



Cornell University  
Office of the Provost

W. Kent Fuchs  
Provost  
300 Day Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853-2801  
t. 607.255.2364  
f. 607.255.9924  
provost@cornell.edu

October 20, 2010

Dear Colleagues,

After considerable discussion and input, I write to provide my perspective on the report from the committee charged in August 2009 to review the Cornell Council for the Arts (CCA). A draft of the report has been shared and discussed with the academic deans and with members of the CCA community. The final public report, dated October 20, 2010, is attached. My perspective and decisions are as follows.

- I agree with the report's observation that \$175,000/year in funding for a university-wide arts council is a modest sum. I have decided to increase CCA's budget to \$225,000/year effective July 1, 2011.
- I enthusiastically accept the report's recommendation for "a consolidation of CCA energies and a redirection of its resources towards a single, thematically unified, annual art event of significant ambition and scale, to be accompanied by multiple academic programs to enable broad faculty and student participation." As described in the report, this change in CCA's mission and organization has the potential to significantly enhance both CCA's impact on campus and the national visibility of the arts at Cornell.
- A number of CCA faculty members have expressed concern about the potential elimination of the small grants program, especially support for creative student projects. My office will provide an additional \$68,000/year for two years to those units previously receiving small grants. These additional funds will be administered by the units, with the expectation that when the central funding is no longer provided in FY2014 the individual units will continue to provide similar funding opportunities for students and faculty. In addition, the university artists of the year awards will continue.
- Significant academic programs benefit from the oversight of college and school deans. Thus, effective today, I am appointing Dean Kent Kleinman to serve as the lead dean for CCA and I am charging him to implement the vision described in the report. Senior Vice Provost John Siliciano will serve as Dean Kleinman's point of contact in the Provost's office for matters related to CCA.
- The Provost's office will conduct another review of CCA in four years with a focus on evaluating the success CCA has had in achieving its mission of advancing the arts for the entire university community. The review will include consultation with the broad Cornell arts community.

I am convinced that we have an opportunity with these additional resources and focused CCA mission to further enhance Cornell's broad excellence in the arts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "W. Kent Fuchs".

W. Kent Fuchs  
Provost

Enclosure

**Public Report of the  
Review Committee for the  
Cornell Council for the Arts (CCA)**

## **1. SUMMARY**

The Cornell Council for the Arts (CCA) Review Committee reviewed the existing CCA, its activities and its structure, and determined that the breadth, small scale, and administrative complexity of its activities are disproportionate to its resources. While the CCA admirably supports a broad range and large number of art-related projects and practitioners, it is not simultaneously able to position Cornell as a significant locus of art discourse at a high level of excellence, or to provide a highly visible profile for the arts on campus. The latter object should be a priority for the CCA as the only centrally funded, trans-college arts organization on campus. The Committee therefore recommends a consolidation of CCA energies and a redirection of its resources towards a single, thematically unified, annual art event of significant ambition and scale, to be accompanied by multiple academic programs to enable broad faculty and student participation. The intention is to galvanize, challenge, and engage the Cornell campus with a regular, intense, recurring event dedicated to advancing art discourse at the highest level of accomplishment and academic rigor. To accomplish this goal, the CCA must reduce its administrative overhead, repurpose its resources, enhance faculty representation, and divest itself of responsibility for the myriad small-scale projects currently under CCA auspices. The Committee firmly believes that the CCA can make a significant contribution to art debate and discourse, both internally and nationally, by consolidating its efforts in this fashion.

## **2. COMMITTEE CHARGE, MEMBERSHIP, PROCEDURES**

On May 2, 2008, an ad hoc faculty committee submitted a report reviewing the Cornell Council for the Arts (see **Appendix 5.1**). This report called for the establishment of a Review Committee to advance the ad hoc committee's recommendations. These recommendations included: revising the CCA mission statement; reconceiving the organization's structure; recommending new management and governance roles; outlining a new activity profile and communications strategy; and drafting an appropriate budget model. Vice Provost David Harris charged the CCA Review Committee (the "Committee") on August 31, 2009. Membership of the Committee represented a wide range of art-related disciplines and consisted of the following individuals:

1. Kleinman, K. (Architecture, Art, and Planning), Chair
2. Johnston Turner, C. (Music)
3. Hassan, S. (Africana Studies)
4. Robinson, F. (HFJ Museum)
5. Taft, S. (Art)
6. Vaughn, S. (Creative Writing)
7. Villarejo, A. (Theatre, Film, Dance)
8. Bailey, G. (Computer Science)
9. Shaw, H. (Arts and Sciences)

Subsequent to the initial meeting, Prof. Sheila Danko (Design and Environmental Analysis) joined the Committee to enhance representation of the design arts in the land grant colleges, and Prof. Hassan departed the Committee due to time constraints. The Committee met seven times between August 31, 2009 and January 25, 2010. In addition to its regular meetings, the Committee met with the current CCA grant sponsors to receive a briefing on CCA grant procedures, and with Interim CCA Director Judith Kellock to review the current structure and programming.

