

FRIDAY AT FOUR © 1990 by Barbara London

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Signs of the Times 1990~1995

1990 Operation Desert Shield leaves for Saudi Arabia in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait... *Home Alone* top-grossing movie... Mikail Gorbachev wins Nobel Prize for Peace... Phil Collins wins Grammy for "Another Day in Paradise"... Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles craze... Dow Jones average hits first-time high at 2999.75... *Dances With Wolves* wins Academy Award for Best Picture... Pres. Bush signs Americans with Disabilities Act... NH's Justice David Souter nominated for U.S. Supreme Court... Luxury tax on yachts, jewelry, etc... Unemployment reaches 3-year high of 6.1%, over 1 million jobs are lost... Thousands leave NH in job search... NH Poet Charles Simic wins Pulitzer for *The World Doesn't End*... NH elects innkeeper Bill Zeff and architect Dick Swett to U.S. House of Representatives... **1991** Pres. Bush talks of a "new world order"... U.S. and Allies defeat Iraq and liberate Kuwait... Bullish stock market finishes above 3000... Unemployment rises... Consumer prices jump... Justice Thurgood Marshall announces resignation... 34 domestic military installations closed... House banking scandal... Anita Hill testifies against the nomination of Clarence Thomas to US Supreme Court... Keating convicted of securities fraud... Ozone depletion studies... Video games, like Super Mario, gain in popularity... John Sununu resigns as Pres. Bush's Chief of Staff... Magic Johnson, infected with AIDS virus, retires from basketball... Last 3 U.S. hostages, including Terry Anderson, freed from Lebanon... 50-year commemoration of bombing of Pearl Harbor... *Modern Maturity* is best-selling magazine... 10,000 U.N. forces placed in Bosnia as part of peace plan... Soviet Union disbands into independent states ... Gorbachev resigns, saying "The old system collapsed before the new one had time to begin working" ... Russia's President Boris Yeltsin rises in prominence... **1992** Radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh writes *The Way Things Ought to Be*... TWA and Macy's file for bankruptcy... Patrick Buchanan makes strong showing in NH's first-in-the-nation primary in challenge to Pres. Bush for Republican nomination... Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton wins Democratic nomination for presidential bid... House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich (R) barely wins renomination in Georgia district...

By law, the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts is mandated to "stimulate and encourage throughout the state the study and presentation of the performing and fine arts and public interest and participation therein." (RSA 19A:5 (1). In carrying out that statutory responsibility, we as the state's arts Councilors, recognize our great obligation and public responsibility in granting public funds in the arts. Our policy, which guides the awarding of grants, is that all activities supported with Council funds be directed toward encouraging the freedom of expression that is essential for the well-being of the arts and the people of New Hampshire. We fulfill our responsibility with the adoption of and adherence to a rigorous system of review by panels composed of arts professionals and New Hampshire citizens informed in the arts to recommend grants on the basis of artistic merit.

—Arts Council Resolution: April 6, 1990

Form and Content



UNH Art Gallery Director Vicki Wright and Melissa Lowenthal prepare an exhibition. (Photo by Gary Samson.)

Mid season in New Hampshire found the staff and the Councilors in retreat at Arts Councilor Bill Zeff's Christmas Farm Inn in Jackson. The purpose of the retreat was to help all concerned deal with the growing controversy surrounding the National Endowment for the Arts and its implications for the arts in New Hampshire. To put the controversies in perspective, UNH Art Gallery Director Vicki Wright gave a slide lecture on the history of the avant garde in the visual arts. She explained the shock viewers felt at seeing Impressionist paintings for the first time; the exile of abstract painters from Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia; and how Senator Joseph McCarthy criticized the USIA (United States Information Agency) for including, in its international touring exhibition, works by Ben Shawn and other artists who sympathized with communist doctrines.

The group also heard from John Frohnmayer via his videotaped speech to the National Press Club. They read and shared reactions to articles written by people who argued for and against the NEA. Here is a sampling from the crossfire of ideas that they considered:

“While the right has been busy winning primaries and elections, cutting taxes, funding anti-Communist guerrillas abroad, the left has been quietly seizing all the commanding heights of American art and culture.”

