

QUEENS MUSEUM

New York City Council Cultural Affairs Committee Hearing on Proposed Cuts to the NEA, NEH, and IMLS

April 3, 2017

Presented by Laura Raicovich, President and Executive Director

Queens Museum
New York City Building
Flushing Meadows Corona Park
Queens, NY 11368

T 718 592 9700 F 718 592 5778
E info@queensmuseum.org
queensmuseum.org

Good afternoon Chairman Van Bramer, Councilmembers, staffers, and friends. My name is Laura Raicovich and I am the President and Executive Director of the Queens Museum and I'd like to thank you not only for this hearing, but for the public rally that preceded it as well.

Over the course of the past year, and specifically since November 9, I've had hundreds of conversations with people from all over the world and all walks of life, centered on the convergence of the art world and the real world and what artists and forward-thinking institutions like the Queens Museum and our colleagues in the room today, can do to benefit both. We believe that great art changes the ways in which we experience our world. Particularly at this moment in time when so many aspects of society require fresh thinking, we need artists and cultural institutions more than ever to bring their special skills to the table. Running the spectrum from our exhibitions through to education and public programs, the impact of this kind of art can be understood formally, experientially, socially, or politically, and these are each equally important.

The President and his administration have already enacted policies which have left an indelible mark on the communities the Queens Museum serves, richly diverse neighborhoods like Corona, Jackson Heights, and Flushing. An undercurrent of fear has replaced the foundation of optimism that has characterized Queens for decades. That fear has manifested itself in myriad ways, but for us, it means less local families coming to our programs because it just isn't worth risking deportation to spend an afternoon at the Queens Museum.

It is at a time like this that we must use all of our resources to offset the negative impact of recent policies, and it is at this point that we should be increasing public support for the arts and humanities, as they are the true vehicles for creating important bonds between people, and allowing for difficult conversations to be discussed in new terms. Instead, we are facing the complete elimination of the NEA, NEH, and IMLS, agencies which have supported our own endeavors to help each of us gain new perspectives on our daily lives.

Whether it is in support of art therapy workshops for Latino families with children on the autism spectrum, artmaking, skill-building, and literacy classes to adult immigrants offered in 11 different languages, or virtual museum tours for homebound seniors, Federal funding enables direct services to a diverse swath of Queens residents, offering assistance at a time when these very communities are at their most vulnerable. Should the proposed cuts be realized, these programs would likely end, and the hundreds of people who participate in them would lose these essential services.

Before I close, I want to mention one more initiative, Immigrant Movement International, our community-led artist project, which continues to serve more than 35,000 people per year out of its Roosevelt Avenue storefront. The space serves as a clearing house for free artistic and social services ranging from artmaking, homework help, and music classes for local schoolchildren, to OSHA safety training for day-laborers, small business mentorship for local women looking to start their own businesses, and legal services for those facing immigration issues. This project, with artist, museum, and community all working together, does not currently receive any Federal support, however it exemplifies the type of project that could be springing up throughout the country, if these three agencies are preserved.

At a time when the public is berated with slogans to "put America first again" or "make America work again," the President's proposed cuts translate to jobs lost, a general devaluing of the proven connection between exposure to cultural institutions and academic success, and an undercutting of the leverage that encourages private donors to support cultural institutions. It seems to me that there is an obvious disconnect.

Thank you for your time and for taking this importance stance against these ill-advised cuts.



04/03/2017

PRESIDENT
Morris J. Vogel

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Zach D. Aarons
Richard Bagwell
Emilio Bassini
Andrew S. Berkman
Suzette Brooks Masters
Perry A. Cacace
Mark Costello
Sally M. Davidson
Gabriella Giglio
Susan Gray
Gary E. Handel
Paul J. Massey, Jr.
Judith Messina
Scott Metzner, *Co-Chair*
Michele Mirman
Eleanor Pelta
Harvey M. Ross
Lisa S. Rothblum
Stephen B. Siegel, *Vice Chair*
Paul L. Schulman
Jill Totenberg
Alan G. Weiler, *Vice Chair*
John P. Wolf, *Treasurer*
Alice Yurke, *Secretary*
Merryl Snow Zegar, *Co-Chair*

Ruth Abram, *Emerita*
Anita Jacobson, *Emerita*
Bruce Menin, *Emeritus*
Ray O'Keefe, *Emeritus*

HONORARY TRUSTEES
Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand
Senator Charles E. Schumer
Congresswoman
Nydia M. Velazquez
Congresswoman
Carolyn B. Maloney
Manhattan Borough President
Gale A. Brewer
N.Y.C. Council Member
Margaret S. Chin

Testimony in support of Resolution 1393-A

Dr. Rachel Feinmark, Manager of Strategic Communication and Mellon/ACLS Public Fellow

I would like to take a moment to thank the council for inviting us here today, and for their unwavering support of the Tenement Museum over the past two and half decades. I am proud to speak in support of this resolution, which is further proof that New Yorkers and our representatives understand the key role that the humanities play in bringing empathy and beauty to our world, and in ensuring our democratic future.

The Lower East Side Tenement Museum tells the stories of immigrants who followed their dreams to this city, building lives in often-difficult circumstances, finding work, raising families, educating children, and—through the hard work of establishing themselves in new places—building this country. It is through the very real stories of the generations who lived in Orchard Street tenements that the Museum helps visitors understand how Americans have developed as a people. Our 250,000 annual visitors, who come from across the city and around the world, learn how Americans have drawn from our past to chart our nation’s future. They come to realize that there have been moments in our national history when too many Americans have lost confidence in this future and lashed out with hostility against immigrants in reaction. Sadly, we are in such a period now.

Sadly, as well, in this time of national crisis, few non-partisan institutions guide us. We’re deeply divided over every possible political question; we can’t agree on what made us the people we are—we can barely agree on facts; and we consume information only if it reinforces our prejudices. It’s against this backdrop that museums have taken on ever more important roles. Surveys show that museums remain an unequivocally trusted source. Museums do incredibly important work; as one of the last neutral venues for our key civic discussions, museums draw on authentic narratives of real people to enable informed and reasoned public debate. Museums help sort out historical fact from partisan fiction, playing a crucial role in the democratic landscape.

These museums look to government funding to fill in the gaps from private funds. For the Tenement Museum, federal funding accounts for less than 10% of our capital and operating budgets. But that federal support stimulates private giving through matching grant challenges. That federal support allows us to take risks to develop innovative programing. That federal support has allowed us to create new jobs and drive local tourism. The National Endowment for the Humanities has made over \$1 million in grants to support the Tenement Museum’s new *Under One Roof* exhibit, which will open in July 2017. That exhibit will, in turn, support 20 new staff positions and allow the Museum to welcome an additional 50,000 visitors to the Lower East Side each year – visitors who will spend their time patronizing local restaurants, shops, and galleries. But the return on investment goes beyond a simple balance sheet.

Under One Roof will feature a reconstructed apartment presenting the stories of the Latino, Chinese, and Holocaust survivor families who lived there in the closing decades of the 20th century. The exhibit will explore the Lower East Side as a center of the city's diversity, and weaves together narratives of immigrants' early struggles with their children's successes. Thanks to NEH funding, visitors will be able to use innovative technology to experience a recreated sweatshop from the 1970s, listen to the music that made first generation American children feel like they truly belonged, and, ultimately, put faces on the huddled masses yearning for a new start on America's shores.

NEH funding has also made it possible for the Museum to create a multimedia website introducing the project which served as an important classroom tool, both for teachers who bring classes to the Museum, and for those who are too far away to visit in person. The funds have helped pay for preserving the historic fabric of the tenement, and ensuring that future generations can safely walk its halls and learn its lessons. And NEH funding allowed the Museum to work with a panel of academic consultants, who helped to ensure the accuracy and vibrancy of the exhibit's intellectual content. Thanks to NEH funding, when visitors start to stream through 103 Orchard Street this summer, they will have safe stairs to walk on, unique audio and visual resources at their fingertips, and engaging exhibit content presented in a space that is open for debate, open for questions, and open for democratic dialogue.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services also provides key support. Thanks to a half million dollar IMLS leadership grant, the Museum will now be able to expand the *Your Story, Our Story* digital project to museums across the nation. *Your Story, Our Story* empowers visitors and students to become historians, helping them to understand that the objects and stories in their own lives are just as important as the ones in a Museum. In addition to facts and dates, students who learn about their families' pasts get an added benefit - studies show that students who learn about their own families' stories and traditions see an increase in self-esteem and are less likely to engage in risky behavior as teens. *Your Story, Our Story* builds stronger families and stronger communities across the nation through a project that would be impossible without IMLS funds.

