

**Minutes of the
LOUISIANA STATE ARTS COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
Brunner Gallery
Covington, LA
December 20, 2002
10:00 a.m.**

WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER

Christine Weeks, chair, opened the quarterly meeting of the Louisiana State Arts Council (LSAC) which was held at Brunner Gallery in Covington, at 10:10 a.m. The following members were present.

Anna Brakenridge
Susan Brunner
Jose Canseco
Freddie DeCourt
Marion Drennen

Neil Early
Angela Hammerli
Sara Herrington
Christine Weeks
Frederick Zeagler

Council members **absent** from the meeting included:

Brandi Bollinger
Mary Joseph (proxy to Chair)
Rosemary Patterson
Susan Reed
Molly Sooter

Susan Turner (proxy to Chair)
Cynthia Warner (proxy to Chair)
LeAnne Weill
Juana Woodard

Staff members representing the Louisiana Division of the Arts in attendance were:

Sam Breaux
Lisa Green
Kitty Pheny
Ann Russo

Also in attendance was Dana La Fonta, Arts Coordinator for the St. Tammany Parish Arts Commission.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Ms. Herrington moved to accept the minutes of the August 23rd meeting. Mr. Early seconded the motion. The motion carried and the minutes were approved as presented.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

LSAC, along with the Louisiana Division of the Arts (LDOA) would like to give a special thanks to Ms. Brunner and staff for hosting the meeting at Brunner Gallery – a beautiful space.

Committee Assignments/Officers/Terms of Office

Ms. Weeks referenced the LSAC Committee handout, which lists the members of each Committee, along with information on who will serve two and four year terms. Ms. Weeks also announced the Executive Committee and LSAC officers. Other standing committees were determined after members had previously stated their preference. It was noted that each individual Committee would elect a Chair for that Committee. It was noted that the Standing Committee meetings have typically been held after the regular council meeting.

alendar of Events

A Calendar of Events listing of statewide funded programs was provided to LSAC members. LDOA encouraged LSAC members to attend events in their area to show their support of arts related projects in their community. It was noted that this information would be provided for each LSAC meeting.

DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FY 2003 Budget Update

Ms. Breaux referenced the Mid-Year Budget Summary that provides a listing of where the funding comes from and how it is distributed amongst the Division's programs. The Summary also provides information on how the Division has sustained its budget cuts for FY 2003 – a total of \$500,630.

Income is primarily received from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the State of Louisiana. There are five standard categories of NEA funding for State Arts Agencies. These funds are divided based on population, program, etc., and some are competitive. Some of the funding specifically goes to Arts-in-Education and Folklife.

Funding from the NEA totals \$671,300, allocated as follows: \$382,300 – Basic State Grant; \$55,500 – Arts-in-Education Grant; \$98,500 – Outreach to Underserved; \$90,000 – Challenge America; and \$45,000 – Folklife. Our current adjusted general appropriation is \$4.7 million. The Regional Folklife Program, which places folklorists in the various regions of the state for the development of Folklife projects, accounts for \$250,000. The Percent for Art Program funding of \$212,000 comes from the Office of Facility Planning and Control for purposes of administration and merely passes through our budget. The money doesn't flow through our account. Funds are requested and forwarded directly to the artists. Total income for the Division is \$5,854,959.

To give a broad view of the expenses, half of the grant funds go to the Decentralized Arts Funding (DAF) Program - \$2,435,634, distributed to each of the eight regions and then to each parish (approximately .50 per person per parish). The remainder is dispersed as follows: \$2,035,000 for Statewide Grants; \$250,000 for the Regional Folklife Program; \$110,000 for Special Initiatives; \$212,000 for Percent for Art; and \$812,335 for LDOA administration and operating expenses.

The next breakdown gives an idea of how the Statewide Grants are distributed. This comes from collaboration in the field for various programs. Each arts panel/program is listed, along with its allotment for the year, which totals \$2,035,000.

The only unusual listing within this breakdown is the line item for Challenge America. The NEA has not always had this program. This year LDOA received \$90,000 and distributed these funds to nine projects throughout the state.