### 3. ASSESMENT OF EXISTING CCA

#### 3.1 Overview

The Committee is unanimous in affirming the importance of the arts as a principal mode of inquiry and knowledge production, and therefore as a full partner in the core mission of Cornell University. While the Committee acknowledges that the CCA is only one of several support and promotion vehicles for the arts on campus, the CCA arguably has the most cross-disciplinary appeal and broad-based participation of all the arts organizations on campus. The CCA is viewed fondly as a unique space for faculty members of various backgrounds to meet and discuss the arts, especially in the context of annually evaluating and awarding the various CCA grants. The CCA has loyal support on campus, especially among the current academic sponsors who invest a great deal of time vetting grant proposals. Cornell Cinema's Director probably represents a sizable constituency when she expressed in a note to the Committee the importance of the CCA grants to their programming. The Alumni Artist of the Year, renamed the Eissner Artist of the Year Award in 2005, has brought to campus a number of internationally leading alumni in the arts (Eisenman, Artschwager, Halprin, Diaz, among others), and the Undergraduate University Artist of the Year Award recognizes exceptional accomplishment by university undergraduates in the arts with an annual grant. In sum, the CCA has some campus-wide cachet and legacy value and is a viable entity for advancing the cause of the arts for Cornell.

Nonetheless, there are problems, and there is agreement among the Committee members that the CCA is not functioning optimally. The major concerns center on the following issues:

- There is insufficient visibility for the arts despite the good efforts of the CCA;
- The current grant process is cumbersome and the grant amounts are too small to enable work of significant scale and ambition;
- The existing administrative structure is many-layered, leading to high administrative and bureaucratic overhead;
- The relationship between the CCA and the Cornell University Council Committee on the Arts is unclear;
- There is a lack of clarity regarding reporting and leadership, including lack of clarity regarding the lead dean model;

The Committee concludes that there is significant need and opportunity for improvement in the mission and management of the CCA.

#### 3.2 Existing CCA Budget Review

Since one of the key constraints on the CCA is its budget, the Committee reviewed the CCA allocations and expenditures for the years 2005 to 2009. The CCA receives a provostal allocation that reached a high mark of \$183,338 in 2008-9, and has a current value of \$174,758 (2009-10).

The small grant program is the single largest cost item; in 2008-9, 46 grants were awarded averaging \$1480 per grant and totaling \$68,050, approximately 37% of the overall budget. The remaining budget covers salaries, operations, communications and awards.

Taking averages over the three-year window from 2006 to 2009, CCA awards are distributed as follows:

Annual value of grants awarded:	\$66,355
Number of grants awarded:	52
Number of faculty grants:	35
Number of student grants:	10
Number of staff grants:	4
Number of student organization grants:	3

Distribution of grants by organization:

AAP:	7 totaling \$5,008
HUMEC:	4 totaling \$2,222
CALS:	1 totaling \$733
A&S:	20 totaling \$28,428
Johnson Art Museum:	5 totaling \$9,116
Cornell Cinema	4 totaling \$7,646
Other (student organizations, other)	10 totaling \$13,146

It should be noted that in 2009-10, two major budget items appear that are not annual expenses— the emerging artists exhibition that occurs every four years, and CCA@NYC, each funded at \$20,000. These items appear to be funded in 2009-10 by reserves and carry forward balances, a model that does not appear sustainable. In 2009, a one-time allocation was provided by the University to revamp the CCA website.

The Committee wishes to stress that \$175,000 annually for a university-wide arts council is a modest sum. Given the current economic environment, the Committee agreed to allow its thinking to be framed by this budget envelope and not assume additional allocations or unrealistic development successes. However, the CCA should always be poised to compete aggressively for external funds. The recommendations herein are crafted with this goal in mind.

### 3.3 Existing CCA Administrative Structure Review

The Committee reviewed the current administrative structure that was implemented in 2008. In this model, the Interim Director reports to the Vice Provost. There is one FTE staff person and four CCA committees that report to the CCA Director. The four committees are:

1. Advisory Panel (15 member policy formation body)
2. Grant Sponsors (11 member grant development and vetting body)
3. Awards Panel (4 member grant awarding body)
4. Working Group (6 member body, function unclear)

The Grant Sponsors advise grantees and review grants proposals; their workload involves reviewing approximately 50 to 60 grant applications annually. Award decisions are made by a separate panel (Awards Panel) that convenes semi-annually. There do not appear to be regular meetings of the Advisory Panel and Working Group. The sole staff position (Administrative IV band) is dedicated to administrative support, budget management, small grants project support, and coordination with web, print and exhibition consultants and student interns. Grant writing is not part of the position description.

It is clear to the Committee that the current administrative structure is overly complex for managing a relatively small budget and programmatic mandate. The structure warrants revision.

