

M A P F U N D

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The Impact of the Multi-Arts Production Fund From the Artists' Perspective

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reported and written by
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with
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*MAP has played a key role in supporting the creation of provocative, innovative performance work exploring evolving concepts of what it means to be a citizen in a world that must change.**

MAP seemed like a perfectly conceived way of helping an artist to do really interesting “expanding the frontiers of thought” kind of work. I felt that the kind of interdisciplinary work they were supporting made it very easy to do a new kind of work as opposed to getting stuck in some kind of formula. MAP Fund is really supporting the creative process.

*All italicized passages in this report are quotes from the artists who were interviewed or responded to the online survey. The quotes have been edited for length and for intelligibility of the spoken word as it appears in writing.

About this Report

In preparation to celebrate the Multi-Arts Production Fund's 20th Anniversary in 2008, the Creative Capital Foundation commissioned this report to ask artists to describe the impact MAP has had on their work, their lives, and conditions in their field. Two hundred fifty-four of them responded to an online survey (an astonishing 50% of those invited) and twenty-five of them agreed to be interviewed by phone. The purpose of the report is to give voice to the artists whose creativity the MAP Fund exists to support.

The report is structured in three sections.

- The first section summarizes the artists' views and the author's commentary.
- The second section contains detailed findings from the survey and interviews, expressed in the artists' voices with as little mediation as possible.
- The final section contains concluding observations by the author and a summary of artists' concerns that go beyond the design and operation of the MAP Fund.

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful for the engaged and supportive involvement of staff members from the Multi-Arts Production Fund, Creative Capital Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and for the generosity of the artists who made time to provide their perspectives. Their insights were remarkably informative, and their commitment is inspiring.

The Author

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Contents

About this Report..... 3

 Acknowledgements..... 3

 The Author 3

Contents 4

I. Summary..... 5

 Introduction..... 5

 Findings 7

 Commentary..... 10

II. Detailed Findings..... 13

 Key Historical Data 13

 The MAP Fund’s Impact on Supported Projects 16

 The MAP Fund’s Impact on Supported Artists..... 19

 The MAP Fund’s Impact on Grantee Organizations..... 21

 The MAP Fund’s Impact on the Field of Live Performance 23

 The MAP Fund’s Grant Program Design..... 27

 The CCF and MAP Fund Program Administration 34

III. Conclusion 38

 Observations on the MAP Fund..... 38

 Other Field Concerns 39

I. Summary

Introduction

The Multi-Arts Production Fund was created by The Rockefeller Foundation in 1988 to support innovation and cross-cultural exploration in theater, dance, and music. Throughout its history MAP has focused on projects initiated by individual creative artists, and has been receptive to interdisciplinary collaboration, technological elements, and phased creative processes. These emphases also implicitly describe what MAP is not: it doesn't provide sustained support for individuals, and strengthening organizations is a secondary effect, not a primary purpose.

Grants support commissions for individual choreographers, playwrights, and composers to create new pieces, and they support the creative process of ensembles and multiple collaborators. Support is provided at any phase of creation through the premiere performance run, including research and conception, composition, readings and workshops, rehearsals, and production. The grants support the full range of artists' career stages from emerging to mastery. They span a broad variety of aesthetic approaches that includes interdisciplinary and international work, pure abstraction and topical engagement, large and small scale, site-specific works and those intended for grand halls, avant-garde investigations and advancements in traditional forms.

MAP has supported projects by such varied and influential artists as Meredith Monk, Eve Beglarian, Rudresh Mahanthappa, and Fred Ho; Trisha Brown, Tere O'Connor, Koosil-ja Hwang, and Margaret Jenkins; Suzan-Lori Parks, Anne Bogart, John O'Neal, and Ping Chong; Sekou Sundiata and Jessica Hagedorn. Examples of projects from the most recent grant round* are:

- director John Malpede's *Degrees of Freedom*, a site-specific and participatory theater event about intellectual property laws and the scientists, software engineers, and lawyers who fight to sustain an open, creative climate for all kinds of knowledge production.
- Roman Paska's *Beethoven in Camera*, a new work which focuses on both actual and potential interrelationships between the projected image (moving or still) and the puppet as a "live" performance presence.
- *Divide Light*, an avant-garde opera created through collaboration between composer Thomas Edward Morgan and visual artist Lesley Dill, working in conjunction with the Del Sol Quartet and the Arts Nova Singers, which contemporizes the complete works of poet Emily Dickinson to link the ground-breaking ideas of the mid-19th century American Transcendental movement to innovations and global concerns in today's rapidly changing world.
- *Dances Across Borders*, a new taiko performance work of music, theater and choreography created by Michelle Fujii in collaboration with Japanese choreographer Shohei Kikuchi, and Portland Taiko artists working in ensemble.

If an artist makes a noise in the woods and no one is around to experience it, did it happen? MAP made it possible not only to bring the performance "out of the woods" but also to enable us to bring an audience to witness it. Though artists must exist by constantly motivating themselves to create at all costs, the inspiration and encouragement that MAP fund gives, at any amount of money, that "someone is listening" can do nothing but enhance and push an artist further in their endeavors.

As described on the MAP Fund website.

- *Deus Ex Machina*, a new dance work by choreographer Sarah Michelson in collaboration with Parker Lutz and Dominic Cullinan, featuring Richard Maxwell, Mike Iveson, and Jodi Melnick, set in Arabia and loosely related to the story of the Arabian Knights.
- *Exhibit A*, a series of three interlocking stories about obsessive collectors of objects that combine to make up a full length performance incorporating film and puppet theater that delves into the compulsion to hoard as a means of self preservation and cultural survival.
- *Northern Lights/Southern Cross*, an exploration of the emotional terrain of “otherness” that shapes the lives of artists with disabilities, especially those from minority cultures, as told here through Native American and Aboriginal perspectives.
- *The Whole Show*, a new work by The Body Cartography Project that investigates intimacy, control, distance and ecological uncertainty from deep in the heart of the nuclear Pacific.

The MAP Fund supports about 40 projects a year with grants averaging about \$25,000. The program is highly competitive, and grant amounts generally are regarded by recipients as substantial. Applications are initiated by individuals, presenting organizations or producing organizations, and must be filed by an organization (including fiscal agents for individuals working independent of an organization). Regardless of how the projects are initiated, they are evaluated on the basis of the project being proposed and on the past work of the artists involved. True peer review is at the heart of the decision making, and a rigorous process ensures fairness and an open door to emerging artists. MAP Fund priorities evolve with the concerns of the field, and the projects it supports are regarded as highly interesting by the field.

The process and decisions are respected. The MAP Fund’s judgment is trusted, and its imprimatur often is sought after as eagerly as the funds.

In 1999 the MAP Fund’s first ten years of operation were accounted a significant success in a formal evaluation conducted by the consulting firm of Adams & Goldbard. The needs the program was created to address were shown to be growing, and MAP’s impact was shown to be growing as well. Funding for the MAP Fund was renewed.

Beginning in 2001 the Rockefeller Foundation transferred management of the MAP Fund in phases to Creative Capital Foundation, and the transfer was completed in 2004. The Foundation now supports MAP’s operation with a single annual grant. While the relationship between CCF and MAP has proven beneficial to both, MAP has a separate staff and separate offices. The key policies and practices that made the program successful under Rockefeller Foundation auspices remain in place.

In 2007 the MAP Fund completed its fifth year of operation under CCF auspices and awarded its 19th annual round of grants, bringing the cumulative total to \$17 million distributed in 670 grants. It is now one of the longest-lived grant programs in the history of arts philanthropy, and its reputation for effectiveness is strong.

The fact that the grant is available, together with other funding possibilities, is what allowed us to even conceive of undertaking this project. It was beyond anything that we had ever done before. If the possibility of funds didn’t exist then the idea would die right after it occurred to you, because it would be impossible. The possibility of funds makes it possible to keep thinking about an idea.

Findings

The Rockefeller Foundation created MAP Fund out of a concern that the objectives of innovation and cultural diversity were not being advanced adequately by mainstream performing arts institutions. At the time, these philanthropic objectives were shared by more than a few other grant-makers, and MAP initially was seen as a niche program that complemented and was complemented by other funding sources. However, its significance was transformed with the emergence of the so-called “culture wars,” which resulted in the disappearance of grant support for individual artists at the NEA and its near-disappearance elsewhere, and once again when arts support and participation were disrupted after the 9/11 attacks.

In the MAP Fund’s second decade it became one of the very few sources that remained supportive of innovative individual artists, who increasingly came to feel marginalized — or worse yet, ignored — within the American culture. Against a background of perceived indifference, the MAP Fund stands out as a respected voice that says artists’ work is important and that their commitment is appreciated. The MAP Fund is a source of psychological as well as financial support, and for many artists the significance they attach to MAP’s existence is deeply emotional.

The key perspectives expressed by the artists are summarized here and discussed more fully in the detailed findings section of the report.

1. MAP Fund grants substantially enhance the quality of the supported projects.

A near-unanimous majority of the grantees (92%)* said the impact of the grants on the supported projects was critically or very important, primarily by improving the quality of the projects (96%). They say the grants:

- make it possible to pay fees, or better fees, to artistic collaborators, resulting in access to better collaborators and securing lengthy time commitments needed for collaborative work. Grants also make it possible for the principal artists to get paid for their work themselves, which gives them the ability to focus on the project without the distraction of other employment.
- make it possible to deepen the creative work through travel, research, workshops, and other development work, and often help include international elements in the project. The grants also give them more rehearsal time.
- help them realize the projects as they imagine them, rather than in a compromised fashion. Grants also make it possible for them to more fully realize production elements and the use of technology.
- give them a valuable seal of approval, which boosts their energy and confidence as well as conferring legitimacy on the project in the eyes of others.
- help them gain access to other funds, increasing the project budgets. By extension, the grants make it possible to think expansively and to broaden the scope of the projects.

Young artists won't be denied. They're going to give it their best, to try to be able to live their dream which is a life as a creative artist. I think they have to be beaten down quite a lot in order to give that up. They're resilient, they search out have other sources of income, and they may not be able to sustain a company or institution. But it takes a lot to make an artist give up her or his voice.

* All percentages in this report are based on the number of respondents to any given question, not the total number of respondents.

- provide time to get projects off the ground through initial planning and framing, so that artists can undertake projects sooner rather than later. The grants seem to function as the green light.
- help artists complete their productions, as well as connect with presenters, their facilities, and their audiences, so that they have the opportunity to see if the work functions as they imagine it.
- provide flexibility in the process, which in turn means the ability to experiment and to choose among alternate paths.
- ease financial stress, by supplying the largest single piece of the project budgets and by reducing the fundraising pressure that usually increases at the same time the artistic work is most demanding.
- make it possible to obtain better equipment and space, and help the artists afford administrative help so they can focus on the creative work.

2. MAP Fund grants make a continued impact on the supported artists' work beyond the supported projects.

The artists supported by MAP Fund are typically committed deeply to their work, to the extent of making considerable personal sacrifices to pursue it. For most of these artists, the artistic drive and commitment appear to be such that they will find a way to make the work regardless of the support they receive. Less than half of the grantees (45%) say that the projects would not have happened without the MAP Fund support.

Nevertheless, receipt of the grant has powerful beneficial effects for the artists. Virtually all of the grantees (96%) said the funded project added to their strength as artists. An equally large majority said the grant was critically, very, or somewhat important to their development as artists. They say the grants:

- help them explore new ways of thinking and new ways of working, enhancing craft and deepening artistic insights.
- give them more time to spend on the projects, to focus, and to more fully realize their ideas.
- enhance their confidence and give them legitimacy because of the trusted imprimatur that comes with the grant.
- give better access to sought-after collaborators.
- help expand their scope of possibilities and raise their sights.
- give them time for cross-cultural investigation.
- give them time to explore other disciplines.

3. MAP Fund grants make a continued impact on the organizations that commission, produce, or present the supported projects.

A significant majority of organization leaders (75%) said the grant helped earn their organization exposure it wouldn't have received otherwise. An even larger majority (86%) said the grant or the project enhanced their organization's reputation.

A majority of organization leaders (70%) said the grant or project made it easier to develop or present similarly innovative new work subsequently, in the following ways:

If you call yourself an artist, you have to maintain the pace and constantly confront the need to replenish your energy and your enthusiasm and your commitment. As you get older and you're no longer starry eyed about it and it's not so romantic anymore, how do you keep making the work? There are days when I wonder why I keep doing what I'm doing. Then I remember how important it is to carve out a space to be creative and protect it. And sometimes you fail. And that's the battle that every artist must have. That's part of the challenge.

The loss of the MAP program would devastate the field.

The enhancement of the program would immeasurably advance the field.

- the project helped build their organizations' reputations and credibility with artists, other collaborators, and presenters.
- the project helped shape their organizations' artistic programs in more adventurous directions.
- the project helped them build organizational capacity to present this kind of work in the future.
- the project helped give this work legitimacy in the minds of board members, funders, critics, and audiences.
- the project helped their organizations gain national or global exposure.

4. MAP Fund grants have a beneficial effect on the field of live performance.

Grantees believe the conditions for innovative work have deteriorated. More than 65% of those who were able to answer said it is somewhat or much more difficult for artists to find support for new work in 2007 than in 1988. A large majority (89%) said there are few or no other funding sources offering comparable support for the kinds of work MAP Fund supports. The number of grants has remained steady within a narrow margin from year to year, but the number of applications has increased sharply; the program is becoming ever more competitive.

Against this background, MAP's continued existence has ever greater symbolic significance. Generally the largest single component in the budgets of supported projects, MAP grants have a growing impact despite the fact that their amounts have not increased. Virtually all of the grantees (96%) said the overall impact of the MAP Fund program is critically, very, or somewhat important to the field of live performance.

5. The MAP Fund grant program is designed appropriately to accomplish its purposes, but a minor adjustment in the process timeline would be beneficial.

Almost all grantees (94%) said that MAP Fund's emphasis on innovation is critically or very important to the health of the field of live performance. A smaller majority (65%) said that MAP Fund's emphasis on cultural difference is critically or very important. This view of the relative importance of these twin pillars of the MAP Fund appears to be mirrored in the evolving pattern of grants chosen by the peer panels. In other words, the panel decisions seem to have tracked well with the field's evolving priorities.

MAP Fund supports about forty projects each year with an average grant of about \$25,000, ranging from \$10,000 to \$45,000. A large majority of the grantees (75%) said the number of grants and the grant amounts are in the right balance.

MAP Fund currently emphasizes project creation and development up to and including its premiere performance run. A majority (56%) said that they would like MAP to maintain this policy, but a meaningful minority (31%) said they would like MAP to allow costs of continuing to develop the project after its premiere even if that meant less money for the initial development costs.

I belong to a community of artists and activists who genuinely believe that theater has a place on the cultural landscape beyond entertainment. That theater has a role in the conversation about moving us forward as a nation, and perhaps as something larger than a nation: as human beings in terms of how we treat one another and how we work as a community. It sounds so idealistic, but I believe it, and I have colleagues who believe it. We make theater for people who don't go to the theater that much, but when they go to the theater it's a very particular glorious event. It's about the issues that are deep in the heart of their communities.

When asked when it would be ideal for the MAP Fund to notify grantees about their awards, 36% named months in the first quarter of the year; 37% named months in the second quarter; 16% named months in the third quarter; and 11% named months in the fourth quarter. (Currently, grantees learn of their awards in July.)

6. Creative Capital's administration of the MAP Fund program is effective.

Because the transfer of administrative responsibility for MAP Fund to Creative Capital is the one major change in the program since the 1999 evaluation study, we wanted to test the perception of the field about its stewardship. A substantial majority of grantees who responded (71%) said the MAP Fund staff is always helpful, and a similarly substantial majority (70%) said the MAP Fund processes and communications are always on time. There was no meaningful dissent on either of these questions.

A large majority (85%) said the MAP Fund application process strikes the right balance between the opportunity to fully inform the staff and panel of their projects while avoiding an undue burden of time in the process. The online application process, required of all, is an important efficiency; a majority of grantees (62%) say the website is very useful or somewhat useful, and the remaining people have no opinion.

Though the grant making process at MAP Fund generally seems to be trusted, some people hold the view that there is a list of “usual suspects” who are favored. For that reason, we tested the perception of the process with respect to fairness. A large majority (85%) said the MAP Fund program is mostly or completely fair.

A number of grantees used the open-ended response sections of the survey to praise CCF, the MAP Fund staff, and Program Director Moira Brennan by name. The impression given by these comments is of a staff that is caring, competent, and reliable.

Commentary

All evidence points to the conclusion that the MAP Fund program should continue with at least the current grant-making budget. The cultural need it addresses is important; the needs of the artists run deep; the program is efficient, making a large impact with a modest commitment of funds; few other sources address the need, despite its importance; and, for all of these reasons, the program's symbolic value is high. From the perspective of social investment MAP Fund is a low risk/high return bargain.

Conditions for innovation in dance, music, and theater are poor and deteriorating. The commitment of the artists to advancing these art forms is remarkable, and through their sacrifices they are the biggest source of financial support to accomplish it. Sadly, they put greater value on innovation than both society at large and the mainstream practitioners in their art forms do. They accomplish a lot with a little, and if it's not possible to provide more money it should at least be possible to continue providing the minimum financial support necessary to offer the psychological boost for which they depend on the MAP Fund.

Like the other arts, dance, music, and theater are perpetual in their existence — rooted among the most basic of human needs — but they are not immutable. Their vitality ebbs

The archetype of the starving artist has a really dark underbelly. It is important not to make choices dictated only by material desires. Not just the artists, but everyone. It will lead to a rather hollow life. But I'm not convinced that the quality of their art suffers when they are braced and supported in material ways. In fact, when given support artists actually flourish. The greater risk is relegating artists to a life that is really rough over the long haul. If you're working a temp job, you don't have insurance, you can't make your rent, and you're living hand to mouth, it becomes very difficult to find that quiet space you need to make something. It's not just about an artist making the rent. It's really about making art happen.

and flows in different historical periods for complex reasons. A key factor, though, is invariably the extent to which innovation and innovators are valued.

In some art forms today, people in the mainstream eagerly anticipate the latest developments. In the trend-forward art forms of visual art, architecture, and fashion design the most innovative artists are recognized and rewarded. That innovation and innovators are not valued so highly in theater, music, and dance is a reflection of audience tastes that are reinforced by weak cultural education and powerful disincentives for mainstream institutions to bring innovation in music, dance, and theater to general audiences. Though our culture has a surface affinity for the “new” it generally is shy of performances that are not conventional. This has not always been the case, and we may hope for a time when the prevailing taste is more advanced. (The irony is that much of the work that MAP supports would be of interest to a general audience if they were ever exposed to it.)

In the meantime, innovators in theater, dance, and music have to make the best of conditions that exist, and it's difficult to avoid the starving-artist archetype when describing the extent of their commitment and sacrifice. Relative to the recognition and material rewards that can be won by innovators in visual arts, architecture, and fashion, there is less of an economic light at the end of the tunnel for innovators in theater, dance, and music. With rare exceptions, rewards for innovators in these fields generally come in the form of the inner satisfaction that comes from doing the work they want to do and earning the respect of peers. In relation to these highly committed artists, the starving-artist archetype has special nobility precisely because there is little material incentive to persevere. For them, the work is and likely will continue to be its own reward.

The number of funding sources interested in innovative work in the performing arts, or in supporting the individual creative artists who do it, has dwindled to no more than a handful. The NEA individual artist fellowships are gone, and there have been similar retreats among state arts agencies and foundations. Corporations and individuals generally have not been supporters of progressive work.* Over 250 people gave input to this report, but only a handful of committed funding sources for this type of work were named besides MAP, and most or all of them are limited in time or geography. Similarly, only a handful of presenters were cited as being committed to showing this kind of work to audiences. More than a few American artists in the performing arts have found better opportunities for commissions and touring in Europe, but some say they prefer the creative energy of New York even though living there may be financially disadvantageous.

By any conventional standard it is inexplicable why innovative creative artists persist in their commitment to this work, yet they continue to make it despite a general lack of support. They find other sources of income: commercial performances, day jobs, teaching. They forgo the conventional aspects of security, health care, and comfortable living if they must, in order to spend their time on artistic projects. Many of them will spend what money they have on the work instead of eating or paying the rent. Though they

Given how constrained the landscape is, if you decide to go into theater now I think there is a real sense that maybe it's not enough to write entertaining pieces, that there's some sense of responsibility to grapple with larger issues. We're living in difficult times and I think that manifests in various artists' minds as ideas of what their role is.

* However, one grantee said that successful visual artists have been a large, and largely unacknowledged, source of support for innovation in the performing arts, through generous contributions of their artworks.

inhabit fields where collaboration is a necessity, they work as individuals because the mainstream institutions offer little shelter in the way of creative community, logistical support, or performance opportunities. They are fiercely independent, in part as a matter of choice and in part necessity, and often lack the psychological comfort that comes from a sense of group identification.

Perhaps one should feel sorry for the artists' situation, but admiration for their achievements is the more appropriate response. The resolute nature of the artists' commitment to their work is the only way to account for the fact that innovation in music, dance, and theater is alive and well, despite the low value assigned to it by society. The breadth of vision is impressive, the quality is high, and creation happens in a sufficiently critical mass to allow artists to learn from each other. These artists accomplish a lot with very little help. Innovation exists in these fields not because it receives broad support from donors, audiences, and cultural institutions, but because it is subsidized by the artists who create it.

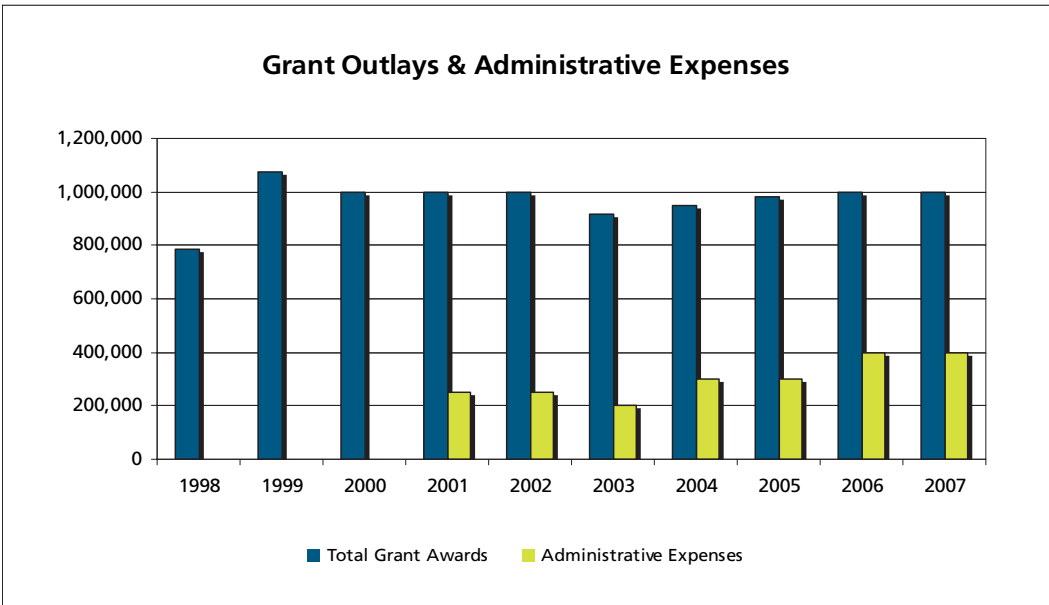
The MAP Fund sets a standard for excellence and innovation that stretches and challenges. It stands as a beacon of hope to artists of extraordinary promise.

II. Detailed Findings

Key Historical Data

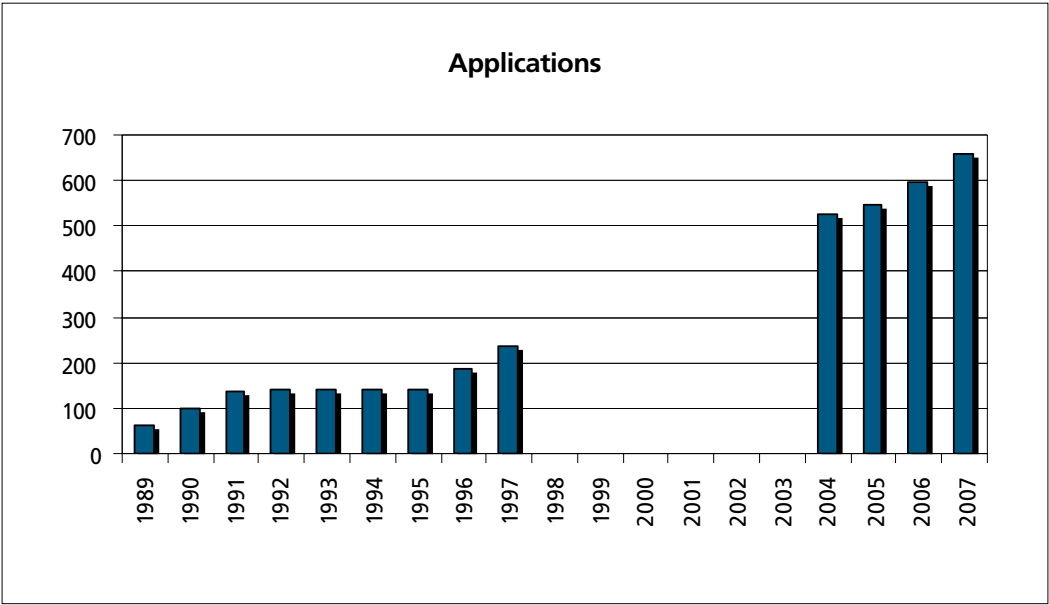
In 1999 (the year of the positive Adams & Goldbard program evaluation) the grant budget for the MAP Fund was increased, and from that year through 2007 the annual grant awards have averaged just under \$1mm. The total grant monies awarded over the nine year period was \$9.7mm.

In 2001, the Rockefeller Foundation transferred management of the grant program to CCF, followed by full administrative responsibility in 2004. The costs of administering the program previously were subsumed in the administrative costs of the Foundation and were difficult to identify with precision. Those costs began to be explicitly identified during the transfer of responsibilities to CCF, and after some seeming uncertainty they leveled out at \$400,000 in 2006. Grant awards dipped during the transitional years of 2003-04, but returned to the \$1mm level in 2005.

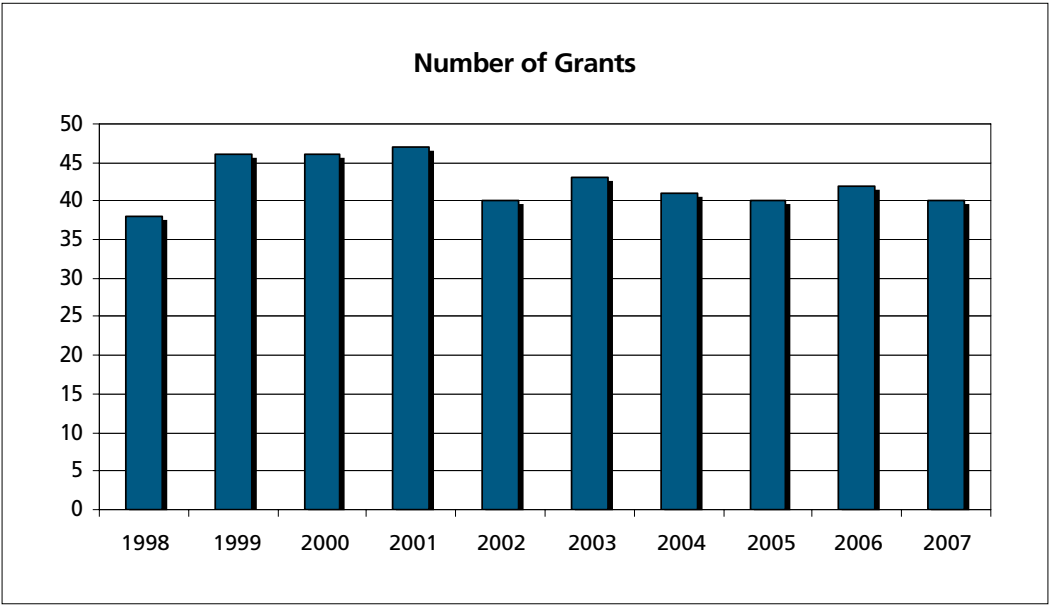


On first look, administrative costs may appear high as a percentage of the grant awards. However, the absolute amount of administrative expenses seems appropriate to the size and complexity of the program. MAP maintains an office separate from CCF, a website, three staff members, and an elaborate application review process that is the source of its reputation for fairness and discernment.

The administrative costs are particularly understandable in light of extreme growth in the number of applications. After the first two start-up years, applications stabilized at about 140 from 1991 to 1995, at which time they began to grow. Records are not available for the 1998-2003 period, spanning the transfer of administrative responsibility, but by 2004 they had exploded to over 500. In 2007 they exceeded 650. In the last 10 years applications increased by more than 170%, and over the 18 years since the program’s inception applications increased by 900%!

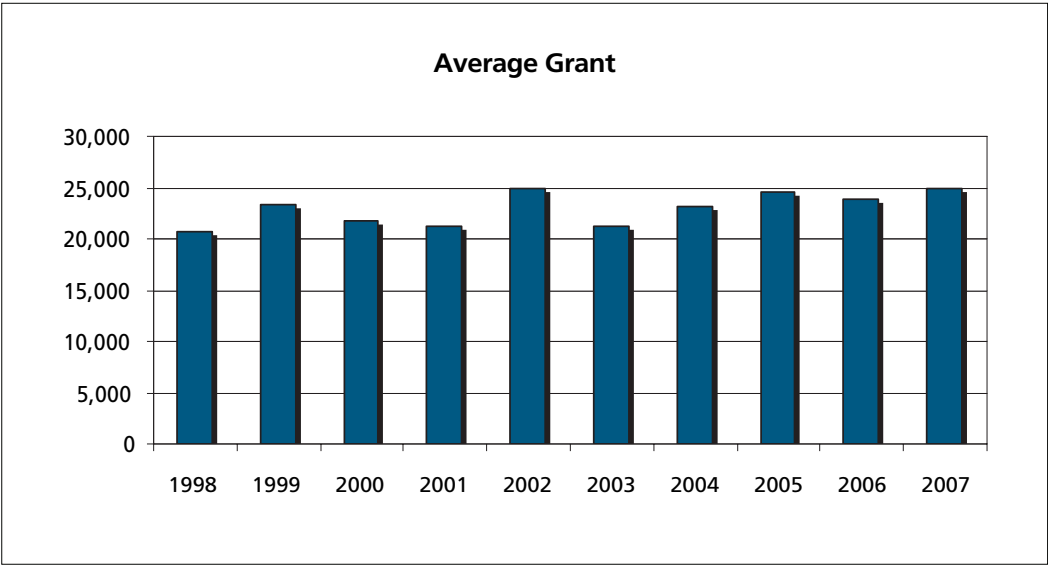


The explosive growth in applications has not been followed by growth in the number of grant awards. Though the number of grants briefly exceeded 45 from 1999-2001, following the increase in the grant budget in 1999, the number leveled off at around 40 in 2002 and thereafter.



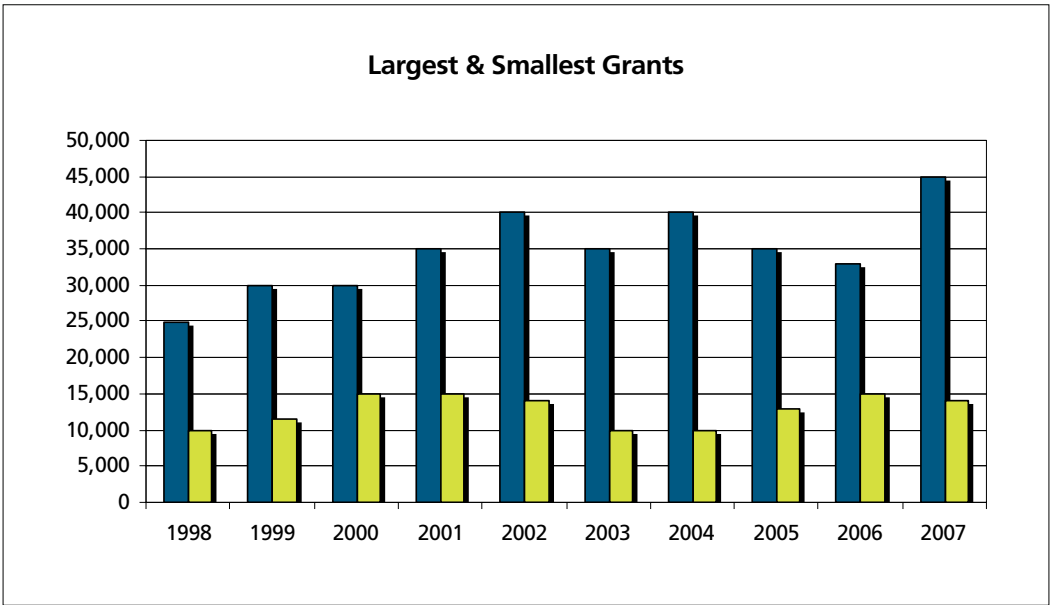
In 1992, MAP funded 21% of the applications received. In 1997 it funded 14%. In 2004 the proportion of successful applications dropped to 8%, then to 6% in 2007. This degree of selectivity, coupled with the fact that a number of important artists and projects are always among the unsuccessful applications, is an important source of the credibility of the MAP imprimatur.

The average grant amounts have fluctuated between \$20-25,000 over the ten year period, edging higher within that range in the most recent three years.

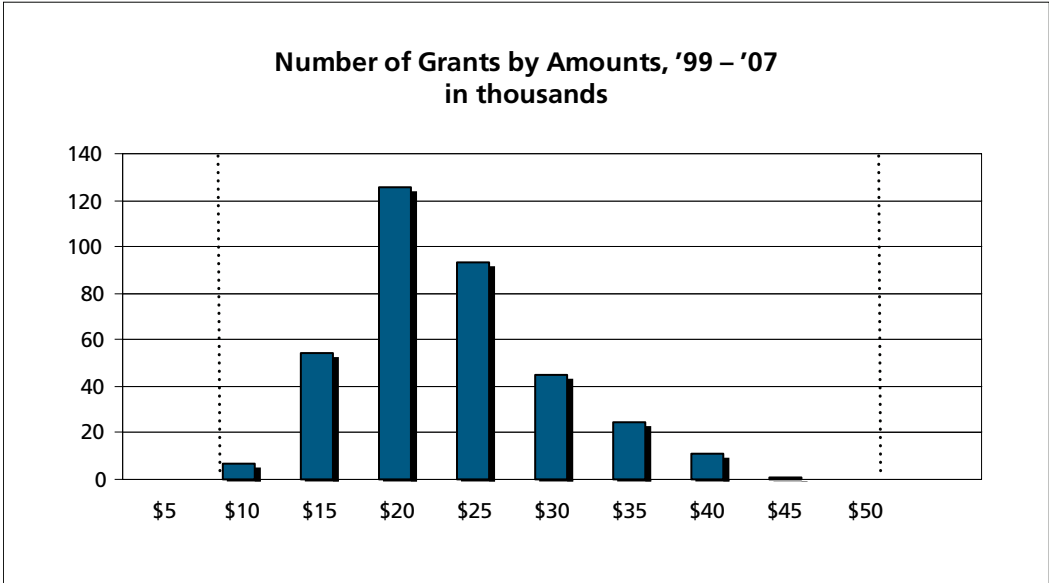


Over the ten year history, and within the context of approximately \$1mm to distribute each year, the number of grants and the average grant amount appear to be finding a balance at 40 and \$25,000, respectively.

The largest and smallest grants have fluctuated from year to year. The low grant has varied between \$10-15,000, but the top grant has varied over a wider range. In one of the ten years the top grant was \$25,000; in six years it was \$30-35,000; in two years it was \$40,000; and only in 2007 was a grant of \$45,000 awarded.



The stated range of grants is \$10,000 to \$50,000, but the program has seemed reluctant to use those extremes. Only a handful of \$10,000 grants have been awarded, and no grant of \$50,000 has been awarded in MAP’s history. The grants are skewed towards lower amounts; the largest number of grants by far is at the \$20,000 level. (Note that for purposes of clarity in this chart, all of the grant amounts have been rounded to the nearest \$5,000.)



The MAP Fund’s Impact on Supported Projects

An impressively large majority (92%) of the grantees who responded to the survey said the impact of the grant on their projects was critically or very important.

Overall, what was the impact of the MAP Fund grant on your project?		
Critically important	132	52%
Very important	101	40%
Somewhat important	16	6%
Not important	0	0%
Don't know	3	1%
Total	252	100%

We asked a series of questions to get a sense of the ways in which the grants have positive impacts on the supported projects.

First we wanted to know whether the primary impact was in helping to make the projects possible or in enhancing their quality. We expected that the primary impact of the MAP Fund was in improving the quality of supported projects rather than in assuring their existence, and the survey results confirmed that expectation.

Only 34% said that supported projects probably or definitely would not have occurred without the support.

Would the project have happened without the MAP Fund grant?		
Definitely	24	9%
Probably	90	36%
Not sure	53	21%
Probably not	66	26%
Definitely not	20	8%
Total	253	100%

Clearly, most of the artists are unlikely to be deterred from persevering in the work by lack of support. However, 96% say that the support enhanced the quality of their projects.

Did the MAP Fund grant help you enhance the quality of the project in ways that wouldn't have been possible without it?		
No	9	4%
Yes	244	96%
Total	253	100%

We asked those who said the grant enhanced the quality of their projects to tell us how it did so. Two hundred and forty artists cited an array of ways in which support was beneficial: it broadened or deepened the investigation, provided an imprimatur that increased confidence and leveraged other resources, paid for critical creative time, expanded production elements, and gave impetus to begin and finish the project.

Artists said the grant broadened and deepened their work by making it possible to think expansively and to expand the scope of the project. It provided greater flexibility and the ability to experiment.

MAP allows you the freedom to make choices, to try something new. We were able to dream and work larger than ever. The encouragement to explore and break boundaries is a rare stroke these days. It helped me to work at a scale that I couldn't have managed and take some risks I wouldn't have taken without this support.

Artists said the grant provided a seal of approval that boosted their confidence. It attracted attention to the project and helped obtain access to desirable presenters, to a desirable audience, and to additional funds.

The grant was a spiritual boost. It gave legitimacy to the creative process and enhanced the group morale and creative energy. The prestige of being on this short, exclusive, and highly competitive list drew attention from presenters, funders, and the artistic community.

Artists said the grant made it possible to pay fees, or better fees, to artistic collaborators. This provided access to more highly qualified people and lengthier commitments of their time. They were able to get paid for the work themselves, and in some cases were able to engage administrative help, so were able to spend more time on the creative work. They had more rehearsal time.

Our job was to be creative artists, but we often find it necessary to moonlight in order to make ends meet. Thanks to MAP support we were able to leave other obligations to concentrate on the project. Without this commitment we would have incurred possible drop-outs, and the quality of the work would have suffered.

Artists said the grant helped expand the production elements of their projects.

The normal choice that arises is between not mounting such projects or spreading a “standard” resource thinly so that it allows the project to go forward at a markedly compromised level. The MAP Fund enabled us to REALIZE the project, which I would distinguish from simply completing the project. We were able to more fully inhabit the ideas, to move through early conceptions into richer insight, to take what had once only existed in the heart and mind and give it physical life in sight and sound.

Artists said the grant provided impetus to begin and finish the project.

Without the grant I’m not sure the project would have happened that year, which was crucial. The grant made the project possible sooner. It not only gave me the initial funds to begin, but also the leverage to obtain additional funding to complete the project. Without the grant, the final realization of the project wouldn’t have happened.

Nearly all of those who responded to the survey (92%) said the project fulfilled their hopes. Factors cited by the small minority whose hopes were not fulfilled included not having enough time, disappointing production elements, limited access to an audience, and an unfruitful relationship with presenters or collaborators. MAP-supported projects rarely go bad — perhaps two or three in a hundred — but when they do go bad, problematic relationships appear to be the cause.

This was the worst artistic experience in my whole career. The organization I worked with, which represented my collaborator, treated me poorly, my name was excluded from all publicity, and I never had access to the budget. I never knew how the money was distributed and how my payment was decided. In short I lost money, time, publicity and a good friendship.

A majority (62%) said the grant helped attract some or substantial additional financial support, a response that probably underestimates the actual leveraging effect. Almost a third (29%) said they didn’t know if the grant helped attract other support, which is unsurprising given the fact that the project budgets often are managed by presenting or commissioning organizations rather than the artists who were surveyed.

Did the MAP Fund grant help attract other financial support for the project?		
Yes, substantial additional financial support	53	21%
Yes, some additional financial support	103	41%
No	23	9%
Don’t know	73	29%
Total	252	100%

Finally, we wanted to know whether the MAP Fund grant helped artists obtain engagements to perform their projects. Once again, the responses to this question were clouded by the fact that more than a third (36%) said they didn’t know the answer. Nevertheless, of those who could answer the question one way or the other, more than half (52%) said the grant helped obtain engagements that the projects wouldn’t have had otherwise.

Did the MAP Fund grant help you obtain engagements to perform the project that it wouldn't have had otherwise?		
Yes	85	34%
No	77	30%
Don't know	91	36%

The MAP Fund's Impact on Supported Artists

We asked the artists who responded to the survey how important the MAP grants were to their development as artists. An impressively large majority (96%) said the grant was critically, very, or somewhat important. This is a strong indication that the grants have beneficial effects beyond their immediate purpose to support creative projects.

Overall, what was the impact of the MAP Fund grant on your development as an artist?		
Critically important	63	34%
Very important	89	48%
Somewhat important	26	14%
Not important	3	2%
Don't know	3	2%
Total	184	100%

MAP grants appear to coincide with turning points or departures in the evolution of the artists' work. The MAP Fund doesn't select projects for this effect, but it may flow naturally from the program's strong emphasis on innovation.

How did the project function in the evolution of your development as an artist?		
It was the culmination, or end point, of a line of work already begun	21	11%
It was the continuation of a line of work already begun	80	44%
It was a turning point, the beginning of a new line of work	74	40%
It was a departure, tangential to the work that came before and after	8	4%
Total	183	100%

Nearly all (96%) said the project added to their strength as artists.

Do you feel that the project added to your strength as an artist?		
No	7	4%
Yes	177	96%
Total	184	100%

They cited an array of ways in which the project helped strengthen them: it helped them expand their personal creative resources, skills, and breadth of vision; it helped build their confidence and their reach; and it enhanced their access to and understanding of other artists.

Artists said the project expanded their personal creative resources and breadth of vision by helping them explore new ways of thinking and working, enhancing craft and deepening artistic insights, and expanding the scope of possibilities for future exploration.

Since that project my work has taken a different path. I feel more willing to take artistic risk. I am not afraid to undertake projects that at first seem unrealistic.

Without the MAP Fund I would have been writing the same play as I did last time only about a different subject. That's no kind of progress.

As an artist, I am dedicated to dreaming without limitations. Support for a process is a source of encouragement for dreams.

This project was our most ambitious project to that date. It was the culmination of two years of research and marked for me a definitive turning point in my career.

The grant allowed me to immerse myself in different communities. I had never been able to do this depth of research on a writing project before. It enriched the work immeasurably and made me committed to working with communities in this way.

Artists said the project generated access to important collaborators and strengthened their understanding of how to work with other artists in cross-cultural and inter-disciplinary investigations.

The grant gave me the funds to work with two great gurus, both senior to me.

It gave me working insight into artists from other disciplines. It exploded my normal artistic problem-solving/ methods of creation.

The project helped me to understand the nature — good and bad — of collaboration. I learned how different artists work and how those different processes result in different priorities on stage.

Artists said the seal of approval that comes with the grant enhanced their confidence and provided a sense of legitimacy.

I started the idea of the project first by myself without knowing the value of what I am doing. Being recognized by MAP made me believe that I can trust myself, that I am not alone, that I can communicate with society with my voice.

To receive the grant was to be given an “objective” form of legitimacy and acknowledgement from the arts community, which allowed me and my collaborators to feel strengthened and encouraged. This was a great step for us, psychologically.

When you get paid for what you do then there's a huge identity shift in which the external “validation” you get affirms an internal suspicion that you may actually be worthy.

When asked whether the grant strengthened the artist in his or her relationship with the commissioning or presenting organization, a quarter (25%) said they didn't know the answer. This probably reflects the fact that some proportion of the grants support creative projects that do not involve touring or commissioning. Even so, a majority (59%) answered in the affirmative, representing 78% of those who could answer one way or the other.

Did the MAP Fund grant strengthen you in your relationship with the commissioning organization or presenter?		
Yes	106	59%
No	30	17%
Don't know	45	25%
Total	181	100%

Half of the respondents (50%) said the grant helped open up opportunities for subsequent projects, against only 10% who said it did not.

Did the MAP Fund grant help open up opportunities for your subsequent projects?		
Yes	92	50%
No	19	10%
Don't know	73	40%
Total	184	100%

Here, too, a substantial number of respondents did not know how to answer, reflecting the fact that artists do not always know how collaborating artists and organizations become familiar with their work. We asked a small number of presenters about this, too, and almost half (47%) of them said the MAP Fund imprimatur makes them more likely to want to work with the artists who receive it.

The MAP Fund's Impact on Grantee Organizations

In line with MAP Fund priorities, the survey and interviews were focused on the artists who initiate and make the projects. Nevertheless, many of the artists represent or are affiliated with grantee organizations and felt they could respond to questions about the effect of the grants on them.

In a response that parallels that of the artists to a similar question, only 17% of the grantee organizations said they probably or definitely wouldn't have undertaken the project without the MAP Fund grant. It appears that both artists and host organizations are committed to the project idea by the time it is proposed to the MAP Fund.

Would your organization have undertaken the project without the MAP Fund grant?		
Definitely	32	19%
Probably	78	45%
Not sure	33	19%
Probably not	24	14%
Definitely not	5	3%
Total	172	100%

Although 19% could not say, 93% of those who could answer said the grant helped get their organizations exposure that wouldn't have been received otherwise.

Did the MAP Fund grant or the project help your organization get exposure it wouldn't have gotten otherwise?		
Yes	128	75%
No	9	5%
Don't know	33	19%
Total	170	100%

An impressively large majority (86%) said the grant or the project enhanced their organization's reputation.

Did the MAP Fund grant or the project enhance your organization's reputation?		
Yes	145	86%
No	4	2%
Don't know	20	12%
Total	169	100%

A majority (70%) said the grant or project made it easier to develop or present similarly innovative new work subsequently.

Did the MAP Fund grant or the project make it easier for your organization to develop or present similarly innovative new work subsequently?		
No	44	30%
Yes	105	70%
Total	149	100%

They said the grant or project helped build their organization's reputation and credibility with artists, other collaborators, and presenters; helped shape their organization's artistic program; helped the organization build capacity to accomplish this kind of work; helped shape the expectations of the organization's board members, funders, critics, and audience; and helped their organization get national or global exposure.

Though the grants focus on the creative artists, they appear to have a lasting effect on organizations, too. Two-thirds (68%) of those who responded said the project helped to move their organization's work to a new level.

How did the project function in the evolution of your organization's work?		
It was a turning point, helping to move our organization's work to a new level.	109	68%
It was consistent with the level of work that came before and after, and had little or no impact on our organization's evolution.	51	32%
It was a setback. Our organization was in better shape before we undertook the project than we were when we completed it.	1	1%
Total	161	100%

The MAP Fund's Impact on the Field of Live Performance

Artists responding to the survey were very nearly unanimous (96%) in saying that the overall impact of the MAP Fund program is critically, very, or somewhat important to the field of live performance, and nearly two-thirds (64%) rated its importance as critical..

In your opinion, the overall impact of the MAP Fund program on the field of live performance is:		
Critically important	161	64%
Very important	66	26%
Somewhat important	15	6%
Not important	0	0%
Don't know	10	4%
Total	252	100%

Why is the MAP Fund rated as so important to the field of live performance? In the survey and in interviews, artists said the environment generally is discouraging, with few sources of support interested in innovation. They also said MAP provides the largest grants available in support of innovative projects, in a manner that is sympathetic to the artists.

A large majority (89%) said that there are few or no other funding sources offering comparable support for the kinds of work MAP Fund supports.

To your knowledge, are there other funding sources that offer comparable support for the kinds of work MAP funds?		
Many	2	1%
Few	196	78%
None	27	11%
Don't know	25	10%
Total	250	100%

We took care in the interviews to note when any other sources were mentioned. Sources named frequently as being interested in individual artists or their innovative projects were the Jerome Foundation, Greenwall Foundation, New York Founda-

tion for the Arts, and Creative Capital Foundation.* (The source that was named most often, but in a negative way and with regret, was the National Endowment for the Arts, which eliminated grants to individuals more than a decade ago; its retreat looms large in the mythology of individual creative artists.) These sources share the MAP Fund's commitment to innovative individual creativity, but each of them supports the field in a different way. In planning a project, an artist cannot rely on the possibility that most or all of these sources will participate in financing a project. For example, Jerome supports individual artists in New York and Minnesota for 3-5 years at a particular transitional point in their careers.

We wanted to understand the artists' sense of how the conditions for new work have changed since the MAP Fund's inception. We anticipated that younger grantees would not be able to compare today's conditions with the conditions of 1988, and in fact more than a third of respondents said "don't know." Of those who were able to answer, more than three-quarters (76%) said that it is somewhat or much more difficult for artists to find support for new work in 2007 than in 1988. While they think conditions have deteriorated for all, the level of concern is even higher for emerging artists than for established artists.

If you can answer, is it easier or more difficult today for <i>emerging</i> artists to find support for new work than it was in 1988 when the MAP Fund was conceived?		
Much easier for <i>emerging</i> artists in 2007 than in 1988	5	2%
Somewhat easier for <i>emerging</i> artists in 2007 than in 1988	25	10%
About the same	10	4%
Somewhat more difficult for <i>emerging</i> artists in 2007 than in 1988	44	18%
Much more difficult for <i>emerging</i> artists in 2007 than in 1988	76	31%
Don't know	89	36%
Total	249	100%

If you can answer, is it easier or more difficult today for <i>established</i> artists to find support for new work than it was in 1988 when the MAP Fund was conceived?		
Much easier for <i>established</i> artists in 2007 than in 1988	0	0%
Somewhat easier for <i>established</i> artists in 2007 than in 1988	19	8%
About the same	22	9%
Somewhat more difficult for <i>established</i> artists in 2007 than in 1988	66	27%
Much more difficult for <i>established</i> artists in 2007 than in 1988	62	25%
Don't know	78	32%
Total	247	100%

Three themes emerged from interviews with the artists to give a more textured understanding of their view of deteriorating conditions. They are concerned about the general atmosphere of public taste; about the dearth of support for their work from grant-makers, presenters and producers; and about the implications of conditions for the emerging artists who will shape the future of the field.

* Other sources mentioned less often were Andy Warhol Foundation, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Creative Work Fund, and the Irvine Foundation's Creative Connection.

The artists we talked with generally believe the atmosphere for advanced or progressive art is very poor, indeed.

In this society culture is really not a big priority and funding artists and writers and composers just is not really at the top everyone's list. There's no government support, and whatever we thought about the NEA it was important to know that there was this arm of the government that funded artists. What's happened now is a conservative trend, and it's going to continue that way. It can be a time filled with despair for me when I look at it.

I think a hostile climate would almost be better than an indifferent one. Hostility would be inspiring but indifference is deadly. It murders the soul because nobody even cares enough about your work to dislike it. Hostility would wake people up, give them something to fight about, and made people question what they were doing from both sides of the fence. But the indifference is horrific. Nobody's going to come out and molest you, so you present work to people who already agree with you.

What's missing in the funding world is a certain amount of artistry and vision. There are a couple of places doing that, but it's very difficult, because innovation or progressiveness seems radical in the performing arts world. Not everyone needs to be radical or innovative, but it needs to exist.

Most institutions of color that emerged since the 1960s have died, and the ones that survive become very conservative because they have to approach funders as supplicants. They have to basically appeal to a white consciousness, made up of staff ill-equipped to evaluate things outside the mainstream. So white supremacy has been greatly restored. Initiatives from the grassroots to promote alternative and diverse aesthetic perspectives are much, much harder now, and the contemporary experimental hybrid artists are struggling mightily.

In addition to believing that advanced or progressive performance work is not valued by the general society, artists we talked with also generally believe they are marginalized within the field of performing arts production and presentation. This results in a dearth of enabling support for their work by arts institutions and funders.

I'm a 40-something artist. In the '80's there were the NEA individual artist Fellowships, and they were good to get you started. Then in the early '90's came the obscenity things, and that totally changed my career trajectory. By eliminating the NEA Fellowships they really took the bottom out. They took the wind out of our sails.

Funding from the Jerome Foundation was important because it sustained us for a good five years. But then it ends and you're supposed to be on your feet and ready to go to the next level. Well, we didn't go the next level, whatever that is, because it wasn't there to go to.

I'm not sure if the presenting and the funding worlds really understand how much money it takes to do a project. One presenter got excited about funding my project and offered me \$25,000. That would be very helpful, but she obviously didn't know that it would fund about one week of this large project, and I didn't know how to say that without discouraging her. The truth is it costs a lot to produce work when you commit to pay for people's time. It's not a matter of indulgence.

When 9/11 came upon us a lot of money was redirected, and I think we're still recovering from that. I think this funding climate has taken a complete nosedive.

Institutions, being institutions, worry about survival, about how to keep people employed and about how to provide what they believe is a good service to their communities, so they are often conservative. They underestimate what their audiences' tastes will be.

There are many theaters, but their tastes have converged.

There was a time when touring was a lot more available, including the valuable earned income that comes with it. But when funding is down it affects how many artists can present. So it's not just that funding is down, it's also more of a struggle to get earned income than it's been in the past.

The few foundations that are left that have the mission of funding exciting and challenging work and provocative work, work that makes people think, you could count them on one hand. That's incredibly bad. I totally understand [the] foundations that say now we need to fund education. But people look at artists making art and say "how important is that?"

Many of the best-known artists in the field of progressive performance work entered the field in the '80's and are now senior to a population of artists that is being renewed by the continual emergence of young artists doing exciting work. (It may be more accurate to say they created a field, rather than joined it.) As the more experienced artists struggle with conditions they view as deteriorating, they have begun to worry that the difficult conditions may begin to deter young people from entering the field, or that they will be unable to find the support they need to make an impact.

When I was a beginning theater artist the landscape was a little more adventurous and there were more opportunities for younger artists. For me personally, today, the landscape is good; my trajectory has been a really good one. But it's also been a very unusual one, and I'm not sure it's true of my colleagues and particularly my younger colleagues.

I really don't know how young people do it but I also think it's what you do. It's part of the journey. You don't coddle an artist, I'm pretty tough about that, but their resources are shrinking.

It's harder to break through as a writer. It feels a little bit like the channels have narrowed, that you have to have gone to a certain grad school or have more credits. The entry opportunities just feel a little bit more closed. There are not a lot of opportunities, straight up production opportunities, for emerging artists.

The deterioration of the environment for new performance work is half of the explanation for the importance artists attach to the MAP Fund. The other half of the explanation lies in its impact on their projects and on their creative lives (detailed in previous sections), coupled with the trust and respect it has earned from them (detailed more fully in sections to follow). However, it would be appropriate here to give some flavor of the psychological and emotional quality of many artists' regard for MAP, which extends beyond a typical grantor/grantee relationship.

When I started out we had NEA Fellowships, which provided seed money for a career. Younger artists today don't have anything until they get to the level to be noticed by Jerome or get on MAP's radar. So MAP has filled the vacuum; the NEA was the seal of approval and now it's MAP. A grant says to the world that a project is a serious enquiry. MAP just has a lot of respect, and carries a lot of weight.

MAP was important in the beginning because I was emerging and needed someone to say "oh, just pay attention. This is a new rising person." Then it was important again when I was mid-career, because there's a tendency for people to think one's best creative years are over. At that point you need someone to say "okay, she's not done and over with." So it's especially important at two points in your career.

People like me are living off crumbs that fall from the table of this incredibly huge hyper-capitalist society that we live in. I feel myself to be very much a marginal member of American society, sort of at the edges figuring out a way of doing things that I think are important and valuable without much direct support from the mainstream

world. I think the MAP Fund does a very good job of supporting people like me, specifically like me. The fact that the MAP Fund is there is what makes it possible for me to do the work that I care most deeply about. In the larger scheme, MAP is one of the crumbs and it's really, really, really critical that those crumbs exist. Support of what's marginal is part of what makes American society of value.

The overwhelming opinion of the grant in the field is that it's the most important grant to get in terms of interdisciplinary work, for sure. People work really hard to get MAP funding. And it often becomes the core of a project's funding, in this time when it's just so hard to get any money at all for interdisciplinary or experimental work. So people are very excited about the grant and sometimes very daunted by it because it is so competitive.

I've been too abstract for the theater field and too narrative for performance art, so I've always fallen in the hole in between them. I had to find my place in the performance world, and there aren't too many places to go for support. MAP is one of those funds that turns over. So, your chances every year are as good as your chances were the year before, so I had a chance.

In the last twenty years MAP has made possible work that most institutions would ignore. It empowers independent artists, people who want to initiate projects rather than wait around for institutions. That is the key to success of our cultural life, that it is artist driven, not institutional driven. Because MAP is project-based, it really is about making sure the most interesting work gets done.

One thing about the MAP Fund is they're willing to go out on a limb for a project, no matter how conceptually challenging it is. For most funders, this work is just too outside the box and they can't understand it.

MAP has been totally instrumental in my career. Without MAP, the project that moved me forward would have been kind of a pipe dream. It would have been something I did when I won the lottery. MAP gave me exactly what I needed at the time when I needed it.

The MAP Fund's Grant Program Design

I think that the MAP Fund has been very, very intelligently organized.

We wanted to find out whether artists held perceptions of the MAP Fund's program design that might suggest modifications of the grant program guidelines and review process, especially if any such modifications could be made without incurring additional costs. Before presenting the findings on this question, it may help the reader to have a brief summary of the process as it currently exists.

The MAP Fund's aim "is to assist artists who are exploring the dynamics of live-performance within our changing society, thus reflecting our culture's innovation and growing diversity. . . . MAP seeks especially to support work that brings insight to the issue of cultural difference, be that in class, gender, generation, ethnicity, or tradition." Applications are initiated by individuals, presenting organizations, or producing organizations. Because grants can be awarded only to organizations, individual artists may apply through organizations acting as fiscal agents. (MAP goes to considerable trouble to help artists understand how to find a fiscal agent and to prepare an application in this way.) Applications are submitted by mid-February, and then are reviewed in a painstaking multi-step process. The process emphasizes even-handed openness to new artists: master artists compete in the same category with unknown ones, and the grant lists usually include fresh names. MAP communicates the results of the process to applicants in July. The process follows these steps:

1. At the time of submission, applicants choose which of four panels they want to evaluate their project: music, dance, scripted theater, or interdisciplinary. These panels are composed of three or four artists, presenters, or producers who are interested and knowledgeable in this field, some of whom are previous grantees. Applications are submitted online (a process that seems to work smoothly on the whole), and work samples are mailed separately.
2. After a staff review for eligibility, each application is assigned to one of 25-30 evaluators. Evaluators, like panel members, are artists, presenters or producers with knowledge of the field, and who may be previous grantees. Each evaluator scores up to 25 applications on the basis of cultural impact, quality of work samples, quality of the application, and general impression of the proposal.
3. Staff members also score each application, and guided primarily by the evaluator reports they choose a manageable number of the most promising applications to be reviewed by the panels. In recent years, 50-65% of proposals advance for panel consideration.
4. Each of the four panels is allocated a number of grants that they can recommend, proportional to the number of applications received in the respective category. (For example, if xx% of the applicants chose to be reviewed by the music panel, xx% of the grants that may be awarded are allocated to the music panel.)
5. Each panel meets for 2-3 days during the month of June. The character of the panels change with the identity of their members and with evolving priorities in the field. Panelists act in accordance with the clearly stated purposes, intentions, and guidelines of the program, but have considerable latitude for judgment within that structure. Staff members report that they cannot predict the panels' choices with accuracy. Panels choose the applications to recommend, but do not recommend grant amounts.
6. After contacting the recommended applicants to obtain an updated project budget, staff allocates grant amounts using a spreadsheet analysis that takes into account the total project budget; the amount and percentage of the budget to be paid to the lead artist; the requested amount; the requested amount as a percentage of the project budget; how much money already is raised; and how much time remains to raise the rest of the money. The priorities in determining award amounts are (a) for the grant to cover the lead artist's fee, (b) for the grant to cover as much as possible of the requested amount, and (c) for the grant to cover as high a percentage as possible of the project budget. In practice, only about a third of grantees receive their requested amount, and the grants cover 20-25% of projected project budgets on average.
7. The recommended grant awards are reviewed by the Rockefeller Foundation's Associate Director and by CCF's Director of Grants and Services, then are approved by the CCF Board of Directors. In practice there are few differences of opinion at this stage and they always are resolved before submission to the Board.
8. Grantees are notified of their awards and given a contract to sign that obligates them to observing the conditions of the grant.
9. The list of grantees is announced to an email list composed of present and past applicants, grantees, and all other persons who have expressed an interest in receiving news about the program.

Successful proposals tend to be those that are artist-driven rather than institution-driven, and that feature modest project budgets so the grant will make a meaningful financial impact. The panels are most sympathetic to independent artists and the difficulties they encounter assembling a project. They are least sympathetic to projects with low artist fees in relation to the project budget, and to institutional self-interest.

The MAP Fund's identity is formed in large part by its twin emphases on innovation and cultural difference. That these concepts go together is by no means obvious, and the ingenuity of the program's original designers was recognizing the potential for them to complement each other. Over the years, some projects have focused more on one side than the other, but all projects have had features of both. In surveying the artists, we wanted to test our general impression that the balance between innova-

tion and cultural difference has shifted slightly but perceptibly in the direction of innovation as the field and wider society have made gains in understanding and appreciating diversity. (It is important to note that any such shift would be the result of panel decisions on individual grants, reflecting evolving perceptions in the field, not of a staff or policy direction.)

How important to the health of the field is the MAP Fund’s emphasis on innovation in live performance?		
Critically important	175	70%
Very important	59	24%
Somewhat important	5	2%
Not important	4	2%
Don’t know	8	3%
Total	251	100%

A large majority (96%) said MAP Fund’s emphasis on innovation is critically, very, or somewhat important to the field of live performance. A slightly smaller but still large majority (84%) said MAP Fund’s emphasis on cultural difference is critically, very, or somewhat important to the field of live performance.

How important to the health of the field is the MAP Fund’s emphasis on performance works that grapple with the issue of cultural difference?		
Critically important	103	41%
Very important	64	25%
Somewhat important	45	18%
Not important	18	7%
Don’t know	22	9%
Total	252	100%

These findings suggest that the general impression of a shift in the balance between these foundational pillars of the MAP Fund is correct. They also suggest that both continue to reflect essential needs and to be integral to the identity of MAP. Several people confirmed this view during the interviews, with one saying:

It is true that we’ve made progress in understanding and appreciating cultural diversity over the last twenty years, but no one can say we’re done with that. We’ve got a long way to go, and we won’t be done with cultural diversity in our lifetimes.

Two artists went further in suggesting that the shift in balance is a trend that requires some effort to reverse.

When it was still inside the Rockefeller Foundation, MAP funded more artists of color who were doing work that expressed their traditions, and who could be viewed as experimental in that context. The people who get funded nowadays have no track record within their communities. They have learned the language of post-modernism, but their actual work is lacking. In the ‘90s MAP staff had a broader and more varied kind of knowledge and interest.

I am concerned that the Fund’s guidelines have in recent years favored definitions of new and cutting edge work that fail to recognize the merits, creative challenges, and contributions of theater works created by culturally-specific ensembles and traditional artists. I hope the Fund would want to make certain that such voices are not excluded from its call to the field.

In the survey, we wanted to test the staff’s impression that the balance between the number of grants and the grant amounts awarded had found an appropriate equilibrium. This is an important question, one that is considerably more complex than it appears at first glance. It reflects the fact that the grants have both a financial impact and a symbolic impact, and that both are essential to the grantees and to MAP’s effectiveness.

Among the people we talked with, the MAP Fund grant generally is the largest single component in assembling a project budget. The grant amounts are viewed as substantial, and as making a real difference in artist fees. Increasing the amount artists earn while making their art increases the amount and quality of creative time the project can draw on, in the scope of research, in development work, and in production personnel and technology. All of these impacts argue for keeping the grant amounts high, an approach strengthened by recognition of the deteriorating environment for this kind of work.

On the other hand, the symbolic value of the grant — usually referred to as the MAP imprimatur or seal of approval — wields huge influence in strengthening the artist’s hand with other funders, presenters, and producers. For an artist trying to break into the field, a MAP grant is the signal of arrival, of being taken seriously. For a proven artist, a MAP grant remains a powerful signal to funders and presenters that the particular project is an interesting one. These impacts argue for keeping the number of grants high, and this approach is strengthened by the sharp rise in the number of applications and resulting intensification of the competition.

If the competition continues to intensify, or if the grant amounts continued to lose purchasing power, there may come a time when artists decide the grant isn’t worth the effort of applying. If the number of grants were to increase by a large margin, there may be a point at which the imprimatur is undermined. The program is in no immediate danger in these respects, but it’s important to keep the risks in mind.

A large majority of the artists (75%) confirmed the staff’s impression by saying that the balance between the number of grants and the grant amounts awarded currently is appropriate. This view is reinforced somewhat by the fact that those who would change the current balance are divided among proponents of more grants and proponents of bigger grants.

The MAP Fund supports about 40 projects each year with grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000 and averaging about \$22,000. If the MAP Fund grant program were to continue with the same total budget as at present would you want to change the balance between the number of grants and the grant amounts?		
The number of grants and grant amounts are in the right balance.	190	75%
I would give larger grants, even if it meant that fewer projects were supported.	21	8%
I would support more projects, even if it meant that the grants would be smaller.	42	17%
Total	253	100%

CCF not only wanted to know whether the current balance between the number of grants and the grant amounts is appropriate, but also wanted to know what the balance should be if more (or less) money were available. (We were given no information to suggest that either of these possibilities were likely, and therefore presented this inquiry as a desire to be prepared for the future.)

We pursued this question in the interviews by asking which should be the priority if more money were available: more grants or bigger grants. As in the survey, the number of opinions in favor of more grants was somewhat higher than the number of opinions in favor of bigger grants, but the persuasiveness of the arguments was very high on both sides. Tellingly, many of the artists we interviewed argued both sides of this question articulately before coming down on one side or the other. Indeed, these quotes all could have come from the same person:

I would love to see more grants awarded as opposed to the amounts going up for a smaller pool simply because I think the more seeds you plant the better it is for artists, the projects that they're creating, and the community in which they're creating these projects. One of the very exciting things about MAP is that it gives opportunity to artists that aren't on the landscape. That's where I think there's a real lack right now in the institutions. There's got to be a way for outsiders to find their way to realizing their projects.

I think finding money is just so difficult. I would say \$25,000 is a minimum to give you a real amount of time you can dedicate to the actual making of the art, a real stepping stone. That kind of money actually allows you to do something really meaningful. I mean, when people give you a grant for twenty five hundred dollars what are you really supposed to do with that? And there's so many you have to do at those levels and it. You know, like every bit helps but to think how many of those you need. If you could actually think about beginning with \$50,000 you could really start to make a plan, and to create. It would give you the tools to actually have a structure and see where you're going and how to get there.

Think what it would mean to the quality and intensity of art-making if it were possible for there to be hundreds of people doing [this kind of work in a supported way]. Something really, really important happens when you can wake up in the morning and do your work. Do your real work. Everyday. What I'm trying to say is that making it so that a few more people could make that choice [would make it] so it wouldn't be quite so terrifying. Because they have to be really risk-friendly to make that decision.

[If the grant had been bigger] it would have gone to actually paying artists who should have been paid and to hiring some people so that the creative team didn't have to take on a lot of administrative duties. The project was a success, I'm happy to say, but it nearly killed us. Everyone was just sort of performing way too many tasks. I don't think it should have to nearly kill you. I think it would [be better to] allow artists to be artists. We should be able to do what we do well, you know, but there are so many things that get in the way.

