Arts & the Workforce

Excerpted from Arts & America: Arts, Culture, and the Future of America’s Communities

ESSAY BY
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Dear Reader,

For the last 30 years here at Americans for the Arts, I have had the privilege of visiting and learning about a different community almost every week.

In multiple places in every state, I have witnessed firsthand the magic and majesty of the arts themselves and also their transformative power in helping to tackle social and community issues. Whether in a small town or a major population center, the same breadth of value is present. Magnificent, awe-inspiring performances and museum exhibits exist side by side with arts programs designed to accelerate healing in hospitals; musical performances with the homeless to bring comfort and perhaps new inspiration; hands-on visual and performing arts programs in military facilities to aid returning wounded service men and women in coping with PTSD or recovering from physical injury; or the myriad of other ways that the arts are a part of people’s lives.

During my travels, I usually have the honor of meeting hard working local leaders from the government, business, and
education sectors as well as from the arts. When a mayor or county commissioner proudly talks about her home-grown arts treasures—while in the same breath explaining the economic and employment benefits of the arts to her community or the attractiveness of the arts offerings there as a cultural tourism destination—it is clear that the arts are valued as a source of pride and identity and as a positive contributor to growth.

Although the arts have delivered this spectrum of entertainment, inspiration, and transformative value for as long as humankind has existed, they have faced a roller coaster of recognition and marginalization in our country since even before our founding. We are now, however, at a moment where there seems to be an increased recognition of the broad value of the arts. That provides us with an inflection point at which to explore, discuss, and recalibrate what it takes to advance the arts and arts education in America. This book of 10 essays provides an opportunity to look at ideas that might help a community invent or reinvent how the arts fit into it. Our guest authors take a look at the kinds of thinking and mechanisms decision-makers, leaders, and citizens need in order to make the arts more fully part of the quality of experience that every child and every community member gets from living in a particular place.

Americans for the Arts is in the business of helping leaders build capacity for the advancement of the arts and arts education. We work toward a vision that all of the arts and their power can be made available and accessible to every American. The leaders that we help are generating positive change for and through the arts at the local, state, or national levels and across all sectors. Since our founding 55 years ago, we have created materials, management tools, case-making research and data, along with professional and leadership development training to help leaders carry out this important work. About 25 years ago, our publication, *Community Vision*, along with a series of companion pieces, was created to guide the process of expanding capacity for community development through the arts. But a great
deal has changed since then, so we have embarked on the three-year journey to update those tools, look anew at what the arts are doing in communities, and create materials that will help community leaders advance that work today.

In this book, 10 authors focus on just a few of the issue areas that the arts are working in today. These essay topics do not illustrate the only way the arts are working in communities. We are continually looking at other topics in other publications, tools, and discussions to help communities customize their unique approach to involving the arts in addressing their particular needs and goals. Such additional issue areas include: the re-entry of active military service members, veterans, youth at risk, crime prevention, immigration, technology, disease, drug abuse, housing, aging, faith and religion, and perhaps most importantly cross-cultural understanding and equity. This is a partial list of the challenges and opportunities where the arts are playing an important role.

To set some context for the future, we have also included an essay that lays out some thoughts on the history of art in community. My friend, Maryo Gard Ewell, has done more to document the history and sea changes of the last century of arts-based community development than anyone else I can think of. She says that she does it because a field isn’t a field if it doesn’t know its history. I thank her for her extensive contributions to our database of field knowledge, which Clayton Lord has been able to draw upon for his comprehensive history piece in this book. Maryo is also fond of saying that a field isn’t a field without a few heroes in the mix. I count both her and her father, Robert Gard, mentioned in that history, to be among those heroes.

Our field of nonprofit arts organizations and individuals working to advance the arts and to create better communities through the arts is constantly evolving, constantly reinventing an understanding of itself and its role in this great American experiment. But the field
should never waver on the deeply rooted belief in its essential necessity to the world. We are in a period of evolving understanding right now. The broad transformative power of the arts as a means to help create solutions to a broad array of social and economic issues is a big part of the value of the arts in today’s American Community.