### 3.4 Review of Precedents at Peer Institutions

The Committee undertook a cursory review of select peer institutions to determine if models or approaches had been developed that could serve as exemplars for the CCA. It should be noted that several peers—Princeton and Harvard—still confront the fundamental issue of not recognizing practice-based scholarship; Harvard offers no MFA degree programs; Princeton only one (in music composition, incidental to the Ph.D.). This significantly colors the debate about integrating the arts with academics at these institutions.

Princeton University launched a substantial arts initiative in response to a charge by President Shirley Tilghman to reassess the state of Princeton's creative and performing arts (2006). The resulting *Allen Committee Report* recommended a number of university-wide programs including Faculty Fellows,

increased support for existing arts programs, cross-departmental scholarly coursework, and most significantly, a physical Center for the Creative and Performing Arts. The Princeton experience, while inspired, appears to hold few concrete lessons for Cornell beyond the fact that the arts were recognized as important intellectual partners to the humanities and physical sciences both by the president and by alumni. The president's initiative was undergirded by a philanthropic gift of \$101M, announced shortly after the release of the *Allen Committee Report*.

Columbia University does not have an arts council as such; programs and projects are funded principally through individual academic units. Small grants (<\$500) for student work are awarded through a university-affiliated charitable foundation (the Gatsby Charitable Foundation). Columbia maintains a deep website (CU ARTS) that functions as a clearing house for arts initiatives on campus, and President Bollinger has embraced a special global arts initiative in tandem with the development of the University's new regional centers (in Beijing and Amman).

Like Columbia, the University of Pennsylvania has a centrally managed arts website, and no stand-alone arts council but rather an annual, thematically determined, series of programs, including small grant opportunities (<\$750), supported through the provost office (2009-10 theme: Art and the City).

Harvard University's nexus for the arts is the Faculty of Arts and Sciences-based Office for the Arts (OFA) of which the Council on the Arts is a standing faculty advisory committee. The OFA administers student grant programs, student and professional artist awards, a public art program, an annual student art festival, and also manages two performing arts theatres. In 2008, President Faust charged a Task Force on the Arts to review the status of the arts at Harvard. The resulting report calls for curricular changes, the creation of an MFA program ("embarking very belatedly," the report notes), the construction of new facilities, and the creation of a Harvard University Committee on the Arts (HUCA) "to bring together administrators and faculty leaders from all parts of the University where arts study and practice take place, and to increase the accessibility, visibility, and impact of the arts on campus." President Drew Faust formally charged this committee on December 21, 2009 [[http://www.president.harvard.edu/speeches/faust/081210\\_arts.php](http://www.president.harvard.edu/speeches/faust/081210_arts.php)].

Lastly, the University of Chicago's University Arts Council (UAC) serves as a granting agency, distributing support for collaborative public projects (<\$7,500/grant), student projects (<\$1500/grant), summer fellowships, curricular innovation (<\$3,500/grant), and course development and integration (<\$500/grant). The UAC also initiates art projects independently, including *Artspeaks*, a series featuring presentations by and workshops with accomplished artists of international renown in residency at the University.

## **4. REMODELING THE CCA**

### **4.1. Preamble for a Revised CCA**

The Committee spent considerable time discussing two important aspirations: the desire to support the arts broadly at Cornell, and the desire to significantly elevate the impact of the arts at Cornell. While both goals are worthy, the size of the CCA budget required that the Committee confront difficult choices. To achieve breadth and excellence, it is clear that the CCA must attempt wherever possible to leverage resources so that the whole is more consequential than the sum of the parts. It is also clear that the CCA must design its annual activity profile with great care and selectivity if such leverage is to be realized.

This problem is compounded by the fact that the term "arts" in the context of the CCA must be construed broadly and generously to include the performing and visual arts, material work as well as language-based work, and new media projects as well as the design arts and sciences. This broad categorical umbrella is necessary to do justice to the cross-disciplinary range and often transgressive power of the arts; for the

arts can be defined as precisely those practices that, for the sake of reflection and introspection, interrupt our everyday habits and delay our distracted consumption of the social and physical environment. Beyond reflection and introspection, the arts increasingly serve as a critical conduit for exploring social issues by providing unique and challenging juxtapositions of media, message and context in ways that few other disciplines are capable. As such, the arts are not so much defined by discipline or genre but by disposition and consequence. They work across many fields and operate in many modalities. The CCA is therefore obligated to celebrate the diverse and intellectually promiscuous nature of artistic experimentation by embracing a wide range of practices.

The Committee notes that the current CCA model expends considerable overhead and pro bono faculty effort administering a large number of small grants that do not typically aggregate to a larger presence for the arts at Cornell or significantly enhance Cornell's reputation as a nexus for the arts. In contemplating alternative paradigms for the CCA, the Committee was intent on exploring models that enable a scale and level of achievement that is commensurate with a top-ranked university while fostering an inclusive and broad base of participation. This aspiration, within a context of limited financial resources, bracketed and focused the Committee's work and informed its proposal for change.

## **4.2 Three Models Considered**

The Committee discussed three distinct models for the CCA, each of which appear to hold some promise for a future direction. These models are described and evaluated briefly below. The discussion of these three models forms the backdrop for the final recommendation for a reconstructed CCA.

### **4.2.1 A Society for the Arts**

The CCA could be reconstituted in the form of an arts institute, similar in structure and scope to Cornell's Society for the Humanities. On an annual competitive basis, the Society extends support to both students and Cornell faculty and hosts distinguished Visiting Fellows. Cornell faculty fellows are typically awarded course release during the fellowship year, with the cost thereof covered by the home unit. Events are aligned around an annual theme relevant to the humanities. Founded in 1966, the Society is arguably an exemplary model for advancing and celebrating humanities discourse, much to the internal and external benefit of the University at large.

It is not difficult to envision and justify a new Cornell institute, one modeled on the Society for the Humanities but dedicated to the arts. And indeed, the Committee finds much to recommend this model for a future CCA and has shaped its final recommendation in such a way that the CCA can readily evolve in this direction in the future. However, the hard realities of budget, and to a lesser degree space, compelled the Committee to scale their final recommendation to the resources at hand.

### **4.2.2 A Block Grant Clearing House**

This model is a variation of the current CCA taken to its logical extreme. The CCA could become exclusively a fund distribution agency, dispensing block grants via a proportional metric to academic units with art-related disciplines. These units would administer the actual individual grant allocations, thereby absorbing the administrative costs away from the CCA and permitting the maximal amount of funds to go to support art endeavors across the campus. Effectively, the CCA would cease to exist as a central organ for the arts, other than perhaps as an archive of, and public window onto, campus-wide activity in the arts.

It is perhaps not entirely cynical to observe that the CCA, as currently constituted, is not so very far from this model, albeit without the administrative efficiency. Presently, funds are distributed in small packets to diverse projects across multiple units with no explicit synergistic outcome or expectation thereof, and carry a high administrative overhead. The wide distribution of limited resources tends to produce a broad

base of support and enables the pursuit of a large number of relatively modest projects but precludes support for more accomplished and presumably more costly art endeavors or support for external artists of international renown. While wide distribution and support for Cornell faculty and students is a desirable goal for the CCA, the Committee is unanimous in its opinion that the larger ambition of advancing international excellence, visibility, and creative synergy must be part of any future CCA.

#### **4.2.3 *Le Grand Projet***

*Le Grand Projet* model envisions a CCA dedicated to managing a single, large scale, internationally significant art-related event. This would involve a great deal of central coordination and planning, and consume a large percentage of the CCA's resources. The CCA, through the appropriate governance mechanism, would identify a salient theme and endeavor to bring the most distinguished, relevant art practitioner(s) and practices to Cornell on a yearly basis. The event, if successful, would become a predictable annual occurrence that galvanizes the University community around a series of artistic presentations dedicated to a single theme and possibly even to the work of a single artist. The CCA project would have to aspire to a high level of relevance and excellence to successfully mark Cornell as an institution of consequence in the arts.

This model has the advantage of bringing to Cornell an art event at a scale that would not be otherwise achievable. The CCA's unique status as the only funded university-wide agent for the arts would become functionally justified, and the CCA's limited resources would be leveraged to maximize visibility and creative consequence for the arts, both internally and externally. This approach also offers a competitive format for soliciting external support (grants and philanthropy). It is worth noting that fund raising and grant writing is conspicuously missing from the current CCA, in part because it is difficult to attract and secure external support for small scale, distributed, a-thematic art projects. In its pure form, this model does not accommodate the broad but modest support for internal art endeavors characteristic of the current CCA.

#### **4.3 Proposal for a Remodeled CCA**

The three models above have positive and negative aspects. The Committee debated the relative value of positives and the relative cost of negatives, and concluded that the limited resources of the CCA combined with the importance of its mission demanded hard choices. A full-fledged Institute for the Arts is in all probability the best direction for a future CCA, yet it appears unproductive for this Committee to recommend that direction at this time. Open-call, broadly distributed support is a noble objective, but is not compatible with funding an art event of international significance. After considerable discussion, the Committee recommends a modified version of the *Grand Projet* model. Specifically, we propose the following new profile for the CCA:

The CCA will host an annual event of international significance to art discourse at Cornell University. Initiating and supervising this event will be the *raison d'être* for the CCA.

- The event will be thematically specific, temporally bounded, will involve a distinguished practitioner(s) and/or representative of the arts, and will be designed to attract multiple artistic disciplines and diverse faculty and students at Cornell.
- The event will be accompanied by parallel academic and artistic programming— symposia, seminars, lectures, installations, exhibitions, etc.—as a means of maximizing participation and exposure for staff, faculty, and students on campus.
- The CCA will dedicate the bulk of its funds and administrative resources to staging the event, including the attendant programming.
- The CCA will endeavor to maximize opportunities for faculty and students to interact with and participate in activities related to the event.

- The CCA will use the high caliber and international stature of the annual event to leverage press coverage and other public relations opportunities to promote Cornell’s role as a serious locus for art production and debate.

The range and type of themes, artists, and art practices that the CCA could sponsor under this new mandate are vast and varied; to give a more concrete image of the potential of this proposed activity profile, the Committee has supplemented this report with several imagined scenarios—all speculative, but all compatible with a restructured CCA (see **Appendix 5.2**).

The Committee recognizes that this is a very new agenda for the CCA. The Committee envisions a CCA that is essentially singular in its focus; CCA efforts and resources should be directed to conceiving and staging an annual program *that attracts significant broad participation and offers truly unique opportunities for Cornell’s faculty and students to work with and learn from an artist of international stature*. This is a demanding charge for the CCA, one that will likely exhaust its limited resource pool. Some of the more significant implications are itemized below:

- The Committee recommends terminating the small grants program. Some very worthy art organizations on campus that have traditionally received modest but predictable support from the CCA. Select faculty and students who have enjoyed one-off grant support for their work also will be negatively affected by the demise of the small grants program. The Committee believes that to some degree, because the grant amounts individually are modest (~\$1,500 on average) and collectively distributed across several academic budgets, such support can be backfilled by department chairs and college deans with internal support programs. For example, the average annual value of all small grants awarded to AAP-related programs (Art and Architecture) is \$5,008; for the Johnson Art Museum, the annual average is \$9,116. AAP could arguably earmark this amount from internal funds if CCA grants were to be discontinued.
- The Committee recommends disbanding the existing CCA committees and forming a single, representative governance body to help shape what is in effect an annual university-wide, “all-eggs-in-one basket” art event on behalf of Cornell’s diverse arts constituency (see 4.4 below). The Committee believes this will enhance communication, stakeholder buy-in, and maintain the highly desirable opportunity to share ideas across artistic disciplines.
- A new CCA will require new skills—principally event planning and grant writing—and a new perspective—internationalist in scope and committed to the highest levels of artistic excellence—within the CCA culture, administration, and leadership.
- An event of international stature provides an opportunity to acknowledge dedicated Cornell alumni and provides a meaningful point of convergence for the Cornell Council Committee on the Arts and the CCA.

#### **4.4 New Governance and Administrative Structure**

The Committee believes that the existing governance structure, with four committees comprising 41 members, is overly cumbersome. The proposed new agenda for the CCA obviates this complex organizational structure. Instead, what is needed is a cohesive representative body that can work collaboratively, energetically, and efficiently to conceive of an art event of sufficient appeal and intellectual gravitas to challenge and engage the entire Cornell campus. Most importantly, CCA governance must be widely trusted to represent the diverse art practices and interests on campus precisely because, in the end, hard choices will have to be made to successfully organize an annual event with thematic coherence. The Committee therefore recommends that the CCA comprise the following organizational elements:

- **CCA Director:**  
The CCA Director shall be a faculty member from an art-related discipline, presumably from one of the member units. The Director, together with the events committee, is responsible for managing the annual event and coordinating parallel academic programming. The Director has fiduciary responsibility for the CCA budget, and is the point person for internal and external relations related to the event. The Director shall receive an administrative stipend which shall be part of the CCA annual budget. The CCA Director shall report to the Vice Provost or the lead dean.
- **CCA Event Committee:**  
The CCA Event Committee shall consist of one representative from each of the existing 12 CCA member units (Architecture, Art, Design and Environmental Analysis, History of Art, Landscape Architecture, Music, Fiber Science and Apparel Design, Theatre Film and Dance, Creative Writing, Cornell Cinema, Cornell Concert Series, and the Johnson Museum). The Committee recommends that two to three at-large students be added to the Event Committee. The Event Committee is responsible for conceptualizing the annual theme, identifying key participant(s), awarding any grants and funds associated with the event, and liaising with member units to organize parallel academic programming. The CCA Director shall chair the Event Committee.
- **CCA Program Coordinator:**  
The CCA Program Coordinator is responsible for event logistics, public relations, grant writing, business transactions and accounting. The Program Coordinator is a part-time administrative position, reporting to the CCA Director.

#### **4.5 New Budget Priorities**

The recommendations in this report are intended to produce maximum impact, broad-based participation, and visibility for the arts with constrained means. While the Committee strongly recommends that grant writing and fund raising become part of the culture of a revised CCA, the proposed programming is scaled and scoped so as to be viable with the existing allocation of \$175,000. The Committee believes that the CCA Director should continue to receive a stipend paid from the CCA budget, but that course release may not be required.

The budget constraints suggest that the CCA must limit other expense items, including expenses associated with web maintenance and general print production. Because the current CCA small-grant machinery distributes so many grants to so many projects, the CCA website, which features the projects it supports, serves as a *de facto* (if incomplete) snapshot of the arts on campus. Despite an impressive new website, the Committee is not convinced that the CCA is the appropriate portal for Cornell arts information; if, however, a counter determination is made, the CCA budget seems ill equipped to deal with the associated expenses.

