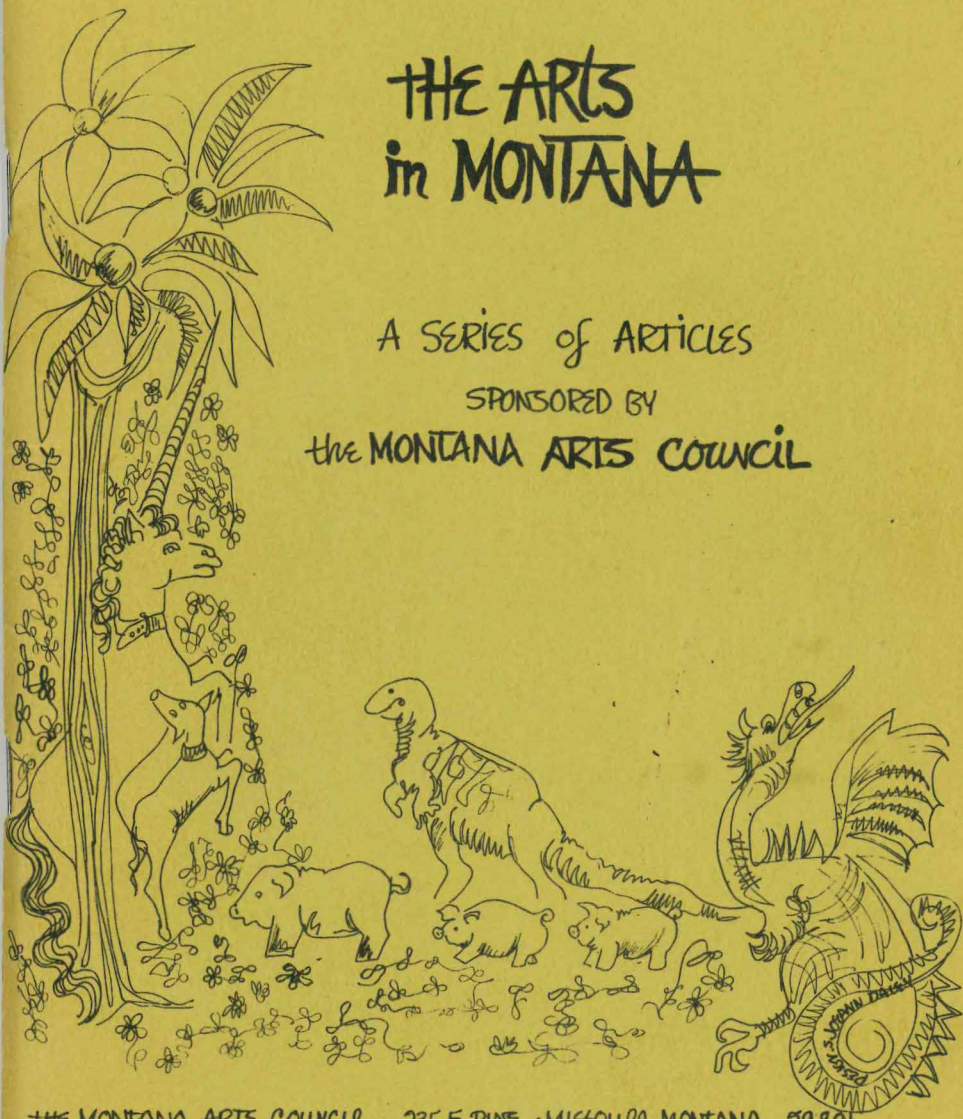


# THE ARTS in MONTANA

A SERIES of ARTICLES

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the MONTANA ARTS COUNCIL



THE MONTANA ARTS COUNCIL 235 E. PINE · MISSOULA, MONTANA 59801

## Introduction

At a time when it appears unfashionable to talk of the future (as if by mentioning it we are callous to the importance of the day-to-day crises which are revealed to us) those of us involved in the arts are intuitively aware that there are major changes occurring and we are immersed in optimistic planning for their future.

Why optimistic--especially in light of Proposition 13 and the taxpayers' revolt? Michael Straight, past Deputy Director of the National Endowment for the Arts, commented on the success of Endowment funding: "Public funding of the arts has worked well for a decade. Its success was heightened because so much else that government did during the decade seemed misguided or wrong." (It appears the National Endowment for the Arts will receive its full authority next year--a relatively unheard of event in government and right in the midst of Jarvis mania.)

Harris polls have been predicting taxpayers' resistance to expenditures for years, but Harris has also documented two exceptions where taxpayers would indeed agree to expanded taxes if they were assured that their money would go for the support of the arts and museums, or environmental concerns.

People across this country are displaying a hunger for quality. They have realized that bigger is not necessarily better, and that it will take more than a job to make life meaningful in the future.

Robert Shaw, conductor of the Atlanta Symphony, stated it clearly and artfully in a testimony to Congress a few years back. "...In general the intellectual and moral climate of our times is agreeable to the proposition that man does not live by bread alone. What we mean is that unnecessary wealth has ceased to be an end unto itself. We produce in order to buy time in order to build a healthy happy physical and social life--and, more important, a life of the mind and spirit. It is precisely this dream that

justifies political and economic activity, that validates it. Great art is great because it carries something so native and true to the human spirit that not even knowledge of how it is done can kill the magic."

In light of a renewed interest in the arts, we have asked a number of Montanans to write feature articles on various aspects of the arts, to explore the arts phenomenon and its many ramifications, and to address current situations and their concern for the future of the arts in the state. A number of their articles are reprinted here. They are written by very special people who have a life commitment to the arts and have done noble service on their behalf. Every one of them has toured this state extensively and speaks from a knowledge gained directly and personally.

David E. Nelson, Executive Director  
MONTANA ARTS COUNCIL

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THE MONTANA ARTS COUNCIL: ITS STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

By Edward G. Groenhout, Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Architecture  
Montana State University

He was in the Governor's office. A man of medium stature whose dark hair showed flashes of grey had been welcomed by the younger chief executive and felt comfortable as he explained his mission. He needed Governor Babcock's help in establishing a committee of men and women that could speak for and assess the needs of the visual and performing arts in the state.

Dr. Charles W. Bolen had come to Montana to become the Dean of the School of Fine Arts at the University of Montana in Missoula, and it was in that capacity that he became aware of important national developments which brought him to the Governor's office.

President John F. Kennedy was on the verge of announcing the creation of what was to become the National Council on the Arts when he was shot in Dallas, Texas. His successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, was apprised of the late President's desires and soon completed the task by naming his own slate of appointees. He also pressed for legislation creating the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, with appropriations for two endowments (the National Endowment (s) for the Arts (NEA) and for the Humanities (NEH) ). The federal government had, at long last, embraced the concept of support for the arts as a national policy.

Dean Bolen also knew that federal support, in the form of a \$25,000 planning grant, was available to Montana for the establishment of a state arts agency. He asked the Governor for advice. Babcock requested a list of nominees and said he'd help. But he also had one suggestion. He knew of a state senator from Billings who had a sterling reputation of support for the arts, and who was a fine painter as well. Babcock pointed to a painting hanging on the wall behind Bolen, and suggested that the artist



be contacted. The artist who signed the painting was destined to be the prime moving force in the writing and passage of the legislation which would make the Montana Arts Council (MAC) an official agency of the state.

