

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

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FROM: KWT

DATE: December 27, 1963

TO:

LCD	DEC 27 1963	LCD
CMH	DEC 27 1963	CMH
RKD	DEC 27 1963	RKD
BRC	DEC 27 1963	BRC
RXC	DEC 27 1963	RXC
GF	DEC 27 1963	GF
PH	JAN 2 1964	PH
KWT	JAN 6 1964	KWT

COMMENTS:

SUBJECT: Main Currents of Trustees' Reaction to "Cultural Development"

Those of you most directly concerned with our efforts in cultural development will be interested to know of the reactions to our program statement. Comments were for the most part sympathetic and friendly; I had the sense that the Trustees found our approach quite congenial.

Among the suggestions made by the Trustees were the following:

- 1) The Trustees would hope we would give considerable attention to literature, and particularly to writing. This is the missing factor in most attempts to do something in the cultural field.
- 2) Several Trustees were concerned about the identity of culture in the United States and in our modern world. They would welcome, as they put it, a snapshot of what culture is today. Some of them believe there is a thin layer of interest in cultural matters but complain that they have no true picture of the cultural interests of individuals. What would our commitments to culture look like in a large crosscut of the population? What about the circulation of culture through society? During the tragic weekend following President Kennedy's assassination the listening audience of one network dropped from 30 per cent to 1 per cent when a Bernstein symphony was played.
- 3) The Trustees felt rather strongly that there was need to identify the level of interest in literature, music and drama today in order to be able to measure what effect, if any, cultural projects might have ten or fifteen years from now.
- 4) Some Trustees urged us to make our major thrust in support of creative work. What the Foundation can encourage is necessarily but a tiny fraction of total cultural effort. We should therefore put our stress on creativity. We should give this field higher priority than performance or criticism. What is encouraged by the Foundation can at best provide leaven in a larger loaf.

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CREATIVE WRITING

5) We should also consider the history of support of great cultural works. For the most part important cultural achievements have come about through "patronage." The history of Renaissance art testifies to the need of this practice. The Trustees urged us to explore this area.

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K. W. T.