#### **4.6 New Mission Statement**

The Committee reviewed the existing CCA mission statement (see **Appendix 5.3**) and determined that a more concise and instrumental declaration of mission would be helpful in focusing and communicating the goals of the CCA. The statement below represents the consensus of the Committee:

*The Cornell Council for the Arts is charged with advancing the arts for the entire University community. Through its programming and advocacy, the Council seeks to:*

- *advance Cornell's contribution to artistic inquiry;*
- *elevate Cornell's reputation as a locus of artistic excellence;*
- *demonstrate the scholarly and academic value of artistic endeavors;*
- *stimulate interest in and knowledge of contemporary art practices;*
- *inspire a new generation of future leaders in the arts.*

*The Council fulfills its mission by conceiving, promoting, and funding artistic projects that meet the rigorous standards of excellence for which Cornell University is known.*

The bulleted items are intended to be consequential declarations without describing actual programmatic endeavors, in contrast with some of the language in the existing mission statement. Terms such as “advance,” “elevate,” and “inspire” are intended to suggest that the CCA is principally responsible for promoting a very high level of excellence in the arts on behalf of the University, a level not otherwise attainable via individual programs or initiatives. Terms such as “artistic inquiry,” and “scholarly and academic value” are intended to emphasize that CCA events and programs should proactively and deliberately be accompanied by and generate informed debate and discourse to support the fundamental premise that art making is a mode of research, and that art is an instrument of knowledge production. There is an intentional bias for advancing “contemporary” practices, reflecting the notion that a top research university is constitutionally committed to the production and dissemination of new knowledge and perspectives. Finally, the new mission statement explicitly empowers the CCA to “conceive” programming and holds the CCA responsible for “funding” and “promoting” the work it deems worthy.

#### **4.7 Enabling Conditions and Implementation**

The CCA, despite its small budget, has a justifiably loyal and dedicated support base. For many years, the CCA has been the sole institutional gathering point for discussions on the arts, and it is the favored place for art practitioners and theorists to find common cause and mutual support in an institution often perceived to be dominated by the sciences. The Committee is aware of this history and these loyalties, and hopes that its recommendations will be understood as solidifying, and not diminishing, this base and voice for the arts.

There will, undoubtedly, be consternation among some if the CCA small grant program is discontinued in favor of a collective, consolidated annual program. College deans and department chairs can play an important role here if they are willing to support with modest funds some of the projects presently nourished by the CCA. A focus on practitioners of international renown and the use of a thematically singular frame to guide annual programming will undoubtedly solicit accusations of elitism and exclusion, but only if opportunities for engagement are sequestered and limited. If the new CCA process favors joint debate and generative dialogues to co-create the theme and the invitation, then there may be the possibility that stakeholders feel they are on equal footing, with less investment of resources.

The changes to the CCA are rationalizations intended to respect faculty time and service, and to ensure that the precious resources of the CCA are deployed in the most productive way, especially with respect to the fixed administrative costs. With somewhat surprising frequency, the Committee has heard from constituents that the very act of gathering to debate projects and proposals constituted an important moment of collegial exchange, suggesting that propinquity was an inherent positive attribute of the CCA. The Committee certainly hopes that this informal collegiality will be enhanced with the introduction of diverse academic programming—symposia, debates, presentations, etc.—around the annual event. Such programming will require broad buy-in and collaboration across academic units if it is to be successful.

The proposed revision of the CCA's profile requires that it become focused and selective in the use of its resources. The Committee does not believe that the CCA has the capacity to function effectively as the University's web presence for the arts generally, and recommends that the University at large, similar to a number of peer institutions, assume this function. The Committee anticipates that an annual event of international stature will self-generate a certain amount of publicity so that CCA communications and marketing costs can be held to a reasonably low level. Clearly, a coordinated approach is required with respect to existing communications teams and platforms. The need to focus its resources on the Ithaca-based event will almost certainly prohibit CCA support for off-campus programming such as the NYC ventures initiated by the current Interim Director.

The Committee is divided on the reporting model best suited for a university-wide organization such as the CCA. Currently, the CCA reports to the Vice Provost which signals, in a positive fashion, the central importance of the arts at Cornell. However, in earlier iterations, the CCA reported to a lead dean, typically the AAP dean.

The Committee recommends that the new CCA be phased in with the first annual event scheduled for spring semester, 2012. This will allow the cycle of grant applications already submitted to be awarded as planned in 2010/11, thereby consuming the 2010/11 budget; and allow planning time to ensure a successful opening event in 2012.

## **5. APPENDICES**

### **5.1 Ad Hoc Committee Report, May 2008**

#### **Report of the**

#### **CCA AD HOC COMMITTEE May 2, 2008**

#### **THE ARTS AT CORNELL**

#### **MISSION**

The mission of the Arts at Cornell has not changed essentially from that stated by the Task Force on Support for Cultural Activities in July 1991, which was chaired by Professor James McConkey (attached):

“What distinguishes art at the university from art in society at large is its educational mission. At the university, that mission is to pass on and encourage processes of creative thinking, of risk-taking, of experimentation. The consumption of art – that is, the listening to a reading of a poem, the attending of a performance, the witnessing of an exhibition – represents one important form of educational experience, in which students can re-create, in their own minds, the thoughts and feelings that went into the creation of a work. But first-hand experience is even more important – nothing substitutes for the experience of applying various perspectives in thinking and problem-solving, as well as using intermediary devices in the evolution, documentation, and expression of thought and feeling. Indeed, the arts at the university constitute a laboratory affording creative experiences through making and doing.”

