of Arts Management and Law*, Volume 13, No. 1, 1983, p. 34.)

Those progressive concepts were behind much of what I did and advocated in my fifteen years on the job. For me, it became necessary to pose the questions "Who is served?" and "What's missing?" in determining the direction of Commission programming and technical assistance in a community. At the same time, I had great respect for what had already emerged over time in the cultural landscape of the country—without the benefit of programmed "reform," and I think, for better or worse, my tendency to want to balance these two often distant cousins made a gradualist out of me, rather than a flaming reformer.

At any rate, the principles cited a few paragraphs back were the basis for agency policy, and policy, in my thinking, was a framework for decision-making, and a way of establishing standards of fairness, even a control on any tendency I might have had to institutionalize my own political agenda. Although an adventurer in spirit, I took accountability seriously—and accountability and policy went hand-in-hand. If the agency could explain clearly what it was trying to do, the public could judge whether or not we were doing it.

Of course, policy was not everyone's cup of tea. For some, like Alwin Nikolais, whose cranky answer to a letter from me in 1983 (asking him about policy favoring experimentation among artists), policy was a bureaucratic diversion that circumvented, liked everything else, the needs of artists.

> . . . Good God, Tony, this year I have a grant that pays for two weeks of rehearsal for me to revive an old work. In that context, your topic is something like asking

> a paraplegic what he thinks about arch supports. All right—I'll take the money meant for the arch supports to buy aspirin to ease the pain of my greater disasters.

Nick was impatient with my efforts to "get it right," since, in many respects, he already had it right.

> [But really,] one of the greatest disparagements is the almost total lack of direct contact the Arts-supporting agencies have with active professional artists…. How nice it would be to get away from promises-promises, and the everlasting process of peripheral project funding…. The source of my lack of enthusiasm and my pale gratitude is a feeling that highfalutin folderol of this nature [a focus on cultural policy] is providing distraction when focus is needed. It sometimes seems to me that all this structure and analysis is little more than excess baggage on the snobbish bandwagon on top of which everyone including the artist's brother—*but not the artist*—is all too ready to jump. (from "Crumbs for the Subsidy Breadline" by Alwin Nikolais, in the *Journal of Arts Management and Law*, Volume 13, No. 1, 1983, p. 164.)

But my experience has always been that, cumbersome though policy-making may be, it is the public's safeguard against arbitrary decisions, conflict of interest, power plays and the triumph of mediocrity in government. It is critical because it makes us think.

C. When you left your job, do you think you had made progress in achieving your "big idea"? Or did you change your mind about what was needed?

Yes, I think a great deal of progress was made in the directions I had envisioned when I came into the job. At the very least, the Commission, when my fifteen-year tenure was over, had become a "permanent," although permanently endangered, part of state government. On the other hand, in some respects, the original "purity" of the movement had already been compromised by politics in Connecticut—as it had in many of the states. Still, the positive impact on the state's cultural life of the fifteen years I experienced as the Commission's administrator was clear to me, as was my sense of great forward motion of the original "big ideas". Of course, I had some regrets, but I was grateful that, overall, I was able to hold firm the vision I had at the outset and that many of my hopes were fulfilled.

D. What were you proudest of having achieved during your time in office?

- *Getting consensus, at the beginning, that we weren't going to settle into the role of a foundation with an emphasis on dispensing money—that, instead, although grant-giving was an important aspect (often an outcome) of our primary services, it would be the Commission's job to provide technical assistance, develop and administer programs, and be a resource for program development outside the agency, in response to what we, as best we could assess them, found to be the needs.* For the first six years or so, we avoided dividing our portfolio in terms of artistic

disciplines instead of departmentalizing the way the NEA did. It wasn't until the mid-seventies that we began to develop a helpful relationship to the large-budget arts organizations and provide direct aid to artists. The early problem-solving and generalizing approach was the best grounding for the agency and for the arts in the state. Between 1966 and 1972 the Commission's financial resources were distributed in the state in the following pattern, the categorical percentages within which are, in retrospect, striking, even to me:

30%	Use of Artists in Classrooms
15%	Audience Development/Performing Arts
14%	Development of Urban Neighborhood Arts Activity
9%	Statewide Touring Programs/Performances
8%	Support and Upgrading of Professional Arts Resources
7%	Public Awareness/Museums and Visual Arts
5%	Development of Rural Arts Activity
4%	Statewide Touring Programs/Exhibitions
4%	Dissemination of Information, Conferences, Public Media (exclusive of ongoing functions of the agency's information center)
2%	Establishment and Strengthening of Local Arts Councils
2%	Direct Support of Individual Artists' Projects

- *Finding in myself an operating style, an ability to communicate* (in around 11,000 meetings, 100 or so appearances before Legislative and Congressional committees and hundreds of presentations at local events and conferences within and outside Connecticut) and a level of endurance that enabled me, with the help of some remarkable staff (around 100 in 15 years) and Commission members (around 75), to build the agency over the long haul and to encourage constructive thinking about the concept of government arts support in state administrations and agencies, arts institutions and artists, and among Connecticut citizens. When I ended my days with the Commission I was very grateful that I had been able to move that concept from a *tabula rasa* to an accepted and appreciated response to the systemic and day-to-day needs of the arts in Connecticut.

- *Helping create the Connecticut Foundation for the Arts* in 1973. The foundation was established as a corporate entity separate from the Arts Commission. It had its own board of directors and staff, and functioned in close partnership (very) with the Commission—serving (functionally though not legally) as the Commission's grant-giving wing. The Treasurer of the State served as Treasurer of the Foundation. As Secretary of the foundation I served as its CEO. Of course the director of the Commission and I got on famously and generally agreed on foundation policy and grant decisions. The source of Foundation funds ($528,540 in FY '74) were the proceeds from investment of an annually renewable $10 million state loan, and gifts and bequests from the private sector.

- *Establishing, in 1974, a special Operating Aid grant category,* through which large-budget arts organizations carrying large deficits could receive operating funds rather than having to apply for program grants. In a time of tremendous fiscal pressure this measure acknowledged that these institutions could ill afford to take on additional project administration when the very survival of their main activity was in question. (See Section I, below, for a description of how this funding category was used to bring the economic plight of the arts to the attention of the legislature and the media.)

- *Convincing governors, speakers of the House and presidents of the Senate in Connecticut not to use the Arts Commission to make appointments for political reasons, and having them listen—sometimes.* In the end, we had some fine, dedicated members, along with a few klunkers. There were a number of distinguished artists whose participation was a signal to the citizenry that we stood for quality: people like Marian Anderson, Cleve Gray, Herta Glaz, Jackie McLean, Moseh Paranov, Mary Hunter Wolf, and Mark van Doren—and there were also critics and scholars whose perspective on the arts was helpful leavening in Commission discussion and decisions: Vincent Scully in architecture and city planning, Walter Terry in Dance, William Faude in history. I was particularly proud of Jackie McLean's appointment because, in that case, I knew my intervention stopped the Governor from appointing a crony's wife who had no particular interest in the arts, and instead bringing onto the board a very thoughtful man who is one of the country's great Jazz musicians and educators.

- *Taking advantage of the federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1976 as a proving ground for creating jobs for artists* that were directly related to their skills and talents—and that provided public service. (Artist unemployment documented between 1971 and 1980 peaked in 1975 to 7.2% of the artist labor force.) Knowing that, at the time, a site other than the Commission office would be more visible to and more trusted by artists than a government office building, we opened a little walk-up space in the Hartford Railroad Station with a prominent ARTSJOBS sign over the counter. Two staff members were assigned to that field location and served as counselors to artists interested in paid CETA work in the state, helping them design their employment specifications, acting as agents both for the artists and for the employer institutions (private and public sector), guiding them in filling out the necessary forms, and giving them a cup of hot coffee with friendly unbureaucratic conversation. Dozens of very meaningful full-time and part-time public projects came out of the two years of CETA funding, along with the predictable disappointments. In this case I was very pleased to have been able to help create a program that the Heritage Foundation would have considered little more than a "high-flown welfare and employment scheme."

- *Taking advantage of the role of Arts Commission director as an "honest broker" to help arts leaders solve systemic problems.* I recall, for example, early in my tenure, asking the conductors and managers of all the state's symphony orchestras to come to my office for an unpublicized, candid discussion on the gnawing challenges

of their profession in Connecticut. About half way through the meeting I said: "There's one systemic problem no one has mentioned. What do you think it is?" There was a pause—and then, to my surprise, one of the conductors said: "The problem in Connecticut is not a lack of music; it's a surfeit of orchestras. Connecticut has too many orchestras." "Good for you," I replied, acknowledging the courage it took to suggest the possibility that if some of his colleagues (and maybe he himself) were to leave their podiums and some of the musicians (many of whom played in a number of the orchestras) could consolidate their careers, the financial and identity situation of orchestras in the state—and the quality of their performance--might improve. Flushed with my brilliance in provoking that important revelation, I responded enthusiastically to an invitation from the state association of local musicians' unions to address its annual meeting. I knew it was important to develop a productive relationship with protective union locals that were sometimes their own worst enemies. In my naiveté, I brought the union leaders a magnificent plan: why not break up the union boundaries to the extent of easing travel of musicians back and forth between territories? And why not just confederate all the locals into one harmonious family? (That happy, trusting family again!) And why not develop a full-time Connecticut Symphony Orchestra of the finest musicians available, that could tour the state on an continuing basis? That said, after some frosty conversation over dessert, the union chiefs eased me to the door. I was never invited back to a Musicians Union annual meeting.

- *Overseeing what I believe was the country's first economic impact study at the state level (1976),* and doing it with economists (John Sullivan and Gregory Wassall, who developed one for the New England Foundation for the Arts a couple of years later). That early research indicated that the direct and indirect spending effects of the state's non-profit arts institutions amounted to $70 million, annually, that this spending produced $5.7 million in federal, state and local taxes, and that the industry supported a total of 5,962 jobs—not bad for a little state of 3 million people. While I was never convinced of the statistical reliability of economic impact research, the general picture they provided was true, and often saved the day when the only rationale for government arts support that political leaders would listen to was that the arts are good for business.

- *producing the premiere performance, in 1966, of the Martha Graham Company's first national tour in 15 years,* for a statewide audience in Connecticut, as a way of recognizing one of the country's great creative geniuses and of getting the new Connecticut Commission on the Arts on the map—in that order, I hope. The Commission (other than our annual arts awards show and a showcase series in the state capitol building) did not produce arts events; when it came to presenting, our role was to support local sponsors with technical assistance and grants. But in this case, at only seven months old, we put the agency on the line (leaning heavily on the sagacity of Mary Hunter Wolf, a Commission member, a great lady of the theatre, and a friend of Graham's)—and were glad we did. We assumed responsibility for booking, promotion, ticket sales, and, with the help of volunteer committees all over the state, recovered an expected deficit and made available hundreds of cheap student

tickets. Even though that tour happened at a time when Miss Graham, at 71, was long past the moment when she should have stopped dancing in public, she did appear in that first performance of the tour (in *Cave of the Heart*, I think), and, because of the monumental choreographic history she had created over a long and astounding career, it was a thrill to have had one last chance to see her, costumed and moving, albeit in great physical and emotional pain. The company, also in pain because their despairing leader had stopped leading them two years earlier but allowed no one else to replace her, gave a brilliant, disciplined performance of some of the Graham classics, to the cheers of a very moved capacity audience of 3,100 in Hartford's Bushnell Memorial Hall. Almost 50 years later I still remember that Sunday afternoon, the dozens of school buses lined up around the auditorium for blocks, and the quiet moments I shared with Martha after the noon rehearsal, massaging her tired, arthritic feet, and brimming with gratitude for the mass and depth of her epic contribution to date of 153 works, so many of which plumbed the human soul as the dance art had not done before. Although she was fading then, at war with nearly everyone in her life and with her ravaged body—and within a few months, she did stop appearing except for curtain calls—somehow, during the next 20 years, through 1990, she crafted 38 more works. For the Commission and for me, Graham was our public debut in 1996.

- *Overseeing the Commission's publication of some useful books, with lively photography, on the arts in educational settings:* Please Run on the Playground (about our program to train teachers how to use movement in their work with children), Poets in the Schools (evaluating the impact of twenty Commission-sponsored poets in the state's high schools and colleges, and of the establishment of a reading circuit for sixteen student poets), and Artists in the Classroom, a study of how eight resident artists of different disciplines fared in eight Connecticut schools).

- *Overseeing the establishment of a means of understanding the economic condition of the Commission's large-budget clients.* A year after the Ford Foundation report came out (1974) we engaged the Touche Ross Company to help us develop a uniform historical data base on twelve Connecticut institutions with annual operating budgets ranging from $350,000 to $1.5 million. The Touche Ross findings pretty well paralleled in the state what Ford described nationally (In fact seven of our institutions had been among the 166 studied by the foundation.). This was the first time the state had obtained extensive and reliable fiscal information on its major public arts institutions, and the data pool was as useful to the institutions as it was to us as a support source. Over time the financial picture of the institutions was not quite as dire as Baumol and Bowen and the Ford Foundation had predicted, but with the new information-gathering instrument, we were in a much better position than before to anticipate trends and dangers in Connecticut. In the late 1970s there was certainly an economic decline in the country that affected all arts activity—a recession and the continuing erosion of financial stability because of a stubborn inflation—but a general lag in the full impact of the negative economy, some impressive management decisions, firmer steps toward debt reduction, and a more aggressive approach to marketing kept most of the institutions from being in imminent danger of dissolution.

