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Description of document: Meeting minutes for the National Council on the Arts meetings held on March 27 and June 26, 2015

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Source of document: FOIA Request  
National Endowment for the Arts  
FOIA Officer  
400 7th Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20506  
Email: [foia@arts.gov](mailto:foia@arts.gov)

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From: FOIA  
Date: Mar 16, 2016 4:04:52 PM  
Subject: RE: FOIA Request to NEA

Dear Sir:

This e-mail responds to your request for records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552. Your request has been assigned file number F16-031. In your below e-mail, you requested:

“A copy of the meeting minutes for the National Council on the Arts meetings held on March 27, 2015 and June 26, 2015. By meeting minutes I mean a written description of the actions taken at the meeting. I am not asking for a copy of the webcast videos.”

Your request has been granted, attached are the responsive documents for your FOIA request with no redactions. Please note the draft minutes were voted and approved as the final record.

The National Endowment for the Arts is governed by the provisions of the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, 20 U.S.C. 951 et seq., and the Freedom of Information Act with respect to the release of agency records. In accordance with the NEA's FOIA regulations, 45 C.F.R. 1100.5(b)(1), you may appeal the Agency's determination. Such an appeal must be made to the Chairman within ten working days following the receipt of this e-mail. Additional information on the appeal process may be found at the following link:  
<http://www.nea.gov/about/FOIA/index.html#appeal>.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this response.

Respectfully,

FOIA Officer | Office of the General Counsel  
National Endowment for the Arts  
400 7th Street SW | Washington DC 20506  
202-682-5418 (p) | 202-682-5572 (fax)

Celebrating the NEA's 50th Anniversary at [arts.gov/50th](http://arts.gov/50th)

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**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS**

**184th Meeting**

**March 26-27, 2015**

**DRAFT**

**The Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City  
Salon III  
Fashion Centre at Pentagon City  
1250 S Hayes Street  
Arlington, VA 22202**

The 184<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Council on the Arts convened in open session at 10:45 am on Thursday, March 26, 2015, with Chairman Jane Chu presiding. The meeting was adjourned at 11:49 am. The 184<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Council on the Arts reconvened in open session at 9:01 am on Friday, March 27, 2015, with Chairman Jane Chu presiding. The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 am.

### MARCH 26, 2015 OPEN SESSION

#### COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Aaron Dworkin  
Deepa Gupta  
Paul Hodes  
Joan Israelite  
Maria Rosario Jackson  
Charlotte Kessler  
Rick Lowe  
David "Mas" Masumoto  
Barbara Ernst Prey  
Olga Viso

#### COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Bruce Carter  
María López De León  
Lee Greenwood  
Emil Kang  
Irvin Mayfield, Jr.  
Ranee Ramaswamy

#### Congressional Ex-Officio

Congressional-Ex Officio  
Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)  
Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN)  
Rep. Patrick Tiberi (R-OH)  
Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)

#### NEA Staff Members Presenting

Jane Chu – Chairman  
Laura Callanan – Senior Deputy Chairman

#### Non-NEA Staff Members Presenting

March Bamuthi Joseph – Chief of Program & Pedagogy, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts  
Deborah Cullinan – CEO, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

## MARCH 27, 2015 OPEN SESSION

### COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

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María López De León  
 Lee Greenwood  
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 Rick Lowe  
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### JOINED VIA TELECONFERENCE

Bruce Carter

### Congressional Ex-Officio

Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN)

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Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)  
 Rep. Patrick Tiberi (R-OH)  
 Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)

### NEA Staff Members Presenting

Jane Chu – ~~Chairman~~  
 Laura Callanan – Senior Deputy Chairman  
 Jillian Miller – Director, Guidelines and Panel Operations  
 Carol Walton – Senior Advisor for Programs and Partnerships  
 Sunil Iyengar – Director, Office of Research  
 Jessamyn Sarmiento – Director, Public Affairs

### Non-NEA Staff Members Presenting

Arlynn "Arni" Fishbaugh – Executive Director, Montana Arts Council  
 Ned Canty – General Manager, Opera Memphis  
 Ellin O'Leary – President & Chief Content Officer, Youth Radio  
 Storm White – YR Interactive Fellow, Youth Radio

## **I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

On Thursday morning, March 26, 2015, March Chairman Jane Chu introduced herself and then called the 184<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Council on the Arts to order. She welcomed the members of the National Council on the Arts, Arts Endowment staff, and any member of the public in attendance to the meeting. For the record, in attendance were Council members Aaron Dworkin, Deepa Gupta, Paul Hodes, Joan Israelite, Maria Rosario Jackson, Charlotte Kessler, Rick Lowe, David "Mas" Masumoto, Barbara Ernst Prey, and Olga Viso. Council members Carter, De León, Greenwood, Kang, Mayfield, and Ramaswamy were unable to attend.

## **II. PRESENTATION ON CREATIVE ECOSYSTEMS AT YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS & BEYOND**

The Chairman read the guest speakers' bios for the special Thursday public session, Deborah Cullinan, Executive Director and CEO of Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, (YBCA) and spoken-word poet/dancer/playwright and Chief of Program and Pedagogy at YBCA, Marc Bamuthi Joseph. She then asked Senior Deputy Chairman Laura Callanan to further welcome them to the meeting. Ms. Callanan introduced Ms. Cullinan and Mr. Joseph and invited them up to the podium.

Ms. Cullinan talked a little bit about YBCA's history and mission. She talked about the Market Street Prototyping Festival, its collaboration with the San Francisco Planning Department and the Knight Foundation to revitalize Market Street through community engagement.