The rising demand for deeper accountability for what the arts bring to the table in terms of social welfare along with the advent of new sources of data, technology, and processing power to make previously invisible connections visible brings us to a pivotal moment. The arts are poised to be fully integrated into a nuanced, deep, and powerful conversation about who and what is needed to create healthy, equitable communities for everyone.

The arts are valuable. Artists are essential. Arts education is critical to keeping America creative and competitive in order to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The arts are a strong partner in the solution to these challenges and can be even stronger in the future. The arts help transform American communities and the result can be a better child, a better town, a better nation, and perhaps a better world. My hope is that this book of ideas can help in that transformative journey.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Lynch
President and CEO
Americans for the Arts
Executive Summary

This essay looks at changes in the American economy and the workforce and the role the arts may play in positively impacting those changes over the next 10–15 years and beyond. In particular, this essay proposes the following trends and associated arts interventions:

- Devices will become more prevalent and more active, creating ubiquitous connectivity and a new paradigm for engaging with each other. Artists and creatives will be a driving force for dictating the design, structure, and nature of that new paradigm.

- The rise of 3-D printing and similar technology will usher in an era of mass customization of products and services. The
creative worker will drive that customization, and the unleashing of creative and personalized impulses among the larger population will drive a general artistic renaissance and the return of the artisan.

- An explosion in the mobility of the workforce and a shift in the nature of work will catapult artists and creative workers to the forefront in terms of redefining where, when, and what people do to be productive economic drivers. The result will be a new era defined by creativity and anchored in the creative impulse.

— C. Lord

In 2015, in the midst of an age of disruption, it is easy to fall prey of defeatism, but after two centuries of being at odds with mainstream technological change, the 21st century comes with the opportunity for artists and creatives to lead again. This essay outlines the critical role that artists and creatives play in three key trends that will define the next few decades. On matters of connectivity, customized economy, and talent mobility, the future of those with imagination is a challenging one. It has always been so. However, in an age of knowledge, it is for them to shape the world and set the stage of what promises to be an age of creativity like nothing we have experienced before.

American cultural expansion during the 20th century is unparalleled in its global reach, its popular appeal, and its cultural and economic position. As both a cause and a result, culture and creativity have become one of America’s largest economic sectors.

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) estimated that, in 2011, the copyright-based industries represented 11.1 percent of GDP and 8.2 percent of employment in the United States. WIPO’s
estimates suggest that in 2015, these industries will contribute $1.97 trillion in value added to the country’s GDP, while employing 12.5 million people. To put these very large numbers into perspective, just consider that if it was a country’s economic data, that country would be the 10th largest by GDP in the world today,³ with financial value three times larger than U.S. military expenditures⁴ and a labor force 10 percent larger than U.S. manufacturing employment.⁵

The scale of these findings is consistent with a recent report from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, which estimates that arts and cultural production (ACP)⁶ alone constitutes 4.3 percent of the U.S. economy, or $698.7 billion, generating 4.7 million jobs. For both value added and jobs created, the BEA shows sustained trends of above average growth for ACP during the period from 1998–2012.⁷

Two main conclusions can be drawn from WIPO and BEA’s figures: 1) content-based industries and activities are vitally important to the U.S. economy; and 2) people working in them are on average 35 percent more productive than the average worker.⁸

Given that, it is safe to assume that the creative economy’s importance will continue growing and consolidating in the United States. Despite these realities, the impact of artistic and creative work is, in fact, still misunderstood and underappreciated by investors, entrepreneurs, and public officials at local, state, and national levels.

The numbers above reflect the increasing knowledge of the previous impact of cultural and creative activities in the economy. Reaching that level of understanding has been a very long and
often a non-linear process. Many organizations—from federal to local government and from academic to industrial bodies—as well as individuals have worked tirelessly for decades to devise, create, and sustain a variety of data and information tools on the economic impact of cultural and creative industries. Case in point, since 1997, Americans for the Arts began releasing its *Arts & Economic Prosperity* reports, steadily painting a more detailed idea of the economic impact of the nonprofit arts sector. However, it was not until December 2013, after much lobbying from Americans for the Arts and work on the part of the National Endowment for the Arts, that the BEA created and reported on the Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (ACPSA), which provides, for the first time, an official estimate (referenced before) of the economic contribution of all arts and culture in the United States. The data was not significantly different from that found by previous exercises.

