

2003

Nancy Hanks

The 16th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy

Lecturer

Robert Redford
Actor, Director, and Activist

September 9, 2003

Concert Hall

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Washington, DC

Presented by

Americans for the Arts

in partnership with

The Film Foundation and

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

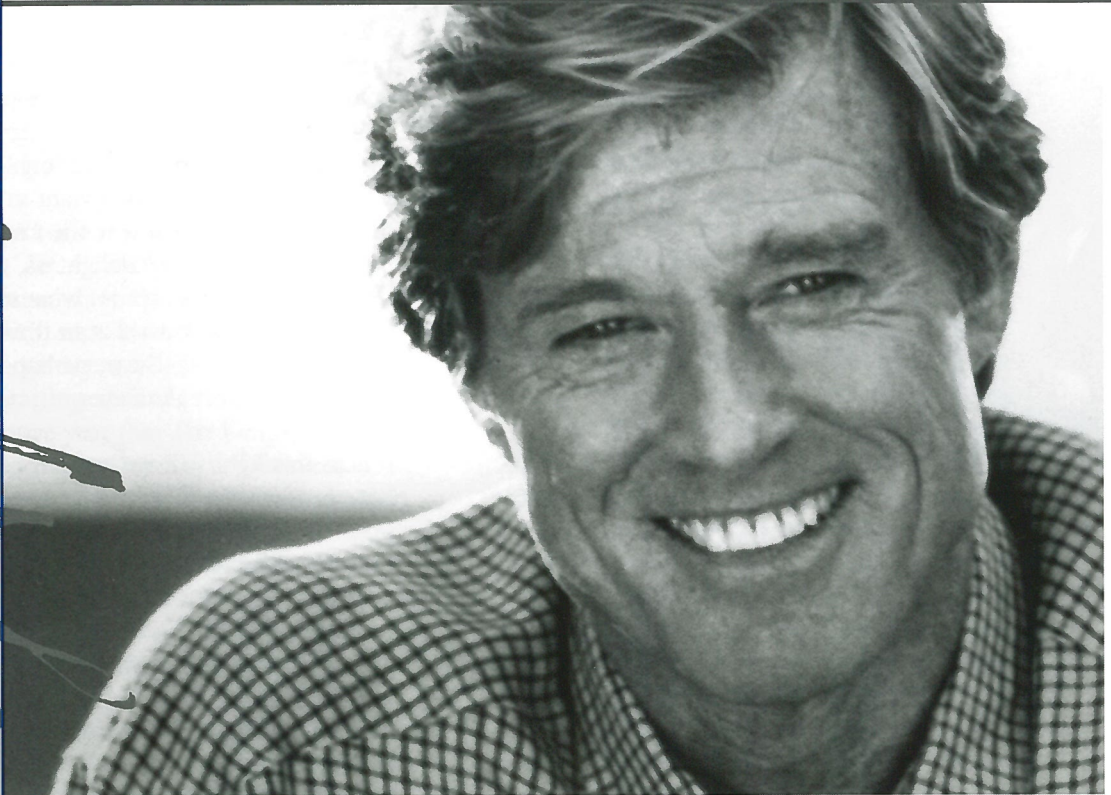


AMERICANS
for the ARTS

SERVING COMMUNITIES
ENRICHING LIVES

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OPENING REMARKS BY
ROBERT L. LYNCH



Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO,
Americans for the Arts

Good evening. On behalf of the board of directors of Americans for the Arts, I want to welcome all of you to The 16th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy. My name is Bob Lynch and I am the president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, the national organization for advancing the arts in America. Our three goals, simply put, are: more money for the arts, from both the public and the private sectors; more arts education; and building better communities through the arts.

As you know, this lecture was postponed back in March due to the outbreak of war in Iraq, which continues to be of great concern to our citizens and the rest of the world. Our economy is suffering, and we've just seen the beginning of a new budget year for most states that includes serious cutbacks in order to deal with huge deficits. The arts, naturally, are impacted by all of these larger forces.

And so Americans for the Arts, along with our national, state, and local partners across the country, works to get out the positive message about the arts to as many elected officials and private sector leaders as we can. For instance, we do a lot of research. In the last year, you may have learned about our national study—*Arts & Economic Prosperity*—that shows the nonprofit arts sector generates a \$134 billion economic impact, including five million jobs and \$24 billion in total government revenues. These kinds of figures strongly suggest that the arts are part of the solution for our nation's economic recovery, and that eliminating them, or disproportionately cutting them, is illogical public policy.

In the area of visibility, you may have also seen one of the ads from our national public awareness campaign with the Ad Council—*Art. Ask for More.*— supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. These ads promote the benefits of an arts education, and in the past year have appeared over 300,000 times all over the country in television, radio, and print, including 32 full-page ads in *The New York Times*. In fact, one of the print ads featuring the great Louis Armstrong is in your program tonight, and I hope you'll take a look.

By speaking about the educational, economic, and public values of the arts, I want in no way to diminish what we know is the fundamental purpose of the arts: to delight us, to inspire us, to provoke us, and to capture what it is to be human. We also know that in troubled and uncertain times like these, perhaps the arts are needed now more than ever.