Dean Bolen returned to Missoula and was quick to contact James Haughey, an attorney whom he did not know. He contacted others, many others, and sought their advice and nominations. In early 1965, he presented Governor Babcock with a lengthy list, 24 names in total. On April 22 of the same year, an Executive Order was issued creating the Montana Arts Council. The same 24 educators, artists, businessmen and business women, patrons, House and Senate members, arts organizations representatives, and laymen were named to set about assessing the state's needs, human and physical resources, and to prepare reasonable goals for the state's cultural development. Dean Bolen was elected chairman by the body.

On the weekend of November 19, 1966, the first Governor's Conference on the Arts was held in Butte, and within a week endorsements of the thrust of the Conference appeared in four of the state's leading newspapers. One month later, the fledgling arts council submitted its report to the Governor and the people of Montana. The timing was excellent. The 40th legislative assembly was about to convene. A leading and respected member of the Senate, James Haughey prevailed upon his colleagues and eight members of the House sponsored House Bill 12. Haughey lobbied in its behalf, and in seven short days from introduction to the signing by the Governor, the Montana Arts Council became an official agency of the State of Montana.

Its birth and attempts to acquire legitimacy were not met with statewide acceptance. Strong feelings existed that several extant organizations could perform the functions and carry out planning, or even become

designated as the "official" state agency for the arts. Foremost among those asserting such claims were the members of the Montana Institute of the Arts (MIA), organized twenty-five years earlier and representative of several of the many arts being practiced within the state--but not all of the arts. Dean Bolen's actions were decisive in establishing that point in the face of criticism. The council pressed forward. Their efforts prevailed and, if hindsight offers a proper perspective, they were right. The constituency served was to become so broad in scope that only a new group with no vested interests could rise to the tasks ahead.

The Montana Arts Council, with its tiny staff and borrowed typewriter, began its work in makeshift headquarters in the Fine Arts Dean's office at the University of Montana. A staff of two, a secretary and part-time executive director, was employed on an annual budget of \$12,500. The new council was trimmed by legislation to 15 members, nine of whom had also served under the Executive Order. Terms of office were designated by the Charter and consisted of one, three and five year appointments. Because of a law change in 1973, one member of the new council still sits-- Mary Cordingley, of Great Falls, who has a tenure of nearly 11 years. Chairman and Vice-Chairman were and continue to be selected by the Governor. The first terms and seats were designed by Ted James, then Lt. Governor and now the chairman of the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

As one might suspect, the affairs of the Montana Arts Council have not been without an occasional element of political determinism. Even governors are not above such actions. But, in the main, the council members have been chosen because of their track records of public service

on behalf of the arts or their communities, artistic strengths, and/or their desires to lead the state and its various constituencies toward higher cultural goals.

The Council's first two years as a state agency were the cornerstone in establishing the direction the body would take and maintain for several years in nurturing and supporting the arts. Fears were heard expressed from Libby to Glendive and Sweetgrass to West Yellowstone that the arts had no affinity for government and vice-versa; only mediocrity could ensue; a welfare state for artists would be created; and sundry other expressions. Support for the arts? With tax-derived dollars? What kind(s) of art? The Council members were well aware of the controversies implicit in every grant request received.

Each action taken would be scrutinized by someone with a position already taken. Quality had to be the by-word; community needs and development had to be central; existing arts organizations had to be served; individual artists had to have assistance. And so forth. The initial members weighed the arguments and distributed their limited resources--\$39,383 received through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Not all of the organizations requesting funds received what they had asked, but many were helped by the first distribution of "seed money." Many were gratified to be recognized and served.

The direction had been well established. Seed money, never more than half of the costs of the project, would underwrite the arts; self sufficiency would be the goal; and individual grants to artists were moot, for Washington had sanctions against the question's satisfaction.

Advisory panels for each of the several disciplines were formed

with memberships selected of leading artists, arts educators, and other interested citizens from across the state. Each advisory panel was chaired by a member of MAC who in turn reported the panel's deliberations to the Council. Every request was discussed and recommendations were proffered. Funding levels were set. The Council voted. Subsidies for the arts became fact in Montana during the summer of 1967.

The following year found many of the same organizations returning with expanded programming requests, and new ones too. The word was spreading. Again, the requests were more than could be satisfied, and again many had to be cut in order to fit the available resources. Criticism was heard. Those whose expectations had not been met criticised the Council and even individual members for having vested interests; that this theatre or that gallery got too much. The honeymoon was over. A significant test was in the making.

The 41st legislative assembly cut the Governor's \$160,000 biennial request for MAC to \$50,000, one half of which had to be used each of the two years. The budget was twice what it had been the biennium before, and the Council hired a fulltime executive director and moved to offices adjacent to the mezzanine of the theatre in the Fine Arts Building, still on the UM campus. The state had again failed to provide programming monies, so support granted to the requesting organizations again came from federal sources.

Montana's problems with legislative support was a reflection of similar difficulties encountered in Washington by the NEA, for its basic grants category was being treated in a niggardly fashion as well. Each state received about \$2300 more during the third year of MAC's life, bringing the Council's three-year total to \$107,000. But pressure from

the states mounted and NEA funding for MAC's fourth year reached \$86,000. It was a good indication of what was to follow, for the NEA was to provide annual federal grants in excess of \$111,000 from this time forward.

Pressures were being exerted in Helena also. A different kind of pressure. It was called Executive Reorganization, and Governor Forrest H. Anderson had the backing of an electorate excited by promises of efficiency and economy. One hundred and sixty state agencies should and could be trimmed to twenty ("Twenty is Plenty"). The task force, headed by a professor of the School of Law at the University of Montana, recommended the abolition of several agencies, including the Montana Arts Council. The tiny unit struggled to muster as much help as it could get. Against significant odds, it prevailed...by one vote in the House.

Now no longer a member of the Senate, James Haughey stood vigil from his position as a lobbyist for a private concern. Keeping an eye on the events on the floor of the legislature, he read the final committee report as published for presentation to the House. A printer's blunder would have abolished MAC. He reported his findings and again, the Montana Arts Council was saved.

Dean Bolen left his University position just before reorganization, and Governor Anderson appointed his counterpart at Montana State University, Dean Harold C. Rose, to the chairmanship. Rose had been a member of the original council and had served continuously since that time. Later, the Governor asked Dean Rose to chair the Board of Architects, and he resigned from MAC. His tenure saw federal support to Montana reach \$161,650 during the second year of the 1971-73 biennium, but still no help from the State for programming money. Rose knew that the same staff that had processed 39 grants totalling \$39,000 in 1967 was now handling 180 grant requests for

more than a quarter of a million dollars.

Further, he saw born an Artists in Schools (AIS) project which aided eleven school districts and thousands of students throughout Montana. As he left the Council, he and Maxine Blackmer, then a professor of art at the University of Montana and Vice-Chairman of MAC, were confident that the legislature would recognize the agency's need for both additional administrative and programming funds, as well as the excellent record of growth and assistance in the grants program. Little help came. Less than \$6,000 was added for the 1973-75 biennium, and the base was still the same as in 1967.