What makes publishing the ACPSA a turning point is that it finally made artistic and cultural production an official component of the economy and part of headline economic indicators. Indeed, artistic and cultural production has been slowly gaining the attention of policymakers for a few decades, and it is bound to experience even greater notoriety as official data begins to show that the sector produces a positive dynamic and has a significant impact on the U.S. economy.

As we move into the future, the nature of artistic and creative work will, to some extent, remain the same: questioning social, economic, political, and cultural realities; experimenting with the world around us; and evolving the sense of our individual and shared identities, as it passes from one generation to another. The ways in which this work is conducted, however, are experiencing a fundamental change. As the impact of the digital age deepens, the rules of the game are evolving very rapidly, the tools at our disposal are increasingly varied, and the impact of our influence is becoming noisier.
In the face of the changes ahead, artists and creatives will become a key driver of the digital age.

★ ★ ★

In his seminal book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Richard Florida considers whether the period from 1900 to 1950 or from 1950 to 2000 was most transformative. He notes that the shifts from 1900 to 1950 were predominantly physical—the hardware: skyscrapers, highways, giant bridges, automobiles, airplanes—but social norms remained essentially the same. Florida then notes that the second 50-year shift, from 1950 to 2000, while also accompanied by dramatic shifts in physical technologies, was predominantly defined as a shift in attitudes, access, and openness. If one extends Florida’s query another 50 years, based on the events, trends, and technological changes we have witnessed during the last 15 years, we can outline three main assumptions.

- First, regardless of technological change, the hardware is likely to remain largely unchanged. Of course, structures of all kinds will become taller, larger, and smarter. Vehicles, from automobiles to airplanes, will become safer, faster, cleaner, and autonomous. Society will improve in terms of comfort, health, and personal security.

- Second, political openness and liberal thinking are likely to consolidate the conquests of the last half-century. An African-American will be in the history books as president number 44, and trends in the adoption of a more open-minded political order and society—particularly in relation to gender, race, and sexual orientation—will continue; even if sometimes the noise of opposition may lead us to believe otherwise. Except for a major backlash or a very unlikely revolution, there is a good chance that the country will continue its bend toward justice and equity for all.
Third, in these first 15 years of the 21st century, the American post-Cold War hubris has increasingly been replaced by a growing sense of the inevitable decline of America as a global power. Interestingly, that is likely not the case. While competitors to American power are rising everywhere, save for a few marginal players of little strategic consequence, no major country is looking forward to a radical departure from the current multilateral and international order. If anything, new big players like China, India, or Brazil (and one old player: Russia) are naturally demanding a level of influence that reflects their growing economic influence and political relevance within international institutions. Importantly, though, their postures suggest that they seek to act as co-leaders (or recover a role as), not challengers, of an American-shaped global order. Much of this shift, of course, was triggered by the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, including two limited but costly and disruptive wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, ongoing wars on Al Qaeda and ISIS, as well as the Great Recession and its reshaping of the international financial system, and the rebalancing economic influence between regions (i.e., Europe’s lost decade and consolidation as a junior partner to America and the surge of China as a global economic and geopolitical power).

In short, if 1900–1950 was about a shift in technology, and 1950–2000 was about a shift in cultural norms and attitudes, then 2000–2050 seems to be shaping up as a set of shifts in power and influence. By 2050, it seems likely that power dynamics as we know them today will be very different.

Related to economy and workforce, much of the future will have been fundamentally changed by the consequences, intended or not,
of three trends: ubiquitous connectivity, mass customized economy, and unrestricted talent mobility.

Ubiquitous Connectivity

One trillion devices will be online by 2050—that’s one thousand connected devices for every person on Earth at the time; approximately one hundred connected devices for every human that has ever lived.\textsuperscript{14}

This rise of connected devices will bring a significant shift in how these devices function, and how we will function with them and with each other. In 2000, essentially 100 percent of the 500 million connected devices that existed were passive—they allowed humans to connect to each other through the Internet or cell phone networks. The combined calculating power of all these devices was not enough to produce the levels of cognitive intelligence of the average person.