It is in this light that we come together again to hear another American leader speak about the place of the arts in our great democracy—this year, an extraordinary filmmaker and passionate arts advocate who comes to us via our new partnership with The Film Foundation, which I will tell you more about in a moment.

For those of you who are new to The Nancy Hanks Lecture, it was originally developed to honor the memory of the late Nancy Hanks, who served as chairman of the board of Americans for the Arts and then went on to become chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. During Nancy Hanks' eight-year tenure as NEA chairman, the agency's budget grew an astounding 1,400 percent, which ultimately changed the face of public funding for the arts in this country. And tonight we have in the audience two of our current federal cultural agency leaders, the new NEA Chairman Dana Gioia, and the chairman of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Robert Martin.

I would also like to acknowledge former NEA Chairman Frank Hodsoll, and our 1991 Nancy Hanks Lecturer, the gentleman who authored the legislation creating the NEA and IMLS, former Congressman John Brademas.

Also with us tonight are some past and current members of the National Council on the Arts and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, along with more than 20 members of Congress, and congressional arts policy staff representing over 250 Congressional offices. Now we understand that many of them have been called to a vote that goes until 9:00 p.m. tonight, and so as they trickle in, we welcome them, and for those of you who are here, we welcome you. We are deeply grateful to all of you for your public service, and we thank you for being with us tonight. Thank you to all of our public partners.

And now on behalf of our Board Chairman Steve Spiess, the entire Americans for the Arts board, and Veronica Hearst, chair of our National Leadership Council, we would like to recognize the people and organizations that have made this event possible. Starting with our host, this is the eleventh consecutive year that The Kennedy Center has hosted the presentation of this lecture series, and I'd like to thank them for their generosity.

I would also like to give special thanks to three sponsors of our Nancy Hanks Lecture Series. For the third consecutive year, we're pleased to have with us the Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Foundation, which for more than 50 years has worked through its awards and program initiatives to "encourage activity and commentary concerned with constructive social change." With us tonight is Hinda Rosenthal, who just last month celebrated her 80th birthday. Happy birthday, Hinda.

I also want to thank the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation for its long-time support of Americans for the Arts' activities in advocacy and recognize its executive director, Peggy Ayers. We offer special thanks as well to the Betty R. Sheffer Foundation for its support of tonight's lecture. And for the first time, joining us with its sponsorship of our reception after the lecture, I thank Lockheed Martin and its manager of corporate philanthropy, David Phillips, for their support. Thanks to all of you for making this evening possible.

As many of you are aware, this past year Americans for the Arts received an extraordinarily

generous gift of \$120 million from Indianapolis philanthropist Ruth Lilly, which will come to us over the next 30 years. We are engaged in a strategic planning process—informed by feedback from many of the people here in the audience—that will help us be the very best stewards of this gift as we all work together to dramatically change the climate for funding the arts in America through strong advocacy, more visibility, effective research, and thousands, we hope, of new voices demanding art for generations to come.

"I am very pleased tonight to announce a new partnership that Americans for the Arts has formed with The Film Foundation, a nonprofit organization devoted to protecting and preserving motion picture history."

—Robert L. Lynch

And, as we look to bringing increased visibility to these efforts, I am very pleased tonight to announce a new partnership that Americans for the Arts has formed with The Film Foundation, a nonprofit organization devoted to protecting and preserving motion picture history. The Foundation was formed in 1990 by Martin Scorsese and nine other eminent directors, including tonight's speaker, Robert Redford. Arguably the most popular and dominant art form of the 20th century, film is an important means of creative expression, and it uniquely documents our history and cultural heritage.

It is our tradition here to precede each Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy with art, and tonight is no exception. In keeping with the important work of The Film Foundation, it is now with great pleasure that I introduce our performance. As part of its mission, The Film Foundation has been responsible for preserving or restoring many historically significant silent films. The excerpt of the film we will see tonight was restored by UCLA's Film and Television Archive, with original acetate master positives provided by the Mary Pickford Company and 16 mm prints held by the Library of Congress.

Mary Pickford, renowned as "America's Sweetheart," was a pioneer in motion picture

history. She appeared in more than 200 films—if you can imagine that—and she was a producer as well as a star. She was one of the four founders of United Artists in 1919, and one of the 36 founders of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The 1927 film, *My Best Girl*, was her last silent film. Wouldn't it be a shame if this piece of history were not available to us? Of all the art forms, film is highly unstable and the most vulnerable to deterioration and alteration.

The scene we're about to see will be accompanied by original music, composed specifically for this presentation, by Donald Sosin, one of the world's finest silent film composers, who will also perform for us on piano.

(Whereupon, excerpts from *My Best Girl* were shown, accompanied on piano by Donald Sosin.)

I'm quite certain that every person in this audience has seen at least one Robert Redford film, if not a dozen of them or more, or perhaps the same one, a favorite, over and over again. While we know him as a filmmaker, what you may not know is that he started his career as a painter and studied in Paris. But at the peak of his fame, when he could have rested on his laurels, he didn't. Instead he took his concern about the future of independent film and put his money where his heart was, along with his time, commitment, and a good deal of sweat equity. In 1981, he created the Sundance Institute, and for more than 20 years has given back to an industry that has been good to him, and we are all the richer for it.

