



ArtFBI

ArtFax

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A Faxazine of Arts Information from Cyberspace to the Mid-Atlantic Community

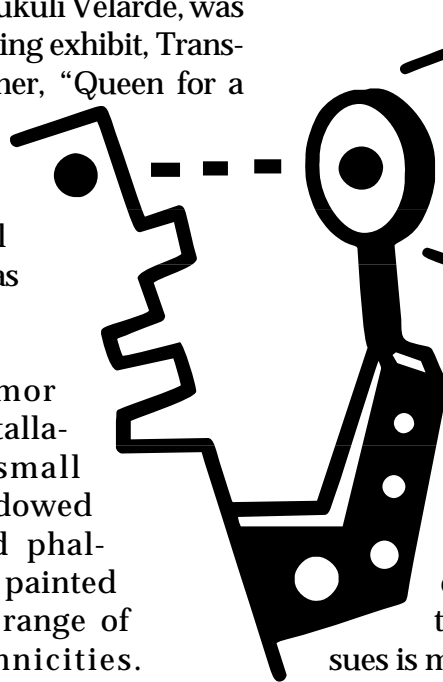
MARYLAND INSTITUTE REMOVES ART FROM WALLS

Students at the Maryland Institute, College of Art in Baltimore were outraged to learn the Administration removed two art works from exhibits during the weekend of December 2. One, "Amor Puro" (Pure Love) by artist Kukuli Velarde, was part of the traveling exhibit, Transformers. The other, "Queen for a Day," was by student David Reynolds. Informational material on HIV/AIDS was also removed.

Velarde's "Amor Puro" is an installation of five small cupids, each endowed with oversized phaluses and each painted to represent a range of different ethnicities. "Queen for a Day" is a photographic essay on Baltimore's transvestite culture.


According to a memo issued by Academic Dean, Ray Allen, the work was removed because many outside people would be visiting the school that weekend (Satur-

day was the last day of the Young People's Studio and Sunday was Portfolio Day). Allen "felt that a large number of people for whom the work was inappropriate would be forced to look at it."



Student reaction was uncharacteristically swift and intense. Letters of protest began to appear on bulletin boards throughout the school almost immediately.

Trish Winslow, a Senior Graphic Design major stated: "That this kind of censorship can happen in a school where we are encouraged, even taught to question, to challenge and to expose unpalatable issues is more than a little ironic!"

Student Lisa Anne Manzi stated the school's administration had done the Institute community a disservice by supporting "an extremely narrow-minded and homophobic framework." She listed numerous recommendations including a 

policy that work will never be removed from any installed show until its scheduled closing date, involving the Student Body as part of the decision-making process to find solutions together, and a commitment to supporting all artists' rights to free speech.

In response to the situation, Fred Lazarus, President of MICA, Allen, Theresa Bedoya, Dean of Admissions and Jana Varwig, Dean of Student Affairs issued an apology for the removal of the work. In a statement issued by these administrators they stated: "We regret what was done and the impact these acts of censorship have had on our community and your trust in us." In addition they acknowledged that decisions were made without consideration of the impact on the Institute community and the values for which the school stands. According to the statement, "There should have been, and we must be certain that all major decisions are preceded by this kind of dialogue in the future."

As a direct result of this mishap, there is renewed interest in forming a student government in order to take part in this process. Dean Allen has also announced that a panel and community forum on censorship will be held at the beginning of the upcoming Spring semester to discuss the issues coming out of this experience.

-Source: ArtFBI

Clipper Park Fire Update

The Clipper Park Artists' Relief Fund was established this fall to offer assistance to the 26 artists affected by a devastating fire on

September 16th at the Clipper Industrial Park in the Hampden/Woodberry section of Baltimore city. Put together by Maryland Art Place with support from the Maryland Institute, College of Art while the Clipper Park fire was still being extinguished, the donations have been processed through MAP as the 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. Governor Parris Glendenning convened a task force to coordinate public assistance from the city and state.