A conservative, educated guess would suggest that one 2050-era connected device would have the same processing power as all 500 million 2000-era connected devices combined. In addition, all trillion of those 2050-era online devices are likely to be active devices—communicating with each other and anticipating and enhancing a great deal of our day-to-day tasks.

Everything will be smart: clothes, shoes, kitchens, tables, glasses, wallets, doors, bags, chairs, and windows—you name it. Many of them will fuse their functions in ways we cannot remotely anticipate; 2050 will not be a quiet world. And the shape, the colors, the flavors, and the identity of it will be the result of the dynamic work of artists and creatives.

Developing a creative ecology in which the myriad of possibilities presented by these new technologies—from advanced materials to energy storage and to Internet of things—make sense
to the average person will be a major challenge. That work will be based on increased “coopetition”\textsuperscript{15} between artists and creatives; they will be the designers of how we relate with and through interconnectedness.

\section*{Mass Customized Economy}

It is generally accepted in the study of economics that, as people get wealthier, they demand increasingly diverse and personalized goods and services. This demand will only increase over time and runs counter to the current mass-production-oriented American system.

The economic history of the last 200 years has been one of mass production, in increasingly large and specialized industries, serving ever-larger numbers of consumers with increasingly homogenous products. That has been true for clothing, food, vehicles, furniture, and any other conceivable product. While the array of colors, flavors, and shapes available today in most marketplaces is more diverse than anything seen before, the fact is that there has never been as much homogenization in supply as exists today.

This trend will shift, and the world will become a place where everything one can use can be personalized, and where access to customization will be relatively equitable and affordable.

We can already see the increased availability of personalized and handcrafted products. Some of these trends are based on the restoration or updating of the traditional practices and techniques, while others take advantage of new technologies. There is also a technology that promises to change that and allow for the return of the artisan:\textsuperscript{16} advanced and affordable additive printing. Otherwise known as 3-D printing,\textsuperscript{17} it is the first serious challenge to mass production in two centuries, and, judging by
current trends, there is every reason to believe that a wave of mass customization in the demand for products will be matched by the strengthening of a *new artisan class*.

These new artisans are already providing an increasingly wide array of design services to an increasingly wide portion of the population today, distributed via Amazon, eBay, Target, Wal-Mart, Macy’s, or just about any store, online or physical, you can think of. In the next few years, people will just buy and download directly to the cloud and order an immediate “impression.” A very large part of the population will become active at designing everything they use to the last detail. Artists and creatives will continue to drive this dynamic *prosuming* process. As 2050 approaches, looking for 3-D-printed, and otherwise personalized versions of everything one can imagine, will be the standard, breaking the link between mass produced consumer products and far away factories. This will be a world, literally, crafted by art and creativity.

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**Unrestricted Talent Mobility**

From academics like Richard Florida and Moises Naim, to consultancy firms like McKinsey & Company and Deloitte, to entrepreneurs like Mark Zuckerberg and Richard Branson, talent is recognized as the prime commodity of the 21st century.

In 2050, major shifts will have occurred around issues of immigration. The need to attract talented people will grow stronger, as the commoditization of skills and ideas becomes essential to the development of the new artisanal industries and their workers.

Economists and politicians will be increasingly concerned with the unintended consequences of enhanced productivity around formerly labor-intensive fields like agriculture, manufacturing, and natural resources extraction. Very few people will be necessary to
keep these activities going. Where will the jobs come from to sustain a growing working population?

As covered earlier, a trend toward mass customization is likely, fueled by an artisan class and enabling technologies like 3-D printers. A similar phenomenon is likely to occur, as it has been occurring over the last 15 years, in terms of what we do for a living.

For most of human history, the main source of wealth was sweating. By hunting, gathering, herding, plowing the fields, or any combination of them, most production was based on manual work. Controlling ever-larger masses of people was the only way to grow a society richer. The tools and technologies that improved the productivity of sweat evolved slowly for millennia. Then came the steam engine.