Still, even though emergencies were in the background rather than being an immediate prognosis, the Commission's data base, accompanied by interviews with the institutions' managements, told us, year after year, that what was really at stake for most was not institutional failure but a deterioration of services, or at the very least, stasis instead of assertive forward motion at a time when demand was growing much faster than supply. In the late 1970s, for example, the Wadsworth Atheneum limited its public hours, closed its valuable library to all but museum staff and, like most museums, maintained a very slow calendar of conservation. The Yale Gallery could not fill an important staff position. Both the Hartford Stage Company and the Long Wharf Theatre limited their large-cast productions. The Connecticut Opera reduced its production expenses and artistic fees. The American Shakespeare Theatre shortened its season. The Hartford Ballet dropped a planned production of *The Green Table* and reduced the dancers' contracts from 46 to 32 weeks. Under these circumstances, the Uniform Historical Data Base helped us understand the importance of operational aid with no strings attached—particularly to organizations like the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center the revenue for which was drawn almost entirely from restricted grants. During the years after the Data Base was created, we were much better attuned to the way the nonprofits behaved financially. For example, some of the organizations indicated that they had completed their most recent fiscal years with surpluses. In such cases, was operational support appropriate? The answer reflects both the nature of year-end surpluses and the nature of operational support itself. In the first place, generally the word "surplus" improperly described the true financial condition of the organization. In some cases, it simply represented the fact that the year ended with a positive cash status that would soon be depleted by the payment of accounts receivable, in other words, that "surplus" was not the normal condition of the organization. Second, a surplus could, in some situations, have been immediately applied to an accumulated deficit in pursuit of a balanced budget, i.e. while the season's fiscal profit/loss outcome may have been surplus the organization's overall condition was deficit. Third, in the case where a surplus may have been shown both at the season's end and in the overall condition of the organization, the excess was probably needing to be applied to the improvement of the organization's capacity to render public service. In no instance among the dozen institutions whose cases were reviewed in order to recommend operational aid awards were they meeting their full potential as sources of cultural services for their communities or the state community as a whole. They were, in other words, experiencing shortfalls in service due to the necessity of budget balancing. When an organization came in with a "healthy" fiscal condition, that status had generally been achieved at the expense of public service. When the organization therefore presented our staff and grants committee with a surplus situation it was seen as a healthy sign and not a reason for the Commission to pull away from support. It was precisely in order to extend and deepen the organization's ability to serve the public that the Commission provided operating support in the first place. Stability and service were at the center of the agency's operating aid philosophy.

- *Through annual state arts awards, helping establish the tradition of giving recognition to some of the leading artists in the state, many of whom had been previously unknown to the general public as Connecticut residents:* Marian Anderson, Theodore Bikel, Peter Blume, Morris Carnovsky, Lucia Chase, Malcolm Cowley, Mildren Dunnock, Juan Fuentes, Cleve Gray, Ralph Kirkpatrick, Eva LeGallienne, Jackie McLean, Arthur Miller, Robert Motherwell, Reuben Nakian, Maurice Sendak, Mary Hunter Wolf. Through the awards we also acknowledged the contributions of organizations like the Artists Collective, Curbstone Press, the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, the Lippincott Foundry, Meriden Gravure, the National Theatre for the Deaf, and Pilobolus. The annual Connecticut Arts Awards galas which rotated between the American Shakespeare Theatre and the Goodspeed Opera House, were, emceed by Skitch Henderson who led the pit orchestra, were simulcast statewide on CPTV and CPR, and were carefully produced events, the guest list strategically developed, and the program full of memorable performances and upbeat congratulatory speeches. Each year there were public nominations—295 by 1980—and many winners came from that list.

- *convincing my Commission members that it was okay to give a grant to an author to cover her baby-sitting costs.* The grant helped Deirdre Bair to write what was to be a highly acclaimed biography of Samuel Beckett. The book, published by Harper's Magazine Press, Jonathan Cape and Editions de Seuil, was the result of a close personal collaboration between Ms. Bair, the playwright's first biographer, and Beckett. Giving money directly to artists was an example we felt it was important to keep in public view. Artist grants were still in our repertoire when the NEA was forced to retreat from the practice under Congressional pressure—and, as far as I know, the agency still supports artists' work directly today. In an 8/27/80 story in the Hartford *Advocate*, the reporter, Stephanie Brown, interviewed a recipient of an artist project grant.

> Even under the current [government constraints] the project grants "are an extremely valuable pool for artists," says Tim Keating, who received one for his Art-O-Rama exhibition at the Hartford Insurance Group early this year. "They've funded risky ventures that wouldn't make money in the market place. It was the only pool available to me."
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> Some observers wanted to douse Keating in that pool. One of them was Susan Grasso, the governor's daughter, and a Hartford Insurance Group employee, who reportedly took one look at Keating's examination of "American consumer culture"—a model rec room in which he showed videotapes of a locally acted variety show—and phoned her mother to complain about what "those jerks at the arts commission have funded now."

- *Insisting that before our contracted artists and program administrators (and agency executive directors!) begin work in Connecticut prisons they experience being locked up in solitary cells for one day and one night.*

- *Establishing a national internship program for promising young arts administration hopefuls, seeking careers in the field.* This was a serious commitment to fine interns a year. There were regular classes, attendance at meetings, conferences and arts events around the state, and a field practicum with individual mentors for each. Some stayed with the Commission (one became associate director, another became a grants officer), some went to other state arts agencies. One became director of a SAA in another state.

- *Receiving a sabbatical grant from the NEA* to study European arts support systems. The fellowship enabled me to step away from my director job in Year 13 and experience the arts from a different perspective. Between June and September, 1979, I traveled in Germany, Yugoslavia, France, Holland, Denmark, England and Scotland, observing the impact of government arts support systems, interviewing about 150 individuals—artists, municipal, state and national officials, institution heads and others—who shared with me useful opinions and data about how governments in Europe finance and stimulate cultural activity. Although government patronage of the arts has existed in Europe for centuries, particularly through ruling families and the church, the historical context of support in 1979 was quite similar to our own, the role of Europe's contemporary democratic governments are promoters, stimulators and financers of the arts having been, for the most part, as recent as 1945, and the most persistent issue now being how government can do more to make cultural opportunities available to larger numbers of people. I was able to share some of the conclusions I reached comparing the U.S. approach and approaches taken by governments abroad at a National Partnership Meeting in Washington, sponsored by the NEA, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and the National Assembly of Community Arts Agencies in June of 1980, and the Washington paper was broadened into a study for the Rockefeller Foundation two years later.

- *Orchestrating "Thanksgiving Day" in Connecticut*, an opportunity for the many NEA grantee organizations in the state to express their gratitude to Nancy Hanks, the Endowment's chairperson at the time (1972)—and to use Nancy's visit as effectively as possible to enhance the Commission's political strength. She arrived from Washington at Bradley Field very early on a September morning. She was greeted on the tarmac by my daughters, Alex, 5, and Hillary, 4, hefting sun flowers bigger than themselves and handing them up to her while the local high school band played. "The Starts and Stripes Forever" off key and twenty members of the Commission greeted her in a reception line. She was whisked to the State Capitol by limo where she met with the Governor, told him what a great state commission on the arts he had in Connecticut, and discussed with him the idea of his throwing his support to the creation of a Connecticut Foundation for the Arts—which he did. Then she addressed a statewide conference on the arts in the Hall of the House of Representatives, met throughout the day with many arts constituency groups, and was driven to a few key cultural sites. After a couple of late afternoon cocktail parties and a good dinner she boarded her plane back to Washington, knowing she'd done a splendid day's work for the arts in Connecticut.

- *Being able to keep in touch with people all over the state who were willing to give me candid evaluation of the Commission's work and of how—good or bad—the agency's resources affected them and their communities.* I got letters, phone calls and visits from folks who told me what I needed to hear. It didn't always make me happy. But here's an excerpt from a letter I was glad to receive—from Bill DeVoti who ran an exemplary poetry program for high schools in around 20 schools in northwest Connecticut and bordering towns in Massachusetts:

> I've been able to observe what happens after the artist leaves. My own relationships with students have been strengthened beyond description by the enrichment of their shared experiences in communication. Just one example: a boy here at school who was often in trouble, a typical "turned-off" kid, a certain drop-out, nearly illiterate, began showing up last year at poetry readings and workshops. Gradually he became more and more involved in writing himself. Within a year he has progressed to not a "model" student—we have enough of those—but a diversified thinker who has discovered a talent acceptable to the school, and more importantly to himself. He now writes good, sometimes startling poetry; his attitude has improved in all classes, and he is staying in school because there is something here for him. He will never make the dean's list, but he may become a poet; he certainly has gained self-respect through success in a previously alien environment, and has channeled his hostilities in to an acceptably creative form.

- Producing the "State Capitol Concert Series," one of the Commission's most visible programs: a continuing series, over five years, of free noontime concerts in the State Capitol's Hall of Flags on successive Thursdays during the legislative session. The Connecticut talent that appeared was diverse: the Eastern Brass Quintet, the Manchester Bagpipe Band, the Paul Winter Consort, the Artists Collective Afro-American Dance Ensemble, Stacy Dukes and the Pips, the Teatro del Pueblo, the Theatre of the Deaf, the Hartford Stage Company, Jackie McLean and his band, folk singers, opera singers, puppeteers, blues bands, youth chorales, even the Hartford Symphony Orchestra (which took up most of the audience space). The series attracted state employees on their lunch hour, legislators, city residents and school groups—around 275 people each time—and there was television or newspaper coverage for most of the events. Each performance was introduced by a key state official—the Secretary of the State, the State Treasurer, the Speaker of the House, the president of the Senate, and senators and representatives from the home districts of the performing groups. Commissioners were on hand to host the events. The performance I remember best was a solo appearance by Morris Carnovsky, the great Shakespearean actor, throwing his magnificent deep voice through the building's marble halls in the mad scene from *King Lear*.

- *Generating the design of a number of programs that had a solid impact on the healthy growth of Connecticut's cultural life,* including:

The *Information Center* Before there was internet access, web sites and googling, people relied on the printed page and on physical files stored in libraries and other information centers. Gathering and disseminating "hard copy" information was a labor-intensive agency function, and it would have been a lot easier not to take it so seriously, but we always saw it as central to meeting the agency's statutory responsibility to "encourage the arts in the state." Our information center maintained a walk-in reference library, did research, produced publications, offered a referral service for artists and organizations trying to solve technical problems or find grants, fellowships and jobs, and computerized the Commission's internal data and management information. It was also the source of a monthly calendar of events and newsletter, "The Arts in Connecticut," which was distributed to around 7,000 arts organizations, libraries, chambers of commerce, town offices and other public places free of charge and to around 600 individual subscribers and a few bulk subscribers for a nominal fee. Paste-up copies were sent to some of the state's magazines and newspapers—and a few in Massachusetts and New York—for reprinting. A summer newsprint edition of 100,000 complimentary copies was distributed to hotels, restaurants, historic houses, museums and other venues. The Information Center also produced a monthly show I hosted on Connecticut Public Television called "State of the Arts."

The *Arts in Educational Settings Program* was the Commission's answer to five agency goals for the 1970s and 80s: (1) recognition of the arts as a basic component of education; (2) accessibility of the arts to Connecticut citizens regardless of barriers or isolation due to geography, race, income, age, handicap or social status; (3) opportunities for Connecticut artists to earn their living through their art; (4) statewide awareness of arts resources and opportunities; (5) opportunities for Connecticut citizens to express and share their ethnic identities through the arts. By 1979 the program also sought to support statewide implementation of the new law, Public Art 79-128 that mandated the arts as part of the instructional obligations of public schools which must be offered on a "planned, ongoing and systematic" basis. The NEA, as transfer agent for the U.S. Office of Education's allocations earmarked for support of experimentation with artists in public schools, was the Commission's principal source of funding for its work in education, matched in most instances, dollar for dollar, by local educational agencies and arts organizations. Matching was one way of making sure the program sponsor was committed to the contract and the Commission was encouraging and seeding, rather than imposing on or supplanting local initiative. Sources other than the Endowment included Titles III and V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and state appropriated funds. Philosophically the agency's direction in education was to promote the creative process both for its own innate benefits and as a tool for learning affective and cognitive skills. This was accomplished by providing grant awards to hire artists to work in educational settings to explore (1) an art form, (2) the arts in relation to each other, and (3) the arts in relation to other fields of learning and expressing. Artists were employed in creative writing, poetry, dance, filmmaking, movement,

mime, theatre, music, puppetry, painting, graphics, and crafts. Special consideration was given to minority artists and constituents, and teacher training. While elementary and secondary public schools were generally the client institutions, considerable work was done as well in prisons, neighborhood centers, recreation programs, senior centers, colleges and universities, and community programs. The kind of involvement the Commission usually arranged with artists was either in a "visiting" capacity—a short-term assignment of five to ten days—or as a "resident" artist with a much longer and more intensive commitment to a client institution and sometimes serving as well as a team leader for the participation of other artists in the same program. The Commission was focused on the relationship of artists to educational settings from the agency's beginning. One of the early models for later activity was "Project CREATE," which, between 1967 and 1970, through an ESEA Title III grant of $450,000, gave us an opening to nine Connecticut elementary schools each of which agreed to work with us and a group of artists (from Children's Theatre International, the Clive Thompson Dancers, the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theater Center, the Hartford Conservatory, the Paper Bag Players and the Rod Rogers Dance Company) to "break through the limitations of a rigidly academic, verbal tradition to show how the creative arts can stimulate the full learning, thinking and doing activities of children." Each school maintained an artist-in-residence who brought visiting artists and performing groups to the schools as resources for the student's own creative efforts, in most cases a full-scale multi-disciplinary stage production. Another precedent in this program area was our emphasis on movement in the classroom during the late 1960s and into the 70s. During those years we arranged and funded teacher training sessions on movement as essential non-verbal communication in the educating process. Both Project CREATE and the movement work informed our standards and goals in later Arts in Educational Settings programming.