Cramped in its small offices on the UM campus, MAC's stuffed files alone were justification for finding new headquarters. Approval was granted to relocate in facilities in downtown Missoula. Now in 30 communities, the Artists in Schools program was assigned a coordinator by means of a special grant from the NEA. For states neglected by their legislatures and sorely in need of additional administrative help, the NEA sponsored a program to support new staff members. The following year, 49 communities participated in the AIS program involving nearly 12,000 students and employing six fulltime and nine parttime artists and poets. In all of its programs, 1975 saw MAC receive and distribute a half-million dollars of federal support to arts projects in Montana. The Council's staff had acquired national reputations for their tireless and qualitative efforts. But for all of its successes, the best the legislature would do was to allocate back to the Council some of the funds received from the NEA grant to be used for administrative purposes; that is, taking from the funds available to the organizations requesting support for arts activities.

Dean Bolen, dozens of current and past Council members, the staff, and hundreds of recipients of the services and funds of the Montana

Arts Council still find it difficult to understand the response of the State to the record of MAC's achievements. Recently there is much talk of implementing "sunset" legislation, which requires each agency to prove why it should continue to exist. Ironically, MAC, as one of Montana's smallest state agencies, appears to be put to a comparable test every few years. It survives, I am confident, because it is among the state's most efficient agencies and its work touches, in the most positive ways, the lives of an incredible number of Montanans. Communities have found their lives enriched through the organizations seeking and gaining support from this state agency. Education has been greatly assisted, from primary through higher education levels. The machinations of politics have been kept at a minimal level within and without the Council's activities.

And therein, perhaps, lies the rub: this relatively small and fundamentally apolitical agency can find scant support from the fundamentally political beings who create and foster the forces that move state government.

It requires a special vision to see through the entwined political imperatives and recognize the simple beauty within our grasp.

#### THE MONTANA ARTS COUNCIL: A CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE

By Maxine Blackmer, Chairperson, Montana Arts Council

(Second in a monthly series of feature articles on the arts in Montana)

"...my life...has been shaped significantly by...the arts in this state."

Last week I received my copy of a national ceramics magazine, and as I looked through the table of contents, a familiar name stood out. For the second issue in a row a former student had published an article. One of these artists--they are both producing potters now--still lives in Montana.

In a reminiscent mood brought on by these names from the past, I began to think about the Montana that I had moved to almost thirty years ago, and the fact that the first people that I had come to know were associated with the arts. Actually, my life has been shaped significantly by the development of the arts in this state.

The Montana Institute of the Arts (MIA) had been founded two years before my arrival by H. G. Merriam and a group of people concerned with all aspects of Montana's culture. My first statewide contacts with Montana artists came at the annual MIA Festivals, usually held in Virginia City at that time. I went there with a group of MIA members who were active in the then Helena Art Center in the early '50's. "Shorty" Shope, Mabel Bjork, Bernice Boone, and Jack Chivers were some of the artists who were responsible for my resuming an art career.

From early childhood I had been interested in drawing, painting, and crafts. A well-trained high school teacher and an "almost" art major at the University of Minnesota provided me with some basic background. However, economic considerations, frequent moves, and family responsibilities kept me from much involvement until we came to Helena in 1950. There, a local group of artists and the beginnings of the Archie Bray Foundation, with Pete Voulkos,



Rudy Autio and other early Montana potters, reaffirmed my commitment to the arts as a producing visual artist, an educator, and an active supporter of arts activities.

The last year we lived in Helena I taught the art classes at the high school. When we came to Missoula, I decided to do graduate study in the Art Department at the University of Montana. I also taught art at Sentinel High School for three years, then resigned to complete my degree work. I joined the UM Art faculty--at first part-time and later full-time--where I taught ceramics, jewelry and design until I retired over a year ago to devote more time to my own work in my home studio.

I have always been concerned about the position of woman as an individual in our society and the feminine role in leadership, careers, the arts and politics. Accordingly, I became active in the American Association of University Women, first as Cultural Interests chairman and later as branch, then division, president. With the support of AAUW I was appointed to the Montana Arts Council as vice-chairman. When Chairman Harold C. Rosé resigned in 1972, I was appointed by Governor Tom Judge as chairman and have held that position for five years.

"There are indeed exciting changes happening now."

The Montana Arts Council has been in existence as an agency of state government for ten years now, and has been in its growth stages during a significant time; for there have been, during this same period, profound changes in goals, attitudes and basic philosophies of life values. With these changes came the attachment of less importance to material things. I also have been aware of the changes in opportunities for young artists, as they select alternatives to established patterns for "success." Many are now able to support themselves by using their talents and marketing their art through co-ops, fairs, sales, barter, and support programs of various kinds. There is a climate, nourished by the National Endowment for the Arts,

the state arts agencies and the needs of people for richer lives, a climate which is encouraging the growth of all the arts.

The feeling that the arts are neither "elitist" or "populist", but are for everyone is providing economic, as well as cultural, support for today's artists. There are indeed exciting changes happening now.

"Building on these foundations is the challenge for the future."

During my years of involvement in the arts scene, I have seen the important effects that various arts organizations have had in Montana in the development of our arts climate. The MIA, with its statewide membership, its publication, and its programs like SHARE, has had a very definite influence. Its branches and festivals have encouraged "grass roots" involvement. The Archie Bray Foundation served notice that Montanans were leaders in the contemporary ceramics movement. Outstanding ceramists from all over the world came to "the Bray" to witness the exciting activities and innovations. The American Crafts Council introduced Montana craftsmen to other new movements and helped to further export and expose the work of Montana's artists. The University system, from the early "Round-up of the Arts" and "Frontier" magazine, to the current academic programs in all arts areas, exhibitions, touring performing groups, Continuing Education and specialized summer camps, is a prestigious influence. Building on these foundations is the challenge for the future.

I feel strongly that the Montana Arts Council is the best vehicle to coordinate all of these efforts to enhance the aesthetic environment, to encourage state and private support for the arts, to direct arts programming, and to facilitate the acceptance of "quality of life" as the norm for all of us. The members of MAC maintain an overview of the arts in Montana, both in a geographic sense and because we are concerned about and represent all the arts. For instance, James Pasma, a sculptor, is a resident of Havre; Shirley Bentley, a painter, lives in Helena; painter Mary Cordingley is from Great Falls; and painter/educator Robert Morrison is a native of Billings. Musicians are Jessica

Stickney, Miles City; John Johnson, Glendive; and Marian Thielman, Chester. David Shaner, of Bigfork, is a production potter. Ceridwen Breen, Hamilton, has performed as dancer, singer, and actress. Frances Byerly, of Lewistown, is a community activist with a strong interest in photography. In Butte, MAC members are Alan Goddard, in theater; Lawrence Hayes, artist and teacher; Peggy Hodge and Roberta Taylor, both involved in promotion of arts activities. In addition, advisory panels convened in each arts area complete an impressive array of expertise available to aid in the decision-making process regarding awarding of grant funds.

The granting process is constantly being evaluated and refined, as MAC has developed during its first decade from being primarily a pass-through granting agency to spending about three-fourths of its meeting time in planning for the future and in assessing the cultural needs of the state.

"...a town of 600 generated an audience of 800...!"

A brief review of what is now going on in the arts in Montana will demonstrate the scope of the leadership and support of the Montana Arts Council. Our Artists in Schools program has touched every county in the state with at least one of its poets, writers, filmmakers, and visual artists. Four-month residencies by professional writers were supported in three communities this past summer.