To introduce him, I'm pleased to bring to the stage Washington's own connection to Sundance. Pat Mitchell's distinguished work in television has encompassed reporting, hosting, anchoring, and producing. It has also taken her to the executive suite, where she currently serves as the president and CEO of PBS. With a stellar record in the documentary field, her expertise is a natural match for the Sundance Institute's commitment to nurturing the growth of nonfiction filmmakers and to promoting documentary exhibition to a larger public. She has been on the Sundance board for more than decade and is now serving as its vice chair. Please welcome Pat Mitchell. ■

INTRODUCTION BY PAT MITCHELL



Pat Mitchell, president and CEO, PBS

Thank you Bob and Americans for the Arts for this opportunity to participate in this special evening.

Introducing Robert Redford to any audience is a privilege that I promised him I would not abuse by heaping too much praise. He is not someone who needs it or courts it. But I will take this opportunity to share a few of the reasons I

admire and respect this man beyond measure.

Some of those reasons are evident and begin with familiar titles: *All the President's Men*, *A River Runs Through It*, *Ordinary People*, *The Milagro Beanfield War*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, and dozens of other movies that have shaped our dreams and defined our times.

In aggregate, these stories and all the other projects for which he was actor, director, or producer and sometimes all three...over a singularly distinguished career, were shaped by his own interest in the creative process and his commitment to the values that art, in all its forms, sustains in a democracy.

Those are the values that bring you and him to this gathering this evening.

It must be said about Redford's creative choices that they have sought to balance the integrity and importance of a marketplace of ideas with a marketplace that all too often drives art and artists towards a bottom line...or as Bob might say, the "bottom," period.

It was out of concern for the negative forces that the marketplace measurements alone unleash that

Bob choose to create an alternative force...a creative process by which art and artists could be nourished away from the marketplace and its attendant pressures.

It's called the Sundance Institute and I am proud to serve as a trustee. In that capacity, I can brag about its impact in ways that Bob will not.

In the natural beauty of a Utah mountain valley that Bob purchased originally for preservation, the Sundance Institute offers a supportive, safe place where emerging artists, filmmakers, screenwriters, playwrights, composers, actors, and writers are mentored by experienced professionals, are allowed to take risks and experiment, and altogether, encouraged to trust their own voices, pursue their own dreams.

Over three decades, hundreds of artists with an idea, a dream, a vision have come to Sundance and many have gone on to become successful in the marketplace. All have gone on to pursue their art with greater confidence...in large measure, because of the commitment of this man.

Through the Institute, the Sundance Film Festival, considered the preeminent exhibition for independent film from all over the world, and the Sundance Channel, Redford has placed his values and his resources on the line again and again to ensure that independent artists and art are recognized and supported.

As a result, Sundance in all its forms, and its founder have changed the landscape of film and theatre...and impacted perhaps more than any other single force, the rise of the independent voice in American culture. This contribution was recognized with a special Academy Award from the Academy of Motion Pictures.

Along with the other awards and honors that have come to him as an actor and director, he also received the National Medal of Arts and the Freedom in Film Award presented by the First Amendment Center. And most recently, he was honored with the Pell Award for Excellence in the Arts.

I know...I promised not to praise too much or list too many awards. But one more thing must be

mentioned in this hall and in this city. He is an active and engaged citizen who spends time in here for good cause. Lots of good causes actually.

He's always been a significantly effective voice for the environment and, given the critical issues of sustainability facing our planet today, he's more active than ever as a voice for social policy that protects our great natural resources. In fact, he was on the Hill yesterday and today, advocating for the arts and all the values he and this audience holds dear.

"...Redford's creative choices...have sought to balance the integrity and importance of a marketplace of ideas with a marketplace that all too often drives art and artists towards a bottom line...or as Bob might say, the 'bottom' period."

—Pat Mitchell

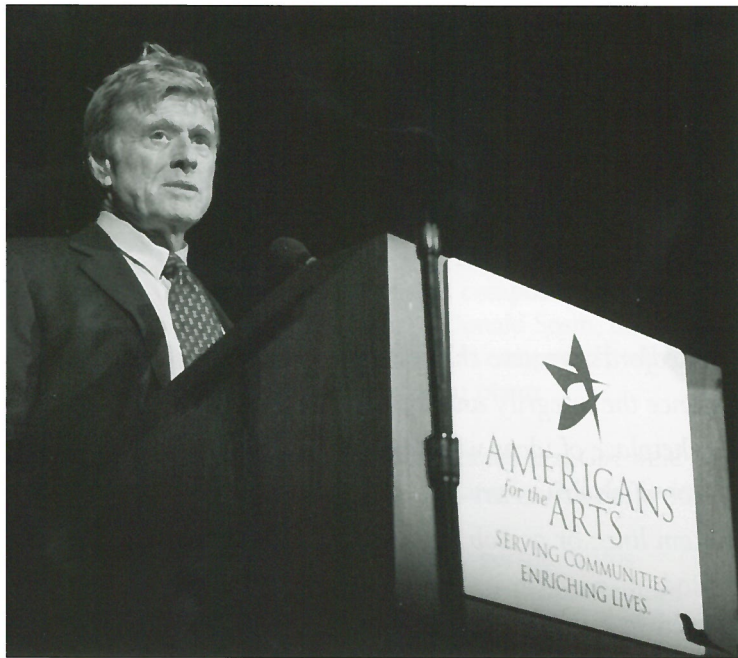
As you might imagine, he gets face-to-face meetings with the leaders, and his opinions, passionately and articulately presented, are listened to and often have led to actions and policy.