Special Initiatives to statewide service agencies are as follows: \$50,000 – Louisiana Partnership for the Arts (LPA); \$30,000 – Louisiana Alliance for Arts Education; and \$30,000 – Louisiana Presenters Network. These

Ms. Breaux noted that LDOA took a budget cut during the Legislative Session. The cuts received were roughly based on line items that were attached to the budget the year before (\$100,000 from the Regional Folklife Program; \$100,000 from the Decentralized Arts Funding Program; and \$100,000 from the Statewide Grants Program). Unfortunately, line items added the year before are the first to go when budget cuts are being determined. LDOA also sustained a \$17,974 cut in operations. Cuts during legislative session totaled \$317,974. LDOA was slated to lose a lot more, but we were able to recapture our funding. The primary focus was on retaining \$3 million dollars in grant money rather than getting the \$300,000 back.

It was explained that for the upcoming fiscal year, projections for state income became tenuous and it was immediately announced that we would undergo a budget freeze. During this first budget freeze, the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (DCRT) was required to cut \$2.5 million. Every Office within DCRT was required to take on their fair share. The Office of Cultural Development (OCD) was required to cut \$400,000. OCD contains the Divisions of Archaeology, Arts and Historic Preservation. LDOA sustained a cut of \$200,000.

Originally, it was anticipated that we would have had to cut even more. Some DCRT funds are untouchable and this makes it even more difficult for Offices to sustain cuts. DCRT Secretary Phillip Jones recommended cutting Pass Through funds, approximately \$1.5 million, by 50%. The argument was that these funds do not sustain the same impact as the DCRT programs. After about a month of conversation and discussion, legislators approved cutting Pass Through funds by 50%. This was a fair compromise, but still left a couple of hundred thousand dollars to be cut.

DCRT looked at two pots of money that would not cut staff or erase programs. The first option was the Division's grant money (although the money had already been spent). The second option was the State Library's Technology Fund. After a

lot of deliberation, Secretary Jones felt that it should be the State Library fund because it would be easier to get this funding back as opposed to recapturing the grant funding.

At a recent meeting, Jones articulated that the grant programs were still popular and still needed and would not be cut unless absolutely necessary. However, the Division still sustained a \$182,656 cut in addition to the \$317,974 hit during the legislative session for a total of \$500,630 in cuts. A \$500,000 cut for LDOA, out of the \$5 million budget, is huge. This depleted LDOA's discretionary fund. The breakdown of how the \$182,656 cut was absorbed is as follows: State Arts Conference - \$65,000; Governor's Arts Awards - \$20,000; Professional Services - \$22,000; Arts/Tourism Special Initiative funds - \$70,000; and Division Assessment - \$5,656. LDOA decided to cut these programs before cutting the grants because the grants have more impact throughout the state.

It was noted that legislators agreed to use the Rainy Day fund to ease and absorb the blows. Other than that, state government would have to have another budget cut. Almost immediately after the use of the Rainy Day fund, there was discussion of another budget cut that may be coming at a later date. In the spring, we may have to look at cutting the grants programs. Ms. Breaux is working on a memo to distribute to the field to let them know where we are, where we could have been, what bullets we've dodged and what we may face in the future.

A conversation was had with DCRT attorney Henry Bernstein because the grant agreements are contracts/legal documents, and LDOA wants to ensure that all issues are addressed. There is a clause within the grant agreement that protects us to some extent. LDOA is not suggesting that grants will be cut at a certain percentage across the board. We have to be compassionate and strategic while being aware of what is appropriate and what is not. For example, the DAF program goes puts money in parishes where there is little funding for arts projects. A first step would be to raise a warning flag for grantees to be conservative on how funds are being spent and encourage them to cut some corners just in case. Although our discretionary funds are gone, our programs are not discretionary and should be made available.

It was asked that if it becomes necessary to not fund all of the grants, how would this be implemented? If the organization has already spent all of the funding, would LDOA require them to return any funds?

Ms. Breaux indicated that at no point could LDOA evenly cut all programs by 5% because some are federal funds and they can't be cut. Percent for Art could not get cut because it is bond money that is not part of that pot that we are considering. It doesn't always work across the board. Conversations are being held throughout the arts community and the at the last LPA meeting we informed the Partnership of what may be coming down the pike and asked for their feedback and input as constituents. In addition, this was an opportunity to help them realize exactly what this would mean. LDOA also began talking to constituents about FY04 because it's projected that it will not be much better than FY03. During the LPA meeting, it was stated that most organizations needed to feel the hurt. Hopefully, this would strengthen them as a group and bring them together for advocacy purposes statewide. Opinions were very bold and strategic in using advocacy and lobbying. It was impressive to hear that from the constituents. Everyone is on notice and should be thinking of this and taking suggestions from the field in reshaping our strategies. The grants are why we are here and they pay for important activities throughout the state.