To date, the general fund has attracted almost \$22,000. Another \$5,000 has been pledged through the Mayor's office by the Department of Housing and Community Development. A benefit coordinated by Jody Albright in the state's Office of Special Projects netted another \$27,000, bringing the total money raised to date to about \$54,000. All monies were processed through MAP. Of this total, nearly \$33,000 has been disbursed to the affected artists so far.

Of the remaining funds, \$5,000 has been pledged by the affected artists to establish a perpetual loan fund for artists in the future who find themselves in like circumstances. Approach letters have been sent to eight foundations, including The Abell Foundation, The Baltimore Community Foundation, the Hoffberger Foundation, and The Hodson Trust. The initial goal was \$50,000, now upped to \$100,000 in light of the Hollins Street fire just about a month ago (this fire affected an additional ten artists). Although MAP immediately offered assistance, the relief effort for that fire is being coordi-



The NEA last week released a four-page brochure outlining the basic structure of the agency's revised grantmaking procedures and applicant eligibility. New application books are being mailed to previous applicants; those not receiving applications by mid-January should contact the NEA at 202-682-5400.

Jane Alexander, in an introduction to the brochure, commented that, while celebrating the Endowment's success in fostering "the excellence, diversity and vitality" of the arts over the past 30 years, and making them accessible to all Americans, she was reminded of the challenge ahead to continue this success when faced with not only a 40% budget cut by Congress but also the mandated elimination of seasonal support to organizations and grants to most individual artists. With a new organizational structure and a new grantmaking process, the NEA's plan is designed "to encourage all arts organizations to work more together and to share in-



formation and resources creatively."

Ms. Alexander also reiterated her determination to identify ways of systemically funding the nonprofit arts in America: "If we are to ensure that the nonprofit arts not only survive but flourish throughout America, our commitment and resolve must be matched by our creativity and vision."

The basic changes to the NEA's application and review structure are that four broad themes and a new public partnership program will replace the 17 programs of the past, while keeping specific discipline expertise of NEA staff. Organizations can submit only one application for project support in one of the four themes. The four themes (together with deadlines) are as follows: Heritage & Preservation (Intent to Apply - February 5; Application - March 4; Estimated Project Start Date: November 1, 1996); Education & Access (Intent to Apply - February 5; Application - March 4; Start Date: March 1, 1997); Cre-



nated by the MACAC with The Eubie Blake Center as the 501(c)(3). So far, The Abell Foundation has granted \$5,000 to this perpetual fund.

The Clipper artists are also deciding on an amount to be set aside from their fund for the Hollins Street artists. What remains in the fund is to be disbursed amongst the Clipper artists until mid-January. Money that comes in to the fund after that point will then be given over to the new perpetual loan fund. How this fund is to be administered and by whom will be decided in the first quarter of the new year.

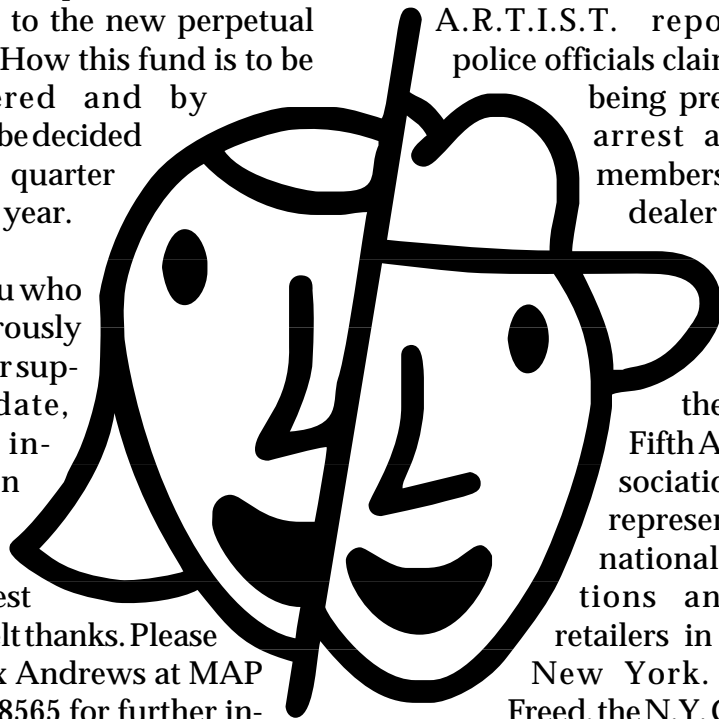
To all of you who have generously shown your support to date, everyone involved in this project offers you their deepest and heartfelt thanks. Please contact Tex Andrews at MAP at 410-962-8565 for further information.