Montana played a major role in the establishment of the Western States Arts Foundation, a unique regional arts organization of ten western states and Alaska. Through WSAF we have been able to provide block booking of professional groups to bring in touring programs--theater, dance, film, music, art exhibitions--that Montana communities could not otherwise afford. One of our goals, to aid the individual artist, is possible at this time through WSAF. The Montana Legislature has provided a small annual amount of program funds which MAC has used in towns of under 3,000 population to help bring in programs requested

by the communities. Absarokee, a town of 600, generated an audience of 800 for one performance! We feel that this program could and should be expanded considerably, as it is obviously the right response to a real need.

The phenomenal growth of arts centers in the state during the past few years is unequalled anywhere in the U.S. With support from mill levies and assistance from MAC, this phenomenon, along with the growth and development of other arts institutions, like theaters, museums, symphonies, children's theater, festivals and publications, attests to the growing acceptance of, and enthusiasm for, the arts by the people of Montana. Our major concern for the future is the need for a broader base of financial support for the arts in our state. Some of our neighboring states now have enacted legislation for "percent for art" in public buildings. Existing permissive county mill levies for museums and art centers could be expanded and the concept be applied to other arts institutions such as symphonies, community theaters, and festivals.

"We must pool our commitment...and...bring the best...art to the greatest number of American people."

In the not too distant future, the federal dollars we now receive through the National Endowment for the Arts may become more closely tied to program funds appropriated by the state. Before that happens, the state must examine its financial responsibility towards arts funding in the light of the major commitments made by most other states.

A poll recently conducted by Louis Harris Associates in the northwest states (including Montana) revealed a startling willingness of close to three-fourths of the taxpayers in these states to pay even higher taxes in order to provide greater support for arts activities. Over 90% of these taxpayers wish there were more teaching of the arts in their children's schools. In 1976 both the Democratic and Republican parties included strong statements in support of arts activities in the U.S. and also urged increased congressional support for

the National Endowment for the Arts. We members of the Montana Arts Council are urging similar support by the Montana political parties.

Joan Mondale, wife of the vice president, articulate spokeswoman for the arts and an artist herself, addressed the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies at its annual meeting in Utah this past September. Her conclusion to a timely and supportive speech was:

"We must pool our commitment and our knowledge to create a climate in which American art flourishes. And then we must find a way to bring the best of that art to the greatest number of American people."

I see, and I feel sure that the other MAC members would agree, an exciting and challenging future for the arts in Montana. Further development of the Council as a facilitator and as an innovator in improving the quality of life in Montana through artistic experiences is a major goal. We have many objectives--use of the media, art for handicapped and elderly, art for the confined, aid to individual artists, touring, an art van, a state collection, encouragement of Native American arts, environmental art, arts in education, arts advocates, public and private support--these are just a few of the challenges.

We know the magnitude of these challenges, but we also know what has occurred in the last ten years and feel a growing confidence in responding to the artistic and cultural needs and desires of Montanans.

James M. Haughey, Billings

NOTE: This is the third in a series of articles sponsored by the Montana Arts Council and designed to help inform Montanans about arts activities throughout the state.

James M. Haughey is a Billings attorney, with the firm of Crowley, Haughey, Hanson, Toole and Dietrich. Equally importantly, he is a fine painter and a former state senator. As Montana Senate Minority Leader in 1965, he led the forces supporting legislation which established the Montana Arts Council as an agency of state government.

Haughey's art works have been exhibited in one-man and group shows and in a touring show sponsored by the U.S. Information Agency. He has had paintings published in "Ford Times" and he has served as president of both the Yellowstone Arts Center Foundation and of the Montana Institute of the Arts.

Haughey is an elected member of the American Watercolor Society, the American Artists Professional League, the Northwest Watercolor Society and recently was named Member for Montana for the National Committee for Advocates for the Arts.

(from Montana Arts Council)

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If you are old enough to look back thirty years, you can see a remarkable groundswell of activity in the arts in the United States. More Americans are singing and playing music, painting and making jewelry, acting, dancing, and sculpting than ever before. Never in history has such a high proportion of a nation's people actively worked in the arts, either professionally or as amateurs.

It is a national phenomenon, in which our state has richly shared. In the Billings area alone I can think of over twenty acquaintances who actually make their livings from the sale of art works.

While most Montanans, like most Americans, have not themselves yet felt

the exhilaration of creative work in the arts, large numbers of non-producers are realizing some of the joys of the arts. They buy paintings, in greater numbers. They go to plays. They attend concerts.

We now have symphony orchestras in Billings, Missoula, Bozeman, Butte, Helena, and Great Falls. Theater groups in a number of towns and cities give rewarding and often inspiring performances.

Art centers have burgeoned in communities across the state, thanks to inventiveness and plain hard work. In Billings, a county jail was transformed into handsome galleries for changing exhibitions of paintings, sculpture and prints. Anaconda's art center was once a church. So was Chester's, Missoula's was an abandoned library, as was Kalispell's. The art center in Great Falls occupies an old school building and the one in Butte is a Victorian mansion. The people of Lewistown have made an art center out of what was once a bunkhouse, and they have enlarged it by adding an old carriage house. But Miles City may claim the most resourceful renovation. Their art center is underground in what were formerly the storage tanks of the city's water works.

Thirty years ago this activity, these performing groups, these art centers did not exist. They came to being in part because of greater leisure time, but more importantly because the arts meet a fundamental need of the human spirit. It is a need more keenly felt today, in an age of mechanization, of specialization, of automation, than in simpler times. The complexity of our civilization, which is beyond the comprehension of any of us, leaves us bewildered. The incessant bombardment of our minds by a kaleidoscope of ideas and concepts enervates us. We are exhausted and confused by the frantic pace of our daily lives.

In our perplexity, people are turning to the arts, realizing, if at first only subconsciously, that in art they find a solace that lifts the spirit. Art is creativity and creativity heals the battered soul. It provides escape from the traumas which inflict us all, but it gives much more than the temporary

respite which our escapist activities can offer. It enlarges our vision. It expands our horizons. Art seeks essence and is essential.

Our state and federal governments, in the last ten to twelve years, have begun to realize that the arts are central to our society. They have given token support to the arts, through the National Endowment for the Arts and the Montana Arts Council. Business and industry increasingly are conscious of the vital importance of the arts in the lives of their employees and their customers and of the general public. Corporate contributions to the arts have increased tenfold in ten years from \$22 million to \$221 million. A healthy sign is the rapid growth of the Business Committee for the Arts, whose members are leaders of most of our larger corporations. The support activities of these corporations evidence a growing recognition by corporate management and boards of directors, not only that the arts deserve and need financial support, but that corporations have an obligation beyond profit realization to contribute to a better society for our citizens.

Encouraging as these developments are, they are but faltering first steps toward the day when the arts will be an integral part of daily life, not only of a relatively small number of artists but of workers and managers, students and teachers, salesmen and farmers. Financial support for the arts, although it is growing, fails to keep pace with rising costs. The income gap threatens the very existence of our great museums and performing arts institutions as well as countless small and new arts programs.

In a 1975 study, nine in ten people (93%) said that the availability of cultural facilities is important to the quality of life. But those who know how vital are the arts to a fuller life have not spoken clearly to our political leaders. In the words of Louis Harris, who conducts the well known opinion survey, "The American public is far ahead of the Congress and even the arts establishment



in seeing that the arts are important to the quality of life. Citizens must now demand that Congress address itself to the quality of life the American people aspire to."

There is real need for greater arts support, not only from the private sector but from government. To answer that need the American Council for the Arts has formed a citizens' action program called Advocates for the Arts, the first nationwide constituency of citizens working for all the arts. Advocates will be informed of legislative issues and can effectively make their views known to state and national legislators. Members are needed in all Montana counties.

