

Courtesy, N.C. Arts Council

A violinist practices during a break at the Eastern Music Festival in Greensboro, one of 14 statewide arts resources designated by the N.C. Arts Council.

# The North Carolina Arts Council

by Lyman Collins

The Division of the Arts Council within the Department of Cultural Resources is the principal conduit for state funds going to individual artists and arts organizations. The division, with a staff of 22, makes grant awards, provides services and information, and stimulates support for artists through its five sections: community development, folklife, music/dance, theatre arts, and visual/literary arts. The division also distributes grants in categories which can apply to more than one of these five sections.

Established by executive order\* in 1964 by then Gov. Terry Sanford, the N.C. Arts Council

became a statutory agency in 1967. In 1971, the Arts Council became a part of the newly created Department of Art, Culture, and History; the name changed in 1973 to Department of Cultural Resources. In 1981, the Arts Council became a full division within DCR, in the process absorbing the Theatre Arts Section and the Office of Folklife Programs.

The state arts council emerged after the establishment of several successful *local* arts councils in the state. In 1949, the first permanent local arts council in the nation was founded in Winston-Salem. Similar efforts sprang up in the 1950s and 60s in Asheville, Charlotte, and

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\*Executive Order "Establishing the North Carolina State Arts Council," December 3, 1964, in *The Addresses and Papers of Governor Terry Sanford 1961-65*, Memory F. Mitchell, ed., Division of Public Papers, State Department of Archives and History, 1966, p. 538.

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Greensboro. Aware of how these councils benefited local artists and arts groups, Sanford launched a statewide council.

From its beginning, the N.C. Arts Council has worked to support local councils and to stimulate their growth. In 1967 there were 18 local arts councils in 17 counties; today 93 local arts councils exist in 87 counties. In most instances, local arts councils are organized as private, non-profit organizations; they are not state agencies. These groups have annual operating budgets ranging from \$1.2 million in Charlotte to \$1,722 in Hyde County. They depend upon federal, state, and local funds from public and private sources. Local arts councils are often the "local distributing agents" for Grassroots Arts Program funds (see "community development" section below) and can also apply for state funds in other grant categories administered by the Division of the Arts Council. Referring to the "arts council" requires a differentiation between the local arts councils and the state arts council.

In addition to the local/state distinction, one should note that the term "arts council" can refer to the division within the Department of

Cultural Resources as well as to the board originally established by Gov. Sanford. A 24-member group of private citizens appointed to three-year terms by the governor, the N.C. Arts Council determines policy and acts on grant applications—upon recommendations from the staff of the Division of the Arts Council—for most of the programs listed below. Theatre Arts is a notable exception. A separate 13-person board, a holdover from the previous departmental organization, acts on these grants; the secretary of DCR appoints the members of this board. Technically, these two boards make recommendations to the secretary of DCR, who awards the grants. As a practical matter, these two boards make the final decisions on the awards since the secretary has virtually always accepted their recommendations. In recent literature and public announcements, the division has been referring to itself as the "N.C. Arts Council" and calling the 24-member council the "Board."

Below is a description of the major programs and grant categories of the Division of the Arts Council, listed alphabetically within each of the division's five sections. Six other programs involve more than one section and are listed in descending order, by amount of grant awards for 1981-82. The total amount of grant awards (not including administrative costs) relating to each program and each section for fiscal year 1981-82 is included.

Mary Regan, executive director, N.C. Arts Council.



Michael Matros

#### **Community Development Section—Total Grants: \$999,855**

1. *Artists-in-Residence Coordinator*. This person works with three separate programs:

a) the National Endowment for the Arts "Artists-in-Schools" program, which places professional artists in residencies in elementary and secondary school (\$59,483, NEA);

b) *Public School Challenge Grants*, awarded to local school systems to encourage artist residencies (\$25,225 total, in grants of \$5,000 or less to be matched one-to-one by local school budgets); and

c) *Visiting Artists*, a cooperative program with the Department of Community Colleges which supports professional artists in a residency program through the community college system (\$1,000,000, through the Department of Community Colleges, see article on page 60).