The *Community Arts Development Field Program* placed staff consultants in three regions of the state to develop comprehensive arts planning, provide Commission information services, make technical assistance referrals to other agency staff members, outside consultants, and experienced people in the field, promote local arts agency development, establish artist liaison in assigned geographical and program areas, encourage and assist prospective grant applicants in organizing their cases and assist the grants staff in client evaluation, help the Commission administer its programs for the benefit of local constituents, provide education program monitoring, support arts development for disenfranchised minority communities, work with local and regional media to bring greater public awareness to community arts activities, and perform on-site visits and report on community arts activities independent of Commission client status. On a rotating basis we brought his regional coverage to the South Central, Southwestern, Northwestern, and Eastern Connecticut—a total of 121 towns. Field representation provided a much needed linkage between the agency and communities desiring greater accessibility to Commission programs. The consultants covered a total of 121 towns.

The *Community Arts Agency Development Program* was aimed at building a long-term partnership between the Commission and local arts councils and municipal arts agencies. With the assistance of a staff consultant and our network of field representatives, the program tried to meet three goals: (1) development of a financial, information and technical support system for the state's 57 local councils and commissions; (2) assistance to local agencies for upgrading their services, management, planning and accountability; (3) development of a capable network of local arts agencies as eventual agents for partnership and decentralization.

The *Operational Aid to Primary Arts Institutions Program* provided funds to professional producing or exhibiting organizations, crafts centers and presenting organizations in Connecticut which, through the quality of their services, their stature on a state or national level, or by the importance of their contribution to a significant population or to other organizations in the same arts discipline. Although the organizations often indicated informally the level of support they needed or felt was appropriate, they were not required to file a formal application. Generally this was deficit reduction funding, and our decisions were based on an evaluation of their financial data. In 1979-80 the recipients were the American Shakespeare Theatre/Connecticut Center for the Performing Arts, Arts Resources, Inc., the Connecticut Opera Association, the Hartford Ballet, the Hartford Stage Company, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, the Institute of Movement Exploration, the Long Wharf Theatre, the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theater Center, the Wadsworth Atheneum, the Yale Repertory Theatre, the Yale University Art Gallery.

The *Operational Aid to Urban Arts Centers Program* provided consultant services to primary urban minority arts/cultural organizations in Connecticut, coordinated development of a collaborative structure, provided managerial, artistic and technical services requested by those organizations; administered funds allocated to those organizations for agency services, assisted the Commission in future urban minority arts program planning, and helped secure NEA and other funding for the centers. Among the institutions in this category were the ABCD Cultural Arts Center, the Artists' Collective, Dixwell Children's Creative Arts Center, and Youthbridge. The ABCD Cultural Arts Center received the Commission's largest grant ($82,240) in 1797-80.

The *Competitive Grants Program* This program provided financial assistance, on a competitive application basis, to artists and organizations in order to encourage artistic excellence, diversity of expression, and accessibility to all citizens. Grants were awarded to recipients whose programs included professional arts programming as an integral part of their public service. Priority was given to established arts organizations with qualified management and artistic personnel, although community-based organizations, educational institutions, and units of state and local government were viewed as important elements in the

state's arts support system, and were funded to the extent that they offered employment opportunities for Connecticut artists and provided significant arts experiences to the public. In 1979-80 152 applicants were served for a total of $384,449 in the following categories: Program Development, Personnel Development, Pilot Projects, Project Development, Technical Assistance, Artists' Fellowships, Artists Projects.

The *Sustaining Grants Program* Sustaining Aid provided support to the primary activity of professional arts organizations (other than those receiving Operational Aid). The intent was to encourage continuation of existing programs of high artistic quality. These grants did not require creation of a project in order to qualify for funding.

The *Alternative Funding Program* enabled the Commission to act as a referral to other funding resources and, whenever appropriate, as a stimulus for giving to the arts outside of the agency's budget. We catalogued sources in the foundation, government and corporate funding communities and encouraged clients (particularly in the areas of Education, Hispanic Cultural Development and Neighborhood Arts in which grant-seeking tended to be less regular and less productive than other areas) to take advantage of opportunities they had not considered before.

The *Visiting Consultant Program (later, "Professional Advisory Services")* enabled arts organizations and individual artists requiring technical assistance on a short-term basis to receive quick-response partial or full subsidy for consultations with qualified professionals. Assistance was sought and provided in many areas, such as graphic design, fundraising, accounting, publicity, ticket sales, marketing and performance facility evaluation.

The *Conferences and Workshops Program* organized and ran local and statewide conferences, symposia and workshops aimed at strengthening our client fields. The range of topics was wide—from "Designing, Obtaining and Financing Artists' Spaces" to "Vocal Technique, Rhythmic Improvisation and Conducting Practices for Choral Musicians" to "How to Access Federal Grants' to "Local Arts Management."

The *Community Action Arts Program* made practicing artists available as participants in urban neighborhood development, focusing on community self-realization and identity. Each community-artists relationship—short-term and long-term—was unique and resulted in experiences which ranged from social action to purely artistic creativity. Working closely with the Commission and the participating artists were municipal agencies, arts councils and neighborhood organizations. Among the artists were: Robert Alexander, theatre; Andrew Beddoe, music; Percival Borde, dance; Jaki Byard, music, John Davis, theatre; Pamela Dodes, film; Slade Hopkinton, theatre; Reginald Jackson, film; Etheridge Knight, poetry; Peggy Kirkpatrick, theatre; Tony Mason, music, Ernie

McClintock, theatre; Abraham Lind, music; Jackie McLean, music; Victor Miller, theatre; Ralph Ortiz, sculpture; Frederick Preston, music; Wole Soyinka, theatre; Clive Thompson, dance; Estaban Vega, theatre; Oscar Walters, graphics. Clive Thompson and Jackie McLean both did six-week residencies, Clive conducting dance workshops in Danbury, Hartford and Waterbury, Jackie conducting jazz and drug counseling workshops in Hartford. We also ran a Black and Hispanic Theater Development Project within this program, directed by Patrice Walker, a Yale Drama School graduate and teacher at the Educational Center for the Arts in New Haven. Pat organized a committee of African-American and Hispanic cultural leaders from around the state which sponsored resource workshops and seminars in eight cities, some of which were directed by Joan Sandler, executive director of the Black Theater Alliance and Miriam Colon, director of the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater of New York, and performances and open master classes by Barbara Ann Teer's National Black Theater of Harlem, the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, the Rod Rodgers Dance Company, Ballet Hispanico and El Nuevo Teatro Pobre de America.

The *Hispanic Arts Development Program* was designed to upgrade the Commission's services to Connecticut's rapidly growing Hispanic population and to encourage the development of Hispanic arts organizations in communities throughout the state. The program's bilingual consultant, Nilda Morales, encouraged Hispanic organizations and artists to take full advantage of the Commission's services, and counseled the Commission on strengthening Hispanic cultural expression statewide through more effective programming, more public communication in Spanish and more staff contact.

The *Rural Music Program* was a cooperative effort between the Commission and a number of Connecticut towns to discover a methodology by which a small community with limited financial resources and population could increase its exposure to live music. Assisted by some University of Connecticut researchers, the Commission identified seven small towns that were geographically removed from a major cultural hub and made a commitment to each of at least three years to develop ten-year projections of musical activities geared to their special interests and identity, and to subsidize their programming. A staff consultant, Charles Fidlar, helped with planning, promoting, fundraising and presenting each concert. A diversity of musical ensembles and soloists performed over the years in the towns. The Commission used the opportunity of these close relationships to document the process of the towns' growing sponsorship strength and sophistication, and to learn from the experience the dynamics of work with small populations.

The *Dance Development Program* helped Connecticut dance companies upgrade their artistic standards through workshops, conferences, seminars, master classes and artist residencies in stagecraft, management, dance technique, choreography, music for dance and other important elements of the art form. Artists like Violette Verdy, Anna Sokolow, Viola Farber, Chuck Davis, Jacques D'Amboise,

Leon Danielian, Carmen DeLavellade, Betty Jones, Gus Solomons, Jr., Charles Weidman and Fred Bjornsson were engaged. The technical assistance aspect of the program was a great success with the dance community, was written up in the American Association of Dance Companies and the American Dance Guild publications and replicated in a number of states. Sponsorship development and financial assistance was also an important part of the forward motion of dance in the state. The Commission, with assistance from the NEA, subsidized many residencies by leading dance companies, including those of Alvin Ailey, Edward Villella and Violette Verdy, Merce Cunningham, Ann Halprin, Lucas Hoving, Bella Lewitzky, Donald McKayle, Alwin Nikolais, Murry Louis, Twyla Tharp, Rudy Perez, Paul Sanasardo, Paul Taylor and Martha Graham. One teacher remarked that truancy was never a problem when a dance company was in residence in her school.

The *Craft Development Program* was created to identify and respond to the needs of the Connecticut craft community as expressed by individual crafts people, professional craft institutions, and other craft-related organizations in the state. The Commission supported a part-time craft consultant, Nancy Hileman, to work with these representatives, and to maintain liaison with regional and national craft people and activities. Through her, we helped establish the Connecticut Craft Council, an ongoing Connecticut Craft Conference and an ongoing Master Workshop Series (with such teachers as John McQueen, basket maker from New York, Bernie Vinzani, paper maker from Indiana, Carol Summers, woodcut printmaker from San Francisco, Heikki Seppa, metalsmith from Missouri, Nancy Halpern, quiltmaker from Massachusetts, and Peter Voulkos, potter from California. The Commission also dealt with legislation that affected crafts people, including a revision of the Consignment Law. Among the program goals were: increasing communication within the craft field in Connecticut, promoting professionalism, contributing to the agency's understanding of the needs of the craft constituency, assisting the grants staff in evaluating applications from the craft field, providing the Commission with on-site evaluations of craft activities, responding to crafts people, craft groups and institutions' requests for assistance and information, identifying funding for special Commission-initiated projects, providing information about agency services and disseminating information of general interest to the field, promoting visibility of professional crafts people and organizations/institutions in Connecticut, and encouraging cooperation in the field.

The *Performing Arts Touring Program,* with a roster featuring 40 music, dance and theatre ensembles from the six New England states, was administered in Connecticut through the New England Foundation for the Arts, while *Conntours*, an in-state touring program with a roster of 60 Connecticut ensembles was run in Connecticut by the Commission. The six-state program which received special funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and each of the participating states, gave performers of high professional quality from all the states a regional circuit. The two programs, each marketed to sponsors through attractive

materials, interfaced comfortable and, in the aggregate, had a strong impact in Connecticut. Their goal—to make performing arts attractions available to audiences through fee subsidy—was the same as were their operating procedures, and regional and state staff worked well together with a generally fine result. In Connecticut, through our touring coordinator, John Ostrout (who, years later, became the agency's executive director), significant emphasis was placed on helping as many of the 372 sponsoring organizations registered with the touring programs—arts festivals, community arts council and commissions, libraries, schools, museums and performing arts series—learn the fine arts of event planning, block-booking, financing, marketing and management. This was sometimes a challenge. As John reported at a low point in sponsorship development, "the emergence of stable performing groups is being retarded by generally untrained and fragmented management structures." Nonetheless, in 1978-80 the touring programs generated over $450,000 for Connecticut companies who presented over 300 performances in 44 cities and towns throughout the state. For Connecticut artists on the six-state roster, the opportunity to widen their audience base was particularly welcome.

The *Poets in the Colleges Program* gave graduate students preparing for teaching careers in English an opportunity for extensive work with visiting poets as part of their training for teacher certification. Through workshops conducted at the college and through practice teaching with the aid of the participating poets, teacher candidates explored the creative process in writing and arrived at new attitudes toward teaching writing and literature in public schools and new ways of motivating children to write and think creatively. Funding for this program in the early 1970s came from the Literature Division of the National Endowment for the Arts. The poets were Gerald Hausman, Ross Talarico, Terry Stokes, Jim Humphrey, Leo Connellan, Leonard Halpin. Morris Cogan, chairman of teacher education at the University of Pittsburgh School of Education wrote an evaluation of the program. Through the same NEA grants that supported the college program, the Commission was able to help two existing poetry programs in the state. The Northwest Poetry Project, under the magical guidance of English teacher Bill DeVoti of the Housatonic Valley Regional High School gave high school students in northwestern Connecticut and the Berkshire region of Massachusetts direct contact, through formal readings and workshops during five-day residencies, with some of the country's finest poets (e.g. Galway Kinell, W.D. Snodgrass, Donald Hall, Diane Wakoski, Donald Junkins, David Ignatow, William Meredith, Shirley Kaufman, Carolyn Kizer, Clarence Major, Emmett Jarrett and Mark Van Doren). The other was the Connecticut Poetry Circuit, an extension of the New England Poetry Circuit organized in 1963 by poet Holly Stevens, daughter of Wallace Stevens. Like the Northwest Poetry Project, the New England circuit, which brought distinguished poets (e.g. Richard Eberhart, James Merrill, Adrienne Rich, James Scully, W.J. Kennedy, Derek Walcott, Louis Simpson, Richard Wilbur, Thorn Gunn, Anthony Hecht and Donald Justice) to colleges all over the region; it encouraged very meaningful encounters between artists and students. By 1968 the number of schools participating had grown too

large to be managed conveniently, so, with the Commission's encouragement, the treasures were divided into a Northern New England Poetry Circuit and a Connecticut Poetry Circuit, the latter having 17 participating schools. William Burney of Central Connecticut State University, then Jean Maynard of Wesleyan University, served as directors through the 1980s. Under Bill Burney, an offshoot of the Connecticut Poetry Circuit was established which selected undergraduate poets—four a year—got to make a circuit of their own, and to enjoy the same opportunity their mentors had, to get feed-back from their audiences, and to divide a small honorarium for each reading.

