

1991

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (1979-1992): Speech 01

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TALKING POINTS FOR INTERVIEW ON RI STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS:

RI State Council on the Arts established in 1967

NEA Established by you in 1965 with provision to set aside a minimum of 20% of NEA funds for all state arts councils.

RISCA currently receives about:

\$350,000 from NEA
\$950,000 from State of RI (\$91,000 in 1968)

When drafting legislation for NEA in early 1960's you used the existing model of the NY State Council on the Arts both for the NEA itself and for other state councils.

RISCA is composed of 13 volunteer board members all appointed by the Governor for 3 year terms.

The Director (since 1984) is IONA DOBBINS

- Iona
1. has done a superb job steering much-needed funding to arts organizations throughout the state.
 2. is an articulate advocate for the arts within the state legislature.
 3. has personally done much to raise the visibility the arts in RI; showing how important the arts are to business, education and community development.
 4. has never forgotten how important it is to support our fine individual artists. (fellowships to artists are the only grants that are not matched one to one).

prepared by ADC 1/91

An Introduction to the . . .

**Rhode Island
State Council
• on the Arts •**

THE RHODE ISLAND STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS,

established in 1967, serves as an agency of the state government to promote and sustain the creation, performance, and presentation of the arts in Rhode Island. The particular objectives and responsibilities of the Council are:

- to stimulate public interest and participation in the arts;
- to foster the study and presentation of the performing, visual, and environmental arts;
- to survey and assess the needs of the arts statewide, and to make recommendations to the governor and the general assembly;
- to actively encourage the expansion of the state's cultural resources; and
- to promote and protect the freedom of artistic expression.

RISCA primarily fulfills this edict by awarding grants to individual artists, arts organizations, and other institutions involved in the arts. These grants provide the financial means to create and present a variety of art throughout the state, for the benefit of every citizen. Because they are awarded through a competitive review process, RISCA grants acknowledge

artistic excellence and confer a prestige which helps draw audience and philanthropic recognition to the recipients, and the arts in general. In addition, the Council has developed and administered programs which span statewide by hiring artists to share their talents with all segments of the public in schools, libraries, community centers, parks, hospitals, and other institutions.

Funding for these grants comes primarily from a state legislative appropriation, and a State Programs block grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The Council also receives grants from individual NEA programs. RISCA's funds in turn generate additional expenditures for a multi-million dollar impact on the state's economy each year.

The Rhode Island State Council on the Arts proper is composed of thirteen volunteer board members representing a broad cross-section of arts related interests and experience. Appointed by the governor for terms of three years, the Council members select their own officers and collectively determine overall policies. A fulltime Executive Director administers the agency, and implements programs with the assistance of a paid staff, consulting artists, and volunteer advisory panels.





Very Special!

General Operating Support Grants

provide partial operating capital to Rhode Island's major cultural organizations. To receive funding an organization must have non-profit status, and a proven history of offering substantial quality programs in the exhibition or production of the arts. Review criteria include the quality of cultural experience, maintenance of high artistic standards, sound financial management, extent of community impact, and a demonstrated need.

Project Support Grants allow arts organizations to develop artistic ventures outside the scope of their general operations. To encourage such innovation the Council provides matching funds in several categories: visual arts, literature, dance, music, theatre, folk arts, media, arts services, and interdisciplinary efforts. Advisory panels, comprised of volunteering professionals in each area, serve to review proposals, question applicants, and make recommendations to the Council for funding.

Individual Artist Fellowships are offered by RISCA to help meet the needs of artists in their endeavors to undertake specific projects or to complete works in progress, and to foster development in their chosen areas. These grants can be awarded to Rhode Island artists in the following categories: choreography, crafts, film and video, literature, music composition, new genres, still photography, three dimensional art, two dimensional art, and design. After reviewing samples of the applicants work, advisory panels in each discipline select finalists whose work is then evaluated, with a winner determined by an out of state judge.

Mini Grants are available in order to enable arts organizations to receive assistance for arts related activities which do not coincide with the Council's major funding deadlines, or with existing grant programs. These grants provide limited funding.