We concur with this statement and support the thesis that at Cornell (as stated by our peer, Princeton University, on its web site), “creative and performing arts [should be] central to the educational mission, and all students [should be] encouraged to explore their artistic interests and talents.” This is even more important at Cornell because of our large and diverse student body in so many institutional homes; the arts provide an important integrating and unifying opportunity for all of them.

#### **GOALS**

Cornell should generate an arts presence strong enough to catalyze cross-disciplinary creativity and research and fulfill its potential as a resource for student and faculty recruitment, alumni relations, and development. This effort should:

1. Contribute to a higher level of civility, respect, and humanity at Cornell, for students, faculty, staff, alumni, Ithacans, and visitors through participation in the arts.
2. Heighten the awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the arts throughout the Cornell campus and the Ithaca community.
3. Foster collaboration and cooperation in artistic creation and performance among the various disciplines and departments on campus - in the arts, the sciences, and the professional schools - and thereby enrich curriculum.
4. Facilitate a variety of events and programs in the arts, organized or presented by or for the Cornell community.
5. Provide all students with opportunities to explore and participate in creative artistic experience inside and outside the curriculum, to enhance their personal growth not only on campus but throughout their lives.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The CCA, as currently constituted and funded, cannot fulfill this mission and these goals. We believe, however, that an organizational structure that brings together the arts constituencies from across the campus remains essential and we therefore offer the following recommendations. We have endeavored to provide sufficient detail to give substance to this report but have refrained from attempting to provide answers for questions we believe

should be left to the ad hoc committee we recommend as our successors. Thus we recommend that a new name for the CCA be found but do not attempt to find it ourselves, nor do we attempt to work out anything approaching a detailed budget.

- **Maintain the CCA for the next year** with an Interim Director and a budget that reflects a cost of living increase over the current year.
- **Appoint an ad hoc committee** that will meet during the interim year to address the issues below and to prepare a report. Ideally the report should be delivered in twelve months, but should be at the discretion of the Vice Provost if more time is needed.
- **Develop a New Cornell Arts Presence**  
Change the name and broaden the mission of the current CCA, to bring them more in line with the mission stated above. The new name should emerge as the mission and areas of responsibility are redefined.
- **Develop a New Structure**  
Reconfigure the reporting structure for the newly imagined CCA
  1. We have concluded that the lead-dean structure currently in place does not adequately serve the arts community as a whole, which stretches, institutionally, across many departments and colleges and encompasses individuals everywhere at Cornell. Either place it under a newly appointed Vice Provost for the Arts and Humanities **OR** place it under an existing Vice/Deputy Provost.
  2. Appoint a new **Managing Director** with skills including organizing and producing events and writing grants, someone who would catalyze new relationships and activities. This would be a permanent position, not a part-time faculty position.
  3. Appoint a standing executive committee on the arts composed of faculty members, with members appointed by the participating departments/constituencies. This executive committee, would make decisions on grants and projects (as the current CCA does) and would advise the Provost on issues involving the arts on and beyond the Cornell campus, both curricular and non-curricular. Subcommittees of other faculty in relevant departments, including more junior faculty, should be appointed for tasks, similar to the current CCA. This committee would have an appointed **Faculty Chair** (similar to the current CCA Director) who would have overall responsibility for the endeavor and to whom the Managing Director would report. This **Faculty Chair** should be given teaching relief for the duration of his/her term. Consider including on the committee a limited number of other selected faculty active in the arts, who would be appointed by the provost in consultation with the Executive Committee.
  4. Consider a role for students in the organizational structure.
- **Develop New and Expanded Activities**
  1. Continue funding for grassroots student and faculty projects in the current grant categories and add new categories, focusing particularly on multidisciplinary grants.
  2. Develop (as Princeton has already done) a Festival of the Arts. This would be an annual or biennial arts festival whose funding would not diminish the CCA's regular annual budget. Festivals would be mounted during a three-year trial period, with the first occurring two years from now, either in Spring 2010 or Fall 2010. They would involve all of Cornell's arts units and take place in venues throughout the campus and in downtown Ithaca.
  3. Develop a Cornell Distinguished Guest Artist-in-Residence program. This program would take two forms. One would follow the model of the A. D. White Professorships at Large. The other would bring an artist to campus for an extended period, to create artistic works that would forge new relationships among the Cornell arts constituencies. This could be a very enriching experience for all involved. Emphasis on artists who bridge the more traditional art disciplines would make this an extremely valuable addition to the campus.
- **Develop a New Web Presence**  
Create and maintain a web presence that is a "front door" for the arts at Cornell and that can be reached by one click from the University's home page. Examples of impressive peer web sites:  
Stanford: "arts and events"

Dartmouth: alumni in the arts

This web site would have links to all programs, events, and publications in the arts and provide links to other art related information as appropriate

- **Provide a Budget** to accomplish what is outlined above.
  1. At a minimum and for the present, continue the present annual budget with an added cost of living.
  2. Provide funding for creating the new web presence; include maintenance of the web either by CCA staff or other Provost web staff.
  3. Fund the Managing Director of the organization and continue funding the one other support staff position.
  4. Provide Festival funding: approximately \$100K per year.
  5. Fund a Distinguished Guest Artist-in-Residence program.

#### Committee Members

Ann Lemley, Chair (Fiber Science & Apparel Design)  
David Feldshuh (Theatre, Film & Dance)  
Kent Goetz (Theatre, Film & Dance)  
Rebecca Harris-Warrick (Music)  
Salah Hassan (African Studies & Research Center, History of Art)  
Patricia Phillips (Art)  
Franklin Robinson (Johnson Museum of Art)  
Harry Shaw (Arts and Sciences, English)  
Stan Taft (Architecture, Art & Planning, Art)  
Stephanie Vaughn (English)

## 5.2 Scenarios for a Revised CCA

The proposed new activity profile for the CCA could take many specific forms, but in all cases the challenge to find an event focus and format that engages a wide constituency at the level of prominence imagined by the committee will undoubtedly require creative collective effort by the CCA leadership and affiliated faculty. As an exercise, the Committee discussed possible scenarios for a future CCA, and three examples are included below. In each case, the Committee sought to identify a format/content that embodied issues with broad appeal across multiple units, and that could be leveraged to obtain as much activity and exposure for the arts on campus as possible from a limited and targeted investment of funds. That said, in all likelihood the scenarios below would seriously stretch CCA's budget but are, at least potentially, of sufficient novelty and interest to be competitive for grants or in-kind support.

### **The Prominent Artist**

The CCA could invite an artist of significant accomplishment to campus, and organize events related to the issues raised by the artist's work. For example, Martin Scorsese would be invited for a three-day residency on campus. Cornell Cinema would host a showing of the seminal films, perhaps as an outdoor evening event in the Arts Quad. Scorsese would be invited to give a series of public lectures on his work and to meet with students in a workshop setting to discuss the production and conception of the major works. A seminar(s) is organized with Scorsese and arts and humanities faculty to discuss the cinematic themes that structure his films—violence and the city, social marginalization, non-linear narration, text-image relationships, self-referentiality, guilt and redemption—which would be captured for web casting. The Cornell Symphony Orchestra or Winds Ensemble or Jazz Band would perform arrangements of his principal film scores.

### **The Consequential Issue**

The CCA could focus on a critical art-related issue and invite multiple protagonists to campus to represent the theme. For example, the theme could be "Skin as Cultural Site," represented by diverse artists such as Jenny Holzer (whose work *Lustmord* is inked on living skin); French artist Orlan (who stages multiple cosmetic surgeries to adjust her appearance to cultural stereotypes); and German media artist Stahl Stenslie (who works with teletactility). The Arts Quad would become an installation site for a work by Holzer ("tattooed" building skins via projection for which she is famous); the Johnson Art Museum could feature Orlan videos and images; the CS/CIS department could host seminars on remote tactility; the humanities faculty could host seminars on the changing cultural status of skin; medical historians can present material on the body's largest organ; fabric science faculty could discuss artificial skin design, and so on.

### **The Extraordinary Object**

The CCA might bring to campus an object that embodies critical art/design issues. For example, the fuselage of the Boeing 787 could be exhibited in the Arts Quad. The design team would be invited to campus and a series of events organized to discuss issues such as: the evolution and use of hybrid new materials; virtual testing and modeling; the environmental issues of mass mobility; light and circadian cycles (the 787 has graduated LED lighting to simulate sun rise and fall), etc. Art and humanities faculty could conduct seminars on the rise of airports as social heterotopias. The Johnson Museum would host an exhibition on the fascination of post-war America with that curious object of spatial liberation: the flying car.

### **5.3 CCA Mission Statement (existing)**

The Cornell Council for the Arts has taken many forms since its inception in 1965. In the words of founder James McConkey, the university and its populations in every field “constitute a laboratory affording exceptional experiences through thinking, making and doing;” fostering excellence at every level to be carried outside the walls of the institution to the greater community. The mission of the Cornell Council for the Arts is to be the conduit for this effort in the creative disciplines, including but not limited to visual arts, performing arts, creative writing and spatial, geographical aesthetics such as architecture and the landscape. It is the job of the Council to insure that these arts and the scholarly activity associated with them are equal partners in the university’s public image, and that the creative products of students and faculty alike are proudly put forward in local, national and international professional arenas. To that end, the Council is mandated to provide both financial and philosophical support for initiatives that carry the highest innovative, experimental and life-changing potential in the arts, funding such projects through a competitive annual grant process, and initiating programs that encourage interaction with a broad variety of outside entities.

(Source: CCA Website, 2010)