

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

NEARTS

A GREAT NATION DESERVES GREAT ART

NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS & LAURA BUSH • 2004 • LIBRARY OF CONGRESS & LAURA BUSH

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INTRODUCING
TED KOOSER
 NEW POET LAUREATE



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NEA Arts Journalism Institutes

Improving Arts Coverage in America

“It felt like three weeks of academic and practical work crammed into twelve days.” That was how one journalist felt after completing the NEA Arts Journalism Institute at the University of Southern California, which focused on theater criticism. Another reporter admitted that he “went from abject fear of writing reviews to a palpable easiness” after finishing the grueling lecture and seminar schedule. The experience for many was summed up in the words of this journalist: “Perfect, perfect, perfect.”

Inspiring reporters such as these to cover the arts is just what the three NEA Arts Journalism Institutes were designed to do. In June 2004, the NEA announced the establishment of three Institutes to focus on improving arts criticism in

America. Journalists who cover the arts for media outlets located outside the country’s largest media markets were invited. Institutes for dance critics were hosted by the American Dance Festival at Duke University; for classical music and opera critics at Columbia University; and theater critics at the University of Southern California.

“The vitality of the arts depends more than most people think on lively and informed criticism, especially local reviews and coverage from their own communities.

Outside our major cities, journalists who cover the arts often are overextended with multiple beats and assignments that allow few opportunities to concentrate on various artistic disciplines,” said NEA Chairman Dana Gioia.

The NEA is providing \$1 million toward funding the first two years of the program. Each site will host a two-

or three-week institute each year for up to 30 attendees. All of the participants’ expenses are covered including travel, room, board, materials, instruction, and admittance to performances.

The NEA Arts Journalism Institutes establish the importance of arts journalism through lectures and seminars with leaders in higher education, the arts, and journalism. The attendees work with senior journalists and faculty members to improve their viewing, analytical, and writing skills. In addition, participants attend performances that cover a wide variety of genres and styles, as well as rehearsals and behind-the-scenes meetings with artists and administrators.



Above: Fellows of the NEA Arts Journalism Institute at Columbia University. Photo: Matt Peiken



National Arts
Journalism Program **najp**

Arts Institutes Letters

We consider this Institute to be the most important of activities in communicating the value of dance to the greater community. After all, it is not easy to verbalize what is generally a nonverbal art form.

—Charles L. Reinhart,
Director, American Dance Festival

The program the NEA's grant makes possible will provide journalists from all over the country with a wonderful means of learning more about classical music and opera, and over time it should have a demonstrable positive effect on American journalism in that area.

—Nicholas Lemann,
Dean, Columbia School of Journalism

First-rate arts criticism helps strengthen cultural institutions and the communities they serve.

—Geoffrey Cowan,
Dean, Annenberg School for Communication

Thank you for establishing the NEA/NAJP Classical Music Institute. My name is Erin Auerbach, and I am a fine arts reporter at *The Press-Enterprise* in Riverside, California.

I was a participant in the program, and I learned more about classical music and opera in two weeks than I did in my formal education. (I hold a Masters Degree in Theater Arts and I trained classically as a singer for many years.)

Not only were the lessons in basic musicology interesting, but also the discussions about the business of high arts gave me many great ideas, which I am starting to work on now that I am home. Working with arts journalists is a great way to start.

The concerts and operas were glorious, and it was two weeks that I will never forget. I am so grateful for the opportunity you afforded to 25 journalists. I know that USC and Duke will be sponsoring their own programs, and I hope those reporters are able to benefit as much as I did.

Erin Auerbach
Riverside, California

I was one of the 25 NEA Arts Journalism Institute fellows at Columbia. I want to thank you for funding this fabulous learning experience. It was inspiring. I came back revved up and ready to apply what I learned. Again I have some more tools to improve my reporting and writing and another perspective. This is just what I needed, and hopefully I can continue to learn from what I have learned at the institute. I have a whole new outlook on covering the arts. It was "the arts journalism experience of a lifetime." I felt privileged to be a part of this program. I was impressed with the positive and nurturing support. Thanks so much! It was my pleasure to be a part of this program. I hope you will continue to fund the institute. Thanks for this memorable experience.

Terry Rindfleisch
La Crosse, Wisconsin

2nd Annual Poetry Pavilion

at the National Book Festival

Strains of formal and free verse filled the crisp autumn air, and audiences listened to masters and emerging artists, inside the NEA-sponsored Poetry Pavilion at the National Book Festival. For the second straight year, poetry was featured at the festival and the Arts Endowment sponsored its roster of artists in partnership with the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. The fourth annual National Book Festival, sponsored by the Library of Congress and hosted by Mrs. Laura Bush, was held on the National Mall in Washington, DC on October 9th.

The Poetry Pavilion featured 12 poets reading from their collections and discussing their work. The poets came from across the country, and represented diverse poetic styles: Shirley Geok-Lin Lim, R. S. Gwynn, H. L. Hix, Suji Kwock Kim, Timothy Murphy, Linda Pastan, Benjamin Sáenz, William Jay Smith, and Natasha

Trethewey. The day's special guest was Ted Kooser, the newly appointed US Poet Laureate. "It's like being home when you read," his poetry, former Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey has said. NEA Chairman Dana Gioia hosted the Poetry Pavilion, and read selections of classic American poetry with David Lehman, the series editor of *The Best American Poetry*, which Lehman initiated in 1988.