— *Columnist Patrick Buchanan*

“It is a disgrace that our tax dollars are being used to support the National Endowment for the Arts in their pornographic, anti-Christian ‘art works’... Artists have no more right to be funded in their work than carpenters, truck drivers or sales clerks. Stopping funding for the NEA will allow artists the freedom to produce any ‘works of art’ desired, and thus government censorship will not be involved. Their art work will stand on its own merit, as it should in a capitalistic society...”

— *Donald Wildmon of the American Family Association who organized a campaign to lobby Congress to abolish the NEA*

“The Endowment opposes pornography unequivocally. Pornography has no soul — it has no purpose other than smut — it is the opposite of art.”

“The nonprofit arts have never paid for themselves in the free marketplace. Whether it was the Church, the Medicis or the State, the fine arts have always been supported.

“This is not happenstance. Governments, whether democratic or autocratic, have recognized that the finest expressions of the human spirit; the fullest explanations of what it means to be human; the finest depictions of what is lasting in our society are contained in the arts. We remember governments not for the wars that they fight, but for the architecture, the literature, the visual art, the music and the dance which they support or suppress.”

— *Official statements from the National Endowment for the Arts*

After weighing all of the arguments and engaging in spirited debate, the Arts Councilors voted unanimously (and not surprisingly, in a state with the license plate motto, “Live Free or Die”) on a resolution supporting freedom of expression while at the same time pledging, as representatives of the New Hampshire community, to award public funds responsibly. At the time of these debates, Congress was considering the NEA’s reauthorization and FY90 appropriation. Since half of New Hampshire’s budget came from the Endowment, the

Texas billionaire H. Ross Perot gains support in independent run for presidency... NAFTA... Salvadoran Peace Agreement signed... Bosnian battles grow bloodier... Riots break out in Los Angeles after verdict acquitting 4 policemen in videotaped beating of Rodney King... California earthquake... Johnny Carson retires from *Tonight* show... Emmy awards go to *Northern Exposure* and *Murphy Brown*... Navy Tailhook scandal... Elvis Presley stamp... Objections to lyrics cause Time-Warner to drop song “Cop Killer” from album by rapper Ice-T... Unemployment hits 8-year high... NH sets national record for number of bankruptcy filings... Clinton-Gore ticket wins presidential race... NH Governor Judd Gregg wins bid for US Senate... Steve Merrill wins NH Governor’s race... Oscar for Best Picture goes to Clint Eastwood’s *Unforgiven*... Grammy for best record goes to Eric Clapton’s “Tears in Heaven”... 1993 Poet Maya Angelou writes “On the Pulse of Morning” for Clinton’s inauguration... Clinton appoints Janet Reno as first woman US Attorney General... World Trade Center bombing... Government raid on Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas... Mississippi River floods leave 50 dead and 70,000 homeless... Rita Dove first black US Poet Laureate... Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Clerk of South Africa share Nobel Prize for Peace... Playwright Kushner wins Tony award for *Angels in America*... Oscar for Best Picture goes to *Schindler’s List*... 1994 Nelson Mandela becomes South Africa’s first black president... Yasir Arafat, Simon Peres, and Yitzhak Rabin win Nobel Peace Prize... IBM downsizes... NH loses nearly 11% of its jobs... “Harry and Louise” commercials help defeat Hillary Clinton’s health care reform plan... Baseball strike cancels World Series... Football celebrity OJ Simpson indicted for murder, millions tune into televised trial... Republicans, campaigning on their Contract With America, sweep November Congressional and state elections... In NH, Charles Bass (R) defeats Rep. Dick Swett (D)... *Forrest Gump* wins Oscar for Best Picture... 1995 Republicans control both houses of Congress for first time in 40 years... Newt Gingrich becomes Speaker of the House... Lead singer of Grateful Dead, Jerry Garcia, dies... Surfing the Internet and the World Wide Web... Christian Coalition issues Contract With the American Family... Bombing of federal building in Oklahoma... Jury acquits OJ Simpson... Million Man



Tap dancer Drika Overton of Portsmouth was an Individual Artist Fellowship winner.

outcome was of vital concern.