The *Percent for Art in Public Buildings Program* was a result of legislation enacted by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1978, mandating that not less than 1% of the costs of construction, reconstruction or remodeling of state buildings open to the public, be allocated for art work. The law has provided Connecticut citizens with an improved public environment through the enhancement of state buildings with (usually) compelling works of art by professional artist and craftspersons. The implementation of the law has been the responsibility of the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services in consultation with the Commission on the Arts. The Commission has maintained a slide registry of interested artists from the Eastern seaboard and participated in the selection process.

The *Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts Program* provided legal assistance, without fees, to artists and arts organizations unable to afford to hire an attorney. The work was done through the Young Lawyers section of the Connecticut Bar Association with the Commission giving referral and administrative support.

The *"Where Are They Now?" Program* evaluated and documented the impact of past Commission services and grants through interviews with representative clients.

Where there were systemic challenges within the arts professions we did as much as we could to offer constructive solutions. But I'm proudest of what we were able to do for the dance field—and I'd like to describe it in more detail than the brief program descriptions above.

We began by trying to find out what the dance profession needed in the state. We had a hearing in the State Capitol in January of 1967 for dancers, managers, teachers and dance sponsors with Alwin Nikolais, Omar Lerman, Mary Hunter Wolf and I functioning as the interviewing panel. (We did a similar hearing in March for conductors, managers and board presidents of Connecticut symphony orchestras with Max Rudolph, Helen Thompson, Moshe Paranov and Anthony Keller as the Panel.) The dance session was held in the Judiciary Committee chamber—an imposing legislative setting with all the trappings—which we felt somehow was important. It was an official hearing of a group of artists within the context of the state governmental process, something that had never really happened in Connecticut before. There was even a court steno taking down an

exact transcript of everything that was said. On that day we established a pretty clear picture of where the dance profession was in the state at the time, and, from the testimony, found a point of departure for some programmatic remedies to longstanding difficulties people were articulating. We listened to the eloquent silence of what they didn't say as well as what they did, and we kept an ear cocked for any pervasive hang-ups that might be indicated by repeated leitmotifs. Negative, positive, inquisitive, hortatory, whatever—it was all on the record. And we referred to it a number of years as we tried to craft a responsive program.

What emerged from that hearing was a clearer understanding that our most important constituents within the dance field were going to be the state's teachers of dance. They would be the backbone for progress in a state that, like most states, did not support dance the way it did music and theatre, and, consequently professional achievement and audience sophistication were not nearly as high as they could have been. The Hartford Ballet at its best was doing strong work, there were some promising modern dance ensembles, and there was occasional imported material, most reliably the companies presented by American Dance Festival in New London, but overall, like most of the states in the country, there wasn't a great gushing well of accomplishment in dance—as there was in music, literature and theatre. But there was some solid teaching, and the roots of some good local companies which seemed capable of much stronger artistic consequence. Then, as now, it was the dance teacher (or, in the case of established companies, the dance coach—often the choreographer) who was making the difference. The dance teacher was encouraging the dance material—the bodies—to grow, and often functioned as the sponsor, the one who was bringing in outstanding examples of the dance art.

Out of the January hearing, the first important step was a four-day dance teacher's workshop in August at Connecticut College. The forty participating teachers were exposed to an excellent faculty, some of whom were recruited from the New London campus; others we brought in from distant places. There were technique classes—classical ballet with Muriel Stuart, Cunningham with Merce Cunningham, Graham with David Wood, Limon with Betty Jones, contemporary ballet with Eugene Loring—and sessions on stagecraft with Jennifer Tipton, criticism with Selma Jeanne Cohen, pedagogy with Bonnie Bird, community relations with Charles Reinhart and "Men in Dance" with Bill Bales and Rod Rodgers. It was necessarily a sample menu but it was very inspiring, and it was the best way for a fledgling arts commission to say to our dance teachers: "We know that, in dance, teachers teaching are always learners learning. When you want this kind of exposure for yourselves or for your students, tell us. We will try to help you arrange it and pay for it." Many things happened during those four days in 1967. Perhaps one of the most important sessions was given by Lulu Sweigard, the noted anatomy specialist from Juilliard. Dr. Sweigard managed to create a great deal of distress for almost everyone in her class, because, with the innocent subject of skeletal alignment as her portion of the workshop, she stimulated in people a sense of total insecurity about their knowledge of their own anatomy and the body structures of the young people they were teaching.

This shock of recognition seemed to apply with equal force to the ballet people and modern people. They all were exposed to a new sense of inadequacy during the skeletal alignment session, and went out of it feeling a need for a great deal more knowledge about their bodies and what made them function in movement.

So we were responsive to that, and held a series of workshops throughout the next six years with such outstanding people in the field as Bonnie Bird, Hayes Kruger, Virginia Tanner, Ann Barlin, Mildred Hill, Elissa White, Robert Abramson, Frances Cott, Aileen Crow, Marcia Siegel, Dorothy Vislocky, Irmgard Bartenieff, Elizabeth Kagan, Marian Chace, Dorothea Buchholz, June Kennedy, Phyllis Krechevsky, Alice Martin, Claire Schmais, Betty Sommer, Marsha Taube, Ailene Valente, Jack Wiener, and, of course, Lulu Sweigard. There were so many varieties of insufficient knowledge that people discovered. Skeletal alignment was only one, but it opened up so many others—and, somewhat to our surprise, we found ourselves, as a state arts agency, deeply involved in the basic of dance. It was not just the presenting, which was what most state arts agencies stressed and funded; it was the *understanding* of the basics among professionals. Movement is the vocabulary of what may become a work on state. It is the medium of communication between choreographer and her/himself. It is the medium of communication between performer and audience. And it's also the vocabulary of what may become a successful interaction between a classroom teacher and a student, because the teacher has learned to read the student's body. It's the point of departure for creative work in so many areas. Movement workshops around the state in many aspects of the field attracted dancers, dance teachers and classroom teachers—and led to the establishment of the Institute of Movement exploration, which was guided by the Commission's dance consultant, June Kennedy, and, within a couple of years, became an independent nonprofit. Somehow this kind of subtle development within a key field of the arts—with none of the pizzazz of the dance touring program—was a kind of quiet contribution that would have been hard to explain to a legislator. It was not reaching very many people directly, but it was reaching the right people. I never talked much about this aspect of the progress we made in the field of dance, but, in retrospect, it still gladdens me that those were our choices and I'm proud to have been the one who nudged them along.

- *Bidding farewell with a little flair to the arts organizations and artists with whom I had worked for 13 years, before beginning my sabbatical.* In the 1970s and 80s I was a jogger, so I thought it would be fun and meaningful to express gratitude to the many extraordinary people and institutions on my beat by making a symbolic run around Hartford with a big bunch of daisies in my hand and delivering them—one by one—to the heads of around 15 organizations as a way of saying "thank you"—and of giving the arts, the Commission and the organizations a solid photo op. The route was carefully planned and each of the recipients of my flowers was waiting on the front steps of his or her institution (with dubious staff members, conned into helping make a routine jog look like a marathon effort by applauding the runner as he shot by them). A few of the organization reps, in shorts and t-shirts, joined me for a few minutes of the "artsjog." The run, which lasted about an hour, gave me a chance to think back on many of the

highlights of a once-in-a-lifetime job, the achievements and personal triumphs as well as some of the downdrafts and disappointments. That was 1979, and, among other things, I was thinking I would probably end my career with the Commission on March 15, 1981, fifteen years to the day after I began in 1966. So the farewell jog was more significant to me than I admitted publicly. I did, in fact, leave on the day I planned, and a few days later was given a beautiful party at Connecticut's original state house by the Commission and 300 well-wishers—fellow workers, artists, arts administrators, family and friends. Margaret Vazquez, a staff member and a Metropolitan Opera national finalist, sang, Jackie McLean brought his combo and he and I did an unrehearsed performance together on South African slit drums, George White from the O'Neill Theater Center, who was master of ceremonies, delivered a eulogy, the Commission presented me a large Sol LeWitt work I will always treasure, the poet Leo Connellan made me a poem and said "Our real gratitude to you is in our future art," and Rudy Hashan, the NEA's regional rep in New England ribbed me about my mastery of bureaucratese, presented me with a "Banner of Brevity," and said "His epitaph might read: A word is a word is a word only if preceded by an arrangement of other words followed by a series of sequential explanations of that word ending with other linguistic constructions." There was dancing and food and hilarity and hugs, and then it was over. And now it is 24 years later.

E. What was most frustrating to you?

Generally, the greatest frustration in my work was not having enough time to give my best effort to every challenge. In the early days so many of the difficulties we encountered at all levels had to do with being understaffed and not being able to spend enough time resolving complex problems or establish a schedule that assured appropriate program development and maintenance. Most of the trouble we ran into at that time was that we just couldn't keep up with ourselves, our colleagues, our clients and the country's rapidly-changing cultural environment. The correlative to not having enough time (and the cause of the shortage) was the often frustrating struggle for adequate appropriations to reach our goals.

In 1972 the Commission published a little book called *The Pilot Years: 1966-1972.* The publication was a review and self-assessment of the agency's first six years: its modus operandi, models, record of financial and technical assistance, accomplishments, and disappointments. Among the disappointments I listed in the executive director's reports were:

✓ *As a small agency not having a broader impact throughout the state, and needing to be geographically and numerically restrictive and selective.*

✓ *Not being able to be more effective in reporting to the public on the results of our programs through published reports and brochures.* The Commission's statewide arts calendar was a great success, but other published connections with our client groups were pretty skimpy. In 1972-73 we rectified that deficit somewhat by publishing three books and inaugurating a quarterly news bulletin.

✓ *not, in general, progressing as far in the Commission's support of the visual arts as it did with the performing arts.*

✓ *Taking too long to develop a methodology for long-range planning during 1996-1972.* Uncertainties about agency funding made it difficult to project beyond two or three program years. Compounding the problem was the lack of a sufficient means of measuring the needs of Connecticut's varied arts constituencies and projecting those needs far into the future. The agency did embark on a long-term needs assessment of its clientele and a ten-year program of operation by 1973, and subsequently created a uniform historical data base, but earlier would have been better.

✓ *Not to have made more progress moving state appropriations to a higher level after six years.* In 1972 the Connecticut legislature's 3.9 cents per capita expenditure on the arts was paltry compared with the commitment in many other states—such as Tennessee with 12.5 cents, Rhode Island—14.8 cents, Alaska—33.8 cents, New York--$1.11 and the U.S. Virgin Islands--$2.53.

Two other disappointments from the pilot years are also important to mention:

✓ The 1972 Etherington Commission on state reorganization recommended that the Arts Commission be responsible for raising its own grant and program funds from private resources, an idea that was totally antithetical to the purpose of government support of the arts. It was later rejected as inappropriate by those government officials charged with its implementation. But fighting the plan when it was first introduced was costly to the agency. And the concept did not die with that original struggle. It came back with vengeance in 1980 as an alternative to the Appropriations Committee's plan to dismantle the agency. (See description of the "Hit List" at the end of this section.)

✓ In 1971 Governor Thomas Meskill asked the Arts Commission to conduct a search for an official state song because Connecticut was one of a handful of states without one. We invited song writers to submit entries to a contest judged by a panel of six distinguished musicians. Over 270 manuscripts were received by the Commission. The panel, however, in the most diplomatic terms possible, notified the Governor that it felt no single entry had a combination of music and lyrics worthy of its recommendation as a permanent song for Connecticut. The members did select seven songs which impressed them as having promise, and the governor himself finally chose from among those an older song not submitted to the contest (and surely not among the country's most distinguished state anthems) "The Hills of My Connecticut" by the late Jesse Greer. What was disappointing about the project was that it was a unwelcome diversion for an already hard-pressed staff and did not yield an inspiring result. I suppose, in its way, it did do the Commission a service by making us seem less effete to the general public and giving us some publicity that would normally be very hard to attract. During the period of the contest we held a public sing-in at the State Capitol attended by 76 contestants with their families and an audience of over 400, including many state officials. The 72 little performances,

with the audience invited to join in the singing, were broadcast in 15-minute segments on Connecticut Public Television over the next six weeks.

During the later 1970s there were other disappointments and frustrations, too, among them:

- *Having the hiring of the Commission's executive director taken out of the hands of the board and become a Governor's appointment*. This backward step, a result of 1978 government reorganization in Connecticut, did not affect my position, but the four following executives between 1981 and the present have been political appointees.

- *Losing the Connecticut Foundation for the Arts* after it had proven itself an effective vehicle for grant-giving in the state during the five years of its existence. The Legislature closed it in order to reduce the state treasury's debt, incurred annually in paying out interest to the Foundation from state loan funds.

- *Losing the American Dance Festival* as a major Connecticut arts institution after decades of its exemplary work as a national center for modern dance every summer. I served as mediator for negotiation sessions between the college administration and Charlie Reinhart, representing the Festival. But in the end North Carolina's gain was Connecticut's great loss.

- *Being unable to get applicant organizations seeking grants to submit required financial data on a timely basis*. There was really no easy solution to this problem, since fiscal years varied from organization to organization. But operating out of compatible comparative information in making judgments within a field was always a frustration.

- Watching the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre struggle with economic and managerial realities the Arts Commission did not have the capacity to confront. Since 1955, like the American Dance Festival, the Shakespeare theatre in Stratford, Connecticut, had done some memorable productions with performers—e.g. Katherine Hepburn, Christopher Plummer, James Earl Jones, Jack Palance, Morris Carnovsky, Hurd Hatfield, Roddy McDowell, James Mason—who gave the literature a refreshingly American flavor.

My most frustrating and disappointing days with the Arts Commission were during 1980, the year before I left the job. At that time the Commission was subjected to the most threatening challenge from the Legislature we had experienced in the fourteen years of our existence. In February, the co-chairmen of the General Assembly's Appropriations Committee, in response to their sense that people of the state wanted reduced taxation and reduced government spending, announced a list of proposed cuts in the state budget that totaled $74 million. Among the suggested cuts was the elimination of the Commission on the Arts.

The announcement caught the arts community off guard, especially since the list was made public on the Friday preceding the Commission's previously scheduled Monday morning appropriations request hearing. June Goodman, the Commission's chairperson (and a great lady) and I scrambled over the weekend to come up with a strategy for saving the agency and, if we could do that, finding a way of holding onto as much of our appropriation as possible. The idea of being forced to close down, to discharge the staff, to stop serving the public as we had been for fourteen years, was a nightmare. At the Monday morning hearing, which had attracted a large gathering of concerned citizens, June was calm—and angry. In her testimony she suggested that it might be easier for the committee members to talk about money than the moral implications of unmandating an agency charged with uplifting the state's cultural life.

> Okay. The state's non-profit arts industry, which depends on the Arts Commission for technical assistance, information and consultative support, as well as subsidy, brings $96.5 million a year into Connecticut's economy.

Then she said what was really on her mind.

> When you are fortunate enough to have things of value, you have to take care of them. If you have assets you have certain obligations to protect them or they will depreciate and ultimately fall into ruin. This is a time of conservation, not neglect, a time when we should take care of what we are lucky enough to possess, when we should appreciate what we have, when we should hold onto what we have.

I tried to maintain June's tone and spirit during the next month when meeting with the key legislators and working with representatives of the arts community to present the facts. Meanwhile the outpouring of public objections to the unmandating proposal was voluminous and urgent. The Advocates for the Arts sparked this citizen response and provided names, addresses and phone numbers of local legislators to the hundreds who called on the Advocates organization for lobbying advice.

At a hearing on March 24, I tried to maintain the moral edge.

> It is your job to recommend to your colleagues a budget for Fiscal 1981, but, as you have certainly discovered in the past weeks, you're doing much more than adjusting numbers on a balance sheet. The annual budget of the State of Connecticut represents, in essence, state government's values. This is indeed even more true at a time of fiscal stringency than it is at a time of fiscal ease. When you expand the highway system you are encouraging your citizens to travel by car. When you reduce library services you are encouraging your citizens to spend more time sitting passively watching television. The choices you make, once the political bargaining is over, comprise a document which determines the kind of people we will be in the future, the kind of state we will become.

Support of the Commission from the media was very strong.

> The *New Haven Register*: "Is it really possible that the General Assembly's Appropriations Committee is serious about abolishing the Connecticut Commission on the Arts? Or is the suggestion that $1.3 million of a proposed $74 million cut in Connecticut's 1980-81 budget could be met by dissolving the Commission a macabre, sick joke? Or a piece of arrant electioneer tomfoolery?... In terms of dollars and population, Connecticut is now spending about 42 cents per citizen to fund the arts commission. In adjacent New York the figure is about $1.69 per person and the big argument before their legislature is whether to increase that per capita funding by another 50 cents."
>
> The *Litchfield Inquirer*: "The threat of the Legislature's appropriations committee co-chairmen to eliminate the state commission on the arts is a proposal understandable in terms of the budget crunch, but ridiculous in terms of human needs."
>
> The *Bristol Press*: "Indeed, a budget of $1.3 million seems tiny for an organization which provides the type of rich service which comes from the Commission on the Arts. Clearly, the elimination of that board will not rescue the state from higher taxes or a budget deficit. It will not even come close."
>
> The *Bridgeport Post*: "If the General Assembly abolishes or substantially weakens the state's arts program it will destroy a most worthy element of government."

Letters, telegrams and phone calls flooded the legislature. The plight of no other agency threatened by the "hit list" provoked such a response. Law-makers, during debate on this bill as well as other arts-related bills during that session, made frequent reference to the citizen campaign to save the Commission. But, instead of interpreting the high level of support as an indication that spending tax dollars on the arts was the right direction for Connecticut in bad times as well as good, legislators devised a plan to enable the Commission to maintain its established appropriation level through a supplemental "Special Incentive Program." This proposal, drafted as a substitute bill for the original unmandating legislation, offered a 2 for 1 match to the Commission if the agency engaged in private fundraising. The State would hold $100,000 as a line item and release it on a two-for-one basis as the Commission raised $50,000 from private contributions.

In floor debate in the House, Janet Polinsky (D-Waterford) said: "The response by the public to the entire hit list was extraordinary, but the response to the Commission on the Arts was more than that. It was instant and overwhelming. The members of the General Assembly and the members of the Appropriations Committee in particular received thousands of letters, calls and telegrams supporting the Commission and its efforts on behalf of the arts in our State." About the "Special Incentive Program," Rep. Abe Glassman (D-South Windsor) remarked: "I think it's a good concept and I would further suggest that I would have those people in the arts send the money to the Commission instead of sending telegrams and letters. They probably could have raised the $50,000

that way." On May 2 the bill passed the House with only two dissenting votes. In a way, the vociferous defense of the Commission ended up weakening the agency's position since some key legislators, including Polinsky who authored the "incentive" bill, got it into their heads that if the Commission had so many friends it could raise its own money from them.

How to respond to such a challenge? There was no doubt in my mind that the idea was poison—and even if it kept us alive financially for awhile, we would end up being known as an agency that turned its back on the people it was trying to serve. It would be another kind of death, much more damaging to the arts in Connecticut than folding because of the Hit List. We would need to accept the loss of $200,000 from the previous year and stand up to the legislators who thought they were doing us a favor and make it clear we weren't going to accept their offer. If the Commission members did not agree with my assessment I was prepared to step down. But they did, and I didn't. We huddled and discussed the options—and came out with the following statement:

> "The Commission on the Arts is unalterable opposed to raising funds from the public for a portion of its budget:
>
> (1) The Commission believes it is inappropriate for a State executive agency whose primary function is to award money grants, to be soliciting funds from the public.
>
> (2) A large percentage of the Commission's constituents are at minimum income levels. Those not at minimum levels are already contributing extensively to the arts and cannot be expected to increase their contributions.
>
> (3) A requirement that the Commission engage in fundraising would create an untenable competition between the agency and its constituents, many of whom are already soliciting funds for Commission-supported programs.
>
> (4) The Commission is especially concerned about the potential political repercussions in situations in which a contributor makes a significant gift to the Commission and then lobbies for Commission grants to specific individuals, institutions or geographic locations.
>
> (5) The Commission believes that this fundraising concept would initiate an inappropriate and undesirable precedent for State executive agencies."

We discussed with the representatives of all the organizations getting operational aid the Commission's diminished financial circumstances as a result of the budget cut and the probability that the agency's refusal to solicit private funds to restore the budget level would result in the Incentive Fund being unused. They all understood the consequences—that their projected income from the state would be negatively affected—

and endorsed the course we had chosen to take. They opposed the concept philosophically (as a dangerous precedent for government) and practically (as a deterrent to their own efforts at a very difficult point in their development). We had the same response from other client groups.

When the session was over I looked back unhappily at the mess. *Where was the Legislative Committee on the Arts?*, I asked myself. *Why couldn't the Connecticut Advocates for the Arts have given as exemplary an effort to support the agency before we were on the chopping block as they did when the ax had begun to fall? Why didn't I do more to confront those ornery legislators who thought the Arts Commission was a plaything of the elite, an unnecessary service that benefited those who already had the resources to make their way without tax support? Why didn't I spend more time with the doubters, being sure they had the story straight? Why? Why? Why?*

It was sobering to know that, while we in Connecticut were taking a real drubbing, the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities made a major budget jump from $2.3 million to $4 million, under the leadership of a conservative governor, and that in Michigan, where the nation's unemployment was the most severe, the governor and legislature were strengthening the arts budget. Since no other state arts agency was dealt such a budget cut that year, let alone be threatened with extinction, the sudden endangerment of the Connecticut Commission could not be explained away as part of a nationwide trend.

The agency immediately set to work reducing agency expenditures and services. I asked members of the staff to report on the impact of the losses on their program areas:

> Information Services: *Our challenge is the agency's challenge—how to function efficiently with fewer employees with the least loss of service to the public. We will be eliminating two Program Associate positions—responsible for general information inquiries, research and coordinator of the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts Program, the Visiting Consultants Program, conferences and workshop.* (Jan Devlin, Senior Program Associate and Information Center Coordinator)
>
> Operational Aid/Urban Arts Centers: *[The centers'] major funding sources, the Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, are so limited in their ability to increase their funding commitments that there is the potential of seeing the closing of all five centers in the next decade unless the Commission, along with the centers, take radical action to secure alternative funding and support.* (Dana Wright, Urban Arts Consultant)
>
> Competitive Grants Program: *Our contact with grant recipients and seekers made it very clear to us how they perceived this threat and the consequences of this…action. …The legislative challenge to this agency's existence was of major concern to artists, arts organizations, arts sponsors and arts supporters around the state…* (Gayle Ritchie, Senior Program Associate, Competitive Grants Program)

> Legislative Liaison: *In order to avoid such a debacle next year…[m]isconceptions and stereotypes held by legislators must be corrected. The elitist image of the arts, a stereotype that is prevalent in society-at-large, must be brought down to earth. The universality of the arts must be stressed; legislators should understand that the artist are as much a part of a Sousa march as a Stravinsky ballet, that the movie they saw last might was originally a best-selling novel, that the arts are so interwoven into the fabric of their lives that they take them for granted.* (Anthony Norris, Public Information Officer)

In my annual report to the Commission for 1979-80, I expressed my regret that those who were charged with representing the public in leading the agency were stuck with having to oversee a time of braking rather than accelerating a peppy vehicle:

> I find the current situation discouraging a number of levels, one of which is that some members of the Commission—those recently appointed—have never had an opportunity to et to know the agency when it was not fighting for its life or for its continuation. This is extremely demoralizing for those whose contribution should be a long-range view of the future and the establishment of imaginative, generous policies that serve the arts in the state and bring the arts closer to the people. For members of the staff the sense of erosion and the challenge to our mission is felt daily and I admire their perseverance and their ingenuity in making the most of the circumstances.
>
> I think it would be wrong, however, to give in to a sense of loss. Government attitudes about it are cyclical, and what may be a period immediately ahead of disappointed expectations may, in time, flower once again into a period of forward motion for the arts in government.
>
> In an absolute sense, money and the economy are not the major problem. The percentage of Connecticut's $3 billion annual budget given over to cultural development is miniscule and a change in attitude about the relative importance of what the Commission does and the role of the arts in the lives of our citizens could increase substantially the agency's budget without a significant realignment of any other categories of the state's expenditure plan.
>
> It will, for Commission and taff, be, more than before, our challenge to establish the rightful place of the arts in government and to continue to present the case and understand the significance of what we do for the arts and for a very troubled planet.

Although I had planned to resign at sometime in the next couple of years, and had been looking at March of 1981 as an exit possibility, the 1980 experience wore me down (as did a seemingly intractable asthma condition for which I was taking large quantities of corticosteroids which were often a source of very low spirits) and, though still optimistic about the Commission's future, the wrangle at the Capitol helped me admit to myself that

I was no longer the dynamo I had been when I started in 1966, and that the Commission needed to open the new decade with some new energy, energy that was waning for me. I was also demoralized by feeling that, although we had established some remarkable bridgeheads for the arts in state government, and had enjoyed some major legislative victories, I had failed in my efforts over the years really to secure more fully the concept of government arts support in the place where ultimately it counted most: the Legislature.