Chairman Gioia also said, "Poetry is our most concise, memorable, and expressive way of using words. At the most profound moments in our lives—births, weddings, deaths, and funerals—people turn to poetry to find language strong enough to bear the weight of their experiences. To recognize the importance of poetry in our culture, the NEA is proud to support a special Poetry Pavilion at the National Book Festival."

The crowd listens intently at the Poetry Pavilion. Photos: Jim Saah





Benjamin Sáenz



William Jay Smith



Suji Kwock Kim

ON THE ROAD

By the toe of my boot,
 a pebble of quartz,
 one drop of the earth's milk,
 dirty and cold.
 I held it to the light
 and could almost see through it
 into the grand explanation.
 Put it back, something told me,
 put it back and keep walking.

—Ted Kooser
US Poet Laureate

from *Delights & Shadows* (2004); reprinted by
 permission of Copper Canyon Press. Ted Kooser
 received NEA Literature Fellowships in 1976 and 1984.



David Lehman

Timothy Murphy



Shirley Geok-Lin Lim

Aging Creatively

A New Study Shows Results



Are older Americans who enjoy the arts better off than those who don't? The preliminary report of a four-year study says they are. Initiated and funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the study "Creativity and Aging" is discovering that on-going, professionally conducted arts programming (including music, poetry, painting, jewelry making, drama, and other artistic pursuits) makes older adults happier and healthier.

Now into its fourth year, the study measures the mental and physical health, as well as the social activity, of 300 older people at arts centers in Brooklyn, San Francisco, and the Washington DC metropolitan area. Half of these groups are enrolled in community-based cultural programs on a weekly basis; the other half are not, serving as a comparison control group. Participants range in age from 65 to 99 years old and had to be living independently at the beginning of the study. Each year, participants receive a variety of tests, responding to questionnaires assessing their general health, mental health, and social life.

Above: The Senior Singers' Chorale, from the Levine School of Music, performs at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Photo: Keith Weller. Right: Mrs. Susie Robinson of the CEYA Poetry Ensemble rehearsing with artist Paul Finocchiaro. Photo: Chenoa Estrada

According to study findings, participants who are actively involved in high-quality arts programs reported better overall health, fewer doctor visits, a lower use of medications, fewer falls, more energy, and increased involvement in social activities in comparison to the non-arts control group. In addition, arts participants reported lower levels of loneliness, higher morale, and better vision than their counterparts. These findings are all statistically significant.

The study is conducted and coordinated by the Center on Aging, Health & Humanities, at George Washington University in Washington, DC. Dr. Gene Cohen, primary investigator for the study, points out that, "These findings are indeed remarkable in the amount of stabilization and improvement observed in those with an average age of 80 who are engaged in arts programs. After all, 80 years of age is greater than life expectancy. This study is showing true health promotion and prevention effects in an age group that typically has an increased risk for long-term care."

The three collaborating sites are Elders Share the Arts (NY), the Center for Elders and Youth in the Arts at the Institute on Aging (CA), and the Levine School of Music (DC). The Arts Endowment developed a public-private partnership to sponsor and monitor the study with the Center for Mental Health Services, SAMHSA, DHHS; the National Institute of Mental Health, NIH; the AARP; the Stella and Charles Guttman Foundation; and the International Foundation for Music Research.



National Medal of Arts

at the White House

The White House was the setting for an unforgettable reception honoring seven legendary American artists and one foundation with the National Medal of Arts. “These eight medalists have significantly enriched the cultural life of our nation through their creativity, teaching, and beneficent work,” Dana Gioia, Chairman of the NEA, remarked at the November 17th celebration. The National Medal of Arts, the nation’s highest honor for artistic excellence, was presented to each recipient by the President and Mrs. Laura Bush.

The 2004 National Medal of Arts Recipients

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation,

philanthropic foundation—New York, NY

Ray Bradbury, author—Los Angeles, CA

Carlisle Floyd, opera composer—Houston, TX

Frederick Hart, sculptor—Atlanta, GA

Anthony Hecht, poet—Washington, DC

John Ruthven, wildlife artist—Georgetown, OH

Vincent Scully, architectural historian
and educator—New Haven, CT

Twyla Tharp, choreographer, artistic director,
dancer—New York, NY

The National Medal of Arts, established by Congress in 1984, is awarded by the President to those who have made extraordinary contributions to the creation, growth, and support of the arts in the United States. Each year, the Endowment seeks nominations from individuals and organizations across the country. The National Council on the Arts, the Endowment’s Presidentially-appointed and Senate-confirmed advisory body, reviews the nominations and provides recommendations to the President, who selects the recipients.

The National Endowment for the Arts gratefully acknowledges The President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities for its support.



The NEA invites you to nominate a deserving artist or organization for the 2005 National Medal of Arts by April 11, 2005:
<http://www.arts.gov/honors/medals>



Above: The President and Mrs. Laura Bush with Ray Bradbury.

Below, from left to right: John Ruthven, Twyla Tharp, and Anne Tatlock of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Photos: Susan Sterner

National Heritage Fellows

at the US Capitol



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The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts—both new and established—bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the nation's largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases.

Clockwise, from top left: Rep. Norm Dicks (WA) with Gerald "Subiyay" Miller; Rep. Louise Slaughter (NY) with Charles "Chuck" T. Campbell; Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. (IL) with Koko Taylor and NEA Chairman Dana Gioia; Sen. Lamar Alexander (TN) with NCA member Mary Costa; Rep. Tom Udall (NM) with Eliseo and Paula Rodriguez. Photos: Robert Burgess

ON THE COVER: Ted Kooser, US Poet Laureate, at the Poetry Pavilion. Photo: Jim Saah



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