2. *Governor's Business Council on the Arts and Humanities Awards Program*. An annual award competition for businesses and cultural organizations that support the arts and humanities, held in coordination with the business council (no monetary award). See article on page 37 for a description of this

program, including a list of the award winners.

3. *Grassroots Arts Program.* Established by the General Assembly in 1977, this was the nation's first program to channel state funds to local arts initiatives on a per capita basis. By 1982, the amount of the state appropriation had grown from about 5 to 15 cents per person (\$850,000). Since this must be matched by local funds, at least \$1.7 million was budgeted for arts-related ventures at the local level throughout the state. The Arts Council approves a "local distributing agent" (LDA) for these funds; 67 of the 93 local arts councils are LDAs. No LDA exists in the other 33 counties; the Arts Council oversees the expenditures of the grassroots funds in these areas. Local citizens, through the LDAs, decide how the monies will be spent. Consequently, grassroots funds have supported everything from street fairs to modern dance troupes.

4. *Local Government Challenge Grants.* Awarded to municipal and county governments, these grants (\$5,000 or less) must be matched on a one-to-one basis by the local government. To

receive this grant, a local government must increase its appropriation by at least the amount of the grant. The grants have helped spawn new local arts councils and fund groups ranging from the Southeastern Oratorio Society in Columbus County to the Cleveland County Working Artists Guild. (\$63,947)

5. *Minority Affairs Coordinator.* This person has a dual role: a) promoting concerns of racial minorities in all Arts Council programs; and b) serving as the executive director, on loan from the Arts Council, of the N.C. Cultural Arts Coalition, a private, non-profit advocacy group for minorities in the arts. Pat Funderburk, the coordinator, works with local arts councils to ensure minorities are included in various programs and with the state-level activities. Through the N.C. Cultural Arts Coalition, she does actual programming. "The Cultural Coalition has seven programs in the works now," says Funderburk, "including statewide literary and jazz competitions and a conference about improving the image of blacks in the media."

## What Do Artists Want?

by Wallace Kaufman

In January and February of 1978, the N.C. Arts Council sponsored a series of seven hearings in the old State Capitol in Raleigh. Separate hearings were sponsored for crafts, arts councils, dance, drama, arts education, photography and filmmaking, literature, visual arts and architecture, and music. The N.C. Arts Council, in planning its program for the next five years, wanted to incorporate what various arts groups wanted and needed. The Arts Council had plenty of raw material from which to craft its plan.

Crafts people wanted scholarships, more sales opportunities, and state commissioned works for public buildings.

Dancers wanted subsidies to in-state groups sponsoring public performances so their

companies would not be forced to produce for expenses only.

Community theaters asked for paid directors. Struggling new companies needed subsidies. Avant-garde groups wanted touring help to liberate them from the scarcity of local funds.

Novelists and would-be novelists wanted grants to presses to encourage risk-taking.

Orchestras wanted more money to pay musicians, and composers wanted subsidized residency programs and a preference system guiding grant money to groups which played music by modern American composers.

Photographers wanted to participate in a mandatory percentage of building funds allotted for art. They and filmmakers wanted state production facilities and marketing help.

Architects and artists wanted the state to cease skimping on funds for designing and furnishing interiors of state buildings.

Everybody wanted help with business, administrative, and legal details that ate up their patience, concentration, and morale.

The records of these hearings reinforce my suspicion that most artists have a secret nostalgia for what they perceive would have been their condition had they lived in the Renaissance. What survives in memory is not cold castles, sickness, chamber pots, and the brutish peasantry into which most potential artists were born and died. No, we remember the wealthy patrons who liberated artists like Michelangelo and Shakespeare. Never mind

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*Wallace Kaufman, a free-lance writer and poet from Pittsboro, served on the N.C. Arts Council from 1978 to 1981*

6. *Summer Intern Program.* This program supports qualified persons seeking entry into the arts administration field. (\$4,200)

**Folklife Section—Total Grants: \$7,000**

The Office of Folklife Programs documents folklife through a wide range of audio and visual efforts. It has produced several major statewide folklife festivals and is now coordinating the planning stages of The British American Festival. Unlike the other sections of the Arts Council, the Folklife section places its primary emphasis on production rather than grants. For more on this section, see article on page 68.