More than once, in this city in particular, Redford has heard that his portrayal of *The Candidate* in the movie by that name was the inspiration for a member of Congress's decision to run for office. And since he is currently working on a sequel to *The Candidate*...good timing for such a subject...we can assume that in this movie, as in all his work, he will be once again pursuing the creative freedom that allows art and artists to positively impact lives, engage and entertain, and yes, when in the hands of a committed artist and citizen, strengthen the values that sustain our communities and country.

A strong conviction about the importance of art as a means to do that is why you are here and that is why he is here.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Robert Redford. ■

ROBERT REDFORD



Robert Redford, The 2003 Nancy Hanks Lecturer on Arts and Public Policy

Thank you, Pat Mitchell. You know, with introductions like that, I'm kind of tempted to stay in the wings and quit while I'm ahead.

I'd like to thank Americans for the Arts and The Film Foundation for inviting me here tonight, and I'd like to thank you for being here, and it is an honor.

I've been coming to Washington, DC, for the past 30 years, either filming here in *All The President's Men*, or even having the premiere here. In fact, the last time I was in this auditorium was in 1976 where we had the premiere of *All The President's Men* in this very theater, or for lobbying efforts on behalf of issues relating to the environment, energy, human rights, and art. In the beginning, it was a pretty heady experience to be in the halls of power surrounded by history and events, feeling what it is like to be an integral part of a democracy—particularly if you were fortunate enough to be able to move someone on an important issue.

In time, you experience changes in political climates, different attitudes and priorities. The

strength of the system that controls decisions and compromises became clear over time, and expectations of success had to be tendered with failure relating to these realities. But still, you do feel fortunate to have access to the ears that make these decisions.

Even though you knew that celebrity was maybe a door opener, it nonetheless cuts both ways in politics; it's a double-edge sword, and I found that out through time. Like the time I was on the Presidential campaign trail and I was at Rutgers University and I was speaking to thousands of kids on a college campus about the importance of their vote and environmental issues. In the roar of their connection with what I was saying, I thought, hey, I'm kind of getting through here, this is pretty good. Then I walked off stage kind of heady, and immediately a reporter rushed up and stuck a microphone in my face and said, "Who do you think is better looking, you or Dan Quayle?"

So, just when you think you might be getting through or feeling your oats, reality has a way of biting and putting it all in perspective. So I don't delude myself anymore about what might be getting through or going down or not. But as a citizen and an artist, I try to remember that it is a right and a responsibility to be able to partake in the process of democracy. In fact, I think it was T.S. Eliot who had a great line. He said, "There is only the trying, the rest is not our business."

So I am here today because of my belief that art is a great translator of that which is both familiar and unfamiliar and it is really through art that we can come to know ourselves and others. To me, the vitality and insight which art brings to civil society is more important now than ever.

I grew up in a time during the Second World War when democracy was taken for granted since it was drummed into our minds as a fundamental definition of America and why it was great. In fact, that time in my life I guess shaped me in many ways because of what we were going through. And it was also a time when we were all united—you know, before interracial conflicts started, and that kind of thing, we were all united in unity for the war and its purpose, unlike the conflicts of today. And because times were tough

and my family financial resources slim, living in a pretty rough part of Los Angeles, I didn't have fancy toys or luxuries like TV. So I had to be creative in inventing a world of my own, as all the kids around me did. So I found that my imagination was really the most valuable commodity and thankfully became a life force for me at a very young age. I saw the world around me not only as it was but as it could be. Art and the imagination that gave it life became my closest companions.

Before anyone was much interested in what I had to say, they were interested in what I created. As a kid, I remember sketching everything in sight. My parents and their friends would play cards and I had to be drug along because we couldn't afford a babysitter. And I just drew everything. I guess it was kind of keeping me busy, and so I began to draw them as a group—individual faces and the like. And then I guess I got bored with that and I moved under the table and began sketching their feet, at which point I think everybody started to worry that it was the beginning of a foot fetish. Even though they thought I was a bit weird, I got attention for my art at a young age.

I was not a good student academically. I spent too much time looking out the window because Los Angeles had a very, very poor school system in those days. The district that I lived in was not very high-end. The war was on. So teaching was not too inspirational then.

But I excelled in sports and in art. And my third grade teacher, second or third grade, recognized that art was a legitimate means of expression for me as I struggled with more traditional approaches.

I remember she had me come up to the front of the room and tell stories through my art. And she would put up a newsprint pad on an easel, and I would draw. As she would mention something, I would draw. I think we were studying English and she used what I drew as a basis to make a point. The whole class seemed to get it and they all seemed to learn a little bit about sentence structure and they seemed to be engaged and it made sense. And I didn't know what "it" was that they got, but it felt good.

So my teacher's encouragement of my artistic tendencies continued, making me realize that art

was something legitimate to pursue and that it was integral to how I was perhaps going to find my way in this world and make sense of things. If not for this, I may have taken a path that wasn't as fulfilling and productive. My school behavior record would suggest that it would have been a disaster. But, really, that's the main reason that I'm here, to pay tribute to the work that so many of you out here tonight do every day to keep art alive in schools and in communities all across the country.