It was commented that LDOA should look at where money is being spent and how it's being utilized to reach the most people. Ms. Breaux stated that many of our programs are currently doing this. For example, Louisiana Voices (get background and description) teaches everything from music to occupational Folklife. The program trains teachers to utilize the study guides and have a significant impact. The Arts-in-Education Basic program works to integrate art into the basic curriculum. There is lots of conversation and discussion during panel meetings surrounding impact. Panelists hesitate if the impact is not evident. It was noted that we are moving in a good direction.

Mr. Early noted that this is a big part of what the Alliance is doing as well through its *ArtsBridge* program which travels throughout the state. Awareness is the key.

In recent years, there has been some good collaboration with the Department of Education (DOE), but they should not depend on LDOA to provide in-class instruction. LDOA should be looked at as a resource. Has there been any dialogue about this? Definitely. Mr. Early pointed out that there have been significant changes thus far, especially in elementary education, not just to teach art but the other education areas as well. It's now coming from both directions and even the University level is helping with this project.

Ms. Weeks commented that in every region where we presently have Regional Folklife Program, the Folklorist is located at a University and awareness is raised on both sides.

Percent for Art Program Highlights – Kitty Pheny

Public Art is about art in public places. As of the 90's, it's about the art of making places public. Today public art is the plaza. For example, the project at Southeastern Louisiana University is asking the artist to come up with a conceptual design for the plaza, working with the architect in designing the landscape, etc. Public Art is a civic tool to enhance and enrich buildings. Public art creates a unique community identity. Ms. Pheny presented a PowerPoint presentation of the King County Public Art Program in Seattle Washington.

Louisiana Division of the Arts *Percent for Art Program:*

■ **Our Program**

- 1999 legislation, Representative Diane Winston of Covington authored
- Structure for the program is based on the national model, along with input from Louisiana Arts Administrators
- A 7-member art selection panel makes recommendations to the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Cultural Development for final approval

■ **Most Important Aspect**

The most important aspect of our program is community buy-in – identifying the community to be impacted (the building user community). The public art should connect to the user community, and in turn there should be a sense of ownership within that community. Community members must not only be informed of the process, but also be directly involved in the process.

■ **Acquiring Work**

There are three means of acquiring work based on artistic merit and appropriateness for the site:

- Site-specific commissions
- Structurally incorporated art components, artists on design teams
- Direct Purchase – not as common for this program

■ **Maintenance**

Art will be maintained through maintenance funds for each building. A component built into the contracts, a professional conservator for each project will submit a long-term maintenance report.

■ **Examples**

- Baton Rouge Community College – typical site-specific
LDOA entered into contracts with artists selected for commissions for three projects – Robert Warrens, Alan Gerson and Michael Cain. All three pieces will be in two different buildings—the Louisiana Building and the Student Center—at Baton Rouge Community College.
- Claiborne Collection – direct purchase (not as typical)
The Claiborne Building was finished and the Division of Administration found Capital Outlay funds to provide art for the building. There was a tight timeline and circumstances dictated a speedy process. There were 52 pieces purchased during the selection process, representing the work of 31 Louisiana artists. There will be a total of three commissioned works: 1) Stained Glass – Sam Corso; 2) Wall; and 3) Sculpture. The artists for the Wall and Sculpture Commissions are yet to be determined. A call to artists will be distributed at a later date.

Ms. Drennen commented that the selection process has a fatal flaw based upon her observation of the Claiborne Collection selection panel process. She stated that during the first round of panel selection excellent works were eliminated and not considered again. Ms. Drennen sensed that this was due to the fact that there were mostly non-artist professionals serving on the panel. She commented that artists should have more say in the collective process at the beginning level. It was suggested that it be made into a two-step process: 1st – Artists selection; 2nd – Selection Panel. Allow the artists to debate on whether or not the artwork is good enough and then allow the full selection committee to view the remaining works. Ms. Drennen also felt that the selection committee was made up of too many people.