Mr. Joseph began his part of the presentation by showing a film clip featuring various performances including a snippet from his work, "red, black, and GREEN: a blues." Mr. Joseph then led the Council in a creativity exercise to demonstrate YBCA's similar process with creative mapping. He asked them three questions: 1) Who inspires you?; 2) What does he/she do?; and 3) What is he/she exploring? The Council wrote down their answers and then shared their answers with Mr. Joseph. After that, the Council engaged in a discussion with the guest speakers and Ms. Callanan about creative ecosystems at YBCA (and in other locations) and about inviting other voices and perspectives into their institution.

## **III. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Chairman Chu thanked the asked if there are any other comments or questions. Hearing none, she adjourned the meeting at 11:45 am.

(Gavel.)

## **I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

On the morning of March 27, 2015, Chairman Jane Chu introduced herself and then called the 184<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Council on the Arts to order. She welcomed the members of the National Council on the Arts, Arts Endowment staff, the audience, and members of the general public observing the meeting via the web. For the record, in attendance were Council members Aaron Dworkin, Deepa Gupta, Paul Hodes, Joan Israelite, Maria Rosario Jackson, Emil Kang, David "Mas" Masumoto, Barbara Ernst Prey, Ranee Ramaswamy, and Olga Viso. Council member Bruce Carter joined the meeting via teleconference. Council members De León, Greenwood, Kessler, Lowe, and Mayfield were unable to attend.

## **II. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 2014 NCA MEETING MINUTES/VOTING ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDING AND REJECTION**

Chairman Chu asked the Council for a vote on the minutes of the October 2014 Council meeting which were approved ~~unanimously~~ by voice vote. The Chairman then moved on to the application review ~~and~~ voting segment of the meeting, inviting Senior Advisor for Programs and Partnerships Carol Walton and Jillian Miller, Director of Guidelines & Panel Operations, to ~~preside~~ over this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Walton gave instructions to the Council members on the voting process and called for a motion to approve ~~all~~ recommendations and rejections under the Art Works, Partnerships, and Leadership Initiatives. Then she summarized each area separately, asked for Council comments/questions, and instructed members to mark their ballots for each category. (Council members joining the vote via teleconference were instructed prior to the meeting to e-mail their completed ballots to the Kim Jefferson, Council Specialist in the Office of the Chief of Staff, at the end of the voting process.) After Council members marked their ballots, Ms. Walton turned the meeting over to Jillian Miller, Director of Office of Guidelines and Panel Operations, to summarize the guidelines up for a vote at the meeting.

## **III. GUIDELINES REVIEW/VOTING**

Jillian Miller summarized the three sets of guidelines for Council review at the March 2015 Council meeting: Partnership Agreements, FY 2016; Our Town, FY 2016; and the NEA National Heritage Fellowships, FY 2016. Ms. Walton then called for a motion to approve the guidelines. After the motion was made and seconded, the Council voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the guidelines. Ms. Walton thanked the Council members and then turned the meeting back over to Chairman Jane Chu.

#### IV. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

The Chairman gave the Council an overview of her visits to California, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, and Wisconsin. During her trips to Minneapolis, New Orleans, Miami, Detroit, and Los Angeles, she was able to spend time with Council members Ramaswamy and Viso (both from Minneapolis) and with Council members Mayfield, Carter, Dworkin, and Jackson respectively.

The Chairman also gave notice of upcoming Arts Endowment events such as the 2015 NEA Jazz Masters Awards Ceremony and Concert in New York; the 10<sup>th</sup> annual national Poetry Out Loud competition; and the National Service Organizations meeting – all in April 2015. Another major Arts Endowment event will be the launch of the NEA's Blue Star Museums initiative in May 2015.

The Chairman opened the floor to questions, and then invited Director of Public Affairs Jessamyn Sarmiento to the podium to discuss the agency's plans for its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.

#### V. PRESENTATION ON THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEA

Ms. Sarmiento gave updates on what the NEA has been planning to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the agency. One of the first things that has been done is to update the logo to commemorate the anniversary. The official launch of the new logo and the official celebration will be September 29, the date that President Johnson signed legislation that created the Arts Endowment back in 1965. The Art Works slogan was replaced with "Celebrating 50 Years." In some cases, the agency will use the logo with the tag line "Art for all of US". The anniversary logo will be shared with the agency's partners as well so if and when it makes sense, they can incorporate it into their marketing materials.

Ms. Sarmiento said that "the overarching goal of the 50th anniversary activities is to provide a variety of entry points for our key constituents to the general public to engage with us across the year." The agency will broaden the public's understanding of why what the NEA does matters, and will expand and diversify the public's understanding of where and how the arts impact communities and individuals. The agency also will focus its activities so that they help to expand the number of people who consider themselves participants in the arts. The agency will implement materials, products, and a more coordinated message carried out by staff, the NEA's partners, and grantees.

Some of the tactical outcomes of the agency's efforts will include: (1) Developing a microsite for 50th anniversary that will house 50 years of multimedia storytelling on the impact of the NEA and the arts in America; (2) Leadership initiatives that give the public and partners new and exciting ways to interact with the NEA; (3) Creating an infographics suite of tools from video to other interactive elements, that will help tell



the NEA story in a fun and engaging way; and (4) Creating a hard copy, leave-behind brochure overview on the NEA that will be available on the website and also through the NEA's partners and grantees.

The agency's strategy is to use digital to broadly engage with audiences across all NEA platforms – new platforms launched by the NEA and those of third parties. The campaign will be driven and supported by a digital "hub" within the agency's website. Along with digital strategies and elements to attract online and offline attention, there will be in-person events, chairman travel, and convenings. The principle element that will connect all of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities is storytelling. Storytelling will better connect with audiences by making the stories personal and relevant – hearing from those who have been affected by what the agency does and who it supports.

