



FOCUS GROUP WORKS TO REVIVE LOVE OF LITERATURE



In the Summer 2004 issue of *ArtsPerspective*, the Ohio Arts Council presented an article on a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) survey reporting a dramatic decline in literary reading among Americans. The Ohio Arts Council is seeking to actively promote discussion about these findings and their implications for the arts, humanities, library education and literary communities in Ohio. The OAC recognizes that communication among these communities is imperative to identifying collective strategies.

A brainstorming meeting was held in late November at the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts in Columbus. Representatives including (from left to right above): Wayne Dodd, The Ohio

Review, Author; Kevin Griffith, Chair, Department of English, Capital University; Garry Brown, Highlights for Children; Ruth Metcalf, State Library of Ohio; Wayne Lawson, Executive Director, Ohio Arts Council; Charlotte Kessler, Ohio Arts Council and Madison Council, Library of Congress; Floyd Jones, Senior VP of External Affairs, Columbus Dispatch; Doug Evans, Executive Director, Ohio Library Council; Lisa Sloan, Columbus Metropolitan Library; Donna Collins, Executive Director, Ohio Alliance for Arts Education; Patti Grey, Communications Director, Ohio Department of Education; Jackie Shafer, Production Manager, Ohio Government Television; Kathy Shahbodaghi, (*con't page 2*)

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION AND THE ARTS LAUNCHES NEW INITIATIVE

The Institute for Education and the Arts announced plans for the *National Overture of Education and the Arts in Ohio*. Stark County has been chosen as a pilot site for this multi-year program designed to highlight the power of the creative arts to help improve academic performance by all students at the K-12 level.

The *National Overture* program is being developed with the support of the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Arts Council. It will involve detailed planning and implementation of the program in cooperation with state and local educators, arts organizations, business and community leaders and public officials. *National Overture* events are designed to share with local schools and communities a rich variety of ways the arts can excite and (*con't page 2*)

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COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

"I remain delighted at the kindness and competency of the OAC staff. They give 'tax dollars at work' a human face and do it so well!"

— Friends of Heights
Youth Theatre

"The Ohio Arts Council and the Appalachian Arts Program have been a staunch supporter of the region. Ohio Appalachian Country, Inc. has always appreciated the OAC's willingness to work with the organization in their efforts to preserve and promote the traditional Appalachian artists and their work."

— Ohio Appalachian
Country, Inc.

"The Ohio Arts Council staff is superb. I am relatively new to the nonprofit arts world, and was intimidated by the thought of dealing with agencies such as the OAC. Au contraire! Everyone is friendly, helpful, patient and humorous. You are able to maintain high standards and yet support all levels of artistic involvement."

— Peggy Spaeth, HeightsArts

NATIONAL INITIATIVE (CONT.)

engage students more effectively, improving their own sense of commitment to learning, their understanding of complex concepts and their academic performance in subjects across the curriculum.

"We are extremely pleased to be working with Stark County on this exciting and creative initiative," said Ronald Stowe, President of the Institute for Education and the Arts. "We look forward to cooperating closely with the dedicated leaders of education and arts institutions, business and civic supporters and others concerned about education. We will work to identify local interests and needs, to share best practices from around the country and to build new partnerships with state and national experts and organizations with resources that can be available to schools throughout this area." A regional advisory committee will advise and assist the Institute in developing the education program.

Mike Gill, Chairman of the Board of the Cultural Center for the Arts, said "The *National Overture* initiative holds great promise both for our schools, and also for gaining even broader public recognition of the extraordinary artistic and cultural talent and resources we have in this area." Sheila Markley Black, a partner at Day Ketterer law firm and OAC Board member, will chair the regional advisory committee for the *National Overture*. "I am extremely pleased at the enthusiasm and the diversity of the members of this committee," said Black. "One of our goals is to ensure participation by a very broad spectrum of interests in Stark County, and we have gotten off to an outstanding start."

The Institute's program ranges from showing how 16th century choir books can be used to teach math, chemistry and history, to an intensive examination of ways that existing local resources can be used on an affordable basis to help inspire and teach students in schools. Using a combination of the rich talent that exists in Stark County and other Ohio communities, and resources available without charge from national organizations like the Library of Congress, the Institute is working with educators and arts organizations to focus on improving academic performance by all students, of all skill levels and from all cultural and economic backgrounds.

The Institute for Education and the Arts is a non-profit education organization based in Washington, DC. For more information about the Institute, please visit www.edartsinstitute.org.

FOCUS GROUP (CONT.)

Columbus Metropolitan Library; Jim Elliott, Owner, Editorial Alliance; Missie Kendall, Community Relations Director, Barnes and Noble Booksellers; Susanne Jaffe, Executive Director, Thurber House; John Nance, Ohio Author; and Jo Budler, State Librarian, State Library of Ohio discussed the study's findings and various ideas. The group will assemble again in early 2005 to discuss potential programs and methods to encourage literary reading throughout the state of Ohio.

For more information on the NEA survey and the Reading at Risk report, visit www.nea.gov/news/news04/ReadingAtRisk.html or call NEA Office of Communications at 202/682-5570.



Trial Scene by M. Gorelik

RIFFE GALLERY PRESENTS DESIGN FOR THE AMERICAN STAGE

Design for the American Stage: Treasures from the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute will be on view at the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery February 10 – April 17, 2005. The exhibition is curated by Nena Couch, The Ohio State University Theatre Research Institute and Department of Theatre.

Drawn from the extensive design collection at The Ohio State University's Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute, this exhibition brings the magic of the stage to the art gallery.