Ms. Breaux mentioned that there were professional artists on the committee and there always will be, and that there is a process of acceptance higher up. The Assistant Secretary of OCD has final approval. It is the goal of the Assistant

Secretary to ensure that the artwork selected is of high quality and is appropriate. There are certain criteria to adhere to and the call to artists includes requirement of a résumé, which gives an indication of whether or not the artist is a professional, upper level, experienced artist. In addition, panels are made up this way because public art is art engaged in conversation with a particular group of users who are important to the process and interacting with the art afterward.

What are the criteria of a professional artist? Basically, we require three years of professional experience, a one-page résumé, gallery affiliation, etc.

It was noted that much research has been done on *Percent for Art* programs throughout the United States, and that our guidelines are based on input from the field. It would be disastrous to have any type of majority on the selection panel. All communities should be represented. You're never going to avoid anyone saying, "I don't like that." As long as you can show a fair and diplomatic process, then that's the best way for a successful program. When talking about public dollars, it would be disastrous to not include the entire selection panel. The panel structure is in the legislation, but perhaps this should be re-visited. It was noted that New Orleans and Shreveport utilize the same make-up. New Orleans has a smaller committee and Shreveport has a larger panel.

Ms. Brunner questioned if there is a way to put the criteria in line with the selection of the site and the maintenance and how the piece will actually look in the site? Do we look at the value of the piece? Are we looking at artists whose works are already valuable and will continue to become valuable? Is this a collection that we want to grow and nurture into an incredible collection. Ms. Breaux replied that the criteria do exist, and that the program is open to all professional artists.

Mr. DeCourt briefly spoke on behalf of having every community represented in the selection process and stated that maintenance is the best thing that he has heard regarding the program.

The nature of direct purchase is putting out a call for existing work. Some of the best artists do not have artwork readily available. The selection panel saw slides of the artist's work and selected works specifically for the Claiborne building. This was not a process to further the State Arts Collection. Direct purchase is not a mechanism that will be used very often. This program will mostly utilize the process for site-specific commissions.

Overall, there were 52 artworks selected for the Claiborne Collection, and one really good thing is that the artists are represented from every part of the state. Will LDOA keep track of the maintenance? Yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of FY2003 Artist Roster Recommendations

The **State Artist Roster** is a list of artists and folklorists whose qualifications have been reviewed by the Division director and program staff, and are recommended as outstanding representatives of their artistic disciplines. Appointment to the Roster is for a period of five years. A listing on the State Artist Roster is a designation only. Neither a grant award nor a guarantee of employment is associated with the listing. Any number of artists (no minimum or maximum number) may be added to the Roster. Applications for this program are accepted twice a year: August 1 and December 1.

Ms. Breaux referenced the synopsis within the LSAC packets and stated that LDOA had received 12 roster applications for the December 1 deadline. Nine artists were recommended for acceptance to the Roster. The synopsis shows a breakdown of the applications by artistic discipline. It also provides demographic and regional information.

Mr. Canseco and Mr. DeCourt moved to accept the Artist Roster recommendations. Ms. Drennen seconded the motion. The motion carried and the recommendations to the Roster were accepted as presented.

Election of Executive Committee and Officers

Mr. Early moved to accept the recommendations of the Nominating Committee for the election of Executive Committee members and Officers. Mr. Canseco seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Early stated that, on behalf of the Louisiana Alliance for Arts Education, he would be seeking judges/evaluators for selection of the Arts Ambassadors and Creative Ticket Awards. In the spring, LSAC members will receive an e-mail asking them to serve on the panel for the evaluation process. Please consider sharing your expertise.

Round Table Discussion: Fiscal Year 2004

As stated at the LPA meeting, it was recommended to decrease the pots of funding for each level. If we continue to cushion the field, then they would not come together as a group to advocate for funding. Many others followed with the same recommendation. Share in the hurt to share in the solution.

Mr. Early noted that meeting with people has been very successful. Educating the field is critical. Meet with artists and educators to discuss the needs of the field to try and develop more programs. Education is a big piece, not just with legislators, but the mayors, police jurors, chambers, etc. The Economic Impact Study toolkit is a very valuable tool and should be utilized. Having art and music in the curriculum increase the math and science scores. Those who don't know this, don't support this.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

OTHER

Ms. Weeks encouraged all members to attend the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts meetings and be supportive of their efforts. "Collective wisdom allows one to think outside the box."

LSAC members were reminded that the next meeting would be Monday, March 24th in Baton Rouge.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.