During the 50th anniversary year, Americans will have the opportunity to share what art means to them and why it is an important and essential part of their lives. The NEA will take these stories and present them in a way that supports and validates our agency and the meaningful work we do.

Ms. Sarmiento also noted that the year of celebration will comprise a number of "public-facing initiatives" such as special leadership initiatives, the details of which will be announced at a National Press Club media event on the day of the launch in September. Other initiatives will include a media showcase; a number of convenings throughout the year, including one on the future of the arts that will take place in 2016; a few celebratory events in Washington, D.C., and in communities across the nation; and connecting with broad and diverse audiences through a number of fun and engaging crowdsourcing activities.

Ms. Sarmiento gave an overview of the media showcase will consist of a stories campaign. The NEA, its partners, and others will use storytelling to demonstrate how investments have sparked some of the most influential artistry in history, as well as stories on the agency's continued investments in developing arts rich communities and experiences for individuals. Programs within the story campaign will be "50 States, 50 Stories" which will include stories from not just the 50 states, but also the US territories and jurisdictions that are supported by the Arts Endowment. Additionally, "NEA Sparks the Arts" will feature NEA multimedia presentations highlighting some of the great work that it has invested in the past 50 years. Finally, the NEA will release a three-minute "sizzle reel" that will highlight its 50-year history. A web page was launched in mid-February to collect stories from the public as well as partners and others at the Arts Endowment's website. Everyone is encouraged to visit the page, share it with friends and colleagues and ultimately submit a video, audio, written or still photograph about why the arts matter.

Ms. Sarmiento talked about the role of state arts agencies and other partners in helping the agency promote the story collection effort, sharing a screencap of the Arizona State Arts Agency's website which promotes the effort. She also highlighted two of the stories that the agency has received already. The first one was from Jansen

McGuire who writes that his summer spent volunteering as an apprentice was his best ever, and he "feels so honored to have been with this group of people working toward a common goal of creating a beautiful work of art." The next story came from Geoffrey Levitt, who wrote that doing art is a way for him to express his inner creativity. He shared a few examples of his artwork as well. Ms. Sarmiento closed her presentation by noting that these stories and the ones to come will comprise the mosaic of arts reflections that will help the Arts Endowment tell a story of impact and relevance of the arts across the nation. She thanked the Council and asked if there were any questions. There were none. The Chairman thanked Ms. Sarmiento.

## VI. PRESENTATION ON THE IMPACT OF NEA RESEARCH FINDINGS

This multi-part presentation's focus is on research findings from the NEA's Office of Research & Analysis (ORA). Chairman Chu noted that three reports from the ORA that were released in January 2015 illuminate arts participation and production – from the economic impact of the arts – to how they engage in the arts – to the reason why people might not participate in the arts. She invited Sunil Iyengar, Director of ORA, as well as Arni Fishbaugh (Montana Arts Council); Ned Canty (Opera Memphis); and Ellin O'Leary and Storm White (Youth Radio) to the table/podium to discuss the impact of these studies on their work.

Mr. Iyengar shared selected research findings from the three research products from the NEA's ORA, highlighting the NEA/BEA Satellite Account (Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA)), *When Going Gets Tough: Barriers and Motivations Affecting Arts Attendance*, and *A Decade of Arts Engagement: Findings from the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, 2002-2012*. Council member Masumoto asked Mr. Iyengar a question about data on regional levels. He responded that the NEA is working with the BEA on getting data on the regional and state levels, and understand what the arts and culture bring to the Gross State Product. The other piece about barriers/motivation to attending is only at the national level right now. On arts participation, the current data comprises about 33 states, With the NEA's relationship with the Census Bureau, that should expand.

Mr. Iyengar introduced and welcomed Arni Fishbaugh up to the podium to talk about how artists have contributed to the economy in Montana. Accompanied by slides, Ms. Fishbaugh talked to the Council about the Montana Arts Council's Public Value Partnerships, the Montana Artrepreneur Program, and the Circle of American Masters. On behalf of the Montana Arts council and the state arts agencies, she said that the SAAs value their work with the NEA's partnerships staff, as well as the NEA's ORA. She talked about how large Montana is and its population of nearly 1 million people. Most of its counties are designated as "frontier," with less than six people per square mile. Over 40% of Montanans in the workforce hold more than one job. A Montana Department of Labor report shows that 1 out of every 60 people is a working artist. She said that Sunil is responsible for the Montana Department of Labor report. She sent it over to the Department of Labor and that agency decided to do its own report, which was great to show to the state legislators. For the past 40

years, the growth in the percentage of artists in the labor force has been three times that of the overall labor force in Montana. She showed some examples of art made by Montanans. She said that Montana is ranked first in the nation in Entrepreneurship and Innovation by the US Chamber of Commerce. The arts council's work focuses on three outcomes: economic vitality, arts education, and producing public value of the arts. Artists living in rural areas face marketing challenges. Montana Artrepreneur Program began in 2009 and it has been an economic development training center for hundreds of artists across the state, particularly visual artists. 350 artists have participated – they are primarily from rural areas of the state. The program is funded by the NEA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, LINC, and the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation. MAP has helped artists (who often work in isolation) to connect with each other and network. The first in-depth evaluation of the MAP program by Surale Phillips, and it found that artists generated a 275% increase in net art sales on average in 2009-13 (80 of the 250 artists contacted responded). Artists saw a 53% increase in out-of-state sales, and 29% of gross personal income was derived by the sale of their art work. (For some though, it is 100% of their income.) Artists complete 35 professional business elements in the MAP toolbox to become "MAP certified." Ms. Fishbaugh shared a photo on the school where she once was a student in Fort Benton, MT: "Industry is useless without culture." She noted that she had provided some information for each Council member at his/her place and thanked the Council and her staff and board. She opened the floor to questions. She and Council member Masumoto had a lively exchange about why the Montana Department of Labor did its own analysis and what brought her back to Montana. (Her reply – "a crop duster.")

The Chairman thanked Ms. Fishbaugh and paused the presentation to introduce and welcome Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN) to the Council meeting. The Chairman thanked the Congresswoman for allowing her to join her when she visited Minnesota in the fall, and that she hopes to have the chance to meet with her again when she visits Minnesota in April. She asked the Council members to introduce themselves to Ms. McCollum. After the Council and the Senior Deputy Chairman introduced themselves, Ms. McCollum was invited by the Chairman to speak to the Council.

Congresswoman McCollum said that it was a great honor to be one of the appointees by Leader Pelosi and the Speaker of the House to be one of the Congressional Liaisons. She said that the NEA is in capable hands with Chairman Chu, and that the work that the NEA does is important. She looks forward to having the Chairman back in Minnesota. She said that loved hearing the presenter from Montana (Arni Fishbaugh); her mother is from Montana, so she is "...not surprised that Big Sky "is getting it right for the arts." She encouraged everyone to keep up the good work. Congresswoman McCollum emphasized the importance of inviting Congressmen to come and see the good work that is being done. She said to "tell the stories," because it is about economic growth and opportunity. She thanked the NEA and the Council for the good work that they do behind the scenes. The Chairman thanked Ms. McCollum for coming.

After the Chairman thanked Congresswoman McCollum, she invited Mr. Iyengar to introduce Ned Canty, the next speaker in the presentation.

Mr. Iyengar introduced Mr. Canty. Mr. Canty came to the podium to talk to the Council about "30 Days of Opera," Opera Memphis's exciting audience development initiative that features 30 days of free opera for the public.

Mr. Canty began by giving the Council some background about Opera Memphis. In 2011 when he first started at Opera Memphis, the company sold 55% of the seats available for performances. They struggled with balancing a budget and selling tickets to shows. Opera Memphis is the only professional opera company between St. Louis and New Orleans; Little Rock and Nashville. He noted that if one were to place that same area on the East Coast, it would go from Boston to North Carolina. Opera Memphis focuses on the Memphis MSA. They needed something to reach more than the 1% of the audience they were attracting. Memphis residents appreciate doing rather talking about it ("Memphis grit and grind") and Memphis loves the interaction of high and low. So, the company turned itself inside out and "brought La Bohème to Beale Street." Mr. Canty paused to show a short promotional film about Opera Memphis's "30 Days of Opera," which occurs in September. Some performances are scheduled; some are surprises (location and date/time). The company has a set roster of musicians and singers, but also supplements performances with other artists from the community. Farmers markets, festivals, churches, universities, music academies, parks and botanic gardens, stores, restaurants, other organizations with venues (and mailing lists), and many other diverse businesses and civic and cultural organizations are among some of Opera Memphis's collaborators/partners in this venture. They looked at songs that have a special Memphis connection and songs that most people are familiar with. They also made a point to reach out to families and children. They wanted to place the performances that would get people talking. They once put on a performance in a dog park with performers dressed as cats singing ("meowing"). They noticed a lot of feedback with tweets about the unusual event. They always have signs with their hashtags on them at events so that they can begin the conversation. The initiative is like "a trail of breadcrumbs" that hopefully leads to the opera house. They have seen many people become loyal subscribers through this program who started out not knowing anything about opera. Mr. Canty noted some exciting outcomes from the "30 Days" initiatives – during the past two years, they sold 275 tickets that Opera Memphis would not have sold without the project. Of the 275 tickets that were sold through the program, 175 of them were sold to first-time opera attendees. More than 90% of the people who attended these events made them feel better about their city. He shared some stories of Memphians that have been positively affected by the initiative, including the story of a security guard at the Levitt Shell (one of the performance venues) who was so moved by the performances that he is now one of the Opera Memphis family, and he also embarked on a lifelong dream to learn how to play the piano. In 2011, the organization's goal was to reach at least 13,800 people – Mr. Canty reported that Opera Memphis has surpassed that number, presently reaching 60,000 through "30 Days." Mr. Canty said that success for him will be when people stop saying things like the program is "bringing opera to



the people." He said that opera has always belonged to the people – "...all Opera Memphis is doing is reminding people that opera has been there for them from the beginning." Council members Israelite and Gupta engaged Mr. Canty in a brief Q&A about how the project is funded and artists' participation in the program. The Chairman asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, she thanked Mr. Canty.

Mr. Iyengar returned to the podium gave a little background on Youth Radio and introduced Ellin O'Leary and Storm White to the podium to talk about Youth Radio (YR) and its initiatives.

Ms. O'Leary and Ms. White came up to the podium. YR is an award-winning national model for professional development, media production, and workforce and journalism training. Ms. O'Leary said it was an honor to be there and after listening to their colleagues, it was inspiring to be there. She said that YR combines storytelling with art and technology, and in the process, there is transformation on the individual student level as well as in the community. She thanked the NEA for making all of this possible. In 2007, YR moved from a storefront in Berkeley to a 20,000-square-foot former bank in Oakland, which YR later purchased. Eight years later, this youth-driven media arts organization has transformed the community, the students' families, and the surrounding community, and become a force in the economic revitalization of downtown Oakland. Then Ms. O'Leary showed a short video clip that gave more of an in-depth look at YR.

YR implements a cascading mentorship model, which means that former/older students come back to mentor/teach younger/new students to the program.

Ms. O'Leary noted that YR started off as a radio/journalism training program, but is now much more – YR works across all formats – in photography, graphics, video, print, and online. YR distributes content online via the Huffington Post, National Geographic, and many other major local and national outlets. YR is NPR's official youth desk – covering everything from politics/elections, the latest technology, and current events. (Ms. O'Leary played a brief clip featuring one of YR's radio pieces about an abandoned mall-turned-music venue in Stockton, CA). Ms. O'Leary said that young people tell their stories through writing poetry, composing music, and singing. "Remix Your Life" is YR's artistic development program started by young staff and students. A live music venue has been created next door to YR for performances. It has become a destination and gathering place for local youth. She stepped aside so that Ms. White could speak next.

Ms. White began talking about the role of technology at YR and how technology can be seen as "art," not just STEM. YR is involved in web development and design in addition to broadcast and journalism. YR Interactive has created websites and apps that address issues facing their community. These projects invite listeners to not just listen, but to engage. YR Interactive created an app that not only features YR stories, but has prompts that invite the user to add to the story. With National Science

Foundation and nonprofit foundational support, YR has created a department that teaches students the larger experience of working in the tech industry. The curriculum is not just about coding – it teaches kids how to create apps from start-to-finish. At Youth Radio Interactive, the students learn by doing and creating products that add to national conversations about pressing issues that reach audiences across the nation. (Ms. White paused to show a brief clip about the work that Youth Radio Interactive does.)

Ms. White talked about YR's Digital Communication Workforce development program for youth ages 18-24. It is a six-month program in which student participants are paid and get college credit. The students also get basic design and professional development skills. Internship placement opportunities in the Oakland, California, area are also available. Ms. White was a part of this program and got the opportunity to work for Carol H. Williams Advertising, where she got the chance to be on a team that worked with clients like the YMCA, the Oakland Airport, and Google. Through this program, she has learned not only technical skills, but also how to use those skills to make art and tell stories.

Ms. O'Leary said that YR emphasizes economic and cultural diversity. YR engages about 3,000 students a year. 80% of its participants come from low-income areas and/or low-performing schools. YR provides approximately 300 jobs a year, and reaches millions through its broadcasts. The organization boasts a high school graduation rate of 98% (double the rate in Oakland) and 88% of its students go on to higher education.

Ms. O'Leary said that YR has developed a national news network. YR is launching "Teach Youth Radio" and a series of bootcamps across the country in partnership with Best Buy. She said that the "takeaways" of the program are: high-quality everything (staff and equipment), artistic freedom, large audiences, and NEA support.

Chairman Chu thanked Ms. O'Leary and Ms. White and asked the Council if any of them had questions. Council members Gupta, Israelite, and Masumoto engaged them in a Q&A about the genesis of the organization, the turning point for its expansion, youth involvement, and then what's next for YR. Chairman Chu thanked all of the presenters and Mr. Iyengar.

## **VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS/VOTING RESULTS**

Chairman Chu announced that the National Council on the Arts had reviewed the applications and guidelines presented to them and that a tally of the ballots revealed that all recommendations for funding and rejections had passed.

After asking if there were additional comments or questions and hearing none, the Chairman thanked the NEA staff and thanked the Council members. She said that she

was looking forward to seeing them Council at the next meeting in June, and then adjourned the meeting.

(Gavel.)

(Whereupon, at 10:47 am, the proceedings of the 184<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Council on the Arts were adjourned.)

Respectfully submitted,



Kimberly M. Jefferson  
Council Specialist  
National Endowment for the Arts

DRAFT

**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS**

**185th Meeting**

**June 25-26, 2015**

DRAFT

**The Constitution Center  
400 7<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Conference Rooms A-B  
Washington, DC 20024**



The 185<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Council on the Arts convened in open session at 9:02 am on Friday, June 26, 2015, with Chairman Jane Chu presiding. The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 am.

#### COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Bruce Carter  
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María López De León  
Paul Hodes  
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Emil Kang  
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#### COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

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Jason Schupbach – Director, Design  
Carol Walton – Senior Advisor for Programs & Partnerships

#### Non-NEA Staff Members Presenting

Barnaby Evans – Executive Artistic Director, WaterFire Providence, Providence, RI  
Tom Frouge – Co-Founder, ¡Globalquerque!, Albuquerque, NM  
Lisa Sims – Deputy Director, Venture Richmond, Richmond, VA  
Rick Sperling (accompanied by Mosaic Singers & Actors)  
– President & Artistic Director, Mosaic Youth Theatre, Detroit, MI

## **I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Chairman Jane Chu called the 185<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Council on the Arts to order on June 26, 2015, at 9:02 am. She welcomed the members of the National Council on the Arts, Arts Endowment staff, the audience, and members of the general public observing the meeting via the web. For the record, in attendance were Council members Bruce Carter, María López De León, Aaron Dworkin, Paul Hodes, Joan Israelite, Charlotte Kessler, Emil Kang, Raneer Ramaswamy, and Olga Viso. Council members Deepa Gupta and Barbara Ernst Prey joined the meeting via teleconference. Council members Lee Greenwood, Maria Rosario Jackson, Rick Lowe, David "Mas" Masumoto, and Irvin Mayfield, Jr., were unable to attend.

## **II. APPROVAL OF MARCH 2015 NCA MEETING MINUTES/VOTING ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDING AND REJECTION**

Chairman Chu asked the Council for a vote on the minutes of the March 2015 Council meeting which were approved unanimously by voice vote. The Chairman then moved on to the application review and voting segment of the meeting, inviting Senior Advisor for Programs and Partnerships Carol Walton and Jillian Miller, Director of Guidelines & Panel Operations, to preside over this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Walton gave instructions to the Council members on the voting process and called for a motion to approve all recommendations and rejections under the Leadership Initiatives and Fellowships categories. Then she summarized each area separately, asked for Council comments/questions, and instructed members to mark their ballots for each category. (Council members joining the vote via teleconference were instructed prior to the meeting to e-mail their completed ballots to the Kim Jefferson, Council Specialist in the Office of the Chief of Staff, at the end of the voting process.) After Council members marked their ballots, Ms. Walton turned the meeting over to Jillian Miller, Director of Office of Guidelines and Panel Operations, to summarize the guidelines up for a vote at the meeting.

### **III. GUIDELINES REVIEW/VOTING**

Jillian Miller summarized the three sets of guidelines for Council review at the March 2015 Council meeting: NEA Jazz Masters Fellowships, FY 2016; Literature Fellowships: Translation Projects, FY 2017; and Research: Art Works, FY 2016. Ms. Walton then called for a motion to approve the guidelines. After the motion was made and seconded, the Council voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the guidelines. Ms. Walton thanked the Council members and then turned the meeting back over to Chairman Jane Chu.

### **IV. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES**

The Chairman mentioned that since the last Council meeting, she had visited Minnesota, Kentucky, Utah, Michigan, New Hampshire (twice) Chicago, New York, Boston (twice) South Carolina, and Cleveland (twice).

She gave the Council a brief overview of her trips to Minnesota, Kentucky, New Hampshire, and South Carolina.

While in Minnesota, she was able to connect with Council members Olga Viso and Raneé Ramaswamy, as well as ex-officio Council member Rep. Betty McCollum. Ms. Viso and Chairman Chu joined Congresswoman McCollum to tour Open Book, a nonprofit arts organization that promotes the literary and book arts, and serves as an anchor organization for the Minneapolis's Washington Avenue neighborhood. Open Book is also the home base for three NEA grantees: Milkweed Editions, the Loft Literary Center, and the Minnesota Center for Book Arts. Ms. Ramaswamy joined the Chairman and Rep. McCollum for a visit to the MacPhail Center for Music. The MacPhail Center uses technology to expand music education and provide access to children across Minnesota.

Chairman Chu visited the Appalachian Artisan Center in Hindman, Kentucky, and participated in a music class through the Dulcimer Project, which the NEA funds.

In May 2015, the Chairman went to New Hampshire where she was able to see Council member Paul Hodes and his wife Peggo, and hear them perform at the Community Music School in Concord. Chairman Chu also toured the Capitol Center for the Arts in Concord with Congresswoman Annie Kuster, who is also a strong supporter of the arts and a member of the Congressional STEAM Caucus. Chairman Chu returned to New Hampshire in early June for the New England Foundation for the Arts' Creative Communities Exchange.

Also in May 2015, the Chairman spoke at the opening of the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC. This was the last festival that to be opened by Mayor Joe Riley, longtime mayor of the city and champion of the Mayors Institute program. He is stepping down after 40 years as mayor.

The Chairman then gave updates about some exciting NEA events/initiatives, such as the NEA Jazz Masters Awards Ceremony and Concert (April); Poetry Out Loud National Finals, which celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in April; and Blue Star Museums, which kicked off the sixth summer of free access to the nation's museums for military families with a press conference at the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., in May 2015.

The Chairman opened the floor to questions, and hearing none, then invited Director of Public Affairs Jessamyn Sarmiento to the podium to discuss the agency's plans for the online storybank in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.

#### **V. PRESENTATION ON THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEA/ VIGNETTES FROM NEA'S "TELL YOUR STORIES" CAMPAIGN**

Jessamyn Sarmiento gave the Council an update on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year's activities. Some of the activities are already underway, such as the agency's effort to celebrate the National Park Service's upcoming 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with arts projects that will take place in National Parks. She also talked a little bit about the upcoming leadership initiative that will strengthen the nation's creative infrastructure. She also gave an overview of other 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities such as the September 29<sup>th</sup> kickoff of the NEA's anniversary year such as the panel discussion featuring the current Chairman and former Chairmen, and PBS's In Performance at the White House event (will be broadcasted in January 2016). A symposium about the future of the arts in America is also planned to close out the NEA's Anniversary Year. An interactive timeline about the NEA history and multimedia videos highlighting the work of notable grantees and the ways that the arts work in each state is also in the works.

The NEA's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will comprise a number of public-facing activities, including the new online story bank, which will solicit stories from the public and from the agency's partners on how the arts have influences their lives and communities across the U.S. Personal stories have a great impact. The NEA is reaching out to solicit these stories. Ms. Sarmiento shared examples of some of the stories that the NEA has received. She played a brief video featuring Chairman Chu explaining "Tell Your Story" and how to submit those stories. The agency has already started receiving stories from the public.

Ms. Sarmiento read the first story from Don Stewart (Homewood, Alabama), a doctor who became an illustrator. An example of his drawings was projected on the screen as she read his letter. Then a brief video clip featuring Congressman Leonard Lance was played. Rep. Lance represents the 7<sup>th</sup> district of New Jersey and is co-chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus. In the clip, the congressman talks about the importance of the NEA and its impact on the nation. Ms. Sarmiento said that the agency plans to get more stories from other congressmen this summer.