On the national level, compromise ruled the day. Long-time supporters of the NEA, like Rhode Island Senator Claiborne Pell and Illinois Senator Sidney Yates, kept the agency in business, but had to rethink how it would function. Senator Jesse Helms was successful in adding language restricting the use of NEA funds. Every grantee had to sign a contract that included this language: "None of the funds authorized to be appropriated for the NEA... many be used to promote, disseminate, or produce materials which in the judgment of the NEA... may be considered obscene..."

Those favoring continued public support for the arts, without content restrictions, countered with their views:

"You can't snap back with a smart answer on this issue. I just couldn't define what is pornographic and what isn't. I don't think anyone can.

"I am not in favor of censorship. No one is being coerced into going to an exhibition...Judgment is surely something adult people should exercise for themselves."

— *Michael Levy*

Former Director of the National Gallery of Art, London

"The difficult thing about public art in a pluralistic society is that it often has to accommodate a deep spectrum of tastes and values. The public in a democratic society has every right to make its feelings known. That's very different from enacting a piece of legislation that prohibits the use of public funds for a particular kind of expression..."

— *Mary Schmidt Campbell*

New York City Commissioner for Cultural Affairs

The swirl of controversy around NEA grants swallowed up Chairman John Frohnmayer who resigned in May of the presidential election year of 1992. It led to court cases, filed by artists who were denied grants, in which the Helms language was found to be unconstitutional. It was dropped from NEA contracts in the following year.

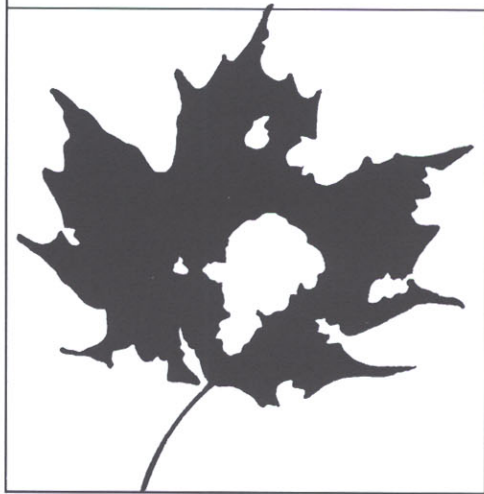
Whichever side was being argued, it became apparent that the arts were part of a larger debate about the way the American people wanted their government and their society to work. It was also clear that artists, as America's culture bearers, had a vital role to play in that debate. What came to be known as "the culture wars" spilled over into other forms of expression, whether publicly funded or not, whether commercially successful or not.

Ironically, the debate turned out to be a fiscal boon, at first, to small, rural states like New Hampshire. From 1990 through 1995,

March... Israeli law student assassinate Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin... Dispute over budget between Pres. Clinton and Congress leads to partial shutdown of federal government... AT&T, 3M, Prudential Life Insurance and other large companies continue to downsize... In NH, median household incomes stagnate or decline... Former Beatles Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr reunite to create new song around tape by John Lennon, "Free as a Bird"... *Cracked Rear View* by Hootie and the Blowfish is year's biggest selling album... In Dayton, Ohio officials for Serbia, Bosnia, and Croatia sign a Peace Agreement... 20,000 U.S. troops join NATO peace-keeper force in Bosnia... Microsoft's Bill Gates publishes his vision for the Information Age, *The Road Ahead*...

The Artist & The Environment

NEW HAMPSHIRE



The catalogue cover for a collaborative exhibition organized by the Visual Arts Coalition, one of the state arts agency's private partners. (Design by Todd Smith)

Congress channeled more money to the states (as “set-asides” for under-served communities) at the expense of large cultural centers like New York City. Each state, led by the arts needs of under-served communities particular to its area, could compete for money on top of its basic state block grant that would directly benefit those communities. For New Hampshire, this opportunity led to several large federal grants coming in to strengthen the Arts Council’s work in rural areas. NHSCA also used some of these funds to improve access to the arts for people with disabilities and for arts projects (through the new Community Arts Program established in 1993) with youth and adults in correctional institutions.