F. What was most surprising to you?
There were surprises every day—happy and unhappy—especially in the political arena. Some are described in (D) and (E) above. Here are a couple more:

- *Getting a Percent for Art bill passed on the first try.* The strategy behind its success, much of which was discussed with the Ad Hoc Legislative Committee for the Arts for the first time the day before the bill was introduced, on April 26, 1978, turned out to be the right one, but we didn't know that until the House vote was taken. When the committee comprising four reps and one senator, met with June Goodman, the Commission's chair, Cynthia White (the member of my staff who had been the liaison between the Commission and the legislature in getting support for the bill) and me, we divided a list of assignments to prepare for the next day's floor debate. We agreed that Rep. Walter Henderson, partly because he had tried to get similar legislation passed on his own the year before and partly because he wasn't an "aesthetic" type and wouldn't raise the hackles of the House's anti-intellectuals, should be asked to introduce the bill when the time came for House debate. Rep. Bill Lawless called him and got his ok. With Henderson on deck, we went after the New Haven delegation which had been strongly supportive of the concept when it came up in the State and Urban Development Committee. Sam Liskov, a former legislator from Bridgeport and a member of the Arts Commission, agreed to sit on the Bridgeport delegation which was assumed to be unfavorably disposed. Rep. Dave Dodes offered to ask the House Minority Leader not to encourage Republican opposition by remaining silent during debate. Bill Lawless agreed to shadow the House Speaker to make sure he would work for the bill's passage behind the scenes. I agreed to produce, by the next morning, a signed letter from the head of the Connecticut Construction Industry Association expressing the association's support and another from the Connecticut Society of Architects. We discussed a scenario for the debate. Rep. David Lavine would be the floor manager, rounding up votes but not participating in floor discussion unless necessary. Rep. Dorothy Goodwin said she would speak to the purpose of the bill and be prepared to respond to predictable admonishments that such a law would promote frivolous government spending like the controversial Carl Andre rocks in Hartford. Rep. Dodes would present an upbeat economic impact projection. The legislators present at the committee meeting made a list of their colleagues who would be unalterably opposed and of the ones who might be willing to trade votes on other bills. During the session the next afternoon, Cynthia and I sat in the gallery over the House floor during the session and watched David Lavine, feverishly collaring members in the aisles. He looked up at us and shrugged his shoulders as if to say, "I've done my best. Now we'll see. It could go either way. Don't get your hopes

up." We watched the Yay and Nay lights go on one after another on the big tally board. Having been so sure that we weren't going to make it, I turned to Cynthia, after all the votes were in, and said, "It's ok, babe, we did the best we could. No regrets—and thank you, from the bottom of my heart." She looked at me strangely and said: "What the hell's the matter with you? We won. We won. We won."

- *Getting political acceptance of establishing a semi-autonomous Connecticut Foundation for the Arts* to become the grant-giving wing of the Commission, taking the political heat off the grant process and raising the level of the state's arts funding.

Organizing programs was full of surprises. For example:

We had engaged Etheridge Knight, a well-known black poet during the time when the work of Ed Bullins, Stanley Crouch, Nikki Giovanni, LeRoy Jones, Audre Lord, Ishmael Reed and Sonia Sanchez was being introduced in some of Connecticut's more progressive schools, to do a residency in a North Haven high school. Knight, who had become a poet while serving a seven-year prison term in the Indiana state penn, was particularly good at helping students find their way into writing, and North Haven accepted him enthusiastically from a list we offered of possible adjunct artists. He was introduced at a faculty meeting which I attended. Etheridge talked effectively about how writing and the persistence of his pen-pal mentor, Gwendolyn Brooks, had rescued his tortured soul, and how important it was for young people to have the same opportunity in their lives. The message was certainly one the group of twenty or so teachers and administrators were pleased to hear. But there was something troubling them. Finally, as the session was winding down, the vice-principal said: "I can't let this meeting end without asking you a question which is very much on the mind of each of us here. What was the reason you were incarcerated?" "Oh sure," Etheridge answered, "you deserve to know. It was assault and robbery with a dangerous weapon." To my surprise, the tense mood around the table lifted, and smiles were on the faces of some of the teachers. As we were leaving the room I asked one of them why Etheridge's offense seemed to be such a relief to the group. "We thought it might be rape. If it had been that we couldn't have kept him. And we want him," was the answer.

G. What was your agency's relationship with the NEA like? With other SAA's? With ACA? With local arts agencies?
Financially, the two agencies worked well together in the early years. Between 1967 and 1970 the Commission's appropriation was larger than NEA support. In 1971 federal funds passed state but both rose annually at a reasonable rate (except for FY '71 when the appropriation went down and the federal piece remained flat). By FY '73 the aggregate dollar value of the partnership was four times higher than when we got started in FY '67, and with the money we had been able to meet a number of mutual objectives. That pattern continued, at a steady increase, through the end of my time as director (1981). We were generally on the same wavelength and tended to be mutually supportive. NEA staff came regularly to Connecticut to provide technical assistance to our shared clients and to the Commission. I served on NEA panels and testified at Congressional hearings. The Federal-State Partnership Office, despite its daunting responsibility to be a helpful

presence to as many state arts agencies as there are weeks in the year, was a big help in Connecticut, as it was in the other states. There were some issues between the SAA's and the NEA—big at the time, but I hardly remember them now. They were an important part of sorting things out for the long haul.

The success of the state programs was, in large measure, the result of an excellent working relationship between the councils and the National Endowment. The Endowment, in the person of its Director of State and Community Operations, Clark Mitze (and before him, Charles Mark), established a trust in what the states were trying to develop through the Endowment's block grants, and it carefully avoided encumbering the grant recipients with guidelines of questionable relevance, or with undue standardization. Each state and territory programmed its grant according to its particular requirements and, as a result, we had an array of projects across the country whose freshness, variety and unique suitability to their own place and time were most stimulating to anyone hoping to see evidence of a successful federal-state collaboration.

I remember arguing before a joint subcommittee hearing in 1970 (Senate Special Subcommittee on the Arts and Humanities and House Select Subcommittee on Education, chaired respectively by Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island and Representative John Brademas of Indiana) that it would be a significant advantage if specific dollar amounts in the matching grant program could be included in the legislation governing federal funding for the arts because state councils were making great gains parlaying their block grants into considerably larger amounts through at least two-for-one matching arrangements. In Connecticut we felt if our federal piece was secured by Congressional mandate we could generate at least five dollars for every federal dollar expended. Since planning and budgeting must be done at least one year prior to the granting of funds by a state council, we needed to know well ahead of time what figure we could use as a matching base.

At that time there was some rumbling both at home and in Congress suggesting that the states should receive all of the NEA's money, that the Endowment should become essentially a re-granting and pass-through agency, establishing general guidelines and a reasonable degree of quality control but leaving programming and allocation decisions to the state agencies. It was a time when devolution of federal functions directly to the states had some strong advocates. That idea never seemed very smart to me, and I said so at the Pell-Brademas hearing:

> While block grants to the states should be significantly increased in size during the coming period, this should not be done at the sacrifice of a substantial fund covering direct grants by the Endowment to worthy recipients regardless of geography. The country's major cultural resources are not evenly distributed throughout the states and are not likely to be for a long time to come. If the Endowment is, as it must be, attempting to insure the cultural survival of the key resources, institutions and individuals, then it is essential that decision-making as to grant distribution be completely free and uncomplicated by attempts at proportional representation.

Another suggestion at the end of the 1960s was that grants made by the Endowment under section 5/c of the 1965 enabling statute continue to be made through federal initiative but that they be channeled through the state arts councils. There was merit in the idea but most of the councils were too weak administratively to handle the added responsibility. The approach would have greatly enhanced the image of the state agencies, but, even with adequate additional staff for management and evaluation of federally-funded projects, serving as a grant conduit would have come with some liabilities. What if, for example, the state council strongly disagreed with giving a particular grant to one of its constituents? But federal/state gathering and sharing of information on grantees at an informal level and a general balance between the federal agency as a supporter of institutions and activities of *national importance* while the state agencies, through the 5/h provision, had the wherewithal to fund arts programs whose importance and effect were focused on *development within the states*, seemed best. That inevitably these two territories, in some instances, merged was one reason a well-oiled federal-state partnership was crucial then, and still is. In a real sense, during the first decade of the SAAs and the NEA we were working through the possibilities of federal-to-state decentralization and feeling both the advantages and constraints.

During my years on the Expansion Arts panel it was still possible fore NEA personnel and advisors to travel to places where we could deepen our understanding of the constituencies federal arts programs were serving. Memories of the panel's trips to San Juan, rural Appalachia and the Southern Ute Indian Reservation, and the people we met, remain strong.

With other SAAs? There was a good deal of informal sharing in those early years, usually by phone—but occasionally face-to-face at regional meetings and NASAA, NEA and ACA conferences. Some of us traveled to other states to present new programming concepts and learn from our colleagues, but getting away from responsibilities at the home office was tough and those demands limited such exchanges. There were attempts at interstate program planning, and, once in a while, we would put something together, usually in contiguous states, but, for most of us, regional programming didn't really get underway until the RAAs were established in the seventies. Of course whenever Ray Scott had our attention, which he generally did, he would angle to get his Michigan ArtTrain to stop in every station in each of our states, a threat most of us politely and successfully shunted into the roundhouse of Bad Ideas. But the joking, the posturing, and the genuine concern for our mutual purpose gave us a sense of closeness and hope. John Hightower in New York was an experienced resource and a valued debater when he and I corresponded and phoned on national issues. And Jim Edgy, Norm Fagan, Dean Myhr, Len Pas, Frances Poteet, the aforementioned Mr. Scott, Bob Sheets and others were big on hospitality at home and leadership at the national level. I was grateful to them for the extra burdens they willingly took on themselves. I especially remember valuable and reassuring cooperative planning and technical assistance with the New England directors: Art Williams—and, after Art, Ellen Lovell in Vermont, John Coe in New Hampshire, Dick Collins—then (and forever) Denny Wilson in Maine, Ann Vermel—then Robin Berry in Rhode Island, and Anne Hawley in Massachusetts. In 1975 the state arts

councils of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, with backing from the NEA and the Connecticut Commission as program coordinator, established the New England Contemporary Music Circuit involving professional ensembles from each state, performing music of the 20th century on tour. In 1976 the six state agencies bonded into the New England Foundation for the Arts, a formal NEA-supported relationship that focused on some critical developmental areas including the exchange of performing and visual arts resources, research, information systems and staff in-service education. By 1980 our basic budget consisted of a $452,880 grant from the Endowment and participating shares from each of our states totaling $270,500, on a sliding scale according to state agency budget levels. At that time the community “return” on the Foundation’s $768,910 budget was over $1 million. What seemed to distinguish our regional association from the others (the Mid-America Arts Alliance, the Western State Arts Foundation, Affiliated State Arts Agencies of the Upper Midwest, and the Southern Arts Federation) was its very careful and generally conservative development over a period of many years and the strong consensus among its member states that it should function only as an extension of the services of the state arts agencies themselves and not as a separate regional bureaucracy with an independent life and purpose. When I left the Connecticut Commission the New England Foundation board consisted of Alden Wilson and Ada Graham of Maine, Anne Hawley and Herbert Kenny of Massachusetts, John Coe and Susan Gosselin of New Hampshire, Robin Berry and Dorothy Licht of Rhode Island, Ellen McCulloch-Lovell and T. Hunter Wilson of Vermont, and Marcia Alcorn and Tony Keller from Connecticut. Our executive director was the esteemed Thomas Wolf, who ran a very efficient and responsive operation. (More on the state leaders below in my anser to the questions: *From your experience, how has the role and the activities of SAAs changed since you began your career?)*

With ACA? ACA was a key watering hole for essential information and an important forum for meeting the field head-one, and it was a platform for the early leaders—like George Irwin. ACA got it right a lot of the time—sometimes not. It was a difficult organization to lead and, sometimes, to follow, but we needed it—especially before the states and locals had their own organizations—to keep us abreast of the political scene: what to anticipate in Washington and what to do about it. A number of the ACA publications were important resources and the Louis Harris surveys helped us to get the attention of our own constituencies when understanding and acting on national trends were a spur to effective local action. In the early days it was a network and a service without which the field would have been a great deal rockier than it was.

With local arts agencies? We gave a great deal of staff time and expertise to developing local arts councils and commissions. The opportunities were limitless and the significant strengthening of local planning and programming initiatives, over the fifteen years I was director, was very gratifying. By 1980 there were 57 community agencies, 41 private councils and 16 municipal commissions. For my three last years with the Commission, in order to concentrate our efforts in communities and on local arts agencies, we operated four regional offices, run by full-time field representatives, each one a senior member of the Commission staff. Generally, the local agencies and the state commission did well together. In some cases their growth was spectacular, partnership was easy, and their

ultimate financial and managerial independence was a sure bet; in some cases, local conditions and the quality of leadership made their progress very challenging. But the relationship usually was a productive one. One of the field reps, Nicholas Duke, described this client category nicely in a year-end report: “Local arts councils and commissions in Connecticut vary enormously in stages of development, purpose, size of budget, range of activity, commitment to services, sources of funding, and levels of professionalism. At their best they are among the most professional, representative and effective organizations in the field of arts administration; at their worst they are misdirected, unrepresentative of their communities and parochial in their outlook.”

H. (this can be a probe question from g above) What was the single biggest issue or challenge the SAA field had vis a vis the federal government, the regionals, other states, the local arts agencies?
Instability. It was hard to set a course because the ground was always shifting. The constantly changing political conditions at all levels—usually due to the election of new leadership, the rise and fall of parties, the appearance and disappearance of champions of the arts from the scene, and the economy—made projections difficult and promises dangerous.

I. Can you think of an anecdote that tells us something about the arts in the political climate of your state at that time? Can you tell us who – if anyone – was a special political ally to you in those days (the governor? A legislator?)
Alliances with legislators warmed and cooled depending on the specific issue and how it related to their districts. There were a few who were professionally and/or personally connected with the arts in the state—such as Rufus Rose, a puppeteer (creator of Howdy Doody!) and supporter of the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, and David Lavine, an environmentalist and author. But many did not have a place for the arts in their lives. In the mid-seventies we established an Ad Hoc Legislative Committee on the Arts. The three who chaired the committee over time, Senator Larry DeNardis, Representative Dorothy Goodwin and Representative Bill Lawless, were very helpful advisers and watchdogs. Governors, Speakers of the House and Presidents of the Senate—because they made appointments to the Commission—were generally supportive when presented with a problem or need, but, in most cases, the agency was not a high priority for them. And, in 1980, when the chips were down (see Section E above), the advocacy we thought we could depend on in the legislature and administration evaporated. When the state’s budget was really in bad shape that year, we were far more vulnerable than we had anticipated. Commitments we had cultivated in past sessions were difficult to re-kindle. Political conditions in Connecticut were not so unlike those in other states. All of us had good years and bad years in those early days. Friends and detractors among public officials came and went. What may have made Connecticut a little different from some is that because the state was relatively rich in cultural assets it may have seemed to some of those charged with making decisions on appropriations levels that a tax-supported aid to the arts was not as important as it really was.