Other stories shared featured choreographer/dancer Nichole Canuso (Philadelphia, PA) explaining what dance means to her; March Larkin, a military spouse, discussing how art has created familial bonds among her children and stepchildren; and playwright Thomas W. Jones, II, talking how the NEA helped create the regional theater movement in the U.S.; how the NEA recognized the importance of community theater outside of major metropolitan areas; and how early support from the NEA helped his theater Jomandi, which became the third largest African-American theater in the country. The regional theater movement helped to highlight and showcase previously unknown but important playwrights such as August Wilson. Ms. Sarmiento invited everyone to participate in the project and share their arts stories. The "Tell Your Stories" campaign website is [arts.gov/tell-us-your-story](https://arts.gov/tell-us-your-story).

Ms. Sarmiento thanked everyone. Chairman Chu thanked Ms. Sarmiento and asked if there were any questions from the Council. There were none.

## **VI. PRESENTATION ON PERFORMING ARTS FESTIVALS**

The Chairman segued into the next part of the meeting – presentations on the impact of festivals on their communities. Chairman Chu cited the agency's most recent SPPA data, which notes that 22.4% of Americans attended a visual arts festival or craft fair in 2012, and 20.8% attended an outdoor performing arts festival. She also pointed out that in a 2010 NEA research report, *Live From Your Neighborhood*, two-thirds of respondents believed that outdoor arts festivals enriched community life. It also was discovered that festival audiences more accurately reflect the country's demographic makeup in terms of race and gender than other types of arts audiences, bringing together members of the community who might not be in other settings where they can interact with each other. 76% of arts festivals were entirely or partially free; and more than half of survey respondents with children brought their kids along. The Chairman said that the agency has found that festivals can make art accessible to all segments of society. Festivals also have the power to increase tourism, boost local economies, and brand communities as arts destinations. She mentioned Spoleto Festival USA (Charleston, South Carolina), JazzFest (New Orleans, Louisiana), South-by-Southwest (Austin, Texas), ArtPrize (Grand Rapids, Michigan), and the National Storytelling Festival (Jonesborough, Tennessee) as examples. Those festivals are part of what makes those communities special. The Chairman asked NEA Director of Design Jason Schupbach to the podium to introduce three festival organizers from across the country to talk about their experiences making a difference in their own communities.

Mr. Schupbach talked about the impact of festivals on communities and then introduced the first presenter Lisa Sims and invited her to come to the podium.

(A PowerPoint featuring images of and about the festival were projected on a screen behind her throughout the presentation.)

Lisa Sims talked about the Richmond Folk Festival in Richmond, VA. She said that

she can't overstate how important the Richmond Folk Festival and its predecessor, the National Folk Festival, is to the city of Richmond. This year marks the 11th year of the festival, which has dramatically made a positive impact on the community by bringing diverse groups together. She gave an overview of Richmond's history to give some context. 200,000 people a year come to the three-day event. Festival organizers set out to very deliberately to create an event that would showcase the arts and be a signature event for Richmond and bring the community together. The National Folk Festival and the National Council for Traditional Arts have a proven track record and model of inclusion. The community impact still drives the Richmond Folk Festival. Over the years, not only have they accomplished creating an inclusive successful arts event where everyone is welcome at the table, but they have educated the community about folk and traditional arts. One of the greatest challenges in early years was communicating what folk means to a very diverse community. The Richmond Folk Festival strives to present "...the best artists you've never heard of." The festival has featured Mayan sun dancers, Mexican mariachis, Indian slide guitar, Hawaiian, Native American, hip-hop, go-go, Tibetan Opera, Afro-Persian music and dance, Greek, among other traditions. This festival has reframed the arts for Richmond. Ms. Sims paused to show a portion of a video that was done by a Virginia Commonwealth University documentary film student. She said that it captures what the festival has meant to the festival goers over the last ten years.

Ms. Sims noted that the festival is popular and that children have grown into young adults attending the festival. The festival has nearly 2,000 volunteers that come back every year. Volunteers collect donations in buckets, and that has risen to more than \$100,000 per year. The festival does school performances with artists in advance with the festival. The festival also works with the city jail. The economic impact of many local vendors who anticipate in this massive and ever. Media partners enable the festival to have a zero advertising budget. Eleven years and seven stages and three days each year, thousands of hours of programming hundreds of thousands of attendees at \$1.4 million budget and free admission. Richmond is a community of old roots, but the festival breaks down barriers and put together people in way that very few things in Richmond have ever been able to do. Ms. Sims thanked the Council.

Mr. Schupbach introduced the second presenter, Mr. Tom Frouge, Co-Founder of ¡Globalquerque! in Albuquerque, NM, to the podium to talk about ¡Globalquerque!.

(A PowerPoint featuring images and video of and about the festival were projected on a screen behind him throughout the presentation.)

Mr. Frouge talked about the festival, which takes place over two days each September at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. He talked briefly about Avocado Artists, which he founded in 2004. ¡Globalquerque! comprises as many as 20 performances representing 17 acts from 5 continents on three stages. The festival also is accompanied by a range of outreach and educational activities for children and adults, such as a "global fiesta," a free, international film festival, a free "mini festival" for children from underserved communities, dance lessons, interactive arts workshops,

and cultural presentations and workshops. In addition, each year Globalquerque! commissions a different New Mexico visual artist to create unique image for the festival to use for the annual poster, program guide, marketing, promotion. He showed the Council the poster for the 2015 festival. ¡Globalquerque! also partners with universities and other arts and cultural organizations. Mr. Frouge thanked the festival supporters (including the NEA) and invited all to attend the festival in September.

Mr. Schupbach introduced the final presenter, Barnaby Evans, Executive Director of WaterFire.