Readers who know the urgent need for arts support will want to join in this united effort. They may send their names and addresses to Advocates for the Arts at 235 East Pine Street, Missoula MT 59801. They will become an active group of concerned citizens who can sound the call for the arts with a voice which will be heard in city halls, in legislative chambers, and in the halls of Congress.

By Sr. Joeann Daley

(Foreword by the Montana Arts Council)

(Sr. Joeann Daley, a Dominican nun and artist, came to Montana in 1968 to teach art in Anaconda Central High School. When the school closed, she remained in Montana devoted to enriching lives through the arts. Though Anaconda was in the midst of a company strike, she assisted the community in establishing the Copper Village Art Center and Museum in an abandoned old church building. The success of the Copper Village Art Center and Museum has become noted nationally where it is referred to as "the Anaconda miracle."

Her unusual talents lie in working with diverse groups who desire to strengthen their communities through understanding the role of the arts in a quality life. Convinced that communities benefit greatly when citizens, through state and local governments, service clubs, and individual action work together to make visible commitments to the arts, she also determined to help. She agreed to become the director of a project of the Montana Institute of the Arts through a grant from the Montana Arts Council to assist small communities. For five years now, Joeann has devoted part of her time (when she's not making prints) to directing the Small Community Arts Resources Survey.

In developing the survey, Joeann has visited over half of the communities in the state which have populations of less than 3,000 (there are just over 100). Invited to the community by one, or a small group of concerned persons, she will talk with many representative individuals in the town--teachers and school administrators, bankers and businesspeople, civic leaders and clergy, as well as artists. In a "town meeting," she will ask residents to dream of what might be possible in their community and how they might organize to go about making these dreams come true.

Inspired by her optimistic and positive enthusiasm, many of these communities have indeed seen their dreams come true--more doctors, arts centers, new streets, community theaters, musical groups, workshops and classes, and sponsorship of touring performing groups, in addition to new channels of communication among

artists who heretofore had felt themselves working in virtual isolation. And the world is made a little smaller because of these developments.

The Montana Arts Council is pleased to have been a part of all of this activity and to share with the readers of this newspaper, the reactions of Sr. Joeann Daley in this fourth article in the series, "The Arts in Montana.")

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Several years ago I had the glorious delight of visiting The Cloisters in New York City, where I discovered the Unicorn Tapestries. My life in Montana has not been the same since.

The Unicorn Tapestries weave together the enchanting myth of the subduing of the unicorn. Woven in delicate blue-greens and brilliant floral patterns, the story is unfolded in minute detail by the skillful hands of the tapestry weavers.

Inspired by the unicorn, I would like to weave an enchanting tapestry based not on myth but on reality--the reality of the many threads woven together in intricate patterns creating "the Montana Tapestry."

No unicorns abound in floral fields but once there did live a dinosaur ot two in Jordan's rolling fields. Knights on horseback? Not really; but daring men and women with ideas, dreams, and the courage to subdue dragons and unicorns alike.

But no masterpiece is created without overcoming obstacles--without the slaying of dragons. Montana communities have encountered several dreadful dragons--the Skeptical Dragon, the Apathetic Dragon, and the Obstacle-Creating Dragon.

The Skeptical Dragon has many negative voices; voices that say, "It can't be done." "We tried it and it was a disaster." "That won't work in this town." "Come back later after you've tried it." "Prove it!"

The Apathetic Dragon had lead in his feet. These feet can't possibly move in any direction but backwards. He doesn't care, and finds it difficult to believe that there might be people who do care about taking steps--even walking or running!

The Obstacle-Creating Dragon is a near-sighted creature with such poor eyes

that it is doomed to a life of myopic practicality. It is totally impossible for this dragon to dream. It is a dragon without a future. What is worse than a dragon without a dream? This dragon is able to see what IS, rather than what CAN BE, and that makes the difference. "Who will do it?" "We are so far away from people." "We don't have the space." "Who would want to come here?" "We don't have the leadership." "We don't have the money."

And yet these dragons are being slain--the Montana tapestry is being woven. Men and women are finding the courage to take dreams of art centers, community theaters, arts festivals, museums and classes and carry them out of the enchanted forest and into the Montana Reality.

The Montana Reality shows that dreams need not be fargetched, mythological fantasies of what might have been, but that dreams can be and have a right to be.

To be; to be unique yet individual; joined together by a common thread creating a design of great beauty--the beauty of dreams becoming realities. With the persistence of earlier pioneers, communities have taken on dragon-size challenges. How else can one account for an art center in Chester, a huge museum in Libby, community theaters in Hardin and Harlowtown, arts festivals in Rudyard and a string symphony in Scobey?

What is the common thread holding together the multi-colored and multi-faceted tapestry of Montana? The human thread--the thread that locks together north to south and east to west--is the common thread. People, taking ordinary stuff of ordinary lives and creating magic with it. The magic of real people coming together to dream about what unicorns see.

And what do unicorns see? It would seem that unicorns have a clarity of vision that refreshes and renews itself. This vision is possible when we are able to see the entire picture. As the great beauty of the Unicorn Tapestry can be enjoyed for

each individual flower and animal, it is when we stand back from it that we are able to see the magnificence of the whole.

Developments in the arts, whether in the form of an arts organization such as the Montana Institute of the Arts, grass roots arts centers, local theater groups, touring performing groups, arts festivals, or other endeavors, have this ability to refresh and renew the lives of the people and of the communities involved.

The coming together of these individual threads of various colors and textures weave our Montana Tapestry. Each individual thread adds a dimension, a pattern, and a design that remains alone as a knotted thread unless we have the vision to step back for a real look at the masterpiece that we are creating and is creating us.

Sponsor's Note:

This is the fifth in a series of articles sponsored by the Montana Arts Council concerning various types of arts activities in Montana.

Eugene Andrie, professor emeritus of the music department at the University of Montana, also recently retired as founder-conductor of the Missoula Civic Symphony Orchestra and is currently devoting full time to his other profession--fly fishing. (He is the designer of the Dietrich Buxtehude trout fly.)

Although it is the oldest symphony orchestra in Montana, the Missoula Symphony is only one of six currently performing--a remarkable record for a state of our size and for communities of sizes which, in other parts of the country, would not dare to establish orchestras. Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls and Helena all boast thriving orchestras.

Andrie's remarks will be familiar to those other conductors, orchestras and board members, as he points up the fact that it is the business and professional people in the community who, caring enough to put 90 live musicians on a stage for an exciting and enjoyable evening for the audience, tackle the hard financial aspects of such a venture. An orchestra, like any other performing art, must be supported by a sound, well-organized business structure in order to achieve its artistic goals.

The Montana Arts Council

## HOW A COMMUNITY SYMPHONY EDUCATES A CONDUCTOR

By Eugene Andrie  
 Founding Conductor, Missoula Civic Symphony Orchestra

The rewards of conducting great music seem obvious: the aesthetic "feedback" to the conductor is ingratiating and inspiring and he, more than anyone else, understands that "the song is to the singer, and comes back most to him." But the parameter of his experience is much more than the rehearsal and concert. It includes the enlightening and rewarding contacts with people of many inclinations in the community and the immersion in a variety of projects which broaden and deepen his perspective.