7. *Blues to Bluegrass.* Supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and fees from local school systems, this program pays a day residency fee of \$125 to traditional musicians to conduct a workshop, including two live concerts for school audiences. The Office of Folklife Programs provides a teacher's kit to help organize classroom study (\$7,000, NEA).

**Music/Dance Section—Total Grants: \$197,110**

The music/dance director attempts to stimulate a wider audience for music and dance in the state by working with North Carolina-based companies and by trying to bring national music/dance groups to the state. In 1982, for example, the Arts Council, with the assistance of the National Endowment for the Arts, awarded Davidson College a dance grant to present the Oakland Ballet. "We're a little school trying to do great things," says Davidson's College Union Director C. Shaw Smith. "We could not have gotten the Oakland Ballet without the assistance of the Arts Council."

8. *Dance Presenter Program.* This program helps book nationally recognized, out-of-state professional dance companies, providing up to \$7,500 per sponsor per season. Through 1982, NEA provided the majority of these funds. Beginning this year only state money will be used. (\$141,781, \$113,129 of that through NEA)

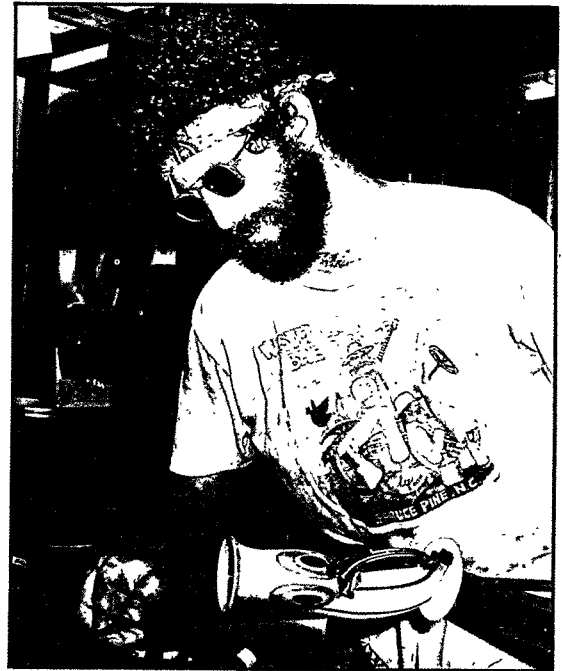
9. *Music/Dance Grants.* Provides basic operating support to music/dance organizations which serve at least a region of the state and have

that the dirtiest politics of North Carolina are innocent by Medici or Elizabethan standards.

Good arguments can be made for the state giving money directly to artists or simply going out and buying them what they need. Good arguments are not always politically acceptable. Good arguments can also be made against patronage. For starters the entire 1982-83 Arts Council budget of \$2.6 million would support only 200 artists at about the average industrial wage. Nothing would be left for tools, theaters, paint, instruments, advertising, or studios.

Since those public hearings in 1978, however, the Arts Council has been able to translate artists' requests for assistance into several modest programs designed to support the efforts of individuals. The Artist Fellowships program (see main article, program no. 20) provides grants of \$5,000 every year to each of four artists, selected in part for previous contributions in their art forms. The Arts Council also sponsors a creative projects grant (see main article, program no. 21), which assists groups in commissioning new works of art. The subsidy to artists through creative project grants is less direct than that through the artists fellowships, but it still represents an effort to recognize and support individual artists.