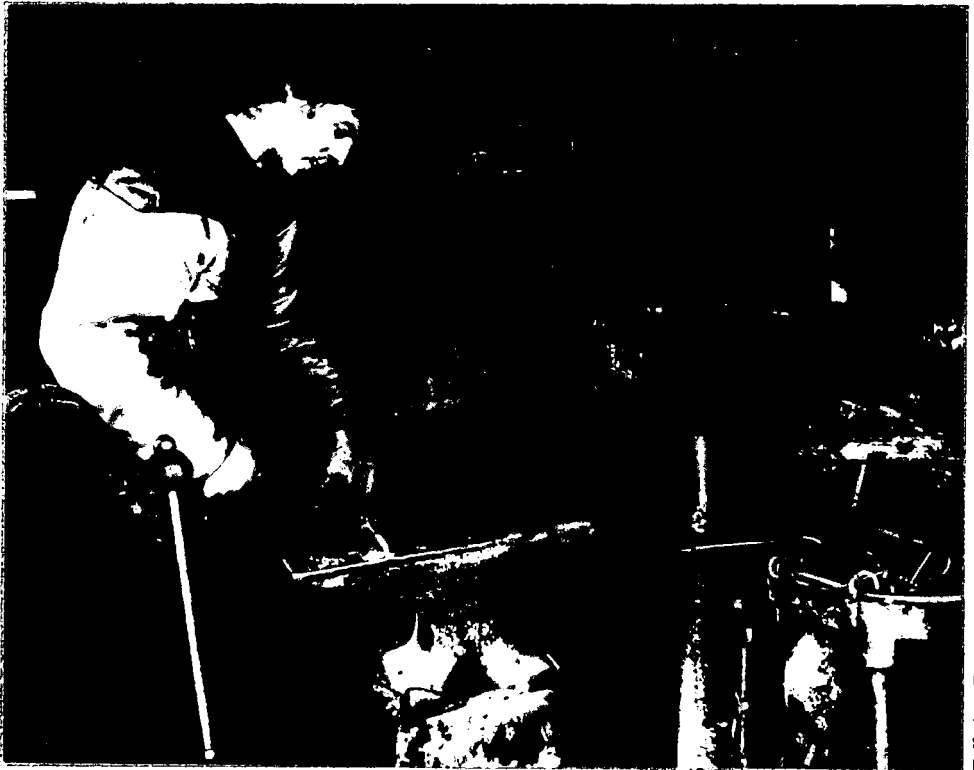
To further carry out its mandate as a state agency, RISCA administers several specific arts programs:

The Artists in Education Program offers students a unique educational experience by placing professional artists in residencies at schools and community centers. These artists work closely with students, teachers, and administrators as they create works in various disciplines;

The Folk Arts Program was founded in 1982 in an effort to maintain the state's traditional artistic heritage, and works to expand the awareness of the folk arts as an on-going process in every community. This program supplements existing projects by facilitating residencies, exhibits, media, and lectures on Rhode Island's folk traditions, and also by identifying and promoting individual folk artists;

The Touring Program makes funds available to Rhode Island non-profit organizations that present public performances, exhibitions, and media events. This program is funded in part by the New England Foundation for the Arts, and encourages presentations to be set in communities which have limited cultural resources;

The Very Special Arts RI/ARTSREACH Program exists to develop the creative talents of, and to promote opportunities in the arts for disabled persons. To this end grants are awarded to organizations to assist with projects that bring the arts to persons with disabilities, with the intent of integrating these persons into mainstream arts activities. This program also sponsors training, Very Special Arts Festivals, and other significant projects.



Folk Arts Program

Apart from administering these grants and programs, RISCA operates in other ways to serve the arts community. The Council recognizes outstanding contributions to the arts by a Rhode Island individual or organization through the presentation of the **Governor's Arts Award**. Given annually by the Council in the Governor's name, this award consists of a sculpted medallion, a citation, and a monetary stipend.

PARTNERSHIP • State Council on the Arts — Rhode Island Foundation
With support from the National Endowment for the Arts and many local corporations and foundations, the Rhode Island Foundation has established the *Arts Fund*, which provides on-going support to small and medium-sized arts organizations

throughout the State. Applicants to RISCA for operating and project support are also considered for funding from the Arts Fund. Expertise of the staff and review panels of RISCA is utilized extensively by the Foundation in determining the merit of applicants, however, all grants from the Arts Fund are approved by the Foundations Distribution Committee.

Technical assistance is often as important as funding. With this in mind, the Council frequently organizes seminars on such topics as fundraising, and grants management. Information regarding these seminars, and about competitions, grant deadlines, career opportunities, events, and other pertinent topics is distributed to the community via the Council's bulletin, RISCA News Notes.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL (401) 277-3880



Artists in Education Program