Gathering together the musicians essential for a viable ensemble is, in itself, an exciting venture. Besides the required nucleus of professionals, I had to seek out earnest amateurs and qualified students.

There was the dentist who sandwiched his practice time in between patient appointments so he could revive his emboucher. And then there was the literate and analytical school custodian who practiced his violin in the boiler room. Many young mothers found time to devote themselves to string and wind instrument study between harried schedules of household chores and children's demands. There were the genial retirees, who recharged their ebbing energies into magical sounds of violin, cello and trombone; and eager young students, delving into this new world of sound, strove to rise to higher levels of understanding and performance.

I recall the many times that musicians drove miles through snow and over ice rather than miss a rehearsal, and the instances where patient husbands minded the brood while wives rosined the bows. The professionals, many of them teachers as well as performers, had my greatest admiration for their dedication to the art in giving that last spurt of energy after an exhausting day of teaching. Their

leadership as principal players and as instructors at sectional rehearsals were major factors in achieving musical excellence.

It became apparent after the initial success and interest in purely orchestral music, that another dimension to the project was appropriate at that time, and a choral group was organized. What a happy affair that turned out to be! The vocal branch of the organization, under the skillful direction of a beloved colleague (George Lewis) performed with distinction and won the admiration of no less than Robert Shaw, founder of the Robert Shaw Chorale and conductor of the Atlanta Symphony. The Chorale gave the community the rare opportunities of hearing the great choral masterpieces and it proved to the Board that it could enhance the series with enlargement and variety of programming.

The pooling of all these talents brought surprising results and often reached professional quality in bringing out the true essence of the music--even though techniques were often strained beyond the assumed limits. There were moments when the conductor sensed and saw the human spirit in its finest form among the musicians before him and his reward was the joy of all in making the music come to life.

No less revealing and gratifying though, was the spirit of people in the supporting group--the Symphony Board of Directors--the citizens who gave their special talents and energies in promoting the project as an essential part of the cultural life of the city. Like the unpredictability of many facets of musical performance, the business of running a community symphony had its periods of misgivings, undetermined drive results, discouragements and plain "uphill" toil. This business required not only clear-headed business minds, but imagination and unrelenting determination to make a viable project from a dream.

There was, as in the case of most Montana symphony boards of directors, a happy balance between conservative business practices and adventurous attitudes.



The governing body had to grow from a well-meaning, enthusiastic, "open-ended" (in terms of agenda) lay-musician group to a systematized, efficient, hard-hitting promotional organization. I was enlightened and impressed in observing how dynamic young business leaders, elder administrators, professional persons, workers, ranchers, and housewives worked together for effective board meetings and successful patron drives and how, after lively discussion, they settled pressing problems and projected long-range policies.

A surprising entity in the Board's development was the doctor-dentist leadership. These men, who gave generously of their precious time, improved the business routine and effectiveness of the Board and established such far-reaching policies as the hiring of a business manager. In this case it was a retired school principal who, with his helpful wife, made arrangements for board meetings, took charge of ticket sales and a dozen other tasks. This engagement proved to be most fortunate because it gave continuity to the business of the organization --relieving board members of the constant burden of daily transactions. It was an M.D. who initiated the "family ticket" for the series which proved to be such a boon that the auditorium was over-sold, and the board had the delightful, if excruciating, dilemma of controlling the seating without discouraging the expansion of audience. Enlarging the circle of involvement of people in the community was the aim of these medics, and with the help of a distinguished lawyer, they set up a pattern of board member rotation which constantly brought new blood into the association. Adding a series of Children's Concerts also proved most effective in generating interest in the symphony and in music generally.

I recall how deliberate the Board's planning was to develop a budget that realistically projected the annual needs, but which also set aside a fund for emergency or adventure situations. It was this resource (combined with grant funds from the Montana Arts Council) which made possible the engagement of Robert Shaw to highlight the first annual Missoula Festival of the Arts. The continued

impact on the city of this venture proved beyond a doubt that risk projects can accrue great benefits.

The vision and sensibility of the Board of Directors in setting up and utilizing the reserve fund was demonstrated again in launching such programs as the Professional Core Project (honoraria for first-chair players who instructed as well as performed) which proved its worth in the quality of concert performances; the Educational Outreach Project (sponsoring narrative programs for children) which promises long-range as well as immediate benefits to the culture of the community; and Distinguished Soloists engagements which brings internationally recognized solo artists to the city to enhance programs and to stimulate players and singers. The combined effect of these programs was a surge of public interest and improved performance.

One of the brightest phases of Symphony activity was the advent of the Women's Committee. (Ed. note: The Women's Committee, now the Women's Association, was founded by the energy of Andrie's wife, Lorraine.) Starting with fund raising rummage and flower sales, which raised hundreds of dollars for music scholarships for student members of the orchestra, the projects advanced to such money-making ventures as The Potpourri of Arts (which grossed as much as \$19,000 shared by local artists and the Symphony Association); the Champagne Ball (which earned up to \$2,000 and provided an evening of sociable entertainment for members of the Association and friends); the Bridge Tournament (which raised \$850 and provided social contact for amateur and competitive players); Music for Children and their Parents (which earned over \$700 as well as providing an opportunity for families to participate in the enjoyment of music with dance, drama, and art as added attractions) and House Music (a series of programs by scholarship students for the residents of retirement centers and for hospitals and libraries--there are no profits but the benefits gained by both performers and audiences are in the best interests of the Symphony's long-range aims). One cannot overestimate the interest and good will generated for

the Symphony by the Women's Committee.

Although the concept of a community symphony was first suggested by a university dean of fine arts and activated by a group of amateur musicians, the idea blossomed into a multi-faceted reality involving hundreds of people working together to enrich the city's life. The conductor-music director learned that the baton alone made no sound and that only with the cooperative efforts of musicians, artists and the lay community was it possible to enjoy the rewards of producing great music.

And, with that realization, I feel that my education as a community symphony music director has been completed.

THE HUMAN HEART - THE ULTIMATE ARTS CENTER

By Kyle Hanton, President, Montana Art Gallery Directors Association

Not very many people would agree that a pinball machine is a work of fine art; but depending on how we look at them, it is possible to make a good case in favor of the idea. Pinball machines have achieved a certain level of acceptability these days, especially among teenagers and young adults, but generally they are viewed as a nuisance or as extraneous contrivances of machine-age mentality. The notion that they might be reasonable symbols of our 20th Century culture is acceptable to the sociologist and to a few of the "far out" art critics, but for most of us the argument breaks down when we question the personal motivation of the designer or creator. In order to be seriously considered as a work of fine art we tend to insist upon what some refer to as "purity of purpose."

For a rapidly increasing number of Montanans that purpose is quite simple: we enjoy, and want to enjoy, making things and being involved in the pursuit of sharing with others the results of our creative activities. Our reasons are as varied as the results, but the simple fact is that we feel better, are happier, and maintain our very human sense of dignity when we are having fun. Once this fact is understood, the phenomenon of the rapid growth in community arts programs in Montana becomes easily appreciated.

