



# ArtFBI

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

## BENTON FOUNDATION AND NEA LAUNCH FUNDING FOR ARTISTS AND ORGANIZATIONS TO USE THE INTERNET

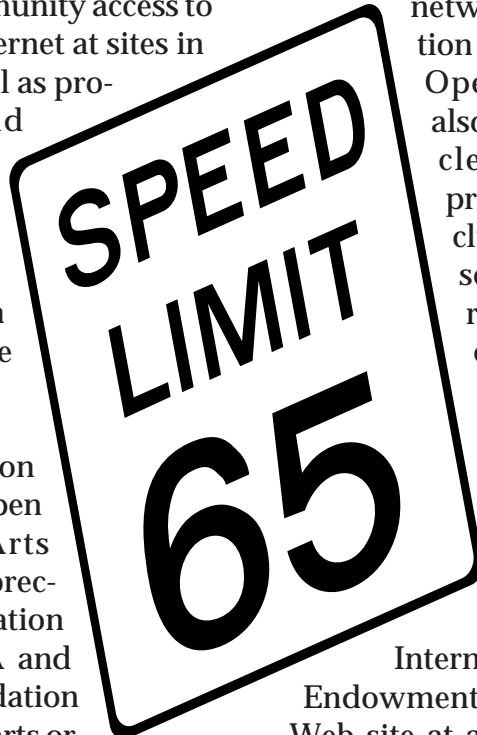
The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Benton Foundation recently announced the nation's first funding initiative that will provide community access to the arts on the Internet at sites in all 50 states as well as propel artists and nonprofit arts organizations online by helping them to become effective information providers on the World Wide Web.

This new \$1 million initiative, called Open Studio: The Arts Online, is an unprecedented collaboration between the NEA and the Benton Foundation to help nonprofit arts organizations and artists go online, increase the arts and cultural presence on the Internet, expand the online arts audience, and provide public Internet access at arts and community institutions. The project will serve as a "na-

tional laboratory" and is designed to periodically assess the changing needs of arts organizations and artists and the evolving state of networked communication and technology. The Open Studio website also serves as a public clearinghouse for project information, including a project description and status reports. Open Studio is an integral part of an overall effort by the NEA to extend its public outreach and serve the arts and the public more effectively through the

Internet. In April, the Arts

Endowment launched its own Web site at [arts.endow.gov](http://arts.endow.gov). The site includes a monthly magazine, a guide to the Arts Endowment, and an art resource center. The Benton Foundation, dedicated to protecting the public interest in the digital age, has long been a proponent for pro-



viding noncommercial public space in the new communications environment. The foundation's work ranges from published work on connecting schools and public opinion research on libraries to national policy summits on communications policy and practices in the public interest and the creation of a communications hub to link children's advocates. More information about Benton, including publications and cyber resource pages, can be found at [www.benton.org](http://www.benton.org).

The initiative consists of two funding components:

1) Offering Free Community Access to the Internet - More than 100 arts organizations and culturally-oriented community centers (2 in every state and territory) will receive a matching award of \$2,000 to \$4,000 to set up public access points to the Internet. Through this initiative, members of the public who are interested in accessing the Internet can receive personal assistance helping them learn how to browse the Web and access its cultural resources.

2) Helping Artists & Arts Organizations Become Effective Information Providers on the Web - Ten institutions with existing telecommunications resources, such as libraries, universities, and community telecommunications centers, will each receive up to \$35,000 to serve as mentors to ten regional cultural organizations and ten local artists, teaching them how to become effective information providers on the World Wide Web. The trainees will then mentor another organization or artist within a year of completing their


own training. By the autumn of 1997, this program will generate an Internet presence for 200 arts organizations and artists with 200 more in training.

Fourteen sites have already been selected as pilots and the remaining sites will be selected through a competitive process, with awards announced in March 1997. The proposal deadline for the remaining sites is January 15, 1996. For more information about applying for site awards, send a blank email to [mentorrfp@benton.org](mailto:mentorrfp@benton.org) (for mentor awards) or [accessrfp@benton.org](mailto:accessrfp@benton.org) (for access awards), visit the Open Studio Web site at [www.openstudio.org](http://www.openstudio.org), or call the Project Coordinator, Anne Green, at (202) 638-5770.

Source: Benton Foundation

### Victory For NEA Four! "Decency" Standards Ruled Unconstitutional

On November 5, 1996, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco upheld the 1992 Federal District Court ruling which struck down a federal statute requiring the National Endowment for the Arts to consider "general standards of decency" in awarding grants, according to a report from the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression. (NCFE) The lawsuit, *Finley v. NEA*, popularly known as the "NEA Four" case, was filed in September 1990.

In a 2-1 ruling, the Appeals Court held that the requirement violated the First and Fifth Amendments because it 

POWER IN PRACTICE, a new publication available from The Pew Charitable Trusts, offers arts practitioners some useful advice on what to expect and what to avoid when designing and delivering arts programs for children.

Power in Practice chronicles the experiences of ten Philadelphia-area arts organizations as they participated in a four-year initiative funded by The Pew to test and evaluate new approaches in arts education.