The increase in federal money to the Arts Council came at an auspicious time because New Hampshire’s government was having funding problems of its own. A preface to a September, 1990 federal grant request from the Arts Council explains:

“Only two years ago, New Hampshire led the New England states in rate of population growth, lowest unemployment rate, lowest per capita taxes, and highest per capita income. Now the boom times are a Camelot-like memory, with condo-castles falling on the auction block and roads heading south punctuated with one-way moving vans. Even the most optimistic expect the economic downturn to continue for one to two years, pinching the state’s resources for government services (based as they are on business profit, real estate transfer, and rooms and meals taxes) to proverbial pennies. As the state cuts back..., more demand is placed on local communities... For now, the Council sees a need to continue community-based arts programs which incorporate strong, local involvement. Statewide goals...need to be tempered with practical, singular successes on a local level. (It means allowing flexibility to mold funding and services to individual communities.)...It means emphasizing model projects...in-service training and technical assistance...”

From a peak of about \$518,000 in FY91, the Council’s state appropriation was cut by 5.4% to about \$490,000 for the next year, then restored by 4.1% in FY93. In FY94, it increased a bit to about \$515,000. Then the next year, it dropped to about \$505,000. A larger cut for the next fiscal year, July 1, 1995 - June 30, 1996, took it down to about \$486,000 (43 cents per citizen). New Hampshire ranked 44th out of the 50 states in per capita spending on the arts at the end of 1995.

Funding uncertainties in the ‘90s encouraged the Arts Council to evolve from a basic grants-making agency to a more complex organization with varied services designed to enable artists, arts administrators, educators, and others involved in the arts to develop the skills and resources they need to build their own successes. The decade began with a full five years of increased, labor intensive conferences, publications, workshops, development of model projects, meetings to encourage new partnerships and collaborations, and



Performance artist Dan Hurlin is both an Arts Council Fellow and Artist Roster member.



A scene from the Council's second Artist Retreat, organized through the Artist Services Program. Seen here: storyteller Odds Bodkin, composer Larry Siegel, fiddler Dudley Laufman, folk singer David Coburn, and potter Gerry Williams. (Photo by Gary Samson)



The premiere of the *Village Store Verbatim* took place at Mike's Auto Repair shop in Westmoreland. (Photo by Michael Levine)



Grandchildren's Love by Kathy Seward-Mackay, a Fellowship winner in the '90s.

events to recognize and publicize excellence. A few highlights from 1990 - 1995 illustrate this direction.

The first Artist Retreat in October, 1990, was designed to encourage collaborations among artists of different disciplines. This encouragement led to many new art works of imaginative dimensions. The first one that directly benefited from Arts Council services and funding was *Village Store Verbatim*. Created by the collaborative team of composer Lawrence Siegel and writer/director Valeria Vasilevski, this music/theater piece reflects small town life in New Hampshire. It premiered in 1991. Rural Arts Coordinator Frumie Selchen reported the event:

"It was past closing time on Friday evening in September, but Mike's Auto Repair in East Westmoreland was full of people. The usual cacophony of steel striking steel was replaced by the hush of expectant whispers...."

"Siegel and Vasilevski spent the winter months recording everyday conversations at places like the Classy Cat Cafe (later the site of a coffee and pumpkin pie reception for cast and guests), contradances, potluck suppers, and local grocery stores. Ms. Vasilevski shaped selected dialogue into a libretto that spans issues from the trivial to the profound, highlighting emotions ranging from apprehension about the Gulf War to nostalgia, love, and frustration over taxes. Siegel set the libretto to music in a post-modern oratorio style with an equally broad range of references, from Baroque to Country-hoe-down to jazz."