About four years ago a small and very loosely organized group of galleries in the state became aware of this phenomenon and decided to share in the fun. The Montana Art Gallery Directors Association was incorporated in 1974 as a non-profit, self-help organization whose primary goal is mutual assistance, encouragement and program development. The result of their activities has been a recognition within the state (as well as in the other western states) that Montana leads all others in per capita arts centers and is second only to California in the

total number of ongoing programs. The MAGDA membership includes cultural centers of all types: historical museums, community centers, large and small commercial galleries, municipal museums and college art departments. The variety of programs range from historical displays to the most modern art shows, from fly-tying demonstrations to painting classes, from puppet shows to film tours, or to live performances by groups as diversified as country rock and Bach quartets. Underlying all of this activity is the enjoyment and fulfillment of creativity. Arts centers are fun and full of good things to see, hear, touch and do.

In June of 1977, after the snow had disappeared and the winds of spring had arrived, the Lewistown Art Center put up an exhibition of kites made by one of Montana's artist-teachers. In conjunction with this display, the Center also provided a childrens' kite-making workshop. The artist and the children made and flew kites such as defy description. The sun was bright and warm; the breeze was gentle and kite strings were tangled all over the playing field where the smaller children struggled back and forth in gay delight.

Last November, at the Hockaday Art Center in Kalispell, ten photographers sat behind a long and solid table to discuss, with some personal passions, the involvement of each one in the art of photography and the use of the camera as an artistic medium. The two exhibits on display at the time involved differing concepts of the use of the photographic image. One was quite literal in representation; the other was very experimental, combining several media along with the photographs. The panel discussion eventually involved everyone in the audience, so heated was the nature of inquiry into photography as an art form and of the line which invisibly separates commercial art from fine art. In the interest of this relatively new art form, the directors of the Hockaday have equipped a basement work area as a dark room for the use of its interested patrons and partners. Short-term courses are offered regularly and involve eager students of all ages.

When the Copper Village Art Center in Anaconda recently opened a dis-

play of classical and humorous etchings by 18th Century English artist William Hogarth, they also showed the modern film "Tom Jones," which told a story set in the same period in which Hogarth worked. The principle at work was one which suggests enjoyment as a prerequisite to understanding. Among the most common forms of the popular arts is the motion picture which, in the hands of sensitive and creative artists, becomes one of the truly exciting, moving and persuasive fine art forms of all time. The consideration that films are products of a company of actors, aided by a host of set designers and prop handlers, recorded by a crew of camera specialists, all under the supervision of one or more talented directors, suggests that this communal effort of an artistic statement becomes very considerable indeed, if it succeeds. Selections from among the best films ever made are currently touring many of our art centers this year, under the auspices of the Western States Arts Foundation.

Often, because of the lack of a theater within the gallery, the art centers have sought spaces beyond their own walls in which to present such programs. In this way the spirit of the art center expands beyond its walls and into the heart of the community. Live performing artists are also participating in this happy marriage of creative energies. Touring theater companies from both universities have presented Shakespeare and Shaw in galleries, museums and school yards all around Montana and were sponsored in these efforts by community arts centers.

In addition to presenting works of art which one expects to find in museums and galleries, most art centers also provide space to the artists themselves, or to other well-known and established craftsmen who give of their time and talents by conducting workshops and classes. Potteries and painting studios are common and natural adjuncts to the galleries. The absolute frustration of rendering the exactly proper shade of blue to represent our unique Big Sky is a joyful agony shared by amateur and professional alike. And if sometimes we see another way of representing some one else's sky, we are all the more appreciative

if we have once tried to do it ourselves in our own way.

All around us, every day of our lives, we are in the midst of the arts. Whatever we may think of them, billboards are cousins to paintings. In the widest definition of the term "visual arts," so are pinball machines, neon signs and Pringle's potato chip cans.

When the art form tries to sell us a product, we call it advertising, or commercial art. When it tells us stories, we call it illustration. Art that beautifies our homes or our bodies is called decoration. These forms of art are sometimes referred to as the popular arts in a way similar to calling Elton John's music popular. Those forms of art known as the fine arts seem somehow to carry the burden of being special, more personal, more individual. They are not usually mass produced and are almost always more expensive to own.

One simple function of the arts center is to make the fine arts available to be seen and sometimes purchased. The particular function of a museum is to collect and keep for permanent or revolving display those objects and works of fine art which seem to be particularly interesting and, therefore, worthy of being cared for in the public domain. Frequently, the art works produced by living artists differ so much in form, style and content from our more comfortable popular arts that we don't know what it's all about. The answer is, of course, that all art forms are expressions of our human natures in an array of colors, sounds and materials as varied as nature herself.

Collecting, exhibiting, selling or explaining the art object is the natural foundation upon which Montana arts centers have been developed but, much more than that, our centers are lively stations of criss-crossing activities in which we learn to make, to love and to enjoy the sharing of our natural creative impulses.

When an old structure is saved, renovated and enlivened into an arts center, it is cause for celebration. When a community builds a symbol of itself in

the form of a museum of art and heritage, it is a symbol of deserved pride.

The real arts center is, however, in the hearts of its people; those who enjoy.



## THE M.I.A.--AN ORGANIZATION FOR ARTISTS AND AUDIENCE

By Robert Fehlberg, A.I.A., Billings  
 President, Montana Institute of the Arts Foundation

Out of the blue someone asked me recently why I was so involved in promotion of the arts. This caught me a bit unprepared, because I had never really thought about why I was interested in the arts; just how to develop and encourage interest in the arts. I am able, though, to put forth a few thoughts along this line.

Architecture is an art form that involves all the senses and all the art media. It is the essence of living. By actively attempting to make people aware of the arts in their many forms, I am promoting an appreciation for architecture--the art medium in which I work every day. I am attempting to develop an audience for good architecture, hoping each day that I am instrumental in creating some worthwhile building or space which will be recognized as being something more than mud and wood. Someone once said that though bricks and mortar are the materials, when a person with feeling touches them, they become architecture. This statement can also apply to other art forms. Given the pallet of paint, or of words, or of musical notes, a creative person can arrange them into a painting, a poem or a piece of music which an attentive person can enjoy.

If I can help develop an appreciation for the arts in a few individuals, perhaps these individuals will also understand my architecture. I am interested in an audience, a creative audience. This then is perhaps one of the reasons I have been a member of the Montana Institute of the Arts for the past 25 years.

In this organization there is a potential for reaching a varied and sizable audience. MIA is composed of individuals interested in all the art forms--painting, weaving, ceramics, history, writing, poetry, photography, dance and drama--as well as in the enjoyment of the creations of others. It's natural that a painter might enjoy the creative efforts of a potter or dancer; the photo-

grapher to enjoy the works of the writer or the music of a guitarist.

In MIA all of these creative people can interact. They are varied in their degrees of accomplishment, for MIA membership is open to beginning painters as well as the professional who derives his living from painting. The interaction between these levels of accomplishment is most important. The accomplished painter may give many good pointers to the young painter, and in doing so may also regain some of the freshness of the fledgling; while the individual standing by, who doesn't paint, may gain a better understanding and appreciation for the works of the painter.

An audience is an important element in the creative efforts of the artist, although some artists are, in some instances, content in creating for themselves. For the most part, though, artists need the reactions of others to be able to judge their impact and acceptance.

To facilitate this interaction, local groups meet and work together as "branches" of MIA in 30 towns across the state. Each Spring a statewide festival is held to bring this broad group of interests together to compare, observe, study, discuss and generally enjoy the sharing of arts experiences.

The Montana Institute of the Arts was organized 30 years ago by a group of 150 individuals called together by Missoula's H. G. Merriam, to see if something could be done to provide more recognition for Montana's artists and to increase the cultural opportunities for the growing arts audience. The preamble of the MIA constitution states: "...to preserve the heritage of the State as found in its history and folklore, to stimulate creative work in several arts and to make these cultural resources available for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of Montana." These have been MIA's goals since it was founded.