- Source: Maryland Art Place

Artists Continue Dispute With NYC

A.R.T.I.S.T., a group representing artists who display and sell their work from the streets of New York City, has reported further developments in its case against the City of New York. Robert Lederman, president of A.R.T.I.S.T., claims that police officials have told him that Mayor

Giuliani has now authorized them to renew the crackdown on artists displaying original paintings on New York City streets. Arrests are expected to begin this coming Saturday. In two years more than 200 fine artists have been handcuffed and arrested for not having a license that the City admits in its legal brief is "unobtainable." Confiscated art is sold at police auctions or destroyed regardless of the outcome of each artist's case.



A.R.T.I.S.T. reports that police officials claim they are being pressured to arrest artists by members of an art dealer/landlord coalition, the SoHo Alliance and by the powerful Fifth Avenue Association, which represents multinational corporations and major retailers in Midtown New York. Kathryn Freed, the N.Y. City Councilor for SoHo is also reportedly pressuring police to make more artist arrests, calling artists, "...parasites" and claiming they ruin the quality of life in the city.

In an early round of this continuing court case, a Federal judge denied painters, photographers, printmakers and sculptors First Amendment protection based on the conclusion that: "...Art is farther from the core than the written word.... Plaintiffs' art does not carry either words or the particularized social and political messages upon which



the First Amendment places special value...written matter is the heartland of the First Amendment." The opposition contends that the ruling ignores 50 years of Supreme Court and appellate cases that have affirmed the visual arts equal status with the written word. The judges entire ruling may be read at the A.R.T.I.S.T. web site: <http://homepage.interaccess.com/~mar/nyc.html>.

Individuals and organizations in the legal, cultural and arts communities are being asked to join in the case by filing amicus briefs, by December 29, for an appeal challenging the ruling.

- Source: Artswire

Talkback!

"TalkBack! A Forum for Critical Discourse," a new quarterly online journal, is now online. Edited by Robert Atkins, journalist, art historian and former columnist for the Village Voice, TalkBack! will focus on discussion of the issues

surrounding the production and distribution of online artworks as well as on contemporary culture in general. Regular features of TalkBack! will include reviews of online artwork, a guide to artworks, zines and museum sites on the Web, opinion pieces "challenging the (electronic) cultural status quo," news, reports and commentaries. The inaugural issue will include reflections by Susan Sontag, William Gibson, Merce Cunningham, and Philip Glass.

TalkBack! may be found on the Web at <http://www/math240.lehman.cuny.edu/talkback>.

Istook Amendment Defeated

Last week the House passed Lobby Reform legislation unanimously and unamended, staving off the attempts by Representatives Ernest Istook (R-OK) and David McIntosh (R-IN) to pass the "Silence America" Amendment, which would have severely limited non-profits' right to lobby.

tation (Intent to Apply - February 20; Application - April 3; Start Date: May 1, 1997); and Planning & Stabilization (Intent to Apply - February 20; Application - April 3, 1996; Start Date: May 1, 1997).

In addition, the NEA announced a new Partnership Program (one application only from each state and jurisdictional arts agency and their regional arts organizations) beginning FY 1997—details in a separate booklet available March 1996. The Endowment will also support "Leadership Initiatives"—specific initiatives for projects of national significance and impact, or that serve as models in one field or across the disciplines.

- NEA on Artswire

End
Transmission