“Are these federal and state governments missing something in turning their backs on the arts? We need people in office who will have a vision for our country that goes beyond the next election. We need people in office who understand that encouraging creative pursuits could be critical to any number of sectors, from the next great technological idea to the next historic medical discovery. How do you put a price on that?”

—Robert Redford

Being in this hall tonight prompted me to remember some of the writings of John F. Kennedy. I became reacquainted with a speech that he gave in 1963 at Amherst College where he was paying tribute to the American poet Robert Frost, and reflected on the value of the arts to a society. It was less than a month before his assassination.

“I look forward to an America which will reward achievement in the arts as we reward achievement in business or statecraft. I look forward to an America which will steadily raise the standards of artistic accomplishment and will steadily enlarge cultural opportunities for all our citizens.”

—John F. Kennedy.

To me, art, in all its forms, is the purest reflection of the most diverse aspects of us as individuals, as communities, as nations, and as cultures. It's art that feeds and nurtures the soul of a society, provokes thought, inspires critical thinking, and fosters understanding of things foreign to our own immediate world. In the end, art plays a primary role in encouraging healthy tolerance of diversity

in any culture. In times like these—in this very hour—more of this kind of encouragement would serve us quite well.

Joseph Campbell felt that a society without mythology was doomed. I feel the same way about the role that art can play in a society's sustainable future. On the surface, it may not have the weight of the SEC, the Department of Defense, or Social Security and other programs that may be easier to quantify, but it is still a part of the whole. And, more importantly, it exemplifies one of our great, maybe our greatest critical luxuries—freedom of expression.

Throughout the '80s and the '90s, there were a lot of battles over free expression, and they were furious and frequent. On the one side, the perception that art was undermining the moral fabric of our society began to stick and take on a life of its own and it became the order of the day. When the moralistic posturing gave way to the rationale to cut funding, for a time it was the political value of attacking the arts that increased significantly in stature. By falsely positioning the debate as one of morals and money, these forces hoped to use fear to obscure the real truth—the value of art to every community—and fear is a very dangerous platform to work off of.

“It's art that feeds and nurtures the soul of a society, provokes thought, inspires critical thinking, and fosters understanding of things foreign to our own immediate world.”

—Robert Redford

I wondered then, why aren't they going after tabloid media or corporate greed with such a vengeance? Why isn't there the same fervor about the dismal state of literacy in our schools, or the AIDS epidemic, or homeless men, women, and children? Why is the zeal not pointed to the virtual flood of guns and drugs into our nation's streets, or pollution into our air and water and the resulting public health implications? When has a painting ever instigated the destruction of a culture? Is a song or a play or a painting or a

photograph that much of a threat to our nation's well being? That notion seems particularly absurd in light of the larger threats we are currently facing.

Luckily, the collective voice against this trend won out and, of course, the political winds changed substantially. And while the cultural wars may have subsided, they still rear their ugly head way too frequently. But there's more than one way to strangle the arts and, today, funding cuts being discussed all across this country at all levels of government could really paint a truly devastating picture when all is said and done.

As most of you know all too well, when the economy is in as bad a shape as it is now, art becomes the “throw-away.” Art and art education becomes the funding cut they feel won't have a tangible effect. In other words, it's the cut from which they think nobody is going to suffer and they think nobody will notice its absence. Well, that's not true. It may take a while to get it, but society at large will suffer, and I believe society at large will ultimately notice.

Government support for the arts is not the frivolous give-away that some would have you believe. It's a good investment and it is a sound economic development. Art and public policy is good business. Let's look at the financial stake that the government has in the arts. The nonprofit arts world is roughly a \$134 billion a year industry, employing millions. It generates nearly \$81 billion in spending by those who participate in its cultural offerings and is responsible for some \$24 billion in taxes going back to federal, state, and local governments annually. And this doesn't take into consideration the impact the nonprofit sector has as the training ground for writers, musicians, actors, dancers, painters, photographers, filmmakers, and the like. It doesn't take into consideration the ultimate effect these people and their work have on a thriving multi-billion dollar private sector. So supporting the arts is good business and the numbers bear this out.

It's also good public policy. A study by the Justice Department, Americans for the Arts, and the National Endowment of the Arts demonstrated that arts programs helped at-risk youth stay out of trouble, perform better in school, and improve



Peggy Ayers, Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, and Robert Redford

how they felt about themselves and their future. How do you put a price on that?

Yet, President Bush recommended virtually no increase for arts grants administered by the NEA. President Bush also recommended terminating funding of the Arts in Education program that is administered through the Department of Education.

Education isn't important? State legislatures all across the country are making substantial cuts. Several states are proposing wiping out their entire state budget for the arts.

Are these federal and state governments missing something in turning their backs on the arts? You bet they are. We need people in office who will have a vision for our country that goes beyond the next election. We need people in office who understand that encouraging creative pursuits could be critical to any number of sectors, from the next great technological idea to the next historic medical discovery. How do you put a price on that?