The artworks for professional productions across North America represent a range of theatre design from renderings by the Armbruster Scenic Studio (1875-1958) based in Columbus, to Raoul Pène Du Bois's Tony Award-winning set designs for the 1953 *Wonderful Town*. A three-dimensional model by Broadway designer Tony Straiges and a glorious painted dance floor by artist Caroline Beasley-Baker for the Bebe Miller Dance Company will be on view as well as designs for Kenley Players of Dayton, Contemporary American Theatre Company in Columbus and designs for the Metropolitan Opera, New York City.

The Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery showcases the work of Ohio's artists and curators, exhibitions produced by the Ohio Arts Council's International Program and the collections of the region's museums and galleries. The Riffe Gallery's Education Program seeks to increase public appreciation and understanding of those exhibitions.

The gallery is in the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, State and High Streets, Columbus, OH. Gallery hours are Tuesday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Saturday 12-8 p.m. and Sunday 12-4 p.m. Closed Monday and state holidays. Admission is free. For information, call the Riffe Gallery at 614/644-9624 or visit the web at www.riffegallery.org.

GOVERNOR TAFT APPOINTS OHIO ARTS COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS

Governor Bob Taft announced the reappointment of Joseph Hale and the appointments of Raymond Tymas-Jones and Neal F. Zimmers, Jr. to the Ohio Arts Council (OAC) Board.

Joseph Hale, from

Cincinnati, was reappointed to a term ending July 1, 2009. He has been an OAC board member since 1999 and serves as Vice President of Corporate Communications for Cinergy Corp. He is on the boards of Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Downtown Cincinnati Inc. and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

Raymond Tymas-Jones,

from The Plains, near Athens, was appointed to a term ending July 1, 2009. He serves as the Dean of the College of Fine Arts at Ohio University. Tymas-Jones is currently chairperson of the Executive Development and Leadership Ad Hoc Committee for the International Council of Fine Arts Deans.

Neal F. Zimmers, Jr., from

Dublin, was appointed to a term ending July 1, 2009. He is a past legislative appointee to the OAC and served 20 years as State Senator. Zimmers currently serves as Resident Vice President of State Relations at Public Policy Advocates. Zimmers is a member of the Tiffin University Board of trustees, the Capital Square Foundation and the Governing Board of the Dayton Heart Hospital.

Save the Date

The Governor's Awards for the Arts & Arts Day 2005 is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. on **April 6, 2005** in the Capitol Theatre of the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts.

The Governor's Awards for the Arts is a statewide program that showcases and celebrates Ohio artists, arts organizations, arts patrons and business support of the arts. Winners are selected in six categories—Arts Administration, Arts in Education, Arts Patron, Business Support of the Arts, Community Development and Participation and Individual Artist. The winners are chosen for outstanding contributions to the arts—statewide, regionally and nationally. Award winners will receive an original work of art by Ohio printmaker Nicholas Hill.

Arts Day invites arts advocates from around Ohio to come together at the capitol to demonstrate, through a united presence and voice, the need for and value of public funding for the arts in Ohio.

Award categories and recipients are: Arts in Education, Nils Riess (Ada); Community Development and Participation, James R. Tarbell (Cincinnati); Arts Administration, Barbara Nicholson (Columbus); Arts Patron, Ann Amer Brennan (Akron); Individual Artist, Ann Hamilton (Columbus); Business Support of the Arts, The Logan Clay Products Company (Logan); and Special Recognition, Jon Hendricks (Toledo).

The Irma Lazarus Award will be given to former Ohio Senate President Senator Stanley Aronoff (Cincinnati). The award honors the memory of Irma Lazarus, who made countless contributions as an arts patron, advocate and leader in the development of state funding for the arts in Ohio. It goes to an organization or individual who has helped shape public support for the arts through their advocacy work and have brought statewide, national and international recognition to Ohio through sustained dedication to artistic excellence. The Irma Lazarus Award is presented at the discretion of the Ohio Arts Council Board.

The 2005 Governor's Awards Selection Committee, made up of Ohio Arts Council Board members, included committee chair Sheila Markley Black (Canton), Susan Sofia (Columbus), David Barker (Columbus), Martha Burton (Portsmouth), Charlotte Kessler (New Albany) and Michael Radcliffe (Columbus).

Invitations will be sent late-January 2005 to you and more than 10,000 artists, business leaders, arts managers, board members and patrons from every corner of the state. The general public is also invited.

For more information about the Governor's Awards for the Arts in Ohio, contact Gregg Dodd at 614/466-2613 or gregg.dodd@oac.state.oh.us. The Governor's Awards for the Arts in Ohio is held in conjunction with Arts Day. For more information about Arts Day, call 614/221-4064, e-mail info@ohiocitizensforthearts.org or visit www.ohiocitizensforthearts.org.



Share the Arts

artsPerspective

Published by the Ohio Arts Council

This newsletter aims to keep Ohio's key decision makers informed about the work of the state's arts agency. We'd like this to be a two-way communication. If you have comments about the OAC's involvement in your district or area of expertise please send them to Kathy Burgan at the address below. Thanks for reading.

Gregg Dodd, *Public Information Director*
Jami Goldstein, *Communications Manager*
Kathy Burgan, *Editor*

We're Building Ohio Through the Arts

The Ohio Arts Council is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically.

The Ohio Arts Council is an equal opportunity employer.

Visit Us on the Internet

www.oac.state.oh.us

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Bob Taft
Governor

Susan R. Sofia
OAC Board Chair

Wayne P. Lawson
Executive Director

ArtsinOhio.com

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With Support from the National
Endowment for the Arts.