(A PowerPoint featuring images and video of and about WaterFire were projected on a screen behind Barnaby Evans throughout the presentation.)

Mr. Evans thanked Mr. Schupbach for the introduction and thanked the National Council on the Arts. Mr. Evans thanked all the artists and volunteers. He said that the agency's focus on festivals is appropriate, as it is "the heart of where interaction with people happens." Although he has been involved in "experiments" in other places, the focus of his remarks is on some of the experiments that they have done in Providence. He said that Waterfire is hard to describe. It is art work, place, ritual, immersion, "a happening," installation, sculpture, and performance. It is a recurring free-form festival with music and performances both live and recorded with many interventions and experiments, presented approximately 20 times a year. It occurs over a nine month-period in the outdoors – on streets, in parks, bridges, rivers, and plazas. Waterfire is free to the public and always in an open public space. Everyone can be a participant, an actor, and a performer. Providence is a national showcase for the extraordinary power of creative placemaking. Artists have long been doing creative placemaking for 5,000 years and it is great that the NEA is joining them. Mr. Evans said that "Providence was graciously called a little more than a smudge beside the fast lane to Cape Cod by the Wall Street Journal." The city had engaged in a \$179 million attempt to transform the city, and it was largely done in traditional investment in moving rivers and the expected building boom they hoped for did not follow right away. What was missing was the connection of art and people. WaterFire has been a part of the revival and renewal of Providence's downtown. It has attracted visitors and commerce and has build civic pride. WaterFire has served as useful tool for bridging the gap between people and place. WaterFire attracts about a million visitors per year, 70% coming from other places. The budget for the event is \$2.4 million; a study estimated it brings in \$113 million in visitor spending. There are as many as 600 volunteers.

(Mr. Evans paused to show a brief video clip featuring WaterFire.)

Mr. Evans said that the event is very interactive and involves a lot of walking. They make an effort to rebrand Providence and make it a national destination. One of their specific efforts is to honor and highlight underrepresented communities and highlight and celebrate their traditions, skills, and expertise. There are no fancy seats or VIP

sections and everyone is allowed to go everywhere. Mr. Evans thanked the NEA and the artists that make this nation great. He concluded with video footage of a memorial service that was integrated into the activity of WaterFire.

Chairman Chu opened the floor to Council members to ask questions. Council member Israelite engaged the presenters in a discussion about the resources available to each of them and their organizations to mount the festivals.

## **VII. MOSAIC YOUTH THEATRE – PRESENTATION AND PERFORMANCE**

Chairman Chu introduced Rick Sperling, Executive Director of Mosaic in Detroit, MI, and gave a brief overview of the history and impact of the organization, which was founded in 1992.

Mr. Sperling began by asking the other guest presenters to join the table again so that there wouldn't be any empty seats.

Mr. Sperling explained that in 1992, Detroit – the city that had brought the world Motown – had virtually eliminated performing arts in the schools. This led to a vision of bringing in people together from 50 schools from diverse backgrounds to create a theater and music company. Throughout the year, Mosaic serves students at hundreds of schools. The core group of students comes from 50 different schools. The initial focus was on theater and music training, but they did not realize the impact that they were having until they surveyed the participants. Mosaic changed its mission to focus on empowering young people through professional training and great performances. Mosaic has toured Canada, Europe, Africa, the United States, and including the White House and the Kennedy Center. (Referring to fellow guest presenters Mr. Evans, Mr. Frouge, and Ms. Sims, he mentioned that the company has never been to New Mexico, Rhode Island, or Virginia.)

Mr. Sperling cited the statistics that 95% of the young people involved in Mosaic were admitted to colleges, and that this year, 100% of the graduating seniors were admitted to college. Mosaic engaged the University of Michigan to understand why the program was having such a positive impact on the youth. The University of Michigan School of Social Work & Psychology Department embarked on a three-year study. The result was the Mosaic model for youth development through the arts. It was funded by the Wallace Foundation. Their theory is "three Es": Expectation, Empowerment, and Environment. The program gives the participants a safe and nurturing environment and a feeling of a deep sense of community. The program changes young people's vision and expectations of their futures, of what they feel that they are able to do. Mr. Sperling shared that many of the students say that they do not expect to graduate from high school when they begin the program, but even after one year in the program, not only to those same students say that they plan to graduate from high school, but they talk about planning to one day attend graduate school. With Mosaic's involvement, there is music, voice, movement, and drama deeply



enhancing learning in science and math in Detroit schools. He said there was no better way to tell the Council about Mosaic than to see the program in action. Mr. Sperling had the Mosaic students come to the area in front of the conference room where the children gave a very moving theater and musical performance that featured songs by Sam Cooke ("A Change Is Gonna Come") and Macklemore & Ryan Lewis ("Can't Hold Us") as well as a scene from Shakespeare's "The Tempest."

The students received a standing ovation. They then introduced themselves. They are all between the ages of 15-18 years old. Chairman Chu thanked them and opened the floor to questions or comments from the Council.

Council members Hodes and Ramaswamy noted how "deeply moving" the performance was.

### **VIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS/VOTING RESULTS**

Chairman Chu announced that the National Council on the Arts had reviewed the applications and guidelines presented to them and that a tally of the ballots revealed that all recommendations for funding and rejections had passed.

After asking if there were additional comments or questions and hearing none, the Chairman thanked the NEA staff and thanked the Council members. She said that she was looking forward to seeing them Council at the next meeting in October, and then adjourned the meeting.

(Gavel.)

(Whereupon, at 11:12 am, the proceedings of the 185<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Council on the Arts were adjourned.)

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly M. Jefferson  
Council Specialist  
National Endowment for the Arts