To get a free copy, call the Communications Office at The Pew Charitable Trusts at 215.575.4800 or place an order through the publications request page on the Trust's web site: [www.pewtrusts.com/publicationrequest.html](http://www.pewtrusts.com/publicationrequest.html)

Source: Pew on AW

ART DATA LIMITED

“People involved in policy making and program design in such fields as health care or education are accustomed to having at their disposal extensive bodies of information on service-delivering organizations. By contrast, the data available to those of use who care about the arts is limited and uneven quality,” write Paul DiMaggio and Deborah Kaple in INFORMATION ON ARTS ORGANIZATIONS, an article in the Autumn 1996 issue of GRANT-MAKERS IN THE ARTS.

Further information on the study DATA ON ARTS ORGANIZATIONS: A REVIEW AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT, WITH DESIGN IMPLICATIONS is available on the Princeton Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies website: [www.princeton.edu/~artspol/](http://www.princeton.edu/~artspol/)

Source: Arts Wire

was so vague as to invite “arbitrary decisionmaking” by NEA officials, and because it imposed an impermissible content-based restriction on artists’ speech, the NCFE reports.

According to the NCFE Judge James R. Browning, a Kennedy appointee, wrote for the Court, “Even when the Government is funding speech, it may not distinguish between speakers on the basis of the speaker’s viewpoint or otherwise aim at the suppression of dangerous ideas.” The Court also found that “Government funding of the arts, in the circumstances of this case, must be viewpoint-neutral.” Judge Warren J. Ferguson (a Carter appointee) concurred, while Judge Andrew Klein-feld (a Reagan appointee) dissented.

National Campaign for Freedom of Expression board president Mary D. Dorman, one of the attorneys for the plaintiffs, comments, “In 1990 four individual artists and an artists’ membership organization had the courage to challenge the National Endowment for the Arts — the federal government. After six years the result is an unequivocal denunciation of decency as a standard by which to determine public funding for artists and the arts.”

The NCFE reports that David Cole, who argued the appeal on behalf of the plaintiffs, states, “This

decision means that from now on the NEA must concern itself with art, not politics or decency.”

NCFE executive director David Mendoza adds, “This is an important legal affirmation that the First Amendment applies to artistic expression, even when it is funded by public dollars. It is unfortunate that we must constantly seek redress from the courts, in long and expensive litigation, to counter blatantly unconstitutional legislation imposed by Congress.”

In 1990 the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression initiated a lawsuit on behalf of four artists: Karen Finley, John Fleck, Holly Hughes, and Tim Miller (who became known as the “NEA Four”) — after they were denied grants by then-NEA Chair

John Frohnmayer for political reasons, according to the NCFE. A few months later the “decency standards” were adopted by Congress and made a condition for the continued existence of the NEA. At that time the National Association of Artists’ Organizations (NAAO) joined the original artist plaintiffs to challenge the constitutionality of the “decency standards.”

There were two parts of the Finley v. NEA lawsuit. The first involved the denial of grants to the four artists for political reasons and the violation



of their privacy by the NEA, while the second challenged the constitutionality of the “decency standards.” In June 1992 Federal District Judge Wallace A. Tashima ruled that the standards were unconstitutional, violating both the First and Fifth Amendments. Judge Tashima’s 44-page ruling was a powerful and eloquent defense of freedom of artistic expression, equating it with academic freedom. His ruling enjoined the NEA from enforcing the “decency” standard.

For more information about the NCFE visit their web site at [www.artswire.org/~ncfe/](http://www.artswire.org/~ncfe/) or contact: NCFE, 1402 Third Ave., #421 Seattle, WA 98101 Tel: 206-340-9301 Fax: 206-340-4303

Source: NCFE on AW

## Local Arts Agency Budgets Increase

Local arts agency (LAA) budgets continue to increase in 1996 according to the results of a survey conducted by Americans for the Arts. The survey, released this

October as a United States Urban Arts Federation Report, is based on information collected from LAAs in the nation’s 50 largest cities.

The report concludes that LAA budgets increased 8.1 percent in 1996. Local government support continues to be the major source of revenue for LAAs in the 50 largest cities (71.4%). And local government support to LAAs continues to increase — 4.7 percent in 1996.

Using the arts to address community development issues is the fastest growing program and service area of local arts agencies. 100 percent of the LAA’s surveyed use the arts to address community issues that range from cultural and racial issues to substance abuse prevention. Additionally, 98 percent collaborate with other local government agencies such as school districts, parks and chambers of commerce.

For more information, contact Americans for the Arts Tel: 202-371-2830 Fax: 202-371-0424 web site: [www.artsusa.org](http://www.artsusa.org)

Carla Dunlap, Technology Officer at the Maryland State Arts Council has put up the Council’s first Web page. The URL (web address) is: [www.writer.org/msac/msac.htm](http://www.writer.org/msac/msac.htm)

Dunlap reports that the site will be basic to start with content oriented towards the Council and its programs. She would like to link arts organizations in Maryland that have web sites.

In addition she is planning a technology issue of the Council’s Winter Newsletter. If your organization is using technology for administration, programs and special projects, let her know. Her e-mail address is: [msac@access.digex.net](mailto:msac@access.digex.net)

End  
Transmission