Creativity is made all the more special because it is a great intangible, with no term limits, no time limits, no ending. And it can come from the most unlikely places and from those that might not fit the "traditional" model of the artist. Creativity is inherent in all great endeavors whether traditionally artistic or not, so it is creativity that must continue to be nurtured if we hope to reap the benefits of

the many great minds we don't yet know. And how do you put a price on that?

Yes, there are pressing needs all around us. But completely ceasing to fund the arts is sadly short-sighted in any economy. Governments have to find a way to remain in the mix of resources for the arts and the private sector. Corporations, foundations, and individuals all need to find ways to help fill the gap during these tough times such as we're in right now.

And that includes my industry, which benefits greatly from a vital and thriving artistic force. When one thinks of Hollywood, art isn't necessarily the first thing that's going to come to mind. Some say it is often anti-art. No. It's just a business—first and foremost, a business. But it is a business that can't exist without creative talent in every facet of the making of its product. So, in the end, the challenge to create art still rests squarely on the artist and not the industry. As in any medium, sometimes we succeed and sometimes we fail, but we succeed often enough to create films that inspire, expose, transform and provoke, amuse, entertain, and even teach.

Just as all the other arts did at the moment of their conception, cinema transformed the world. For good or bad, it is a universal communicator on a global platform. Film is an indigenous American art form, even though it's always been a struggle to have it taken seriously as an art form. But we can't deny that business has significantly infiltrated the practice of art in general and, sadly, in particular film. The constant talk of grosses—dollars and cents as the benchmark of a film's worth—is very debilitating to the body of serious film discussion and appreciation, and particularly the artists themselves. After all, where would the business of film be without art as its seed?

While my business is a somewhat solid industry, it will still be important in the years to come, in my view, to embrace *risks* as readily as it does *sure things*. It must make sure that freedom of artistic expression is honored and nurtured across a broad spectrum. I believe strongly that keeping diversity alive in my industry will keep the industry itself alive.

Now, I was happy to hear the Sundance Institute mentioned tonight. The Institute is, in its way, a step toward making sure diverse voices and the creative energy they bring with them are given an opportunity to grow and evolve. Those who come to the Sundance labs to make films and those who come to the Festival to show films really are a microcosm of diverse voices that our industry needs to continue to support and nurture if it wants to maintain itself. They are also the kind of voices that will join in characterizing us to the rest of the world in the years to come. It's all connected.

After now I guess 23 years, Sundance continues to be a community work-in-progress, where success and failure are simultaneously evident, treating failure as a step toward growth rather than the destruction of a vision or a person's emotional framework. I look at the Sundance Film Festival every year, and the innovative hustle demonstrated by scores of young filmmakers to bring their vision to the screen is amazing. They haven't curled up and died just because they can't get government backing for their projects. Somehow they find a way. Like grass working its way up through a sidewalk, it will find its way, but I'm sure if I took a quick poll, I'd find that most of them found art, found their voice, in neighborhood, community, and school arts programs. That's where they first began this great dance with the wonders of creativity.

By the way, I started the Sundance Institute with a grant from the NEA. Brian Dougherty arranged for that. And it was a time when many others were more skeptical of the idea's worth. When I tried to sell it, people doubted very strongly. It took a lot of pushing. Of course, that was the seed that got me started, so I'm always going to be very grateful to the NEA for believing in me and us at the right time. It was instrumental in getting us started. It wasn't just the seed funding, but the seal of approval that gave the idea impetus. I mean, it was like, what's this guy doing, he's a movie star. And you needed that credibility. I'm not sure the movie business had it.

What most of you know that maybe others don't is that out there right now is some kid with a great song in their head we've yet to hear, or a novel in their heart that has yet to be written.

There's someone out there that hasn't picked up a paintbrush yet but has a masterpiece on the horizon. There's a kid out there who hasn't picked up a camera yet but could end up making a memorable film of their time.

What most of you know that others might not clearly see is that the nurturing of creativity comes into play in everything from world diplomacy to world economics, business endeavors, social endeavors, and everything in between. It is creativity that gives all of it the nuance that often makes the difference. In all of its forms, art plays a critical role in finding our way as a people and as a culture.

“Government support for the arts is not the frivolous give-away that some would have you believe. It's a good investment and it is a sound economic development.”

—Robert Redford

As President Kennedy said that day in Amherst:

“I see little more importance to the future of our country and our civilization than full recognition of the place of the artist. If art is to nourish the roots of our culture, society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him.”

This was then. I imagine today the only alteration with that would be that he would say “set the artist free to follow his or her vision.”

We hear the word “freedom” bandied around a lot these days. God knows it's a sacred concept particularly for us Americans. How fortunate we are to have it. How viscerally we need to feel the commitment to protect it. To be able to be part of a freedom of expression that allows us to tell stories of “our” choice in the uniqueness of “our” own voices as citizens and as artists is not to be taken lightly. To be able to freely voice dissent in the true democratic way in our hearts or in our art is something to protect at all costs. But then the glory of art is that it cannot only survive change, it can inspire change. It is for all these reasons that it behooves governments to sustain an environment that enables, supports, and

nurtures the free and creative expression of its citizenry. I have great hope for the future of art in this civil society as I look out over this room and I try to imagine the collective power, the collective voice that will not cower in the face of budget-slashing critics, and will not surrender its advocacy for art and free expression.

