

Cambridge Arts Council

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Memo to: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

From: Pallas C. Lombardi, Director

Re: Council Order #0-18

Dated: November 20, 2000

*How to increase opportunities to
showcase Cambridge artists*



Date: 1/3/01

We submit the following suggestions of how to increase the showcasing of Cambridge artists:

The artists of North Cambridge and Cambridgeport need *funding* to continue their annual open studios. Open studios provide many Cambridge artists with visibility and an opportunity to sell their work directly to the general public. In addition to their time, open studios cost the artists money to produce materials to promote open studios. Although both groups have received funds through CAC's grants program, the State Arts Council does not allow continuous funding (dependency) from this funding source.

The Underground Railway Theatre and Nora Theatre continue to seek support to relocate back in Cambridge to produce local theatre, classes and provide the community with a much-needed rehearsal space. They have had some success in finding a building and negotiating a long-term lease to locate in Central Square. Building renovations will be costly and they need funds.

The Agassiz Neighborhood Arts Council has launched a capital campaign to support a citywide arts center with a focus on art classes for children and teaching opportunities for Cambridge artists. (The Maud Morgan Visual Arts Center) Funding support of this project would help provide a needed resource for children in this community.

Annually, CAC receives over \$200,000 in requests from community groups and artists to partially subsidize art events to benefit the citizens of Cambridge. Although CAC has effectively increased its funding base for this program, the demand continues to triple the resources available. The competition for support from local businesses, the City, and foundations is high in Cambridge due to the number of artists and presenters competing for limited resources.

The Arts Council maintains a mailing list of 600 Cambridge visual artists, 900 area performing artists, 890 area craft artists, and 2000 street performers. Many community groups and businesses access artists through the Arts Council. Nevertheless, the most frequent request from all sectors is for money to support artists and projects in the community.

Artists have not sought help from CAC to become involved in farmers markets. We do not know how the Farmers

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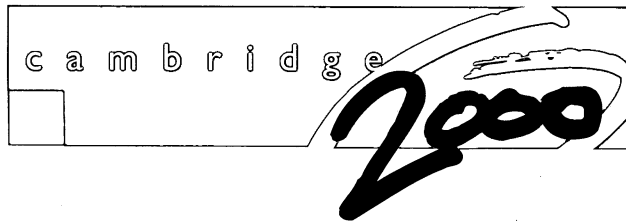
Executive Director

Pallas C. Lombardi

Federation would respond to a request to include artists in the Central Square farmers market or the Morse School market. Artists that make one-of-a-kind items have many places to exhibit and sell their art. However, individuals who import or purchase items and sell them at fairs and festivals tend to seek non-craft shows to sell items and usually do not list themselves as "artists". If the intent here is to support artists, it is our opinion that Cambridge artists would prefer support of Open Studios, especially in Central Square.

The Arts Council has not produced teen or other concerts on the Cambridge Common for the following reasons: 1) the many fairs and festivals held annually in the City provide performing artists with income and a number of performance venues 2) research indicated that Boston Arts Office no longer produces *Concerts on the Common* because community groups and neighbors complained about noise, traffic problems, etc., and 3) it is our understanding Cambridge restricts use of the Cambridge Common to protect a fragile open space's green, trees, and plants.

If financial resources can be increased, there continues to be a necessity for an objective study to prioritize how funds will be equitably distributed to artists and presenters in Cambridge. An objective study to determine how well Cambridge's arts programs serve the population, including its artists, should be done in the near future. Objective evaluators and reviewers could assess the arts and cultural programming and services in the City and make objective recommendations on how to best serve Cambridge through the arts.



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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager

Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

January 8, 2001

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 00-121, regarding a report on how to help increase opportunities to showcase the artists of Cambridge, received from Executive Director of the Arts Council Pallas Lombardi.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy".

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment



2000 Things 2 Do in 2000

Communication from Robert W. Healy,
City Manager, relative to Awaiting
Report Item Number 00-121 regarding
a report on how to help increase
opportunities to showcase the
artists of Cambridge.

In City Council January 8, 2001

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