Some anecdotes about the political climate at the state and local levels:

- The first reflects the uncertainty and lack of connection of some legislators with the cultural heritage of the state and the nation. One afternoon in the late 1960s Marian Anderson, a member of the Commission, testified graciously at an appropriations committee hearing about the importance of the arts to young people growing up in a challenging world. When she finished, there was spontaneous applause from the gallery, and the committee chair, a bricklayer from a small town, leaned down from his high perch and said to her with inadvertent, starry-eyed condescension: "Miss Anderson, I just want to tell you—you're a real credit to your race." Without batting an eye Marian Anderson, her big hands folded characteristically in her lap, nodded her head gently and said, "Why thank you, sir." That, in the 60s, political leaders were still thinking along racial lines, was instructive to those of us who were embarrassed by the naiveté of the remark. I apologized to her afterward, saying "That could have been better." "Oh, don't worry," she responded, "that *was* better. Just remember where we've been. It's going to take awhile longer for these distinctions to fall completely away. What he said came from his heart. I rather liked it."

- The second story is about how the Commission responded to its own overreach in funding client institutions that had not come out of an arts background as much as an anti-poverty background. In 1973 I made a play for a $215,000 anti-poverty allocation that was floating between agencies and succeeded in getting it line-itemed into the Arts Commission's budget. It was tricky money. For one thing the Commission generally avoided rigidifying categorical agency allocations in fear of getting caught in political crossfire, and this was going to play right into the hands of those who were already critical of my advocacy of cultural equity—who liked to admonish me when they read special pleading in the Commission's programming and budget. So, at that point, we were risking losing essential good will and confidence in our economic stability. As it turned out, the new funding, because it did come with strings attached, ended up elevating a couple of local anti-poverty agencies (with solid arts components) to the top of the Commission's grant list. This did not go over well with the traditional arts institutions, the heads of which politely suggested we might be working outside our statutory mandate. This exposure ultimately worked to our advantage and to that of the traditional institutions themselves. Our work with the Touche Ross Company to develop a uniform historical data base on large-budget Connecticut institutions had made it possible to use extensive and reliable fiscal information to document the condition of the "majors" and also helped to underscore the sincerity of our interest in upgrading our capacity to offer more substantial future aide as we gathered political strength, and high appropriations. In the fall of 1976 with the newly-produced research in hand I went to see Joe Lieberman, then majority leader of the Connecticut Senate (now a U.S. Senator), and favorably disposed toward state arts funding, and asked him to take the political leadership in establishing a special fund for large budget arts institutions in the next state appropriation. New Haven, the Senator's district, was home to a number of the Commission's clients that would benefit directly from the fund (Long Wharf Theatre, New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Yale Repertory Theatre). Lieberman agreed to sponsor a special effort to increase the state's responsibility to the twelve organizations and proposed in the Commission's FY '78 $1,036,325 appropriation request a special category called "Operating Support to Large-Budget Arts Institutions that Serve the

Public," a line item that carried a $500,000 price tag. He pledged his personal support of the fund and said yes to my invitation to him to call a press conference announcing it to the public in the presence of the board presidents and managers of the twelve. The press conference took place at 10 a.m., December 13, 1976, at the Hartford Stage Company. The key players were seated in a semi-circle on the stage (with Lieberman spotlighted in the center), and the press was in the audience seats. The senator, pointing to three large pie charts, began by summarizing the Touche Ross data, and described the economics of the non-profit arts sector in Connecticut against a background of statistics indicating a rapidly growing public demand for cultural experiences. His message was stirring:

> The time has come to present the case for the arts in Connecticut… For years it has been assumed that the arts institutions of this state would survive no matter what. This is not so. Unless citizens, legislators and business leaders insist that these institutions receive the same kind of attention we give hospitals, libraries and educational facilities the non-profit arts industry in Connecticut will disappear. If it does, the quality of our lives will be painfully compromised; a major incentive for business to locate here will be gone; and, most important, we will be lacking a primary source of creativity, inspiration and self-knowledge—which are elements of a good society.

Because it was difficult to get the attention of the Fairfield County press when arts news took place in Hartford, we asked Joanne Woodward to chair a repeated press conference at 2:30 p.m. in Manhattan at the New York Hilton Hotel, and bused the featured presenters to the second site to be sure we didn't lose anybody in between. The day was a success. Not only did the large-budget institutions benefit in our appropriation, but it was one more gain for public (and legislative) acceptance of the role of government in the broader sweep of cultural support in the state.

- There were light moments in the Commission's relationship with the Legislature. Like taking a group of key legislators to a performance at the Hartford Stage and getting the state minibus I was driving stuck to the ceiling of an underground parking lot for which the vehicle was too tall. In good spirits after a cocktail hour at the Wadsworth Atheneum, they all got out to help get the bus unstuck, but getting out only got it more stuck. They all had a great time—their uproarious laughter echoing in the labyrinth's chambers. And I was laughing, too, though I was thinking "C'mon now, objectively speaking, isn't this the scenario you would conjure up if you were playing What's Your Worst Nightmare?" The curtain was held while we walked to the theatre—and the Arts Commission was never charged a penny by the State Motor Pool for repairs to the van. I was profoundly embarrassed, but the appropriation was increased and I considered repeating the performance during the next session (but didn't risk it).

- From time to time I found myself involved with local politics. Once, for example, I got a call from the chief of police in New London, conveying concerns expressed by some local citizens that parts of a new piece of choreography that was going to be performed in public later in the week at the American Dance Festival would be presented without any body covering. He had expressed his concerns to the management of the

American Dance Festival and had, appropriately, been told that it was the choreographer's decision to have some of the work performed unclothed because he felt it best expressed the peacefulness and innocence of the moment, and that it would be a very bad precedent to insist that a creative effort be undermined. He suggested that I get involved, saying: "I'm counting on you to do something about this. A state arts council should maintain some order in the arts. We don't want to have to close the show down." I said censorship was not in the Commission's purview, and that there was nothing legal I could or should do about the situation. I did, however, promise to get in touch with the director of the Festival and try to get a better sense of how the work might affect young children—so that, if a heads-up in the press would be a service to parents, the Festival might be willing to get a news release out on the subject. In the end, the section of the work that had worried the police chief was performed with a semi-transparent body stocking, and the compromise was perceived both by the town and the dance company as acceptable. If the nudity had been a political statement, the story would, no doubt, have been quite different, but the choreographer wasn't as interested in stirring things up as he was in making a poetic statement in the simplest terms possible. Once what was conceived in innocence was on its way to becoming a cause celebre, the impact he was seeking was invalidated. The compromise wasn't really a victory for anyone, but the work, tough not as intended, was still beautiful.

J. How did you use your time:

1. Can you describe a prototypical day?
My typical day began at 5 in the morning and ended at 10 or 11 at night. It was usually divided into three parts:
5-7 a.m.: planning and writing;
8:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.: staff management and communication, meetings with artists and representatives of arts organizations, preparation of reports, testimony and presentations, meetings with state officials, staff and politicians, on-site review of program progress and problems, meetings with Commission members (individuals, committees, board)
8 p.m. – 10 or 11 p.m. (some nights each week): participation in local events, speeches,
There was also time on the road *outside* the state – participating in national meetings (ACA, NASAA, NALAA, NAAO, etc.), serving as a consultant to new SAAs, serving on NEA panels, presenting Connecticut Commission on the Arts proposals to NEA staff, lobbying the Congressional delegation, participating in meetings of the New England Foundation for the Arts, working with national arts organizations (Young Audiences, NEA, ACA, etc.)

2. In a typical year at the beginning, can you give a general idea of how your time divided (in percents, roughly):
7%____ *Grant administration*
10%____ *advocacy/lobbying with public officials*
25%____ *field /constituency communication*
10%____ *agency strategic planning*
25%____ *program development*
3%____ *fundraising*

20%____ *partnership building (with other government agencies, with other types of nonprofits, with private sector, with arts/cultural agencies at other levels of government –* at the state, local and national levels*)*
** Please note: A large amount of time was devoted to agency administration and board liaison. This interview does not request percents for these categories.

3. Did your time use change in any noticeable way from the beginning to the end of your time at the SAA?
At the very beginning, in 1966, I was the only staff—so I had to cover all the bases without assistance, and without prior experience. It was comparable to starting up a dot/com company in the 1990s. For me everything was new: state government, policy development, program design, grant-seeking, working with a board of political appointees, making the idea of state support known to communities, artists and organizations. Ten years later I had a staff of 26 and was running a year-long internship program for five young people entering the field. The agency had changed significantly—and so did my use of time. From the guy who had to do everything, I became the one who trained and deployed others to do the jobs I had done before.

K. What else - information, stories – can you tell us that you think people in the future ought to know about your agency, or the SAA world in general?
As time goes on people in the SAA world will be increasingly unaware that the whole enterprise nearly came topping down in 1980 when David Stockman, Ronald Reagan's budget chief, recommended the dissolution of the National Endowments as a way of lightening the federal government's debt burden—a mirror image of the same unmandating attempt that was happening almost simultaneously in Connecticut. Not only would the loss of the Endowments have been a disaster for the arts nationwide; it would have profoundly undermined the forward motion of the state arts agencies, many of which, at that time, were financially interlocked with their federal counterparts. The President, at first, backed the unmandating idea, but was persuaded by members of Congress and a groundswell of influential leaders from the arts community to refrain from precipitous action and, instead, consider objectively the contributions of the agencies to the country. As a result Reagan appointed a (somewhat bipartisan) Presidential Task Force on the Arts and the Humanities—and, in a year's time, succeeded in helping Reagan out of his political jam by recommending retention of the agencies with a few perfunctory caveats. Although its charge and its modus operandi were not deep, and the examination of the agencies were, in many ways, inconclusive from a research perspective, the Task Force provided an important and constructive service to the arts in the U.S. at a time of great uncertainty: it adopted a position strongly supportive of the work of the Arts Endowment and removed the sting from those elements in the Reagan Administration that had been seeking to cut the Endowment loose from the roster of federal agencies.

In 1981, having recently left the Connecticut Commission on the Arts, I became a consultant to Charlton Heston, Task Force co-chairman for the arts. (Ours was a profoundly unlikely fit, but, for me, the Task Force was a revealing and valuable experience.) At that time I suggested to Heston that, since the timetable and mandate of

the Task Force did not allow for the kind of substantive policy analysis needed for a full understanding of the Endowment's relationship to its clientele (and to its enabling statute), the Task Force should develop a format for this kind of inquiry and encourage timely implementation after its report was submitted to the President. A similar effort was underway in Canada and might serve as a useful model for what the U.S. might do after a decade and a half of experience with government arts support. We discussed the use of a "community of interest" approach to the job, and Heston agreed in principle with the importance of a carefully framed inquiry which would use the Task Force sign-off as its point of departure. A presentation was drafted. As the Task Force's interest in revitalizing the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities as a clearing house for federal arts policy grew, however, the concept of an independent study fell out. The Federal Council recommendation was passed and the body was reorganized but not according to the Task Force outline. Instead, three coordinating bodies emerged in place of the original one, none of which had an announced concern, budget, or structure for comprehensive policy review. The newly formed President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities focused on building private sector support, the Interagency Committee on the Arts and Humanities took on certain liaison responsibilities between departments and agencies of the federal establishment, and the old Federal Council continued to act as administering body for the Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act.

II. Have you stayed in touch with the state arts agency field since you left your position as Executive Director?
To a limited extent. When I worked with the Presidential Task Force on the Arts and Humanities in 1981 I contacted a number of SAA directors to discuss strategy. In 1991 I returned to the Connecticut Commission to conduct seminars on cultural equity for the staff and Commission members. But generally, my direct contacts with the field have been infrequent.

A. If so,
1. From your experience, how has the role and the activities of SAAs changed since you began your career?
In the beginning the field of directors was diverse. None of us came to our jobs from graduate programs in arts administration or from lieutenant positions in other state arts councils because there weren't any. It was fun. There was a rabbi from West Virginia, a poet from New Mexico, a theatre manager from Rhode Island, and a hardware salesman from Oklahoma. One guy lived on a boat. Another (in primal scream therapy) lived in a box. We compensated for what we lacked in professional experience in our new line of work with a wealth of ideas, energy, commitment and curiosity. We learned fast. And we taught each other. We picked up the phone and talked over our problems—and we became tutors to the next generation of new directors of new agencies in the 1970s. I traveled to a number of states to share what I had learned and crafted in Connecticut and welcomed reciprocal visits. After some years passed, a certain sameness descended on the field, and, although the directors had become much more expert at what they did, I found us a somewhat less interesting group of people—overtaxed by expectations and precedents, trying to weather one legislative hurricane after another, learning the fine art of compromise, dreaming less extravagantly. Inevitably, by the mid-seventies, some of

our individuality was gone. Even Norm Fagan, Ray Scott, Bob Sheets and Jim Edgy toned down a tad, which I hated to see. They, and other pioneers, kept our sprits up by behaving outrageously during dark times.