My hope comes from not only those gathered here tonight, but from the efforts of grassroots, state, and national organizations, young artists I meet at Sundance film labs, the inner-city elementary school kids who are learning to play music and write poetry, the literary and theater programs in prisons, and traveling exhibitions to rural communities all across the country.

Thank you to the co-sponsors of this evening. To Americans for the Arts, my gratitude for your tireless and effective advocacy on behalf of art and all that comes with it—you truly make a difference and we're all the better for it. And to The Film Foundation, of which I am a board

member, a recognition and respect for the important work that you do to inspire young artists through education and for protecting and restoring some of the greatest films of all time and the diverse perspective of it all to live on.

Lastly, it is an honor to pay tribute to the memory and the contribution of Nancy Hanks, whom I knew and remember fondly. Nancy Hanks had a profoundly gifted perspective on cultural policy in the United States, that being *access* to the arts. Her legacy is the success of many, many of your programs, the creative mastery of many of the artists here tonight, and the commitment to freedom of expression that we all collectively embrace. The life she lived really meant something.

So we go forth from here tonight to continue to try to enlighten those who dismiss the arts as unnecessary, irrelevant, or dangerous. And we do so not only in the memory of Nancy Hanks, but in the name of the active and deserving imagination of every American child. Thank you. ■



Madeleine Albright, former U.S. secretary of state; Veronica Hearst, chair, Americans for the Arts National Leadership Council; Bob Lynch, Americans for the Arts; Joni Cherbo; Hinda Rosenthal, Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Foundation; Dr. John Brademas, previous Nancy Hanks lecturer, former U.S. Congressman, and president emeritus, New York University; and Robert Redford

About the Lecturer



Robert Redford is somewhat of an anomaly in the entertainment industry. Though he has been world-famous for nearly 30 years, he remains a highly private individual. He is an ardent conservationist and environmentalist, a man who stands for social responsibility and political involvement, and an artist and businessman who is a staunch supporter of uncompromised creative expression. His passion remains to make films of substance and social/ cultural relevance, as well as to encourage others to express themselves through the arts.

This interest in the creative process, and creative expression in general, began long before Mr. Redford set his mind on an acting career. Born in Santa Monica, CA, as a child his only sources of entertainment were the public library, radio, and the local movie theater. Cartoons inspired him to draw and paint on his own. Later, having attended the University of Colorado, he dropped out and went to Paris, where he attended the Ecole des Beaux Arts. When he returned to the U.S., Mr. Redford enrolled in art school in Brooklyn and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts to study acting so he would better understand the needs of the theater. His drama teachers recognized his talent and set design soon took a back seat to acting.

He landed his first Broadway starring role in *Sunday in New York*, followed by *Little Moon of Alban* and Neil Simon's *Barefoot in the Park*, directed by Mike Nichols. His first movie role was

in *War Hunt*. He represented the role of newlywed Paul Bratter in the film version of *Barefoot in the Park*, opposite Jane Fonda, for which he received praise from critics and audiences. In 1969, Mr. Redford and Paul Newman teamed to star in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. Directed by George Roy Hill, the film became an instant classic and firmly established Mr. Redford as one of the industry's top leading men. He, Mr. Newman, and Mr. Hill later reunited for *The Sting*, which won seven Oscars®, including Best Picture, in addition to bringing Mr. Redford a Best Actor nomination. He has since built a distinguished acting career, starring in such notable feature films as *Jeremiah Johnson*, *The Way We Were*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Three Days of the Condor*, *The Great Waldo Pepper*, *Brubaker*, *A Bridge Too Far*, *The Natural*, *Out of Africa*, *Legal Eagles*, *Sneakers*, *Indecent Proposal*, and *Up Close and Personal*, among others.

In 2001, he starred in *Spy Game* and *The Last Castle*. Mr. Redford has starred in several films produced by his own Wildwood Enterprises, which he founded in 1968. His acting and producing credits under the Wildwood banner include *Downhill Racer*, *The Candidate*, *The Electric Horseman*, and *All the President's Men*, which earned seven Oscar® nominations, including Best Picture. In addition to his prominence as an actor, Mr. Redford has won a Directors Guild of America Award, a Golden Globe Award, and the Academy Award® for Best Director for his feature film directorial debut on *Ordinary People*. He went on to both direct and produce *The Milagro Beanfield War* and *A River Runs Through It*, for which he received a Best Director Golden Globe nomination; and earned dual Oscar® nominations for Best Picture and Best Director and a Golden Globe nomination for Best Director in 1994 for helming *Quiz Show*. Mr. Redford also earned two Golden Globe nominations (Best Picture and Best Director) for *The Horse Whisperer* in 1998 and went on to direct and produce *The Legend of Bagger Vance* in 2000.

For television, Mr. Redford recently executive produced the first American episode of the PBS series, *MYSTERY!* Based on Tony Hillerman's novel, *Skinwalkers*, the episode premiered in November 2002.

A large part of Mr. Redford's life is his Sundance

Institute (named for the outlaw he played in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*), which he founded in 1981. The nonprofit Sundance Institute is dedicated to the support and development of emerging screenwriters and directors of vision, and to the national and international exhibition of new independent cinema. Its highly acclaimed Screenwriting, Directing, Playwriting, and Producing Labs take place at the Sundance Village mountain retreat in Utah, founded by Mr. Redford in 1969.

The Sundance Film Festival is a program of the Institute and is internationally recognized as the single most important showcase of independent cinema. Sundance Channel, a further extension of the Sundance Institute's mission and dedication to independent filmmakers, brings television viewers engaging feature films, shorts, documentaries, world cinema, and animation, shown uncut and with no commercials. Through its original programs, Sundance Channel connects viewers with filmmakers, the creative process, and the world of independent film. Launched in 1996, Sundance Channel is a venture between Robert Redford, Showtime Networks Inc., and Universal Studios.

Mr. Redford founded the Sundance Catalog in 1989 to support both the Sundance Institute and fine artists and their work. It has grown into one of the country's preeminent specialty catalogs over the past decade.

“What most of you know that maybe others don't is that out there right now is some kid with a great song in their head we've yet to hear, or a novel in their heart that has yet to be written. There's someone out there that hasn't picked up a paintbrush yet but has a masterpiece on the horizon. There's a kid out there who hasn't picked up a camera yet but could end up making a memorable film of their time.”

—Robert Redford

In February 1996, Mr. Redford received the Screen Actors Guild's prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award®, honoring his enduring contributions to film. In March 2002, he received an Honorary Academy Award, recognizing his achievements as “actor, director, producer, and creator of Sundance, inspiration to independent and innovative filmmakers everywhere.” He was also the recipient of the 1997 National Medal of Arts from President Clinton and the 2001 Freedom in Film Award presented by the First Amendment Center. He was recently honored with the 2002 Pell Award for Excellence in the Arts: Lifetime Achievement Award. In addition to his work as an actor, director, and producer, Robert Redford has been a noted environmentalist and activist since the early 1970s and has served for over 25 years as a Trustee of the Natural Resources Defense Council. Mr. Redford remains active with local, regional, and national organizations on a variety of environmental, arts, and justice issues.

About The Nancy Hanks Lecture

Nancy Hanks served as president of Americans for the Arts (formerly the American Council for the Arts) from 1968 to 1969, when she was appointed chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, a position she served through 1977. During her eight-year tenure at the National Endowment for the Arts, the agency's budget grew 1,400 percent. Until her death in 1983, Nancy Hanks worked hard to bring the arts to prominent national consciousness. This year marks The 16th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy, established to honor her memory and to provide an opportunity for public discourse at the highest levels on the importance of the arts and culture to our nation's well-being.

Past Nancy Hanks Lecturers

- 2002 Zelda Fichandler, founding director, Arena Stage, Washington, DC, and chair, Graduate Acting Program, New York University
- 2001 Frank Rich, op-ed columnist, *The New York Times*
- 2000 Terry Semel, past chairman and co-CEO, Warner Bros. and Warner Music Group
- 1999 Wendy Wasserstein, playwright
- 1998 Dr. Billy Taylor, jazz musician and educator
- 1997 Alan K. Simpson, former U.S. senator
- 1996 Carlos Fuentes, author
- 1995 Winton Malcolm Blount, chairman Blount, Inc., philanthropist, former U.S. Postmaster General
- 1994 David McCullough, historian
- 1993 Barbara Jordan, former U.S. Congresswoman
- 1992 Franklin D. Murphy, former CEO, Times Mirror Company
- 1991 John Brademas, former U.S. Congressman and president emeritus, New York University
- 1990 Maya Angelou, poet
- 1989 Leonard Garment, special counsel to Presidents Nixon and Ford
- 1988 Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., historian

About the Presenters



Americans for the Arts is the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With a 40-year record of service, it is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Americans for the Arts is focused on three

primary goals: 1) increasing public and private sector support for the arts; 2) ensuring that every American child has access to a high-quality arts education; and 3) strengthening communities through the arts. To achieve its goals, Americans for the Arts partners with local, state, and national arts organizations; government agencies; business leaders; individual philanthropists; educators; and funders throughout the country.



The Film Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization committed to fostering greater

awareness of the urgent need to protect and preserve motion picture history. Through national educational programs, campaigns, and substantial annual support to the nation's leading archives, the Foundation actively works to preserve and protect our nation's film treasures. The Film Foundation was created in 1990 by Martin Scorsese and nine other eminent directors—Woody Allen, Robert Altman, Francis Ford Coppola, Clint Eastwood, George Lucas, Sydney Pollack, Robert Redford, Steven Spielberg, and the late Stanley Kubrick. For more information on the Foundation, visit www.film-foundation.org or call 212.906.8862 (New York) or 323.436.5060 (Los Angeles).



The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is America's living memorial to President Kennedy and the nation's busiest performing arts facility.

Last year, the Center's seven theaters hosted approximately 3,000 performances for audiences totaling nearly two million. Audiences of another 22 million attended Kennedy Center touring productions around the nation or tuned in to Kennedy Center television or radio broadcasts. The Kennedy Center's achievements as a producer and commissioner of new works have created a legacy that includes more than 200 original productions and commissions in theater, opera, dance, and music. Its innovative arts education programs offer lifelong learning opportunities in the arts that benefit young people, educators, families, and adults in the national capital area and in every state in the nation. For more information, visit www.kennedy-center.org.

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