The money pie, however cut, can never serve the real needs of more than a few of the state's artists if given to them directly. In a democracy where voters have the right to criticize the taste of public officials, the distribution of patronage would be skewed



Ben Levin, Courtesy N.C. Arts Council

Rob Levin, a glass worker living in Burnsville, received an N.C. Arts Council fellowship in 1980.

heavily toward artists who had already proven that their life style and work would not challenge public taste. To test the truth of this one need only look at the selection of poets laureate and painters of official portraits. In the end, artists might attack a patronage system more than any other group. □

operating budgets of at least \$100,000. Statewide Arts Resources groups (see number 16 below) are not eligible. (\$15,500)

10. *North Carolina Dance Showcase*. This annual event—including workshops, meetings, and evening performances—is organized by the music/dance section to provide exposure for the dance groups in the state before the arts presenting organizations and the public. (\$9,000; \$5,000 of that through NEA)

11. *North Carolina Touring Program*. Designed to assist groups and individuals in gaining a stronger touring record, this grant program provides funds to presenters in booking North Carolina performers. Grants are available to book selected groups for music/dance and for theater at a maximum of 30 percent of contract fee. (\$21,155)

12. *Touring Promotion Grants*. Assists touring groups in developing promotional materials to increase the marketability of touring organizations, in grants of less than \$2,000. (\$9,674)

**Theatre Arts Section**—Total Grants: \$248,661

13. *Theatre Arts Grants*. Provides basic operating support to non-profit professional theaters, ten outdoor dramas, and six resident companies. Support goes to groups across the state, from the Flat Rock Playhouse in the mountains to the Shakespeare Festival in High Point to the East Carolina Summer Theater in the east. (The article on page 15 discusses outdoor dramas.) Theatre Arts funding has been essential for maintaining high quality theater in the state, says Robin Farquhar, general manager of the Flat Rock Playhouse. "A lot of companies would be in serious trouble without their help," he says, "particularly in the area of capital improvements." (\$248,661)

**Visual/Literary Arts Section**—Total Grants: \$24,300

This section administers two grant programs and provides technical assistance to individual artists and visual/literary organizations throughout the state.

14. *Literary Arts*. Designed to assist professional development through workshops, readings, and special programs and to provide publishing opportunities, these grants are generally less than \$3,000 and no more than 50 percent of the cost of a project. (\$20,100)

15. *Visual Arts—North Carolina Exhibition Exchange*. These grants encourage organizations to share expertise and expense while bringing quality exhibitions to the widest possible audience. Grants are less than \$3,000 and no more than 50 percent of the cost of a project. (\$4,200)

**Other Programs**—Total Grants: \$566,413

16. *Statewide Arts Resources Program*. The Arts Council awards annual operating grants to major organizations which it approves as a "Statewide Arts Resource." The Council determines the grants on an individual basis; each group determines how to spend its grant. During even-numbered years the Council accepts applications from new organizations wishing to be considered eligible for this category. Fourteen groups, listed on page 14, currently qualify for this category. (\$410,000)

17. *Special Projects*. Designed for unique programs that demonstrate a need which cannot be met through other categories, these grants (for \$5,000 or less, no more than fifty percent of the costs) are open to applications from any non-profit, tax-exempt organization. (\$53,246)

18. *Salary Assistance Grants*. Based on a declining scale, which may be extended over a three-year period, these grants support salaries. The funded organization gradually assumes payment of the entire salary. The amount of a grant varies depending on the position. Grantees must match at least one-third of the salary the first year, one-half the second year, and two-thirds the third year. (\$38,877)

19. *Arts Service Organization Grants*. Grants are designed to support statewide arts service organizations, which through their membership represent a particular arts constituency. (\$24,890)

20. *Artist Fellowships*. The program provides direct support to individual artists (including poets, fiction writers, playwrights, composers, choreographers, painters, sculptors, printmakers, photographers, filmmakers, and craftspeople) who have made substantial contributions through the creation of their art. Amount of fellowship: \$5,000. (\$20,000)

21. *Creative Projects*. These grants are for non-profit, tax-exempt groups in commissioning the creation of a new work of art by a professional artist. Grants are \$5,000 or less, no more than 50 percent of the costs. (\$19,400)

In addition to the above 21 programs, the Council provides limited funds for consultants to arts organizations and makes money available for arts administrators to attend workshops, conferences, and other events which strengthen management skills. The Council maintains a job registry and each year sponsors a series of workshops to aid administrators and artists.

Most of these grant categories have a March 1, 1983, deadline. For more information about the Arts Council and its programs, contact Ardath Weaver, Communications Manager, North Carolina Arts Council, Department of Cultural Resources, Raleigh, N.C. 27611. □