The NEA was like that, too. At the start there were a lot of artists and others whose careers up to that point were close to the field on a direct, experiential basis. After awhile the same people matured into artist-bureaucrats, more efficient and often more effective, but, in some cases, less heartful.

2. From your experience, what skills/competencies do you think are most important to incoming SAA staff? To SAA leadership?
See Section IV below.

3. Would you pursue a career in SAAs/public arts management today if you were starting out?
Sure would.

4. Has the field lived up to its promise? Why or why not?
Implied in this question is another question: "If government arts agencies had not been established in the 60s and 70s at all levels, what would the cultural life of the U.S. be in 2005?" I think, in many respects, without a continuing presence of government arts agencies since the 1960s, the country would be significantly poorer culturally. In addition to fielding some very imaginative and relevant programs, and to providing funding which in quality, volume and consistency would not have come from any other sector, government in the U.S. has helped give communities and individuals a much clearer sense of an essential bond between the arts and society—perhaps even between the arts and the "good life." The country at mid-century was hell-bent on technological growth and change—and rewarded itself economically and in "quality of life" for an astonishing number of big successes in many technical fields. To the extent that, during this boom, the national cultural life moved forward in greater diversity and security than before, and that a balance was kept between material and creative process, the nascent arts agencies certainly deserve a share of the credit. A great deal of the cultural vitality we are experiencing in 2005 can be traced back to the birth of the federal, state and municipal councils and commissions forty years ago.

On the downside I would mention two areas in which government support has not lived up to its promise:

(1) The first pretty much echoes through these pages—so I will summarize it but not belabor the point in further detail. Cultural policy was, when we got started, and continues to be, a much minimized field.

(2) I'm worried about the increasing specialization of audiences. Classical music, for example, is now marginalized by many audience bases not because it isn't beautifully performed, or because it is old hat, but because its access isn't integrated into public expectation, either through education or through the development of more interplay

between audience tastes. An excerpt from an interview I did with Laurie Anderson back in 1983 (on the subject of public policy that promotes experimentation among artists) may help to illustrate my concern over twenty years later:

> KELLER: I recall the John Cage Festival in Bonn during the summer of 1980—integrated neatly into the B*undesgartenshau* (the national garden show), which occupied the same space by the Rhine. There was the Cage *Musicircus* on a beautiful starry night surrounded by acres of prizewinning annuals and perennials from all over Germany.
>
> ANDERSON: Yes, that's the kind of integration…Cage next to the flower show, the boat show, the air show, whatever. A comfort with site and context, but certainly no compromise of the presentation itself… American audiences tend to be terribly specialized. If your interests are rock-and-roll and sports, you're not likely to venture into another sphere. You don't say, "Where would I not normally go?" and then go there. The European festival seems to break down some of that rigidity… {I}f we're really interested in public policy that will encourage experimentation here in the States, we should develop public policy that encourages openness on the part of the public. It all fits together.

Today, despite some of the integrating potential of the media and of multicultural venues, audiences seem to be more isolated from each other than ever. I don't think enough has been done in the field to bring the wide sweep of ideas and experience in the arts into the kind of sense-stimulating environment that gives the consumer the pleasure of personal choice rather than mass sales.

B. If you have NOT stayed in touch with the field, why not?
For many who were in the field at the start, there was no official reason for us to hand around—and there were some compelling reasons not to. Gary Young succeeded me at the Connecticut Commission and was very effective—but operated out of a different style and a different historical perspective. He was more efficient than I, and, having come from the directorship of another state arts council (Oregon), he certainly didn't need me for anything more than a general orientation and a heads-up on a few issues that were peculiar to Connecticut. Also, I was an inveterate pack rat; he threw out whatever wasn't needed at the moment—including many of the historical files and correspondence I had hoped to give to the University of Connecticut archives! If I had stayed too close to Gary's work at the outset he and I would probably have debated the small stuff while his focus needed to be trained on more important matters. I felt the same way about my relationship with the staff. While I saw them occasionally, I was careful not to get between them and their new leader.

III. Think about the time when you were starting your work with SAAs. What have you changed your mind about, if anything, from then to now?

IV. Do you have a single piece of advice for a young person entering the field of public sector arts administration today?

Always seek balance within your job and within your life. During my fifteen years at the Commission it was my own self-imposed policy not to participate personally in the work of any arts organization in Connecticut as long as I was the administrator of an arts support agency. Although I had been involved in theatre for most of my previous life—as an actor and director—I left that part of me behind the day I began my job in state government—March 17, 1966—and never really went back to it. That constraint came out of a fear that by being particularly close to an arts organization in Connecticut, outside of my official relationship, I might generate conflict of interest concerns among the agency's constituents. It might be said that my theatrical disposition was simply morphed into my administrative style—but whatever instinctive performing I did in that role, it was no the same as being part of a group of people working together to interpret a play script for the public. I think, in retrospect, that I missed that kind of production environment more than I acknowledged at the time, and that some of the inevitable loneliness I felt in the job could have been alleviated by being focused for at least a few hours a week on an artistic enterprise. But there were no theatrical projects, no choral singing, and, come to think of it, no writing or painting or any of the solo arts that would, in fact, not have been in conflict with my image as an objective broker.

So these many years later I want to say to people coming out of an active arts background into the field: don't throw it all away. If it's important to you, keep that path open to your soul and let your colleagues (staff, board members, other SAA directors) help you judge whether or not you are keeping your objectivity and the public's trust intact. Balance within your personal life is a very important part of your success as a sensitive steward of your state's cultural development.

The arts and sciences, as the scientist Lewis Thomas observed, are linked by bewilderment. They are simply two approaches to figuring life out—or trying to. And the "trying to" is essential to both. Discovery usually happens on the way, not at the destination.

Fluidity comes from a willingness to be bewildered—and administrators should encourage fluidity in themselves, and accept bewilderment as a starting place. Liberation into the fluid body, and, by extension, into the fluid mind and spirit, is key to dealing effectively with artists and the public, and to originating and managing programs that encourage fluidity in society at-large. It's important to ask yourself how you are keeping that quality in your life and your work.

Ken Dewey, a much respected artist-administrator on the staff of the New York State Arts Council (who died in a plane crash while still in his thirties), used to say that "state arts agencies should be enclaves of the arts in government, not enclaves of government in the arts." It's a fine and important distinction. It is probably just as well if a state arts agency is not fully trusted in government. Its responsibility, if it is going to be true to its mandate, is sometimes to subvert (within the law of course!) some longstanding patterns of society. In that role it must beware becoming inadvertently caught in the vise of regulatory expectations and behaviors. A leader who is able to keep fluidity in his or her

own personal priorities will keep on the side of artistic creation while working in the context of government.

Back in the 1980s the Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee of Canada did a good job at delineating the fundamental differences between culture and the State, urging continuing watchfulness lest the ease of communication between them become the basis for mutual co-optation:

> [T]here is a danger, too, in this seemingly happy interdependence of government and culture, for they do not pursue the same ends. Government serves the social need for order, predictability and control—asking consensus, establishing norms, and offering uniformity of treatment. Cultural activity, by contrast, thrives on spontaneity and accepts diversity, discord and dissent as natural conditions—and withers if it is legislated or directed. The well-being of society is threatened if the state intrudes into the cultural realm in ways that subordinate the role and purposes of the latter to the role and purposes of government itself—or of any other spheres of activity. Moreover, the cultural sphere, embracing as it does artistic and intellectual activity, has as one of its central functions the critical scrutiny of all other spheres including the political. On this score alone it cannot be subordinated to the others.

V. Information about you:

A. Education
1. Educational level (has, ba, some grad, ma, PhD)
2. Major/field

1. Attended public schools in West Hartford, CT, high school (Loomis-Chaffee) in Windsor, CT, Middlebury College (Middlebury, VT), Harvard College (Cambridge, MA) and Columbia University (New York. NY)
2. Degrees: BA – Harvard, MA – Columbia. Major: English Literature at Middlebury and Harvard, Dramatic Literature at Columbia.

B. What skills/competencies did you have/did you bring to your leadership position at an SAA? How had you acquired these skills? (experience, professional development training, formal degree education)

1. Group leadership, writing, theatre producing, knowledge about the arts in the U.S.
2. Skills acquired through schooling, jobs, family interaction, travel, observation

C. Work Experience
1. Specific arts management experience vs. non-arts management experience

1. My management experience has been entirely in the non-profit sector.

2. Did you work for a SAA either before or after your time as Executive Director?

2. I entered the field in 1966, at 26, when state arts agencies were in their infancy—and so was I—so there was no possibility of working for a SAA before Connecticut. As things turned out, when I left the Arts Commission in 1981 I did not do any more work directly with SAAs.

3. Did you work for a public sector agency – not an SAA – either before or after your time as Executive Director?
3. Yes: National Educational Television, The Rockefeller Foundation, The Presidential Task Force on the Arts and Humanities, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Hartford Camerata Conservatory, The Institute for Community Research, The Institute for International Education, The Journal of Arts Management and Law, Associated Councils of the Arts, Young Audiences, The Vermont Council on the Arts, Connecticut Countdown, The Charter Oak Cultural Center

4. It may be necessary for us to just ask them to make a list of their work experience in chronological order – no need for years – including the SAA, and then for us to categorize – jotting one of these categories after they have named the job:
- private sector management
-government agency management
-gallery/performance group
-fundraising/grant administration
-performer/critic/writer
-lobbyist/advocate
-nonprofit sector experience
-elected office holder
-arts education/teacher
-academic
-service organization experience: national or other

Work Chronology
1961-63
The Hartford Courant – Reporter
U.S. Army (6-month Plan) – Pvt

1963-66
National Educational Television (precursor of CPB) – Staff Writer

Avocational Interests during those years:
Theatre Production, including:
Philoctetes by Sophocles, East River Park
Amphitheatre, New York – Director
The Flood by Keller & Crystal, Café LaMama –
Author, Director

1966-81
Connecticut Commission on the Arts – Executive Director

In that capacity I also served on various boards, advisory committees and panels of other agencies and organizations, including:
National Endowment for the Arts
New England Foundation for the Arts
Connecticut State Department of Education
American Council for the Arts
National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
Opportunity Resources for the Arts

Received various awards during and at the conclusion of my time at the Commission, including:
Governor's Arts Award
Hartford Advocate Best of Hartford Readers' Poll "Good Egg" Award
Soni Fidelis Public Service Award
Connecticut Society of Architects Public Service Award
Artists Collective "Artie" Award

1981-91
Various consultative and staff roles with:
The Rockefeller Foundation
The Presidential Task Force on the Arts and Humanities
The National Endowment for the Arts
The Hartford Camerata Conservatory
The Institute for Community Research
The Institute for International Education
The Journal of Arts Management and Law
Associated Councils of the Arts
Young Audiences
The Connecticut Commission on the Arts
The Vermont Council on the Arts
Options
Connecticut Countdown – Executive Director, 1984-85
(Connecticut Countdown was a statewide nuclear arms policy forum.)

Lecture at colleges and universities on cultural policy and arts administration—including UCLA, Wisconsin, Columbia, Harvard, Sangamon State, and NYU. Taught a summer course in cultural policy and globalization at American University.

Wrote two book-length studies: *Contemporary European Arts Support Systems*, for the National Endowment for the Arts, and *International Cultural Exchange: Looking to the Year 2,000,* for the Rockefeller Foundation.

Avocational Interests during these years:

Real Art Ways, Hartford – President of the Board
Charter Oak Cultural Center – Vice President of the Board

Journal of Arts Management and Law – Board
Columbia Research Center on the Arts & Culture – Board
International Theatre Institute – Board
Also as an occasional performer and director, I had a continuing role as "St. Radio" in Douglas Davis's global radio and television productions, having appeared in Davis's N.P.R. works originating from the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, WNYC in New York, the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center and the Guggenheim Museum, New York, and was a member of the Vintage Players in Connecticut which specializes in the work of contemporary Irish playwright Brian Friel.

1991-2000
Charter Oak Cultural Center – Executive Director
In that capacity I also served on various boards, advisory committees and panels of other agencies and organizations, including:
The Coalition to Strengthen the Sheldon/Charter Oak Neighborhood
CSS/CON Economic Development Committee
CSS/CON Strategic Planning Committee
Institute for Community Research Cultural Heritage Arts Program Advisory Committee
Hartford Heritage Trail Education Committee
Hartford Downtown Council Arts, Culture and Entertainment Committee

Avocational Interests during these years:
American Leadership Forum – Senior Fellow
Roberts Foundation – Trustee
City of Hartford Commission on Cultural Affairs – Commissioner
Columbia University Research Center for the Arts and Culture – Board
National Task Force on Cultural Policy in the Public Interest
Non-Profit Resource Center at the United Way of the Capital Area – Advisory Board
Connecticut Commission on the Arts Future Planning Committee
American Leadership Forum Class X Youth Violence Abatement Project Committee
American Dance Guild Task Force for National Cultural Policy

2000 – Present
Moved from Connecticut to a wooded mountain 113 acres off the grid in Braintree, Vermont, where I write, make trails and ponds, produce power with a wind turbine and solar panels, and serve as chair of the Chandler Center for the Arts 2020 Future Planning Committee in Randolph.

D. Do you pursue any art form? Which?
My art forms have been music (piano from age 5 through 20 and a lifetime of listening), writing (both professionally and recreationally from an early age through the present), and theatre (acting and directing, from age 15 through 26).

E. Demographic information:
1. Gender
2. Age range now
3. geographic region he or she lives now
4. political/partisan identification
Male, Caucasian, Jewish, 66, Vermont and Connecticut, Liberal Democrat