Other Council programs concentrated on giving practical help to artists, administrators and educators. More than 13 public and private arts, educational, and health organizations and agencies in New Hampshire and Vermont worked together on a series of conferences and workshops entitled *What Working Artists Need to Know: Health and Safety Issues for Visual and Performing Artists, Craftspeople, Art Educators, and Health Professionals*. This model earned national recognition and an award for the Arts Council. The idea for it was sparked in May, 1990, at a NHSCA sponsored statewide conference which the Seacoast Arts and Cultural Association helped coordinate. It was called: *ART CHALLENGES: the Shape of New Hampshire's Next Decade*.

Another statewide conference, initiated by the Council's Cultural Facilities Program, focused on ways to remove or reduce physical and communications barriers to the arts for people with disabilities. *Arts, History, and Access: Beyond the Ramp*, held in January, 1993, was coordinated in partnership with the Division of Historical Resources, State Library, and Governor's Commission on Disability.

The Arts in Education Program's Fall Conferences, first led by AIE Coordinator Lanie Keystone (1991-93) and then by Catherine O'Brian (1993 - present) continued to expand opportunities and methods to help teachers and artists integrate the arts into schools, kindergarten through grade 12. O'Brian, in particular, broadened the scope of the conference to include more public

participation. In September of 1995, 165 artists, educators, and others participated in *Voices and Visions*, a 3-day event which was held on Star Island, Isles of Shoals. O'Brian was also key to the revival of the NH Arts Education Alliance.

As these examples show, the development of new partnerships was central to the work that the small staff of seven was able to accomplish. One of the Council's most inventive partnerships was with the Fish and Game Department. This came about when the Traditional Arts Program was revived after a 10-year hiatus, thanks to new funding from the NEA's Folk Arts Program. Shortly after Traditional Arts Coordinator Jill Linzee became the Council's eighth staff member in 1993, she designed an apprenticeship program for artists to carry on traditional arts associated with outdoor hunting, fishing, and recreational activities. Carving and painting duck decoys, tying delicate fly-fishing lures, and constructing graceful dog sleds are some of the skills that this project helped to pass on from master to apprentice.

A selection of these traditional arts became the nucleus for the display of New Hampshire's cultural resources at the Salem Rest Area, at the first exit north on I-93. This successful partnership resulted from Director Bonaiuto's work with the Department of Transportation. The rest area, besides showcasing traditional arts such as Newt Washburn baskets and an Ed Moody dog sled, greets visitors coming into the state with contemporary works by Dimitri Gerakaris, an "Old Man of the Mountains" weathervane and matching andirons for the fireplace inside.

Another ongoing partnership, established in 1994, gave more recognition and visibility to media artists working in the state. Assistant Director Rebecca Lawrence initiated the NH Film and Video Arts Awards by building on the work being done by the all-volunteer Film Commission. Connected to the Office of Travel and Tourism Development, the Commission promotes film and television production in the state. To encourage resident media artists, the Commission started screening New Hampshire produced films and videos at First Night celebrations. The Arts Council added a competition for awards to the selection process. Two rounds of awards (1994 and 1995) recognized students, amateurs, and professionals who work as independents. The award-winning films and videos were screened at First Night celebrations and, throughout the year, in small towns around the state.

Certainly the grandest recognition ceremonies of the Bonaiuto years were the 1989, 1991, 1993, and 1995 Governor's Awards in the Arts. In January of 1996, a Living Treasures Gallery officially opened to display works by those artists who were honored with Governor's Awards for their lifetimes of achievement. Once again, the Gallery was a result of partnerships, both private and public. Corporate and public (through the Percent for Art Program) funding enabled the Council to collect works from enamelist Karl Drerup, sculptor Robert Hughes, printmaker Herbert Waters, and poet Donald Hall. Thanks to the support of



Basketmaker Newt Washburn participates in the Traditional Arts Program's Apprenticeship project.



Film animators John and June Casey were among the first to receive an award in the film and video competition sponsored by the Arts Council in partnership with the state's Film Commission.



The logo for the Governor's Awards in the Arts. (Designed by Fickett & Walsh.)