Today we have an active membership of 900 people across the state. We maintain contact, in addition to our local meetings and the annual festival, through our quarterly publication, MONTANA ARTS. Through this magazine we share news of artists and arts activities in the state; news which is of interest to

artists and audience alike and which draws us closer in our mutual concern for Montana's arts.

Attitudes towards the arts have changed in Montana during the years since 1948. The cultural climate has improved tremendously. Arts centers have been established in Billings, Lewistown, Anaconda, Butte, Kalispell, Missoula, Chester, Great Falls and Miles City. This probably couldn't have happened in 1948 or even in 1958, but it did start to happen in 1964 when a group of MIA members in Billings started the organization that became the Yellowstone Art Center. Later another group of MIA members in Lewistown put together that art center. The trend continued and several arts centers have been born due to the efforts of MIA members, working together for a community facility that would make the creative arts available to the general public. These centers provide the audience an art experience, while exhibitions brought into the community provide the artist with a stimulus necessary to further develop their own techniques.

All MIA activities are directed at developing the arts as they pertain to the artist and the audience. MIA works with other arts organizations to foster in Montana an arts climate that fulfills the needs of the people, all the people, of the state.

Membership in MIA is of nominal cost and the only prerequisite is an interest in the arts. If you would like to improve your view of the arts, talk with others of like interest, your membership is welcome. MIA is not a mutual admiration society but a vital force in the arts scene in Montana.

(Note: MIA membership inquiries may be sent to the Montana Arts Council, 235 E. Pine St., Missoula, and will be forwarded to Mr. Fehlberg.)

#### THE ARTS AND THEIR FUNDING IN THE NORTHWEST

Terry Melton, Northwest Regional Representative, National Endowment for the Arts

Legislation signed by Lyndon Johnson in 1965 made the Federal government a concerned partner with the states in the recognition and support of the arts across the United States. From that first appropriation (\$2,534,408) to the National Endowment for the Arts in 1966, Federal funds have risen to \$114,600,000 in 1978--or about 52¢ per person.

According to the Congress, not less than 20% of appropriated funds for the Endowment are for support of state and regional programs, and of that amount, 75% is made available to the states through the Basic State Grant. That amount for Montana has grown from \$39,383 in 1968 to \$243,000 in 1978.

In addition to the Basic State Grant of \$243,000, the Montana Arts Council's 1978 estimates also include obtaining \$150,000 in grants from other National Endowment for the Arts programs. This brings total grant estimates to \$393,000, with an estimated match of some \$1.2 million from Montana's own arts programs. The Montana State Legislature's General Fund appropriation to the Montana Arts Council is \$66,424 for 1978, an expenditure of approximately .9¢ per person.

How does all this compare with other Northwest states?

ALASKA: The Alaska State Council on the Arts leads all the states in an appropriation of \$1.73 per person--a total state appropriation of \$661,800. While they receive the same \$243,000 Basic State Grant as Montana, their programming and additional fund-getting power are enhanced by their substantial state appropriation. Alaska also has a "percent for art" law, and when the new capital city is built, between one and two million dollars of Northwest art is expected to be purchased.

IDAHO: The 1978 state appropriation to the Idaho Commission on the Arts

is \$50,700. In dollar amounts they are fourth from the last, over Montana, Wyoming, American Samoa and Guam. The per capita expenditure from that appropriation is 6.1¢. With the Basic State Grant, Idaho will this year receive over \$300,000 in grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. Idaho art groups will match those funds with some \$600,000.

OREGON: The appropriation from the state to the Oregon Arts Commission is up 52% in 1978 for a total of \$229,000. The Oregon Legislature expends 9.8¢ per person and their national state appropriation rank is 36th. Oregon's "percent for art" legislation resulted in purchases of more than \$94,000 in works of art this past year.

WASHINGTON: Washington State Arts Commission state funds for 1978 are \$347,775. Nationally the state ranks 37th in state funding, expending 9.6¢ per person. During the 1978 budget period two other funds are administered by the Commission, although not included in their basic budget--a \$1 million appropriation for an Indian Cultural Center, plus an additional \$300,000 for "Art in New State Buildings." Washington State has for several years been the leader of the "percent for art" law, while one-percent laws exist in six cities and two counties in Washington. This past year the State purchased art works in excess of \$165,000, while Seattle expended some \$215,000.

For the five Pacific Northwest states the state appropriations are "all over the block," ranging from Idaho's \$50,700 to Alaska's \$661,800. There are "percent for art" laws in Alaska, Oregon and Washington. "Percent for art" legislation has been introduced in Idaho and failed, and will be introduced again. The legislation has not been submitted to the Montana Legislature but may be in 1979. No particular patterns of state funding seem to emerge. Alaska, with its 375,000 people, appropriates the most dollars, while having the smallest

population among the five states. Washington, with the largest population, more than 3,500,000, appropriates half the amount of Alaska but at the same time administers an additional \$1.3 million for arts programs. With the exceptions of the sea industries of the coast states and most certainly the oil in Alaska, the Northwest's basic economies don't vary that much. Ranching, farming, and timber affect all the states; Idaho has its mining, Montana its coal. All of the state legislatures are made up of predominantly rural concerns (so is New York's, for that matter) and they all generally submit balanced budgets.

The differences would then appear to settle around two things: the tax base and attitudes toward public funding for the arts. It's how much a state has to spend and then its determination of priorities.

It should be said that larger state appropriations don't necessarily insure better programs. High quality programs do exist among those states at the low end of legislative funding. But an adequate state budget will address the magnitude of the programs and most certainly gives the state greater "buying power" for both Federal and private funds.

Local, State and Federal governments are either slaves or enlightened innovators to their histories--the former being the most prevalent. Attitudes, and certainly funding, are built around tradition, energy, agriculture, industry. Expansive governmental bodies are also looking at the arts for what they are and can be--a non-polluting industry, with its strengths based in people-oriented affairs. The Northwest states have for years considered tourism as a high-yield income opportunity, but generally only traditional recreational patterns are given their due. The fact remains that not all people recreate with hunting, fishing, hiking or skiing.

Artistic, economic and community successes do occur. They happen in Denver and Salt Lake and Seattle. They also happen in small towns like Ashland, Oregon's Shakespeare; Bellingham, Washington's Crafts Fair; and Aspen, Colorado's Institute

of Music. Successes happen where people are concerned with ideas, economics and, maybe most of all, fun.

Montana also has high quality activities and programs in both visual and performing arts. Yet far too many people view these efforts as a drain, rather than a contribution to the community, while not availing themselves of the riches of the activity and the positive economic impact. Communities are slow to come to this new and strange twist to their lives and the Montana Legislature has not yet taken the arts seriously, as is evidenced by a minimal appropriation.

There is an upbeat attitude developing in many Montana communities, though, and it will undoubtedly be these communities which influence the Governor's office and the Legislature. It will be through continuing community success stories now being told in Chester, in Bigfork and in Absarokee; it will be developing in art centers in Miles City, Lewistown and Anaconda; in tandem with success stories in Billings, Great Falls and Missoula. New artistic, social and economic stories will be told as Montanans look again at their land and their resources and begin to consistently choose those directions which add to life rather than take away.