The MAP Fund also wanted to know whether artists would prefer to relax the rules on allowable costs of developing a new work, which currently cut off with the premiere presentation. This cut-off is in response to a fear that there would no end to the costs that could be proposed for support, and that the impact of the grants could be diluted if the door to those costs were opened. A small majority (56%) said that they would maintain MAP Fund's emphasis on the costs of developing a project up to and including its premiere run. A meaningful minority (31%) would allow costs of continuing to develop the project after its premiere, even if that meant less money for the initial development costs.

Currently, MAP Fund grants may be applied to any phase of a project up to and including its premiere performance run. Would you want any of the following currently disallowed costs to be permitted in the future, even if it meant that less money would be available for the initial project development costs?		
Yes, I would allow the costs of continuing to develop the project in rehearsal or performance after its premiere.	79	31%
Yes, I would allow post-premiere documentation or cataloging costs.	32	13%
No, I would maintain the MAP Fund's emphasis on the costs of developing a project up to and including its premiere run.	140	56%
Total	251	100%

Though the cut-off may be the most realistic way of maintaining the impact of the grants on the creation of new work, it would be well to keep in mind that for artists in some percentage of situations, some post-premiere activities could serve to complete the creative work and therefore would be consistent with MAP’s objectives.

The whole concept of the earned income that comes later is really paramount. Who wants to put up a show that only has a one- or two-week run. That can be the end of it. Maybe there’s some kind of a way that we could talk about post-premiere finishing the product, because that is the key to bring more value to it, more impact. After the premiere is when the real work begins. And you either have to find more support to finish it or you just have to kick in your side of [the fee] to the marketing to really begin to truly take full advantage of the experience.

MAP Fund staff members wanted to know if the timeline of the application review process and grant period was in tune with the creative and production rhythms in the field. In particular, was the July announcement of grant awards — which coincides with no prevailing fiscal or season planning cycle — creating any difficulties for artists or organizations? We asked grantees when it would be ideal for the MAP Fund to notify grantees about their awards.

The responses were indicative but not conclusive. 36% named months in the first quarter of the year; 37% named months in the second quarter; 16% named months in the third quarter; and 11% named months in the fourth quarter.

In what month of the year would it be ideal for the MAP Fund to notify grantees about grant awards (to facilitate their planning)?		
January	39	17%
February	18	8%
March	26	11%
April	26	11%
May	30	13%
June	30	13%
July	18	8%
August	11	5%
September	8	3%
October	10	4%
November	8	3%
December	10	4%
Total	234	100%

On balance, these results seemed to suggest that it would be helpful if the grant announcement were to occur earlier in the year, perhaps by 90 days or more.

I’m incredibly grateful for the support we got. I wish, though, that it wasn’t such a long time between when you apply and when you’re told if you got it.

However, some of the responses provided clues to suggest that the date of the announcement might not be the real issue. (Some people were assuming that the grant could be announced earlier without adjusting the application deadline as well.) With the help of artists’ responses to a few interview questions, we came to believe that the most important timing issue was the length of delay between the application deadline and the green light provided by a grant award. More specifically, it’s the delay between conceiving the project and being able to begin the work. From the artists’ perspective, the timeline feels something like this: complete all of the work of conceiving a project, recruiting collaborators, and making tentative arrangements for facilities, so that you can submit a quality application; then, after you’ve gotten excited and gotten others excited

about the project, put all of that on hold for five months, keeping the various commitments tentative; then, when the grant is approved, push hard to firm up all of the commitments and get the project underway, because fifteen months doesn't sound like a lot of time to finish. This suggests that the date of the announcement is less important than reducing the time between the application and announcement, and that a lengthier grant period might also be beneficial.

Before leaving this section about the design of the program, it's appropriate to note that not everyone agrees with the limitations of the MAP Fund's guidelines. We're compelled to report that some artists would prefer sustaining support over project support; more emphasis on cultural difference than on innovation, and vice versa; support for continuing a line of work rather than a new idea; organization-initiated projects rather than artist-initiated; and grants to individuals rather than through organizations.

We need CONTINUED support, not one year out of 2 or 3. How do you build a company that way? Start all over again with new people? Always get free-lance administrators who have no idea how your company works and what it is about? Might companies receive support over 5 years for example so that they can develop and grow?

I personally think there should be more emphasis placed on the "innovation" side of the work than on the "cultural differences" side of the work, as the innovative work often has fewer funding opportunities. And, the future of the field depends on nurturing the innovators.

The artist is at the mercy of the organization, and in one case where my work samples and grantwriting were used to get a MAP grant, but I never received any of the commission. As individual artists we are the ones laboring to create and imagine and even help produce this innovative work and yet still must trust the umbrella of our partner 501c3s to do the right thing.

I think the trend toward project support and away from ongoing ways of supporting individuals is a bit of a sexy flash in the pan approach. The program contributes inadvertently, a little bit, to the starving artist phenomenon because it's about "I have this masterpiece idea" as opposed to "somebody who creates a body of work needs to be supported."

The notion of artists doing work that is different than what they have done before should be de-emphasized. A project should not have to be an innovation in their performance/creative process. That doesn't recognize the arc of the vision of an artist who is on a steadily progressing vision curve, someone who is focused on the entire vision. There are so few grant programs in general, that perhaps the guidelines of all need to make room for all the possibilities and flexibilities of how artists work. Grant programs need to find a way to support thoughtful work, no matter the content or what may be deemed innovative.

I think that it would be great for the MAP Fund look into methods of supporting more traditional arts. This may mean funding work that is not considered "innovative" in the Western context and therefore there would be a need to expand the criteria. However, I believe that a more global perspective on funding the arts would have positive outcomes.

I completely disagree with the relentless focus on project-based funding and innovation. This approach is killing artists. It completely ignores the reality of artists who have established track records and long-term artistic visions. With each project artists are back at square one, running on the funding treadmill. In the end, short-term support is not supportive of artists at all, but keeps them in bondage to funding cycles. Moreover, it is silly to ask artists to constantly come up with something "innovative" or a transformative career moment. This approach both infantilizes artists and ignores the ebb and flow of artists' visions and career paths. After developing a track record, it is ridiculous to have an artist have to explain and justify each piece in isolation. It results in an enormous waste of time for both funders and artists.

The CCF and MAP Fund Program Administration

Among those with the first-hand experience to have an opinion, those who responded to the survey were unanimous in saying the MAP Fund staff is sometimes or always helpful.

The CCF/MAP Fund staff seeks to be helpful to you and your project. What is your perception of the staff’s helpfulness?		
Always helpful	178	71%
Sometimes helpful	22	9%
Not helpful	0	0%
No opinion	52	21%
Total	252	100%

Many of the artists seem to admire the MAP staff as well as respect them. In fact, as trusted as the panel process seems to be there were still a few people who said they’d prefer the staff to have more influence in the grant awards.

I have always found the MAP fund staff to be accessible, informative and supportive. They are exceptional.

This is one of only two granting organizations that actually work with you and have a process with you, and I really appreciate this.

The process of applying has gotten less mysterious. MAP has done a really good job of answering questions about the best way to present yourself in applications.

Moir and the staff at the MAP Fund are amazing because they are really erudite and they really understand what you’re talking about. You don’t have to go through a translational modality of trying to create language that is “explanatory” for them.

All of those who had enough first-hand experience to have an opinion said the MAP Fund processes and communications are always or sometimes on time.

The CCF/MAP Fund staff seeks to be on time in its processes and communications. What is your perception of the staff’s on-time performance?		
Always on time	175	70%
Sometimes on time	14	6%
Rarely on time	0	0%
No opinion	61	24%
Total	250	100%

MAP and CCF are extremely accessible and operate on a human level. They are high-functioning and completely effective. I’ve never felt lost in bureaucracy or distanced. MAP staff has always answered my questions in a timely fashion, and has gone above and beyond in helping me to apply for the grant.

A large majority (85%) rate the MAP Fund program at or near the “completely fair” end of the spectrum. This is a result that reinforces the importance of MAP’s policies in favor of transparency and rigorous process. If the field did not respect the decisions that come out of so competitive a process, the economic and psychological value of the MAP Fund imprimatur would plummet. For this reason, it seemed appropriate to pay close attention to any comments that might illuminate the doubts of the 13% whose responses to this question were in the middle on this question and the 2% whose responses were toward the negative end of the spectrum.

Please rate the fairness of the MAP Fund grant program, with 1 as “unfair” and 5 as “completely fair.”		
Unfair	0	0%
	4	2%
	32	13%
	93	39%
Completely Fair	111	46%
Total	240	100%

Several people attributed an outcome they didn’t agree with to a process that must be unfair. One person said it was difficult to trust a process run by staff members who hadn’t come up through the field and “paid their dues.” It’s not clear if anything could be done to vitiate these views.

Something could be done to address the view expressed by a handful of people who said that too many awards go to well-known artists who get repeated grants.

The MAP Fund is very important to experimental performance. I don’t think the net is cast very wide, though. There is a “usual suspects”-ness to the grantees, a sense that the MAP Fund is keyed in to the faddishness of the present-ing world. I wish the MAP Fund provided more networking opportunities, especially to smaller organizations.

It seems as though the same circle of artists have gotten funding multiple times. It seems to be harder for artists with whom the panel is less familiar to get funding.

We were interested in knowing the facts about this, and took a close look at 308 grants awarded in the eight years between 1999 and 2006. We found 249 names listed as the primary artists in the supported projects, of which 43 were repeat winners. Among these 43 artists were some very familiar names, to be sure, and the fact that they show up in grant award lists in multiple years goes a long way to explaining why some people see a pattern of “usual suspects.” Support for this view comes from the fact that there was 1 artist who won 5 grants in this period! There also were 2 who won 4 grants, 9 who won 3 grants, and 31 artists who won 2 grants. Taken altogether, repeat winners won 102 grants, or 33% of the grants.

There’s another perspective, though: 206 of the grants we looked at were awarded to one time winners, an impressive 67% of the total. Moreover, 206 of the artists were one time winners, an even more impressive 80% of the artists who received support. Far from confirming a bias towards “usual suspects,” these facts draw a picture of even-handedness and openness to new voices. This picture could be communicated more effectively.

Nearly all of those who had an opinion (99%) had a very or somewhat favorable opinion of the website’s usefulness. This is an important result because applications are submitted exclusively online, and the staff uses the website as an active communication tool.

Have you found the MAP Fund website useful?		
Very useful	90	36%
Somewhat useful	64	26%
Not very useful	2	1%
No opinion	94	38%
Total	250	100%

We explored the website ourselves and found it clear and informative. We registered to use the application process, and found it clear in instructions and straightforward in navigation. Though one or two artists reported they had encountered difficulties, the general viewpoint is that the application process is a good one.

It's been amazing how much easier the process has become over the last five years, in terms of the way they've moved to the online application.

The MAP Fund's on-line chats are pretty unique in my experience. I found them to be invaluable opportunities to ask my own questions, and to gain additional insight through other applicants' questions. I have also found the staff to be genuinely warm, accessible, and responsive -- just really great folks to work with in what is often an anxiety-producing process!

A large majority (85%) said the MAP Fund application process strikes the right balance between the opportunity to inform the staff and panel fully while avoiding an undue burden on time. The 15% minority is split between wanting to give more information and thinking too much is required, which provides further evidence that a good balance has been found.

The MAP Fund grant process seeks to provide the opportunity for you to inform the staff and panel fully while avoiding an undue burden on your time. In your view, the balance is:		
Just about right	206	85%
I'd like to give the staff and panelists more information about me and my work	21	9%
The application is too time-consuming	15	6%
Total	242	100%

It is important to note that a significant cost in time and money is involved in an application review process that requires evaluators and panelists to absorb an extensive amount of information from a large number of applicant. But efficiency is not the point; the purpose of such an elaborate review process (described in the previous section) is to keep the awards open to new and unfamiliar voices.

I've seen the process open up a lot more in a way that's really empowered artists to put together something that's going to be effective for the panel. It levels the playing field.

The experience is an exceptionally positive one. From application to funding, the process is economical, pleasant and fair and always keeps the needs and priorities of the artist in mind.

The only dissent we encountered with respect to staff performance was from a person with a long history of MAP grants. This grantee felt that staff members attended more performances and other events — and wielded more influence by their presence — before the transfer of responsibility to CCF than after the transfer. It is plausible to speculate that people might be more responsive to an official of a major foundation than to a representative of a relatively small service organization, but it's not clear that the staff is actually less present in the field than before; several artists expressed gratitude for the efforts of the MAP program director to follow their projects and attend their performances.

Unsolicited, several artists said there is a synergy between CCF and MAP that produced some benefits from the transfer of management responsibility from Rockefeller to CCF.

The CC PDP workshop I took as a MAP grant recipient was synergistic with the MAP grant. I was hungry for all the information they offered and feel it has put me in good stead for the bigger picture. The emphasis on longevity and sustainability is so unusual for funders to address -- and in this way the MAP/CCF combination is singular and extraordinary.

MAP and CCF's practices are consistent with the values they express — a stand-out quality.

A few artists observed that the MAP Fund grant awards are not very visible outside of the circle of people who have an interest in the news.

More PR about the winners each year would actually be a good thing. I don't know if that's a newsletter or a mailing or what. But it doesn't get picked up widely, and a little more visibility would be pretty helpful.

III. Conclusion

Our primary task was to elicit a clear understanding of the artists' perspective on the MAP Fund and its impact on their projects, their creative lives, and the field. This task occupies the previous sections of this report.

Our second task was to use the views we collected from the artists to suggest some implications for the MAP Fund's funding, program design, and administration. We undertake this task in the section that begins on the next page, "Observations on the MAP fund."

Our third and final task is to give voice to any important perspectives expressed by the artists that do not fit into the pre-determined outline of questions to be asked and answered in the report. This task is undertaken in the final section of the report, "Other Field Concerns."

Observations on the MAP Fund

The grant making program is very well designed. Its critical elements should be protected, and changes should be approached with cautious reluctance. In particular, the principle of peer review is at the heart of MAP's reputation for discernment and trustworthiness and is the program's principal mechanism for adjusting to the field's evolving priorities. The twin emphases on innovation and cultural difference that are MAP Fund's "brand" should be maintained, with the balance of emphasis between them left to the peer panel to determine through individual grant decisions, not through policy.

MAP Fund's impact is strong at the present level of \$1mm per year in grant awards, and it would be even stronger with the addition of grant funds up to the level of \$1.5mm. (This suggested level of funding is similar to the recommendation made in the Adams and Goldbard report in 1999. Though the grant budget was increased in subsequent years, the recommended level was not achieved.) The field's needs have intensified while most other sources of support for innovation have dwindled. As a result, the MAP Fund's impact has grown even while its grant making budget has stayed level since 1999. Indeed, just as the artists are able to accomplish a lot with a little, MAP achieves a remarkable impact with a modest amount of money.

The current balance between the average grant amount and the number of grants seems appropriate, and it should not "tilt" in favor of either more grants or larger grants. Artists regard the grant amounts as substantial and the imprimatur that comes from a high level of selectivity as meaningful. The symbolic value of the grants is at least as great as the financial value, and both values should be protected. Nevertheless, the purchasing power of the grants has lost ground to inflation, and the number of grants represents a declining percentage of the growing number of applications. If it were possible to increase program funding to \$1.5mm, it would be wise to raise the average grant amount from \$25,000 to \$30,000 and to increase the number of grants from 40 to 50. In doing so, it should be possible to award at least a few grants at the published maximum of \$50,000; to date no grant has been awarded at that level. Even with an increased number of grants, the program still would be sufficiently competitive to maintain the strength of the MAP Fund imprimatur.

The impact of the grants and supported projects would be enhanced if MAP were to generate more exposure for the projects through wider distribution of the grant announcement. The objective would be greater awareness for the supported artists and projects among the artistic/program staffs of mainstream cultural institutions, in the hope that exposure might result in presentation of the projects to broader audiences. Some aspects of this suggestion could be accomplished at little additional cost. Added benefits could be gained by putting each year's grant awards in an historical context. For example, it would be useful to maintain and communicate some selected cumulative statistics, such as the number of new grant winners vs the number of repeat grant winners.

Grantees would be given some much needed flexibility if the wait time between application and the beginning of the project period could be reduced, and if the time available to complete the project after receiving the go-ahead could be increased. If the application review process could be compressed without undermining its effectiveness, it would appear that moving the deadline from mid-February to mid-March would incur no other disadvantages. It also appears that there are no legal or logistical barriers to lengthening the grant period from 15 months to 18 months.

If an additional funding source were to join in financing the MAP Fund program, care should be taken to discuss and codify the shared decision making arrangements. At present, the relationships between staff members at MAP, CCF, and Rockefeller are clear and effective without being formalized. It should not be assumed on that account that informal relationships would continue to be effective in decision making involving a greater number of partners. On the contrary, the geometric increase in the number of relationships that would result from an increase in the number of partners would make it reasonable to expect that difficulties would arise if they were not explicitly anticipated.

Other Field Concerns

CCF asked us to be alert to important artist perspectives that did not fit into the pre-determined outline of questions to be asked and answered in the report. This section is intended to give voice to those perspectives. Three related concerns emerged from the survey and interviews that pertain to conditions in the field that are beyond the scope of the MAP Fund to address at this time. Consequently, we present these concerns as we heard them from the artists, in the hope that some who may read this report might find ways of addressing them in the future:

- The economic difficulty of sustaining a personal commitment to innovation over the arc of an entire career.
- The difficulty of sustaining progressive directions in a body of work when it is not at the most cutting edge.
- The lack of support for change agents within mainstream institutions who seek to move them in more progressive directions.

An optimistic outlook once provided hope that conditions would improve as the artists built a track record and came into their mature strength. The reality has been different: it has become more difficult economically to sustain a personal commitment to innovation over the arc of an entire career. Artists who sacrificed security for art throughout their careers are becoming more concerned about security in their years of maturity, and are wondering whether young artists will continue making a personal commitment without some light at the end of the tunnel.

I think that one has a little bit more perspective by the time you've worked as long as I have. The thing that shifts by the time you're in your mid-60s is you don't have some fantasy that because you got a grant from MAP or anybody else one year, that it means you're going to be able to make your work the next year. It just doesn't follow. Just because you got a good review, or because somebody funded you, or because everybody thinks your latest work is the greatest thing since sliced bread, it doesn't mean that you're going to get work, that you're going to get funding, that you're going to get touring, the next time. Being an artist in this country is riding a roller coaster.

I pay \$680 a month for health insurance, and after my rent it's my largest expense. I have to pay it myself. I didn't have it until I was 40, but at a certain point you kind of have to have it. If somebody could fix the problem of health insurance for individual artists they'd be doing a social service and supporting art at the same time. It's almost unimaginable how much good that would do for the arts.

It would be interesting if there was a second tier in the Creative Capital model, in which some of the money could be used to provide something like technical assistance support to those people who are getting the MAP grant. Maybe holding a gathering of all the MAP fund recipients for that year, not to talk about institution building but to talk about the capacity to bring this kind of work to more people. It would allow me to meet other artists.

Take one or two or three or four artists that you really, really believe in and fund them for life. This is the only thing that makes sense to me. At a certain point artists that have been at it for long enough shouldn't have to go through the same [process repeatedly]. If their work has proven worthy it should be trusted.

It is almost impossible to live as an artist that always has to start from scratch, and most grants have no continuity. If the artist needs to go through a phase that is not "popular" within the dance/art world of their time, they will most likely not receive grants for a while. It would be more liberating if a grant would (most likely) support an artist for a sequence of projects, rather than one at a time.

What artists need in the current climate is long-term, sustained general operating support. They need to think not just in terms of the next project, but the next three projects. The project-based model keeps us all prisoner to the yearly funding cycle, and the short-term whims of artistic fads. I beg you and your peers in the field - to reconsider your funding model, even if this means fewer artists can be funded.

I'm not running a dance company, but that's not MAP's fault. There are a lot of professionals looking for university jobs now, because we can't keep relying on [intermittent] grants to sustain us. People need security eventually, but touring and funding cycles definitely don't support that. I talked to somebody earlier today who is in her '60's who said "with every project I start over again. After twenty years there's no higher category to be in. I'm still competing with the people who are in their twenties and just starting out."

It might be good to think about two levels of support. Where an artists has been doing good work for 25 years, there should be the confidence to support them for who they are, not just for their project ideas. For an emerging artist, \$25,000 for a project is huge! As you're more established it declines, it's a small amount in the context of mature projects. We have masters, we have treasures, or whatever you want to call it, people who need something more significant and sustained. That would change something about how the field could advance. It would be supporting a different type of innovation that comes from a sustained vision, and that's a kind of innovation that's no less important than the latest great project idea. What my generation was rebelling against was that the preceding generation had gotten fairly stagnant. Now we have a group of innovators, who have stayed true to their nature, and who need nurturing.

Some artists are concerned only with the innovation, and others see innovation as being at the service of a transformative experience for their audiences. For the latter group, some part of the excitement is about an artist or group of artists working together with an audience to grow and explore their common experience over time. The few remaining sources of support for progressive new work focus, as MAP Fund does, on the most exciting projects they can find. Artists who are trying to sustain a steady progressive direction in a body of work and over an arc of time have difficulty finding support.

There is that perception that the program is for emerging artists or very experimental artists, and that a project that actually is about risk-taking but that on the surface may seem more mainstream doesn't stand a chance.

It is challenging to get discrete project support that is not stable from year to year - especially if the important goals are to innovate and explore cultural difference (which can only really happen if the experiments can be sustained and built upon across a continuum).

The work we do is largely non-innovative by MAP Fund standards, and generally does not deal expressly with social issues. From our POV, it would be beneficial if grants were available for the creation of a greater breadth of new work - not just avant-garde, experimental, or socially focused. At the same time, we recognize that artists specializing in socially pointed work might have some difficulty securing funding from more traditional sources.

Programs like the MAP Fund exist, in part, because the mainstream institutions in the performing arts do not take responsibility for fostering the work of innovative artists. However, some of those institutions have within them people who want to see their institutions move in more progressive directions. While it seems odd that many institutions are well funded but can find little support for innovative work, it is the reality. Consequently, the change agents within institutions have difficulty finding support for more progressive work — including the work of MAP Fund grantees.

Funders should be interested in helping the larger institutions do interesting work. In an institution, a \$50,000 grant would make a dramatic difference in its ability to try something really new, really brave.

The grant had a bigger impact financially on my organization early in its development than it did later on. Partly it was that our budget grew, and partly it was that the grant amounts seemed to shrink.

The artists supported by MAP Fund are really interested in bringing up interesting subjects, doing the job of examining what our society should be. This work really is for general America. It would be highly appreciated and people would really enjoy it if it could be extended out to a larger audience. Many of these performances are really for a wide range of people. Interesting things that you won't see on television, and people are always clamoring for that.