The dramatic explosion of productivity unleashed by the Industrial Revolution at the turn of the 19th century is still unparalleled. The building of larger factories to produce more and cheaper manufactured goods created in turn a demand for bigger and longer ships and railroads to bring goods to rapidly growing cities all over the world. In doing so, the role of sweat as the prime source of wealth creation was replaced by capital. We are still dealing with the consequences of that shift, even as another major power driver has increasingly risen to prominence since the middle of the 20th century: imagination.

When and how the preeminence of capital is being challenged by imagination, or brainpower, is still a matter of debate. Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, however, the proportion of the population necessary to produce what we require to survive has continuously decreased. Indeed, as of 2008, more than half of the world population now lives in cities; in the United States that proportion is more than 80 percent and growing. At first, farmhands becoming blue-collars led the urbanization process. The same pattern has been observed over and over across the world as countries have become industrialized. In the United States, however, a new and
clearly different trend has emerged since the mid-20th century: the consolidation of the white-collar worker as the backbone of the economy and the relative depopulation of the blue-collar factories.\textsuperscript{21}

In this shift from sweat equity to capital first, and then to white-collar preeminence, the new trend is and will continue to be primarily illustrated by the increased demand for skilled and talented workers whose strengths lie in imagination and brainpower.

Providing the right tools and trainings—and acquiring and keeping workers with the aptitude to develop this new set of skills—will need to be at the core of any serious economic development program in the next 35 years. As has already been made clear above, the value of the creative is on the rise—and with an increased desire to acquire such talent comes an increased willingness to adjust workplace norms. After all, today’s most valuable asset in a company goes home every day and may choose not to come back the next morning.\textsuperscript{22}

Like entrepreneurs, artists and creatives, generally, do not want to be employees; they want to be the captains of their lives. They are also highly mobile.\textsuperscript{23} As they have been over the last 15 years, this new, desired workforce will vote with their passports about the policies and conditions in which their lives will take place. Financial investment and other forms of capital will follow and reinforce the formation of artistic hubs and creative clusters. Those clusters will thrive on diversity, requiring a level of openness to migration last seen in the United States a century ago. Only this time, the migrating masses will wear more colorful attires, their hunger will be one of ideas, and their tired brains will light well after dark into the night of American cities.

With the concerted and committed work of artists and creatives, in 2050 the United States will be a country that values and cherishes creativity like never before. A time traveller from 2000 would be right to believe that the 21st century has turned out to be the age of creativity.
For this age of creativity to become real, increased awareness of the social and economic value added by artists and creatives is key. This is a process already set in motion by the publication of such work as *Arts & Economic Prosperity* and the Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account. A tangible sign that such efforts, as well as concerted, well-informed advocacy efforts around the need to nurture creatives in order for our economy to succeed, is in the rising movement to shift from STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) to STEAMD (science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, and design) in our educational strategy.

Education reform, of course, takes time, while technology is already here and is not asking for permission. In a way, acknowledging the advent of a world that will soon be ubiquitously connected to a mass customized economy that is, in turn, based on unrestricted talent mobility is simply stating the obvious. One may argue against these trends, but that won’t stop them from happening. We should, instead, collectively explore the best ways to turn them into advantages and how better to adapt ourselves to their disruptive impacts.

Artists and creatives will be at the forefront of the search for those ways. Through their work, many people will find a new and more promising identity to fit into an unknown future. Failing their work, the masses will find themselves lost and insecure.

Leading the way has never been easy, but it is not an unusual task for artists and creatives. Arguably, it has always been part of the job description.

If luck is preparation meeting opportunity, then artists and creatives are about to get very lucky. The opportunity to change the way everybody views the world is at hand. The question then is: Are we prepared to empower our artists and creatives to take the lead?
1. The author is a consultant at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). His opinions in this paper are his alone, and do not represent official policy by or commit the IDB in any way.

2. Those that are dedicated, interdependent, or that are directly or indirectly related with the creation, production, representation, exhibition, communication, distribution or retail of Copyright protected material (Buitrago and Duque 2013).