Thanks to federal funding for arts and culture, the Tenement Museum is able to play a crucial role in preserving American democracy. The 228,000 visitors who come to the Tenement Museum each year, including 55,000 school children; 500 teachers engaging in professional development workshops; and over 1.2 million visitors to our websites and virtual tours, do more than just marvel at our historic apartments – they come to understand the profound role that immigration has played and continues to play in shaping America's evolving national identity. They imagine what it was like to live side-by-side with others who spoke different languages and held different beliefs. They think about the ways that the actions of individuals shape and are shaped by American culture and law. And they begin to see that our open society, democratic institutions, cultural creativity, and economic vitality are only possible because of our experience as a nation of immigrants.

And that's what makes America great.



Following is the testimony of Andrew S. Ackerman, Executive Director, Children's Museum of Manhattan in support of the New York City Council's hearing and vote on [proposed Res. No. 1393-A](#), a Resolution calling upon President Donald Trump to fully fund the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and not to eliminate or diminish any of these agencies in any form.

I'm Andrew Ackerman, executive director of the Children's Museum of Manhattan. Thank you Chairman Van Bramer and speaker Mark-Viverito for holding this hearing and for being a champion for the freedom of expression.

Our institution is a recipient of funds from the NEH, NEA and IMLS. Funding is always welcome, but there is an honor and a seriousness of purpose that accompanies grants that have been reviewed and approved by peer panels such as those given by these three agencies. Federal funding also provides those of us who work in cultural institutions with a picture of what is important in our nation.

At the Children's Museum, we are committed to doing what is good for children, helping children learn about themselves as they learn about others. We work in close collaboration with artists, scholars and members of our community to help new generations participate in the cultural and civic life of our city and our country in compelling, age-appropriate ways.

Federal support enables children's museums to share our nation's fundamental principles with young audiences. At our Museum, this has included introducing children to the roots of our government as well as the ideals set out by our Constitution. For example, our "Gods, Myths and Mortals" exhibition, funded by the NEH, focused on the birth of our political system in ancient Greece. A more recent show, "I Approve this Message," featured the autographs of 44 past presidents and introduced children to the basics of the voting booth.

Because our institution is based in one of the most diverse cities in the world, we choose to highlight how our nation's embrace of diversity makes us stronger. With funding from the NEA and the NEH, we have explored global cultural traditions in a celebration of American pluralism. Our cultural exhibitions have included "America to Zanzibar: Muslim Cultures Near and Far (NEH, NEA and IMLS funded)," "Hello From Japan! (IMLS funded programs)" and "The Monkey King: A Story from China." Each exhibit celebrates where we've come from and who we are. Each reflects the glory of our country, a nation of immigrants, a society rich with traditions from around the world and from right here in the Big Apple. Only in New York City, would you see Orthodox Jewish

families, Korean families and tourists from the Midwest trying on Senegalese fabrics inside of an exhibition about Muslim cultures!

Federal support has helped the Children's Museum become a community forum, a place for public discourse. Families can explore ideas, stories, and traditions through the lens of the arts and humanities. Funding from the NEA, NEH and IMLS is critical to our ability to inspire children and families in the great traditions of the United States.

All children deserve to see their cultures and neighborhoods in museums. All children need to understand their importance in the ever-evolving American story. Federal monies for programs and exhibitions let us use private funding to offer free or reduced Museum admission to low-income families who may not otherwise have the opportunity to visit.

IMLS and the Endowments have provided us with venture capital to bring our work directly into under-resourced communities. IMLS provided seed funding for our national health initiative. The result: our “EatSleepPlay™” exhibition and a curriculum used by early childhood and health educators across the country.

IMLS was also an early supporter of our first Health and Learning Hub in Harlem. This initiative transformed a public housing site into a center for early childhood health and literacy. The content, graphics, and exhibitry used in the Hub were adapted from the Museum’s “PlayWorks™” and “EatSleepPlay™” exhibitions. IMLS’s early commitment, in combination with the support of New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, allowed us to leverage private funds in service to this work.

I spoke earlier of honor and seriousness of purpose. IMLS, in its support for our Hub pilot, was carrying on that great American tradition of taking care of those in need. IMLS’s support rallied others to our cause and IMLS’s funds were matched five to one by private donors. IMLS created what could be considered an urban barn raising. Today, there are 24 Hubs in Head Start Centers, and domestic violence and homeless shelters across New York City.

Federal funding inspires institutions to take risks and to innovate. It has allowed the Children's Museum of Manhattan to celebrate the past and to prepare our youngest citizens to be bold pioneers on the frontiers of change. A child who is introduced at an early age to the importance of democracy, the strength of diversity and the joy of the arts and humanities, will be an adult who embraces our Constitution and our deeply held democratic values. Thank you.

Andrew Ackerman may be reached for comment at aackerman@cmom.org, or 212-721-1223.

Testimony of The Honorable Anne-Imelda Radice PhD
Executive Director, The American Folk Art Museum

Good morning. I am Anne Radice and I have the honor as serving as the Director of the American Folk Art Museum, located in Manhattan and Queens.

I have enjoyed a long career working as a leader of cultural institutions, private and governmental. Most of my career has been in Washington, DC. Where I served, among other posts as the Acting Chair of the National Endowment of the Arts for 3 years, The Deputy Chairman for Programs at the National Endowment of Humanities and the Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. I had the largest budgets ever granted these agencies and also augmented the federal money with private funds I raised.

While Chair of the Arts Endowment I wrote an in-depth study about the economic value of the arts, and spent at least two days a week on Capitol Hill fighting to keep the agency alive. We succeeded. How I would have enjoyed speaking about the arts as an integral part of civilization, making us better citizens and all the values of experiencing the aesthetics of beauty. However, I felt I needed to talk the talk that would give comfort and protection to our elected officials. Jobs does, and that argument remains today.

As Director of IMLS I started a number of programs that received governmental and private funding which still exist....why because they had value and could be

sustained.....our seed money began the programs and the success of concepts like "Connecting to Collections", the largest conservation program ever conceived for museums, zoos, aquaria, historic sites and libraries is still going strong. Again, let me recall the mantra of jobs, jobs, and jobs.

The small budgets of the NEA, NEH, and IMLS as well as that of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting are the seeds of a civilized society. The funds are synergistic and matched, as required by law 3 to one.

Creative expression goes beyond painting, acting, and singing. It involves design, architecture, and education.

Let us continue to remind our elected officials that these agencies are the little engines that can. Let us remind our officials that we are not asking for ephemera. I have spent 45 years in the arts. I had appointments in both Bush Administrations as well as the first Obama term. I am a practical business, arts and political animal. I cannot believe that we are here again, begging for crumbs and knowing that arts unite, create jobs and as Walter Cronkite said in a video he prepared for the NEA during my tenure, "The arts make us human."



NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL HEARING ON RESOLUTION 1393-A

**CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES & INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS
COMMITTEE**

Monday, April 3, 2017 – 1:00pm

Good afternoon. I am Tony Marx, President and CEO of The New York Public Library (NYPL). I would like to thank Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, Libraries Subcommittee Chair Andy King, and the entire City Council for holding this hearing today. I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony on *Resolution 1393-A*, calling upon President Donald Trump to fully fund the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and not to eliminate or diminish any of these agencies in any form.

Our public budgets are more than just financial documents; they are a reflection of the priorities and values we hold as a society. In his 2018 budget, the President proposed fully defunding the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). This act disregards the important roles these institutions play in our society and fails to recognize our values. As the head of the nation's largest library (outside of the Library of Congress), I can attest that the IMLS, NEH, and NEA provide invaluable resources to library and cultural institutions nationwide. Last year, NYPL received over \$3.6 million dollars from the NEA, NEH, and IMLS. The IMLS funding alone supported NYPL's development of an open-source



ebook platform which now powers two apps that are leading the way in eBook borrowing: *Open eBooks*, which gives students from Title 1 schools access to a bank of thousands of free e-books; and *SimplyE*, an app that can be utilized by any library system to allow easy access to their individual e-book collections. NEA, NEH, and IMLS funding also supports early literacy programming, digitization, archival, and preservation efforts, and research grants.