My Studio by
Herbert Ogden
Waters. Waters was
selected for the
Governor's Living
Treasure Award in
1993.



NEA Chairman Jane Alexander autographs a book for two students at an elementary school in Concord during her 1993 visit to New Hampshire.
(Photo by Gary Samson.)

Attorney General Jeffrey Howard and his staff, the collection was installed in the public spaces at the Department of Justice, Office of Attorney General.

An unexpected bonus grew out of the research Lawrence and Sylvester did to prepare the Living Treasures Gallery. While gathering Herbert Waters prints done in his WPA days from the State Library (where they had been stored since the early '40s), the duo discovered a wonderful set of watercolors by Nat Burwash that he had created as part of NH's Federal Arts Project of the '30s. A chance phone call brought Sylvester in touch with Burwash who was still sculpting, at age 90, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. When the artist found out about the Library's collection of his work, he was jubilant. After meeting and talking with Sylvester and State Librarian Ken Wiggin, Burwash decided to donate the papers and records from his WPA days in Washington, NH, to the New Hampshire Artists Archives. The Archives are a joint project, begun in 1994, of the Arts Council and the State Library.

These Arts Council accomplishments and many more flourished despite fluctuating public funds and increased threats to the NEA. During the early '90s, new leaders appeared to continue the ongoing struggle with these dual, but intersecting, problems. In 1992, Governor Judd Gregg appointed Van McLeod to succeed Shirley Adamovich as Commissioner of Cultural Affairs. In the summer of 1993, NH State Council on the Arts Chairman Edith Grodin resigned after many years of dedicated service. Governor Steve Merrill, who with First Lady Heather Merrill selected The Year of American Craft for the theme of his first inaugural ball, appointed Robert Murphy, a businessman from North Conway, to be the new Chairman. In 1994, Representatives Joan Kane and Martha Fuller

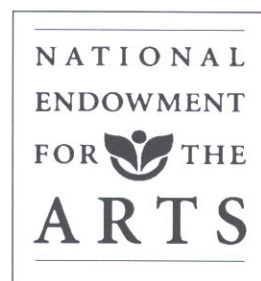
Clark were leaders in establishing New Hampshire Arts and Cultural Resources Caucus for legislators.

After taking office in 1993, President Clinton appointed the actress Jane Alexander as the new Chairman of the NEA. The positive atmosphere during her Senate confirmation gave cause for optimism. She made it an early priority to visit every state in the nation and New Hampshire was one of the first. Shortly after that visit, Bonaiuto was invited to make a presentation to the National Council on the Arts (the “board” for the NEA which includes poet Donald Hall) about the way the federal-state partnership worked. Bonaiuto decided to feature the *Village Store Verbatim* project. Both she and composer Lawrence Siegel went to Washington D.C. for the event. Congressman Bill Zeff came to share the spotlight on New Hampshire for the day. That was in February of 1994. In November of 1994, things changed dramatically.

While the Arts Council coped with changes on the state level, some forces on the national scene were strengthening their attack on the National Endowment for the Arts. As part of their campaign strategy for state and Congressional seats, the Republican candidates all signed a Contract With America which included a plan to reduce funding for the NEA. The Christian Coalition’s Contract with the American Family, which came out later, called for its outright elimination. Many of the new legislators who came to Washington D.C., fresh from the elections of 1994, agreed with the position of the Christian Coalition. As Republicans took control of Congress for the first time in 40 years, the number of legislators who were against federal support for the arts increased. When President Clinton sent his budget to Congress early in 1995, he included a quixotic increase to the line item for the NEA.

In the summer of ‘95, the 104th Congress debated not whether to cut the National Endowment for the Arts appropriation, but how much. The House majority, led by Speaker Newt Gingrich, voiced the harshest criticisms toward the NEA. Some targeted the agency for elimination immediately; others, over a period of three to five years, with cuts of 40%, 40%, and 20%. NH Representatives Bass and Zeff stopped short of recommending immediate elimination, but joined the majority in voting for a 39% cut and a phasing out of the agency.