6. “Artistic and cultural commodities [goods and services] are those intended chiefly as a function of creative or cultural engagement, or are intended primarily to facilitate access to such commodities. The ACPSA, therefore, includes not only commodities whose primary activities are arts and cultural, but also commodities and industries that support the production of arts and culture—i.e., the “creative chain.” For example, the ACPSA includes estimates for “symphony orchestras and chamber music organizations.” To reflect the production cycle of music performance, the ACPSA also includes musical instrument manufacturing, wholesale distribution of music supplies, and musical instrument stores.” “NEA Guide to the US Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account,” National Endowment for the Arts, 2013.


9. As reported by the BEA 2015, ACP has kept up with the growth of the overall economy since 1998 (the earliest estimates).


12. Basel III is a global, voluntary regulatory standard on bank capital adequacy devised to provide a common and more stable international financial system to the world, correcting what were believed to be the systemic flaws that led to the Global Financial Crisis of 2008. It is a complement to the Basel I and Basel II accords, over which the members of the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision harmonize the works of their different financial arrangement. “Basel III,” Wikipedia, February 23, 2015, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basel_III.


16. In reality, the artisan has never left (very few creative vocations ever do), as the current maker movement and other artisanal movements attest. However, the role was increasingly diminished during the 19th and 20th centuries as Industrialization progressed. What we are witnessing right now is its return to prominence.

17. It is likely that the term “3-D printing” sticks and becomes the generic, even though 4-D printing and other characteristics not explained by it are already associated with this kind of technologies.

18. The term “prosumer” was coined by Alvin Toffler in *The Third Wave* (1980) with the purpose of describing the fusion of production and consumption.


Arts in Healthy Communities: Additional Discussion and Resources

The Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts initiative, of which New Community Visions is a part, is an effort by Americans for the Arts and our partners to explore more deeply the important, symbiotic structure of America’s modern communities and to better understand the role that the arts can play in amplifying the positive impacts of the many sectors that exist inside every community.

This book has focused on 10 sectors, but Americans for the Arts generally has identified 30 sectors that we believe need to be considered when talking about creating and maintaining a healthy community, many of which can be aided by arts and culture.

In the efforts encompassed by Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts, as well as in the day-to-day work of Americans for the Arts going back nearly 60 years, we continue to pursue an expanded, better appreciated, and better understood role for the arts in healthy community development and maintenance.

For more resources related to the varied role of arts in community development, we recommend exploring the following Americans for the Arts resources—as well as the Americans for the Arts website in general—and the many great resources outlined in the endnotes of each essay.

New Community Visions

Keep track of the progress of New Community Visions by visiting www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions

Arts and the Military

Americans for the Arts is a founding partner of the National Initiative for Arts & Health in the Military, and hosts the partnership’s website, www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org, where you can
review full text of reports related to the role of arts in the lives of active military, veterans, and their families along with a list of upcoming events, a national network directory, and more.

**Arts and the Economy**

For more than 20 years, Americans for the Arts has been at the forefront of measuring the economic impact of the arts on American communities and the United States, most visibly through the Arts and Economic Prosperity reports ([www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AEP](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/AEP)). Americans for the Arts also generates bi-annual Creative Industries reports on all U.S. counties, and is working to launch a new program called the Institute for the Creative Economy as part of the Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts initiative. Find out more about both at [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).

**Arts and Business**

Americans for the Arts has a robust set of programs and trainings around the role of the arts in the private sector, most notably the pARTnership Movement, which showcases the role that the arts can play in bettering businesses and other private sector organizations ([www.pARTnershipmovement.org](http://www.pARTnershipmovement.org)).