Taken together the NEA, NEH, IMLS, and CPB represent roughly \$900 million or 0.2% of the overall federal budget.¹ Cutting these relatively small agencies would be devastating to the country's 120,000 libraries and the approximately 169 million people who use them. It will also be catastrophic to small and medium-sized arts and cultural organizations, museums, and public radio and television stations across the country.

Needless to say, the elimination of the NEA, NEH, and IMLS would be detrimental, not only to NYPL and the people of New York City, but to our nation as a whole. That is why today, I stand in support of *Resolution 1393-A*, calling upon President Donald Trump to fully fund the CPB, IMLS, NEA, and NEH, and not to eliminate or diminish any of these agencies in any form.

Thank you again to this committee and the New York City Council for the work that you do and for your continued and tireless support of libraries.

¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/with-elimination-of-nea-and-neh-trumps-budget-is-worst-case-scenario-for-arts-groups/2017/03/15/5291645a-09bb-11e7-a15f-a58d4a988474_story.html?utm_term=.a60579e16b82

**academy of
american poets**

**Academy of American Poets
Testimony to New York City Council's
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and
International Intergroup Relations
April 3, 2017**

Thank you City Council Members for this opportunity to speak before you this afternoon.

I'm Jennifer Benka, the Executive Director of the Academy of American Poets, which was founded in New York City in 1934. We are the largest poetry organization in the city, and also the nation's largest membership-based advocate for poets and the art of poetry.

New York City is our nation's poetry capital. We are the city where Whitman walked, where Emma Lazarus left her lines welcoming immigrants to our shores, the home of the Harlem Renaissance, and the spoken word and Hip Hop revolution.

More working poets live in our city than any other, and we have more nonprofit literary organizations and presses than any other working to support those poets by employing them, publishing them, featuring them in readings, and sharing their work on digital channels.

Not only do our organizations ensure that New York City's literary reputation remains, we reach thousands of residents and tourists with literary events each year, and close to a million city residents online— more than some of our visual arts institutions.

Poetry is an efficient and inexpensive art to produce and share. With very little investment, we provide an arts experience for an incredibly wide audience.

On our website Poets.org, we maintain one of the world's most popular collections of poems, and last year 982,000 New Yorkers visited the site to read poems. Including 30,676 who read Maya Angelou's "Still I Rise" and 22,391 who read Langston Hughes's "Let America Be America Again." Both poems that speak to our present moment in profound ways.

We celebrate National Poetry Month each year with a number of programs, including one of our nation's largest poetry events, Poetry & the Creative Mind at Lincoln Center, which is attended by 1,000 individuals.

We provide numerous free resources for New York City school teachers, so that they might share poetry with their students. And, we've worked with social studies teachers on curriculum that integrates poetry as a way to teach history.

FOUNDER
Marie Bullock

OFFICERS EMERITI
Lyn Chase, *Chairman Emerita*
Jonathan Galassi, *Honorary
Chairman*

DIRECTORS
Michael Jacobs, *Chairman*
Ian Kennedy, *Vice Chairman &
Treasurer*
Jennifer Benka, *President*
Helen Houghton, *Secretary*
Liza Bennett
Larry Berger
John Blondel, Jr.
Margaret H. Douglas-Hamilton
Patricia Crodd
Hon. Thomas H. Kean
Bruno Navasky
Gerald Richards
Andrew Schiff
Elizabeth Sobol
Rose Styron
Maurice Tempelsman
William D. Zabel

CHANCELLORS
Elizabeth Alexander
Ellen Bass
Toi Derricotte
Forrest Gander
Linda Gregerson
Terrance Hayes
Brenda Hillman
Jane Hirshfield
Khaled Mattawa
Marilyn Nelson
Alicia Ostriker
Claudia Rankine
Alberto Rios
David St. John
Arthur Sze

EDUCATION AMBASSADOR
Richard Blanco

EDUCATOR IN RESIDENCE
Madeleine Fuchs Holzer

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Jennifer Benka

Academy of American Poets
75 Maiden Lane, Suite 901
New York, NY 10038
academy@poets.org
+1 212 274 0343
+1 212 274 9427 fax
poets.org

Poets.org, National Poetry Month, our many readings, and our educator resources are made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Together these agencies contribute \$75,000 - \$100,000 to our annual budget.

Without this federal support, many of our wide-reaching and impactful efforts will likely be jeopardized.

Poetry matters. The arts and humanities encourage reflection, empathy, and imagination—all qualities necessary to our individual and collective success. American poetry and literature do more than preserve the unique stories of our citizens; they shape our civic identity.

The National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities support invaluable services to New York City residents. The Academy of American Poets expresses our strongest possible support for continued federal funding for the arts and humanities.



Testimony to City Council Federal Funding for Dance and Culture

Submitted to the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations on April 3, 2017

Prepared by Lane Harwell, Executive Director

On behalf of the service organization Dance/NYC, I strongly endorse Proposed Resolution No. 1393-A and call upon President Donald Trump to fully fund the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and not to eliminate or diminish any of these agencies in any form.

In doing so, I join the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations, and colleague advocates working across creative disciplines in recognizing both these federal agencies' significant contributions to New York City's cultural and civic life and the opportunity for increased local-national cooperation to advance the creative sector and its economic and social benefits. With the proposed resolution, New York City can take a lead in a national movement to protect funding levels, ensure the continued flow of creativity and ideas, and move the country forward.

I also bring key data on dance in New York City to make the case for discipline-specific funds. Dance/NYC's recent report, *State of NYC Dance and Workforce Demographics* (2016), made possible in part by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, offers snapshot and trend analyses of federal funding to local dance groups with DataArts' Profiles. For a sample of 172 dance groups, the snapshot analyses show:



- Direct annual funding, including significant National Endowment for the Arts funding, totals approximately \$2.7 million, 21% of total government support;
- Federal support serves dance groups of all types studied, especially dance makers focused on creation and/or performance (63%), as well as educational (9%), presenting (18%), and service organizations (10%), including Dance/NYC;
- Federal funding serves organizations of all annual operating budget sizes ; and
- Federal support drives activity throughout New York City, particularly through groups headquartered in Manhattan (85%), Brooklyn (14%), and The Bronx (1%).

While of considerable value, federal funding for a trend sample declined 37% over a six-year period studied, signaling need for increased advocacy for discipline-specific funds. Funding declined for dance organizations of all types, with the exception of educational organizations, and for organizations of all budget sizes. The smallest groups, those with budgets of less than \$100K, were the hardest hit (69% decline). These groups are the most ethnically and racially diverse and the most likely to employ disabled New Yorkers.

Any further cuts to the federal funding of the arts will have a grave impact on groups that are already struggling and diminish the sector's capacity to deliver public value. Conversely, every dollar added would serve national interests by driving economic and social impact, for which there are clear benchmarks, from attendance and cultural tourism indicators to jobs and field expenditures. For example, the *State of NYC Dance* sample generated \$302 million in annual expenditures, a healthy return on federal investment.

In making the case for dance, Dance/NYC joins the national service organization Dance/USA and the Performing Arts Alliance. Dance/NYC thanks our partners and the New York City Council for its leadership.

##



NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND
INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

Hearing: Proposed Res. No. 1393-A
4/03/2017

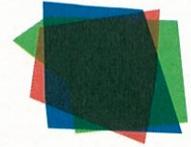
Good afternoon. My name is Kay Takeda –as the Vice President of Grants and Services for Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), I'm proud to be here today to provide our testimony in support of a proposed resolution calling for the full funding of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and against the elimination or diminishing of any of these agencies in any form.

Considering that the impact on the federal budget is minimal, the administration's position threatens agencies that have a catalytic effect nationwide on our quality of life. My remarks this afternoon will focus on the value of NEA in particular, which by virtue of its unique public position, sets the national standard for public support to help the arts flourish in localities, states and regions alike.

No other arts funder is committed to ensuring arts support, with an emphasis on arts education and underserved communities, in every state. This is most evident, as many have noted, in the agency's allocation of 40% of its annual budget to State arts agencies and regional arts organizations, leveraging significant matching support and along the way (sometimes leveraging up to \$9 locally for every \$1 of NEA investment) and requiring planning process that are inclusive and respond to local needs and diverse constituencies.

A portion of that funding finds its way to hundreds of organizations right here in New York City through the New York State Council on the Arts --from large museums and performing arts centers to individual teaching artists working in partnership with community-based organizations. As an arts council, LMCC has served as regrantor of State funds in Manhattan since 1996 --which we carry out alongside our work to regrant City funding from the DCLA. We support approximately 80 projects annually with just over \$300,000 in State funding --projects that bring rich arts experiences to communities from Inwood to the Battery. **We see first-hand the results of this kind of decentralization on local communities,** making sure that independent and grassroots arts activities have the opportunity to take root and grow --right alongside our most renowned arts institutions.

The model the NEA provides for how funds are disbursed by State agencies and regionals deserves note: an open application and peer review process in which juries of artists and arts professionals representing diverse aesthetics, geographies and backgrounds are brought together to review proposals and make recommendations for support. This is a unique process that, when done right, **goes a long way to ensuring funds are allocated in a fair and equitable way** --and is a unique feature of the American arts system. National leadership in this work also creates a ripple effect in terms of dialogue and accountability in such critical areas a diversity, equity and inclusion --and that's valuable for everyone.



Beyond our role as a regrantor, **LMCC has been fortunate to receive NEA support that has helped us both to launch new programs and sustain critical artist resources.** The NEA's support helps us provide **workspace to over 100 artists annually** to support their creative development through our artist residency programs. The NEA has also provided essential seed funding for LMCC's Artists Summer Institute, developed with Creative Capital in 2010, a free, five-day intensive professional development program that has served over 300 artists who credit the program as life-changing in terms of how they approach the business side of their practice and their careers as a whole. Most recently, LMCC has been proud to be the City's partner in administrating the SU-CASA program for Manhattan artists working with senior centers, which has been so generously expanded by the City Council, and as you know, was helped along by NEA Our Town funding.

The elimination of such an important agency would certainly impact the arts in New York City. At the same time, we recognize that the vibrancy of arts in our city is a vitally connected to the ability of the arts to flourish in every community nationwide. Artists are drawn to New York from every corner of the United States –and beyond, illuminating how access to arts education and experiences requires long-term, national investment. Historically, we have seen that the NEA has helped to keep State arts councils in place when budgetary concerns threatened their closure –and while we are fortunate to live and work in a City with incredibly robust public and private sector arts support, we know that in many other parts of the country, this simply is not the case.

We therefore applaud the City Council for considering, and urge you to pass, this resolution to stand with colleagues and fellow citizens nationally to support and preserve these essential agencies. Thank you for your consideration.



HUMANITIES NEW YORK

Humanities New York

Remarks delivered by: Antonio Pontón-Núñez

April 3rd, 2017

Re: Support form Humanities New York of **Proposed Res. No. 1393-A** | Resolution calling upon President Donald Trump to fully fund the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and not to eliminate or diminish any of these agencies in any form.

Acknowledgements: I want to thank the city council for offering to make this resolution and hearing our testimony, and to the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs for funding us the past four years.

Background

Before I start, I want to mention that the name of our organization has changed to keep up with our innovative work—Humanities New York is the new name of the former New York Council for the Humanities. By either name, we continue to be the sole statewide partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. We are a statewide grantmaker and program provider; and we have a significant footprint in New York City, which we will highlight today.

The mission of Humanities New York (HNY) is to provide leadership and support across the state’s intellectual and cultural sectors through grants, programs, networking and advocacy in order to encourage critical thinking and cultural understanding in the public arena. Founded in 1975, HNY is the sole statewide proponent of public access to the humanities in New York. HNY’s vision is to create a vibrant, growing, public humanities community that engages all New Yorkers in civic participation, volunteerism, philanthropy, and community involvement.

HNY partners with libraries, schools, museums, and community organizations across the state to benefit more than one million New Yorkers annually. In addition, HNY has significant a track record running ambitious, statewide public humanities projects. Between January and December 2009 we ran the “Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial,” during which we reached an audience of more than 600,000 with 355 grant-funded or direct service programs. From January 2011 to December 2013 we planned and implemented New York State’s War of 1812 Bicentennial, which reached an audience of more than 2 million New Yorkers. We are currently leading a multi-year, statewide initiative commemorating the centennial of women’s suffrage in New York State, with the support of the New York State Senate and Assembly through the creation of the NYS Women’s Suffrage Centennial Celebration Commission (which HNY is a member of). To date we have funded more than 50 different programs around the state worth over \$240,000.



The Impact of the NEH and HNY in NYC

The National Endowment for the Humanities has a significant investment in New York City over the past 50 years, with memorable and groundbreaking projects to its credit such as the Met's 1972 exhibition of King Tutankamen and nearly all Ken Burn's Films; more recently, the Frieda Kahlo exhibition at the New York Botanical Garden has received critical acclaim and record visitation. More quietly perhaps, the NEH is responsible for funding primary research, smaller-scale exhibitions such as at the Staten Island Museum, teacher trainings, and deeply impactful Challenge Grants for organizations to do bricks-and-mortar projects or raise an endowment. All its grants are highly competitive and New York City institutions are a good match for NEH guidelines.

In fiscal year 2016, the NEH invested more than 11 million in New York City through these and other funding lines. For its part, HNY invested a significant portion of its state and federal funding in projects across the five boroughs as well, serving a different slice of the cultural ecosystem. On average, about 40% of our resources go to the city, which over the past two years has amounted to \$673,469.

The high standards that the NEH holds to all its grantees means that museum interpretation is state of the art, cultural presenters' education curricula are robust and accurate, new discoveries are made in primary research, and collections are digitized and preserved for the coming generations.

There are those, including the Heritage Foundation and the some in the incoming presidential administration, who have stated that the endowments are best turned over to private funders. But that is a cop-out, literally, passing the buck. While the largest institutions can survive and thrive in that environment, many smaller, community-based organizations certainly cannot. And the field may be too big and needful for the private foundations and individuals to simply pick up the pieces. Witness the recent editorial by Earl Lewis, who heads the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which is the sole grant-maker other than the NEH dedicated to the humanities, particularly in higher education.

Finally, there is a moral merit to preserving Federal agencies that demonstrate leadership on behalf of the Federal Government, and answer to all Congressional districts. Corporations and Foundations tend to have distinct regional interests and funding limitations; without the imperative from the cultural endowments to serve Congressman Dan Donovan's district of Staten Island as well as Congressman Jerrold Nadler's district including Manhattan and Museum Mile, certain urban and rural districts are going to be left out, and inequality will be exacerbated by lack of access to cultural opportunities nationwide.



HUMANITIES NEW YORK

The Case for Humanities New York

We need support, not only from the National Endowment for the Humanities but also from state, city and private entities and individuals, to continue making strides in the public humanities in order to serve New Yorkers. Although it is possible the NEH will have enough support in Congress this year to escape complete elimination, the coming years will continue to be a struggle as cuts are proposed. We would like City Council to know that each 10% cut to NEH will translate into the value of a full program or FT staffing line for our organization, at about a \$140K loss.

With adequate funding levels however, we promise to continue our work and several exciting directions, in addition to the Centennials of Women's Suffrage (2017-2020) mentioned earlier.

Improving the Conversation: In response to civic disengagement and distrust in different areas of society, Humanities New York developed *Democracy in Dialogue*, a special initiative that uses local perspectives to explore national issues like migration, segregation, and equality. Through large public events and intensive community conversations, *Democracy in Dialogue* promotes civic engagement and participation, helping New Yorkers gain insight into the struggles their communities face and creating spaces where advocates can learn from those with other viewpoints.

Responsive Grant Making: While many large grant-makers are criticized for being inaccessible to small, grassroots and diverse organizations, Humanities New York intentionally provides a unique opportunity for these groups to win competitive grants of a modest size (awards are given as \$1500 Vision Grants or \$5000 Action Grants). We serve audiences well away from "Museum Mile" by working with groups that are learning, though us, how to offer cultural and educational programs. By training others, too, we expand the field of the public humanities. In our grants program, we do this by encouraging deep community involvement and creative partnerships, and by supporting projects that activate, frame, or deepen our understanding of our shared human concerns. Our uniquely accessible grant application gives priority to projects that engage hard-to-reach audiences (e.g.: veterans, families, public housing, groups with special needs, etc.). At the same time, Humanities New York's grant-making adheres to federal controls and National Endowment for the Humanities guidelines. There is no deadline, with grants awarded every month on a rolling basis.



THE MOTH
75 Broad Street, Suite 2601
New York, NY 10004
212.742.0551
www.themoth.org

Organization Name: Storyville Center for the Spoken Word (d/b/a The Moth)

Testimony RE: Proposed Res. No. 1393-A | Resolution calling upon President Donald Trump to fully fund the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and not to eliminate or diminish any of these agencies in any form.

Storyville Center for the Spoken Word (d/b/a The Moth) is an acclaimed not-for-profit organization that seeks to honor the diversity and commonality of human experience through the art and craft of storytelling. The Moth has been the proud recipient of funding from the National Endowment for the Arts since 2008. We received funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting from 2010-2014.

Support from the CPB was transformational for the organization. With CPB funding, The Moth piloted a public radio show featuring stories from its live shows and developed it into a weekly offering. Thanks to this initial funding, The Moth Radio Hour now airs on more than 450 stations across the country and is enjoyed by 1 million people every week.

The NEA provides essential support for the Radio Hour and also our curated and directed Mainstage series. With NEA funds, we are able to keep ticket prices affordable and bring the series to cities that we otherwise could not make financially viable, such as El Paso and Baltimore.

The Moth's core belief is that everyone has a story and by crafting and telling our own stories, and hearing the true, personal stories of others, we can see one another in our full, storied complexity and feel our shared humanity. The NEA makes it possible for The Moth to find distinctive voices and share them with new audiences; the CPB made it possible for us to share these stories with a broad and diverse national audience.

I'm Justine Nagan, Executive Director of American Documentary Inc, a non-profit based in Brooklyn, and Executive Producer for its two signature series: POV on PBS, and America Reframed on the World Channel.

When the public broadcasting act was put in place in 1967, one of its core tenets read: "It is in the public interest to encourage the development of programming that involves creative risks and that addresses the needs of unserved and underserved audiences..." This is what we do every day- with the help of a dedicated staff and board, partners across the nation, and with public and private support. We feel it is crucial that American viewers, regardless of their ability to pay for cable or high speed internet, should have the ability to access top quality documentaries that will engage, inform and entertain them.

Half of our budget each year comes from PBS as a licensing fee for POV, and half of that goes directly to filmmakers for the right to broadcast their films on television for free, stream them online, and include them in our national lending library for the period of the license. Our Lending library is a network of over 10,000 community partners in 48 states. Nationally these partners include places like the Community College in Hibbing MN, to North Kohala Public Library, Kapaau, HI. Locally those partners include the Lineage Project at the Horizon Juvenile Center in the Bronx and the El Barrio Community Media Center in Manhattan. These are organizations with little or no budget to include this type of content in their programming, and it is content that often they feel is essential to serving their local communities.

Annually we don't receive funds directly from CPB, but many of our core partners do. These include ITVS, the national minority consortia, such as the Center for Asian American Media and the National Black Programming Consortium, and public media stations around the country. These partners are crucial in keeping our public media community and content vibrant and diverse in the broadest sense of the word.

When we do receive CPB funds, it's to strategically support a particular project, like last year when we released *All the Difference*, Executive Produced by Wes Moore, which followed two young African American men in Chicago from High school graduation through College graduation, showing the immense community investment it took for those young men to reach their potential and why it was worth the effort. For this film, CPB supported two-years of engagement activities around first generation college students and young men of color on the path to college completion. The conversations after screenings, from Alabama to Los Angeles, were heart breaking and inspiring.

After viewing the film, 64% of students were compelled to take more responsibility for their education and 74% of teachers said that they plan to learn how they can support first-generation college students. 74% of parents said that they plan to be a better mentor for their kids. The film also played at a special white house screening as a part of the Brothers' Keeper initiative. None of that would have happened without CPB support.

We receive NEA, NYSCA and DCA funds too. While these grants do not make up large percentages of our budget, every dollar is needed strategically to support filmmakers creating powerful documentaries and then to ensure that that work reaches audiences that are hungry for it. It is also important to note that these films are collaborative works - when we support a film, those dollars go to help pay hundreds of people - Directors and Producers yes, but also camera people, sound recorders, composers, editors, taxi drivers, baristas, you get the idea. This field is large, and productive, and much of our industry is based in New York.

We appreciate the opportunity to speak today about the proposed cuts and the potential impact to our work, our community and the film economy of New York.

NYBG/125

Statement in Support of Majority Leader Van Bramer's Council Resolution # 1393

On behalf of The New York Botanical Garden, thank you Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer and all the elected officials assembled here today for calling attention to the devastating and shortsighted proposals contained in the Executive's budget proposal.

As an international science and cultural institution serving people from around the corner and across the globe, we at NYBG are particularly disturbed by the proposed elimination of the NEA, NEH, IMLS, and CPB - but we are equally alarmed by the proposed double-digit reductions to the Environmental Protection Agency and National Institute of Health, as well as environmental programs in the Department of Energy. Funding for climate research, alternative energy, and conservation are key to sustaining the world's delicate ecosystem and ultimately, the health and well-being of plants and people.

Having said that, federal support for the Arts and Humanities to our Bronx community is perhaps best illustrated through NYBG's most successful exhibition ever: *FRIDA KAHLO: Art, Garden, Life*. This exhibition received support through NEA, NEH, and IMLS - and would not have been possible without these funding sources.

This major exhibition integrated art and horticultural components to reveal Kahlo's interest in Mexico's natural history and plant life, as expressed in her home and garden and the botanical imagery in her paintings. With more than 525,000 visitors, *FRIDA KAHLO* broke all previous exhibition attendance records. *FRIDA KAHLO*'s significance to us transcended its scholastic value. For one, the exhibition's subject, cultural programming, and bilingual interpretation helped NYBG connect meaningfully with the Bronx's majority Hispanic community.

We also collaborated with many local community arts groups on programming. Moreover, exhibitions such as *FRIDA KAHLO* benefit the Bronx on an economic level as revenue supports staff salaries, visitors spend money at local businesses, and they gain an appreciation of all the Bronx has to offer.

Most notably, however, is a little known program of the NEA that minimizes the costs of insuring art exhibitions through indemnity agreements backed by the federal government. The insurance valuation for shows like *FRIDA* were enormous - with premiums way beyond the reach of even the largest cultural organizations. Without this federal program, world class art would not make it to the Bronx - or many other parts of the country for that matter.

In conclusion, the real strength of all the arts and cultural endowments is that they are distributed throughout the United States - reaching every Congressional District - rich and poor, urban and rural. I know that our NY Delegation will stand up to these serious and catastrophic proposed cuts and reductions. Representatives like ours - Congressman Joe Crowley - won't take this sitting down.

In addition to passing Resolution #1393, which we wholly endorse, I encourage the City Council to leverage their vast network to reach out to friends, family, and colleagues in other parts of the United States and to get them fired up about this issue. Have them call their representatives and tell their stories. NYBG will be doing this with our sister botanical gardens and science institutions nationwide, and we need everyone else to do the same. Thank you for your time.

Aaron Bouska
Vice President, Government and Community Relations
abouska@nybg.org
718.817.8542



Testimony on Resolution No. 1393

Submitted to the New York City Council

Monday, April 3, 2017

By Roundabout Theatre Company, Allie Carieri, Government Liaison

Thank you Speaker Mark-Viverito and Majority Leader Van Bramer for your leadership in supporting the arts and cultural community in New York City.

My name is Allie Carieri and I am here on behalf of the Roundabout Theatre Company, New York City's and the country's largest not for profit theatre, to testify in support of the continuation of the National Endowment for the Arts.

At Roundabout our mission is committed to producing the highest quality theatre with the finest artists, sharing stories that endure, and providing accessibility to all audiences through the production of classic plays and musicals; development and production of new works by established and emerging writers; educational initiatives that enrich the lives of children and adults; and a subscription model and audience outreach programs that cultivate and engage all audiences. The NEA has been critical to our efforts to achieve that mission both directly and indirectly for the past 50-plus years. Perhaps it's no coincidence that the year in which the nonprofit movement – including Roundabout – was born was 1965, the same year that the NEA was established.

When he signed into law the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965, our 36th President Lyndon B. Johnson set into motion a national commitment to music, dance, film, public media, literature, art, and theatre, demonstrating that the arts were not only a national priority but recognizing that they provided tangible benefits to Americans of all ages for generations to come. In a time of political complication – Vietnam, the Cold War, the Civil Rights movement – the government made the choice to embrace and elevate beauty, creativity, and optimism. The "Declaration of Purpose" that Congress included as the second section of the act states "while no government can call a great artist or scholar into existence, it is necessary and appropriate for the Federal Government to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry but also the material conditions facilitating the release of this creative talent."

With a budget of \$55 million annually, Roundabout is committed to creating and sustaining such a climate and conditions. We produce nine productions a year on our five stages in the Theatre District, including three Broadway theatres, one off Broadway theatre and a black box theatre. In addition to serving more than 1 million audience members and employing 1400 artists, and theatre and administrative staff, we also provide arts education services improving teacher

practice and student achievement for 35,000 New York City public school teachers and students from all five boroughs. Of great pride is our just launched Theatrical Workforce Development program, the first of its kind in the country in partnership with the IATSE which will create a pathway for out of work 18 to 24 young adults into middle class middle skill jobs in backstage theatre.

Roundabout has received NEA funding on and off for decade; most recently, we were awarded a grant of \$20,000 in support of our production of *Napoli, Brooklyn* by playwright Meghan Kennedy this season. But beyond the direct support from the NEA, Roundabout recognizes the immense value of the agency as a lifeline for smaller not for profit theatres in both rural and urban areas around the country.

Will cultural activities always exist in places like New York City? Of course. But the NEA is most valuable because it encourages and supports art making and consumption around the country, in communities where the arts are not readily or easily accessible. In fact, according to a report from the Grant Makers for the Arts, public funders like the NEA devote a significant portion of their grant dollars to grassroots community arts activity, small organizations, and underserved constituencies: groups that are geographically isolated, are economically challenged, or that face systemic obstacles to cultural resources and opportunities to access the arts. As a result, reductions in appropriations to local, state, and federal arts agencies have an especially sharp impact on marginalized communities. The NEA also sets an example for the private sector - studies show that \$9 dollars is leveraged for every dollar the NEA provides in funding. Dismantling the NEA dismantles the cultural organizations for artists and patrons around the country, thus eliminating opportunities for arts makers and consumers, whether that be educational programs, creative outlets, or jobs.

This is why Roundabout has launched its "I Heart Art campaign" to allow our audiences, artists and colleagues around the country vocalize their support for the National Endowment for the Arts.

A nation that believes in its culture on a fundamental level is the nation in which we are proud to create the theatre, the education programs and the inspiration to pursue the arts.

In our theatres, beginning last week, attendees at *The Price*, *If I Forget* and *On the Exhale* will find a pre-addressed postcard in their Playbills. All they have to do is sign them and drop them in the display drop-boxes in the theatre's lobbies, and Roundabout will stamp and mail them to Senator





Charles Schumer on their behalf, encouraging him to continue his advocacy for the NEA. Online, we are posting social cards that fans, followers and other members of the Roundabout family can share to help spread the word about their own support for the NEA. As an organization that provides a place for artists to act and express themselves, we're pleased to be able to provide the same opportunity to our audiences so they may share that the arts are important to them as Americans.

<https://www.roundabouttheatre.org/About/I-Heart-Arts.aspx>

We will be keeping track of the number of postcards completed and the feedback from these cards, and we will share the data with the Council and the Department of Cultural Affairs in hope that it helps bolster their efforts to demonstrate the importance of NEA funding not just for New York cultural institutions, but for the individuals whose lives the arts has impacted personally and professionally.

Thank you again, Speaker Mark-Viverito and Majority Leader Van Bramer, for leading this charge on behalf of New Yorkers.

Thank you,

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF THE MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
IN SUPPORT OF RESOLUTION 1393-A

COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL
INTERGROUP RELATIONS

New York City Council Committee Room, New York, N.Y.

April 3, 2017

Chair Van Bramer and members of the Committee, thank you for providing the opportunity to furnish written testimony in support of proposed Resolution 1393-A, a resolution calling upon President Trump to fully fund the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and not to eliminate or diminish any of these agencies in any form.

Thank you Council Member and Committee Chair Van Bramer and Council Members, Levin, Dromm, Cohen, and Koslowitz for introducing this resolution and fighting for continued Federal funding to support arts and culture.

As budgets and agencies are reviewed by the new administration in Washington and consideration is given to this resolution, it is important to understand the impact the agencies in question have upon the people that visit and access the collections, programs and information under the stewardship of the Museum of the City of New York, an institution uniquely devoted to the history of New York City.

I am pleased to provide information about the support and impact of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) on the Museum and its public offerings.

Over the past five years, the Museum of the City of New York has been awarded a total of \$1,018,473 from the NEH, \$105,000 from the NEA, and \$542,477 from IMLS. Programs supported by critical funds from these agencies directly impact the public through increased access to the collections as well as school and adult educational programs about New York City, its history and the issues it faces currently. These programs inspire and educate. They help provide a better understanding of the past, a better analysis of the present, and a better view of the future. Funding cuts to or dismantling these agencies would limit the resources and programming available

Programs supported include digitization of photography, theater, silver, and illustration collections, such as those of Jacob A. Riis and Reginald Marsh, and making them available online; creation of new art works by New York artists; and education programs for the new exhibition *New York at Its*

Core that showcases 400 years of the City's history and invites visitors to discuss the future in the Future City Lab. This exhibition provides a new platform for K-12 and educator learning programs provided largely to underserved public schools.

Needless to say, NEA, NEH and IMLS funds have been matched by private funds as well—a combination of individual, foundation, and corporate support. In all cases, the imprimatur of these federally vetted projects, make it easier to raise additional funds.

It is also worth noting that the Museum of the City of New York joined all other Cultural Institution Group members in last year welcoming 112.6 million visitors, including 9.3 million schoolchildren at 7,600+ school programs, and employing 32,000 people. Literally millions of people—New Yorkers and tourists alike, access CIG programs. The experience of these visitors and the work available to our residents would be much diminished without the support of the Federal agencies.

Thank you members of the committee for receiving this testimony and for your work in the service of the continued health and vibrancy of New York City's arts and cultural communities.



Whitney W. Donhauser
Ronay Menschel Director and President
Museum of the City of New York

Lincoln Center

Testimony of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts Proposed Resolution No. 1993-A March 15, 2017

Thank you Majority Leader Van Bramer and the Council Members of the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations for this opportunity to testify in favor of Proposed Resolution 1393-A.

Lincoln Center and our 11 constituent arts organizations believe it is critical for the federal government to fully fund the National Endowment for the Arts, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and not to eliminate or diminish any of these agencies in any form.

From our stages and screens at Lincoln Center in New York City - which draw more than six million people to the largest performing arts center in the world - to theaters, concert halls, and galleries across America, the arts inspire and delight people from every walk of life, at every stage of life:

- A child's early introduction to ballet teaches strength and discipline
- A veteran's exposure to art therapy brings healing and hope
- A student's participation in music class improves math scores and critical thinking skills.

Art shapes achievement, with profound and practical effects.

We also know that art improves the quality of life for all New Yorkers. The School of Social Policy and Practice at the University of Pennsylvania recently demonstrated in a comprehensive study that the clustering of cultural assets in New York City's neighborhoods improves health, personal security and school effectiveness. Many of Lincoln Center's NEA-funded programs, including our focus school partnerships and our Arts in the Middle program, targeting middle schools in need in partnership with the Department of Education, help realize these important social benefits.

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts and our 11 constituent arts organizations have received almost \$5 million in grants over the last five years from the NEA. These grants help support many other important programs as well: production and post production costs for the public television series "Live from Lincoln Center" and "Great Performances at the Met," and high-definition webcasts of "Jazz at Lincoln Center"; tuition-free education and community activities at the School of American Ballet; free outdoor programming at Lincoln Center Out of Doors; and more.

Seen it?

Still more, art anchors communities. In American cities and towns, arts institutions and districts are breathing life into neighborhoods – attracting investment, spurring development, fueling innovation, and creating jobs. Arts and culture help power the US economy at the astounding level of **\$704.2 billion** each year.

Beyond our shores, American arts institutions are the envy of the world. In a unique public-private model, private sources provide the vast majority of funding for our artists and arts organizations. Government helps in targeted ways at pivotal moments, for example, by providing early funding to get projects off the ground or helping create or expand promising initiatives to achieve greater reach and impact.

The total cost of the NEA is less than a dollar a year for every American. But because it is so successful and its imprimatur so prestigious, every dollar the NEA contributes leads to nine additional dollars being donated from other sources.

We hold close the words of Lincoln Center's inaugural president, John D. Rockefeller III, who said, "The arts are not for the privileged few, but for the many. Their place is not on the periphery of daily life, but at its center. They should function not merely as another form of entertainment but, rather, should contribute to our well-being and happiness."

To preserve the human and economic benefits of the arts, Lincoln Center urges the Council to pass Proposed Resolution 1393-A in favor of continued federal support for the arts.

Thank you again.

Theatre Development Fund
520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 801
New York, New York 10018-6507
Tel: 212.912.9770 Ext. 100
Fax: 212.354.8739

e-mail: ToryB@tdf.org
www.tdf.org



Victoria Bailey
Executive Director

New York City Council
April 3, 2017 meeting

I am Victoria Bailey, Executive Director of Theatre Development Fund. I would like to register my support for proposed Resolution No. 1393-A. Thank you Chairman Van Bramer for sponsoring this resolution. We have deep concerns about the proposed budget which the White House has released to Congress. As you know it calls for the full termination of funding of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in FY 2108. This is the first American President in history to propose zeroing out all funding for our country's federal cultural agencies.

The current proposal to eliminate funding for these agencies is misguided. Much has been written in the last few weeks about the economic reasons not to eliminate the funding, small as it is, to these agencies. The NEA generates \$9 in matching funds for every \$1 granted to its grantees, found in all 50 states. The return on the dollars invested by you the taxpayers in these efforts is strong and would be the envy of any of us in our personal retirement accounts. It is important to note that the total NEA budget is \$148 million a year, less than 0.004 percent of the federal budget. The per capita cost per American is 46 cents, less than the cost of a postage stamp.

Here in New York City, cultural not-for-profits received \$14.5 million in FY 2016 and a cumulative \$233.2 million from 2000 to 2016. The loss of NEA funding would have a significant impact on the health and well-being of countless New York City cultural organizations. As noted above, in addition to the federal funding itself, this funding leverages matching funding for organizations large and small throughout all

five borough of New York City. These grants are particularly important for small organizations; they act as a sort of “Good Housekeeping” seal, bestowing recognition and prestige, increasing its ability to raise money from individual donors. According to a report issued by Comptroller Scott Stringer, New York City beneficiaries of NEA funding paid over \$453 million in total wages in 2016. In addition 40% of the NEA funding goes to state arts councils and thus the elimination of the NEA would have a negative impact on the ability of the New York State Council on the Arts to do the work that it does.

I am concerned about another aspect of these proposed cuts. When I was learning to be a Business Manager in theatre, I was taught that a budget is a tool – a tool that reflects the priorities of the institution it represents. If that is the case what does the current budget say about us as a nation? What would it mean if we had a national budget that had no resources earmarked to the arts and humanities? What would that signal to our citizens, our young people, let alone the rest of the world about our priorities as a country? We cannot walk away from the belief that our artists have stories to tell that entertain us in the deepest sense of the word. We cannot walk away from saying that just like providing health care for our citizens and retirement funds for our seniors and a strong defense system against those who wish us harm, just like all that, we have to embrace and endorse and strengthen the arts in our country.

Here at TDF, we believe that the arts, and for us more specifically the live performing arts, are essential. We believe that access to the arts is the birthright of every human being. When we sit in a darkened room and listen to a story – no matter what form it takes – listen with other people, we are enriched. We are transformed, for only a short while, and we enter into the lives or experiences of someone other than ourselves. We are entertained. And we leave the theatre changed in some way. This country would be wounded if we walk away from support of the arts and humanities.

ARTS & DEMOCRACY

April 4, 2017

Caron Atlas testimony in support of the NEA, NEH, IMLS, and CPB

To Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer and members of the NYC Council Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations Committee

I direct Arts & Democracy and Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts NY (NOCD-NY). What I know through this work is that imagination, empathy, critical thinking, and public voice are essential to the health of our democracy.

This has been a good couple of weeks for creative local democracy. Arts & Democracy is part of participatory budgeting, which has inspired us with enthusiastic participation. At a youth forum, held to inform the cultural plan, young people from across the city spoke with clarity about why the arts are a necessity for their communities. The forum was hosted by NEA-funded El Puente, which was recognized by the youth as a valued neighborhood hub. And at a NOCD-NY gathering of cultural and community groups doing creative work in public housing, we were reminded about the NEA's investment in a powerful collaboration between Casita Maria and NYCHA in the Bronx.

I've been involved with the NEA, NEH, and CPB for over 30 years as a grantee and panelist. I've seen how critically important their funding and validation are to community-based groups as a "Good Housekeeping" badge of excellence that leverages significant additional funding. I've seen how they raise the bar in the field by bringing us together to share exemplary practices and to inform policy with our practice. Because of this the NEA is often ahead of the curve; for example, diversity and equity were discussed there decades ago. I'm co-project director of a national NEA Our Town supported cohort that is sharing lessons learned about placemaking from the community up from NYC, Kentucky, Arizona, and California. The Our Town program has inspired and supported cities and towns across the country to connect the arts with community development, health, and transportation and recognized the importance of local stories as part of community wellbeing.

This doesn't only happen in urban areas. I saw first hand how important NEA, NEH and CPB investments were to rural Appalachia when I lived in the coalfields of Kentucky and worked at Appalshop, an arts and media center. This investment creates jobs in an area where they are scarce, adds arts to the schools, reinforces cultural identity, and gives people a platform to speak for themselves about community issues. Arts, culture, and media help people respond to an economy in transition and envision alternatives. At Appalshop we knew the power of culture to connect people with different experiences and perspectives. So with the support of the NEA we engaged in a long-term cultural exchange with Pregones Theater in the South Bronx, learning about the common challenges, and strong cultures that connect these urban and rural communities.

In short, arts and culture, books, humanities, and public broadcasting, are critical to healthy and vital communities. We need to fight for them together with our allies from across the country and in tandem with those fighting for other critical issues such as human rights, health care and housing. Together we can surely win.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my testimony.



Testimony

to the

City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and
International Intergroup Relations

By

Dianna L. Jones, Executive Assistant
Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York

Monday, April 3, 2017



My name is Dianna Lauren Jones. I am the Executive Assistant to Ginny Louloudes, the tireless Executive Director at the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York. A.R.T./New York is the service and advocacy organization for over 360 of New York City's nonprofit theatres and a phenomenal place to work. I want to thank Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer and all of the Members of the City Council for their formidable support of the arts sector and specifically, your generous support of the new A.R.T./New York Theatres which opened on January 18th of 2017. In light of recent threats to the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, I am compelled to submit testimony in full support of proposed resolution no. 1393-A.

By reading the proposed resolution it is evident that the Council is well aware of the economic, social, cultural and educational impacts of the arts, cultural institutions, libraries and public broadcast programs in NYC. What then is left for me to say?

I am a young woman, of color. By way of good fortune, hard work and guidance I am a stereotypical abnormality, with a Master's Degree in Public Administration and nearly ¼ of my higher education experience spent living, learning and serving abroad. I am passionate about the broad range of benefits that result from arts and cultural initiatives, and I am as interested in the local impact of the arts as I am in the way these disciplines and industries are present across the globe.

-As an actor on the Globe stage in London

-A director for a series of scenes and monologues on the challenges faced by children and workers in the foster care system at Dixon Place in NYC

-A teaching artist for k-5 students in Newark NJ

-Or an intern working to coordinate the artist roster for the Azgo Music festival in Mozambique

I live and breathe the power of the arts.

I share this information about myself because you already know the facts about the arts and I want you to know WHO is on your team in this fight.

Our call to support continued funding of the NEA and cultural agencies is backed by decades of data:

- Almost 30 million tourists visited the NYC cultural organizations in 2015 and spent \$5 billion collectively on arts, recreation and entertainment; the tourism industry sustains more than 375,000 jobs citywide
- Performing arts companies, museums, and historic sites- all of which benefit from N.E.A. grants are among the largest employers in the city. In 2016 alone, these industries collectively maintained a staff of 30,154
- The \$148 million dollar NEA budget is 0.006% of the Federal Budget

Since 2000, City cultural organizations have received a total of \$233 million in funds from the N.E.A

Unfortunately, our data does not give just cause. I believe that there are underappreciated links between arts and culture and every other sector, discipline and value in which many of our country's leaders place faith. If we can expose, entice and teach by highlighting these links, our future **will** be brighter.

This administration values financial wealth and prosperity- the arts and cultural sectors create jobs, generate revenue and revitalize communities with the support of NEA OurTown Creative Placemaking grants. This administration values



the strength of our military and the nation's security- arts therapy programs are becoming increasingly popular to support the mental health of military personnel, and cultural exchange sharing that takes place in libraries and museums with the support of NEH funds allows us to build the necessary empathy to truly maintain diplomatic relationships with people from around the world.

One routinely visited piece of text which stuck with me from the Conservatory Acting Program at Mason Gross School of the Arts: "I celebrate myself and sing myself and what I assume you shall assume, that every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you." –Walt Whitman teaches self-love, self-care and self-respect, all the while emphasizing the importance of doing the same for others. It breaks my heart and makes me furious that we find ourselves at a time where financial investment in our nation's artists, poets, writers, humanitarian thinkers and creative innovators requires such widespread efforts of advocacy. To me, arts and culture will always be common sense.

I have seen with my own eyes the joy and bustling commerce created by rich and celebrated theatrical history in London, and both the burgeoning economic and cultural value of the arts in Mozambique. And of course, I have unending love for the arts and cultural life available in New York. When I directed a play to raise foster care awareness at Dixon Place, I was humbled by the play's reception. Audience members expressed gratitude and our playwright was overjoyed because she had the opportunity to tell her story. The play was based on an adaptation of the book, "Through The belly Of the Beast and Back to Tell: My Life in Foster Care" written by Titania D. Grace, who was raised by foster parents. She went on to become a Social Worker and conducted interviews which became the basis for much of the book. From the well-endowed performances on Broadway to the intimate and courageous creative expression that takes place Off-Broadway and throughout the non-profit theatre community, these resources are part of New York's unique musculature. It was thrilling to rehearse and perform on the Globe Stage, to hear the voices of tourists young and old, and feel a part of this renowned history. I felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude and deep respect for many of the creative people I met in Mozambique. I cannot forget the twin sisters who both earn their livelihoods as painters, photographers and designing "recycled" fashion (clothes made and repurposed from donations- garments often discarded mindlessly from the Western world of excess). The image of school children with smiling faces as we sit in a simple school building- in the hot, hot sun- the joy of seeing a play, and sharing a dance prepared for the visiting students from the American School are etchings in my mind.

Like many African countries facing the present day political, economic and social impacts of post colonialism, contemporary Mozambican culture reflects much of the country's tumultuous history. The BBC News published an article in January of 2016, citing a bleak economic reality in Mozambique: more than half of the country's 24 million people live below the poverty line. Yet still, in a place where there is widespread poverty, people – rich and poor alike- value the arts. I remember so clearly a high-school student who was native to Mozambique and her enthusiastic involvement in everything the Arts have to offer. She received a scholarship to the American School where most of the student body is filled with international students, sons and daughters of diplomats, wealthy, privilege galore. And this girl, more grateful and gracious than any student I met who had all the comforts of privilege, was involved in school theatre, hosted a radio program on Mozambican Public Radio, wanted to make country better and made it a point to engage with everyone during the school's annual Community Arts festival, "Thlanganisa".

And I wonder, what is happening to us?



The wealth gap in the United States is growing increasingly wider and it appears that our national identity has fragmented to the extreme. Whether we like it or not, there are different types of people in the United States and the arts if nothing more, can make it easier to find peace amongst our differences. Idealistic as it may seem, hidden in the chaos of the world, I trust that there is still peace.

I have stories from my life about the power of the arts set in Newark NJ, Chester PA, and Hoboken and Princeton NJ. I have anecdotes from time spent in other cities and small towns scattered across the country - about communities so divided and categorically unlike enjoying creative expression together, that the **only conclusion** I can draw is that the arts allow us to see our commonality. This is critical. I repeat; our commonality. We built this world together- our institutions, and roads and technologies and all of it: the injustice and oppression and love and cooperation, and violence and hatred and beauty. One thing I dare anyone to deny is that we used each other to build the reality in which we live. We built this together and we need one another to keep building. We formed alliances, we stereotyped, we ignored, and we fought for our loved ones, defended our principles and our country, lied, and cheated, accepted and challenged the status quo. I'd like us to make more choices to build cooperation, equity, sustainability and diversity of both material and value systems. I dare us to *live our commonality*. The arts and cultural staples of our world help us to accomplish this and so much more.

In New York City the arts and cultural ecosystems provide both community and industry. As such, their vitality is paramount to the overall wellbeing and livelihood of New Yorkers whose identities span cultural, racial, political and socioeconomic spectrums. The fields of arts and culture are by no means perfect. There is more work to do to increase access, inclusion and opportunity for people of color, women and members of LGBTQ, international and differently abled communities. But still, the diversity or drive towards a diversity which reflects the undeniably multi-cultural composition of NYC has influence beyond the city's geographic bounds. The abundance of arts and cultural opportunity for which NYC has become synonymous is central to New York City's national and the global identity.

To the members of the City Council, as an individual and as a representative of A.R.T./New York, **thank you** for urging President Donald Trump to fully fund the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. I am committed to stand with you in this fight.

If you would like to learn more about my arts and cultural experiences in Mozambique, I am happy to be contacted.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANNE RADICE

Address: EX DIR

I represent: AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM

Address: 2 LINCOLN SQUARE

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1393-11

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aaron Bouska

Address: 2900 Southern Blvd Bronx

I represent: New York Botanical Garden

Address: 2900 Southern Blvd Bronx

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Allie Carieri

Address: 231 W. 39th Street

I represent: Roundabout Theatre

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: NEAL SHAPIRO

Address: 300 CPW #196 NY, NY 10074

I represent: UNITE

Address: 875 8th Ave NY, NY 10019

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/3/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jody Kohn

Address: 149 Franklin St NYC 10013

I represent: Vineyard Theatre

Address: 108 E. 15th St. NYC

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1393-A

in favor in opposition

Date: 4.3.2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Antonio Pontón-Núñez

Address: 150 Broadway #1700, NYC, NY 10038

I represent: Humanities New York

Address: same

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1393-A

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/3/2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Hannah Joo

Address: 218 East 18th Street, New York 10003

I represent: Dance / NYC

Address:

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/3/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Laura Paicovich

Address: _____

I represent: Queens Museum

Address: NYC Bldg. Flushing Meadows Park
Queens 11368

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/3/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JUSTINE NAGAN

Address: 1293 PROSPECT AVE BK, NY

I represent: AMERICAN DOCUMENTARY / POV

Address: 20 JAY ST #940 BK, NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DAVID MUTTON
Address: 358 87 STREET, APT 3, BROOKLYN, NY 11209
I represent: STORMVILLE CENTER FOR THE SPOKEN WORD
Address: 75 BROAD STREET, SUITE 2601, NEW YORK

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1393-A
 in favor in opposition

Date: 4/3/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dr. Rachel Feinmark
Address: 867 W. 181st
I represent: Lower East Side Tenement
Address: 91 Orchard St. Museum

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jennifer Kenka
Address: 75 Maiden Lane
I represent: Academy of American Poets
Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1393-A

in favor in opposition

Date: 4/3/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kay Takeda

Address: LMCC 125 Maiden Lane 10038

I represent: LMCC

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Allie Carieri

Address: _____

I represent: Roundabout Theater Company

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANDREW ACKERMAN

Address: _____

I represent: Children's museum of Manhattan

Address: _____