In the Senate, Senator Jesse Helms once again introduced language in the appropriations bill to restrict the content of publicly funded art projects. The Senate Appropriations Committee, which included Senator Judd Gregg, voted for a 39% cut as the House had. When the vote came to the floor, Vermont Senators Jeffords and Leahy led an amendment to restore some of the funding. Although they were unsuccessful, the voting patterns did not strictly follow party lines. Both Democrats and Republicans showed their support for the agency by not voting for elimination. This was due in large part to an outpouring of letters, calls, e-mail, and faxes from people who cared about the arts. Both the House and Senate versions went to the Committee of Conference for a compromise decision.



Forces in and outside of government targeted the NEA for elimination in the '90s.



Former Arts Council Chairman Edith Grodin, costumed to show public arts funding as an endangered species, with artist Dan Hurlin at the Council’s 30th Anniversary Arts Ball. (Photo by Bill Finney.)

One of the ironies of the results for New Hampshire was in the timing of that decision. The December issue of *NH Arts* included an editorial that began:

“September 19, 1995, a day of contrasts: celebration and demolition; two cities, two different stories.

“In Manchester, Governor Merrill praised the work the State Arts Council has done (over the past 30 years) and presented his Governor's Awards in the Arts to New Hampshire artists and the patrons and communities that help support them. At the same time, in Washington D.C., a Committee of Conference determined the appropriation for the National Endowment for the Arts: a cut of 39% from last year's funding level. In addition, language authored by Senator Jesse Helms put conditions on the disbursement of the funds that, according to NEA Chairman Jane Alexander, the courts undoubtedly will find unconstitutional.”

The inevitability of cuts, which resulted in massive layoffs at the NEA and will directly hit New Hampshire as of July 1, 1996, had been forecast by the Council. On May 10, 1995, the Arts Council and staff set aside a day to plan for an uncertain future. Pat Jackson of Jackson, Jackson, & Wagner facilitated the session to explore such questions as: Can the Council continue as a publicly funded arts agency? Should the Council develop a private arm? Should it become a private, nonprofit agency? Is there some new public funding mechanism such as a bond issue that would lead to more stability in arts funding for the state's many organizations and artists? Are there inventive ways to earn money to support the arts that have not yet been explored? Has the past 30 years of support made a difference? Are there better ways of achieving the same goals? And, most importantly, how should the agency communicate its cause to those who can influence its success?

At the 1995 Governor's Awards in the Arts, Governor Merrill shared his vision:

“...(T)onight let's not just applaud ourselves for the last 30 years, let's look forward....This is a time to make individual commitments, and I will tell you mine and my vision for the arts in the future...You know these are difficult times in the federal government and at the state and local levels, so why don't we commit ourselves tonight to join the Arts Council's plan for a long term fiscal and financial stability program so that we can reach into the private sector and say to them: Let's combine our commitment to the arts and arts education. Let's make sure that the rich artistic opportunities are here for the great artists who live here and work here. Let's make sure that the arts in the future are even stronger than they have been in the past.”

More changes will be in store for the Arts Council in 1996. On November 20, 1995, Director Susan Bonaiuto announced that she will resign as of February 1, 1996, saying: “It's difficult for me to leave the work that I have loved and that has given me so much satisfaction, but I will be joining my family in a move to



The Wishing Seat, a photograph by Todd Smith, hangs in the Health and Human Services building. It was acquired in the early '80s with arts agency funds. (Archival photo by Gary Samson.)

the Boston area and taking a break to study public policy and cultural policy at Boston College.”

The Arts Council and Commissioner McLeod prepared a recommendation for a new leader for the agency early in the new year. Governor Merrill will consider their recommendation in appointing, with Executive Council approval, a new Director for the NH State Council on the Arts.

One of the first challenges to be faced by the new Director, the Arts Councilors, the staff, and so many others who believe that the arts belong to everyone, will be deciding what form the agency will take in the future.

For as surely as one year must end; another must begin. It is time to write the next chapter for the arts in New Hampshire, as we turn the page to tomorrow.



Shadow puppets by Starbird Puppet Theater of Tamworth.