**Arts and Civic Engagement**

For more than a decade, the Animating Democracy Initiative of Americans for the Arts has been exploring and developing the academic literature, case studies, and general knowledge and vocabulary around arts and civic engagement, social justice, and community health ([www.AnimatingDemocracy.org](http://www.AnimatingDemocracy.org)).
Arts and Education

Americans for the Arts’ arts education programming is a cornerstone of our belief in the role of arts in developing the communities of the future (www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEd). We work with more than 30 other arts education organizations across the country on advocacy, research, policy, and capacity-building. We also implement large-scale programs and partnerships like the Arts Education State Public Policy Pilot Initiative (www.AmericansForTheArts.org/SPPP), which seeks to encourage innovation around the adoption or adaptation of core arts standards in education at a state level, and the Arts Education Navigator series (www.AmericansForTheArts.org/ArtsEdNavigator), which creates easy-to-use advocacy plans and tools for parents, students, and teachers, as well.

In addition to these specific areas of work, Americans for the Arts also houses a trove of research, policy, and practice documents for arts organizations, local arts agencies, and others in the arts sector through our website, www.AmericansForTheArts.org
Arts and America: Arts, Culture, and the Future of America’s Communities

With contributions from Felipe Buitrago Restrepo, Rosa M. Cabrera, Ian Garrett, Talia Gibas, Brea M. Heidelberg, Clayton Lord, Robert L. Lynch, Laura Mandala, Judy Rollins, Judith Tannenbaum, Constance Y. White, and Laura Zabel

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About the New Community Visions Initiative, part of Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts

The essays in *Arts and America* collectively form the first phase of an initiative called New Community Visions—a national visioning exercise for local arts agencies, arts organizations, artists, and those interested in better understanding the future role of arts and culture in helping American communities thrive.

New Community Visions is part of a sustained, three-year suite of large-scale initiatives from Americans for the Arts that are together called *Transforming America’s Communities Through the Arts*. Through those initiatives, we hope to:

- generate dialogue on a national, state, and local level around the creation and sustainability of healthy communities;
- activate a diverse set of programming and partnerships spanning public, private, and nonprofit sectors;
- lay the groundwork for a collective movement forward over the next decade and beyond;
- and help leaders and the public better understand and celebrate arts and culture as mechanisms for creating and sustaining healthier, more vibrant, and more equitable communities in the United States.

[www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/CommunityVisions)

This project is made possible through an ever-growing list of funders, partners, and advisors.
Forums Curator and Documentarian

Michael Rohd and the Center for Performance and Civic Practice
Margy Waller and the Topos Partnership

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Support as of April 30, 2015
New Community Visions Advisory Committee

The New Community Visions Advisory Committee, which has informed the nature and trajectory of the project, includes:

- Jennifer Cole, Metro Nashville Arts Commission
- Deborah Cullinan, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
- Carla Dirlikov, opera singer
- Randy Engstrom, Seattle Office of Arts & Culture
- Tatiana Hernandez, Hemera Foundation
- Maria Rosario Jackson, The Kresge Foundation
- Michael Killoren, National Endowment for the Arts
- Ron Ragin, composer and artist
- Holly Sidford, Helicon Collaborative
- Nick Slie, performing artist, Mondo Bizzaro
- Regina R. Smith, The Kresge Foundation
- Katie Steger, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Carlton Turner, Alternate ROOTS
- Nella Vera, Serino/Coyne
- Laura Zabel, Springboard for the Arts
The regional gatherings associated with New Community Visions would not have been possible without the participation of this growing list of regional, state, and local partners who have contributed thought leadership, proposed the names of participants, and assisted in crafting the regional events.

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**Regional**

- Arts Midwest
- Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation
- Mid-America Arts Alliance
- New England Foundation for the Arts
- SouthArts
- WESTAF

**State**

- California Arts Council
- Georgia Council for the Arts
- Minnesota State Arts Board
- New Mexico Arts
- Oklahoma Arts Council
- Oklahomans for the Arts
- Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
- Vermont Arts Council
- West Virginia Division of Culture and History
Local

- Allied Arts
- Arts & Business Council of Greater Philadelphia
- Arts Council of Oklahoma City
- Burlington City Arts
- Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy
- City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs
- City of Santa Fe Arts Commission
- Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences of West Virginia
- Creative Santa Fe
- Cultural Development Corporation
- Flynn Center for the Performing Arts
- Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
- Macon Arts Alliance
- Metropolitan Regional Arts Council
- Minneapolis Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy
- Norman Arts Council
- Oklahoma City Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs