

THE CLINTONS' CHOICE

Art in the White House

Bill and Hillary's first date included a stop at a Rothko show. Two decades later, they live amid an outstanding art collection built over 200 years. On a private tour of the works the couple chose for the family residence, the first lady spoke exuberantly about

the role of art in their lives—and the nation's

BY MARY LYNN KOTZ

WHEN BILL AND HILLARY CLINTON moved into the White House, they asked for easels. And more easels. They set them up in the Map Room and had the curatorial staff bring in all the paintings from the White House basement. One by one, on the dozen or so easels, they looked at the American Impressionists, 19th-century landscapes, Cézanne and Glackens still lifes, Robert Henri's portrait of a gypsy girl, and many other paintings in the White House collection that hadn't seen the light of day in years.

In an exclusive interview with *ARTnews*, Mrs. Clinton spoke with great feeling about the 450-work White House art collection. "When we first got here, my husband and I looked through the book on the collection [William Kloss's *A Nation's Pride: Art in the White House*] and tried to find everything in it," explains Mrs. Clinton. "What we couldn't find on the walls, we brought in here to study. I think we've pulled out every painting that's been in storage," she continues. "We've tried to find a place for everything, but the only one I despair of is Whistler's *Nocturne* (ca. 1870-77). There doesn't seem to be a wall where it gets enough light."



"I like it because of the composition and the emotion," says Hillary Rodham Clinton of George P. A. Healy's 1959 study of John Tyler. "And of course my husband likes it because Tyler is crumpling up the newspapers!"



The first lady with one of her favorites—Mary Cassatt's *Young Mother and Two Children*, 1908.

Seated on a red brocade sofa in the newly redecorated Map Room, the first lady is both relaxed and animated talking about art. Many of her favorites in the White House collection are paintings by women, or those that feature women as subjects, such as Lilla Cabot Perry's *Boy Fishing* (1929) in the West Sitting Hall and Mary Cassatt's *Young Mother and Two Children* (1908). The president, she says, responds more to paintings that have historic meaning for him, such as William Tolman Carlton's *Watch Meeting—Dec. 31st, 1862—Waiting for the Hour* (1863), a scene of slaves gathered around a table studying a large pocket watch on the eve of the Emancipation Proclamation's enactment. "Look at them," President Clinton exclaims to visitors at every opportunity, "just waiting for that moment of freedom."

The president's favorite White House painting, which he has hung prominently in the Oval Office, is *The Avenue in*

terms for the Civil War. On another wall hangs Theobald Chartran's *The Signing of the Peace Protocol Between Spain and the United States, August 12, 1898* (1899). It commemorates the agreement signed by President McKinley in the Treaty Room that ended the Spanish-American War.

Mrs. Clinton says that her husband is also particularly fond of *Morning on the Seine, Good Weather* (1897) by Claude Monet in the West Sitting Hall. "It is such a peaceful, beautiful scene. He'll just sit and look at it as he talks on the phone. And," she adds, "I think the fact that it was given to the White House in memory of President Kennedy has extra meaning for him." During the Johnson Administration, the painting, a gift of the Kennedy family, was given a place of honor on the State Floor. During the Nixon Administration, however, it was sent down to the ground floor, to hang in relative obscurity in the dim light of the Vermeil Room, where it stayed for nearly 20 years until Barbara Bush brought it upstairs to prominence in the family quarters.

Moved by the Clintons to more visible positions on the State Floor were the portraits of Franklin D. Roosevelt by Frank Salisbury and Harry Truman by Greta Kempton. Each president places more prominently the portraits that are personally or politically attractive to him. And the White House collection, which has grown through 43 administrations, offers plenty to choose from. The art is cared for by the Office of the Curator, established by Jacqueline Kennedy, who also began the White House Historical Association.

"So many touches to the house, so much of the art was either brought to the White House or inspired by the Kennedys," reflects Mrs. Clinton. Mrs. Kennedy's primary project was to restore the White House to its early-19th-century grandeur by inviting donations of art and furnishings. The collection, therefore, became a repository for 19th-century art.

The curators and Mrs. Clinton, though, are painfully aware that as the 21st century approaches, the

White House collection is lacking in 20th-century art. The "youngest" painting is a 1952 John Marin oil, *The Circus No. 1*, which Mrs. Clinton has placed in her office in the West Wing, but there is nothing from the 1930s or '40s.

"We would love to have some modern American artists represented," says Mrs. Clinton. "We're really the beneficiary of other people's generosity. We would be honored to have in the White House paintings by 20th-century artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe or Thomas Hart Benton, for example. So if there's anyone out there reading this who would like to make a contribution..." she laughs.

Mrs. Clinton's Chicago childhood, along with her undergraduate education at Wellesley College from 1965 to '69, gave her a lot of exposure to modern art. "The most overwhelming experience I ever had with a piece of modern art



Claude Monet's *Morning on the Seine, Good Weather*, 1897, which the president always stares at when he's on the phone in the West Sitting Hall.

the Rain (1917), one of Childe Hassam's patriotic American flag paintings. "Our first real excitement was hanging the Hassam in the Oval Office," says Mrs. Clinton. This president's taste for history can be seen in the other works of art he chose for that space: Rembrandt Peale's *George Washington* (1823), the *City of Washington from Beyond the Navy Yard* (1833) by George Cooke, and *The Three Tetons* (1895) by Thomas Moran. The sculpture includes a Frederic Remington bronze, *The Bronco Buster* (1895), and a small early-20th-century cast of Rodin's 1880 *The Thinker*, on loan to the president from Mr. and Mrs. B. Gerald Cantor.

For the old Treaty Room, his private study, the president chose *The Peacemakers* by George P.A. Healy, an 1868 painting of Abraham Lincoln with Generals Sherman and Grant, and Rear Admiral Porter meeting to discuss peace

THE PRESIDENT RESPONDS *most readily to the historical subjects in the collection, while the first lady is drawn to paintings by or with women*

was when I was a sophomore in high school and saw Picasso's *Guernica* for the first time," she recalls. "That was a stunning experience! I saw it in the context of a discussion about values, and war, and the role that art and artists can play in heightening your sensibilities to the human experience." At Wellesley, she continues, "I had several friends who were art majors, and we spent a lot of time in Wellesley's Jewett Arts Center and museums in Boston. There's that wonderful Gauguin in Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, *Where Do We Come From? Who Are We? Where Are We Going?* That was a perfect piece of art for someone in college. We'd sit in front of it, waiting for it to tell us the answers! There was also a big yellow piece by Jules Olitski, *Julius and Friends* (1967). I loved that painting, and I named the first car I owned—which was a yellow car—for it, 'Julius,'" she says.

It was abstract art, she reports, that kicked off her romance with Bill Clinton at Yale University Law School. "On our first date—which was not really a date—we stood in line to register for classes, and after we finished we went out for a Coke," she says. "We started talking, went for a long walk—and we ended up in front of the Yale University Art Gallery. It was closed. But my husband had been there a week or two before, and he wanted to show me the Mark Rothko exhibition inside and a Henry Moore exhibition in the sculpture yard. He found a worker, who said it had to be closed because of a labor dispute. And so my husband said, 'Well, if we pick up the garbage, will you let us in?'" The future president and first lady proceeded to pick up all the trash that had accumulated—and then had a leisurely private viewing of the Rothko and Moore exhibitions.

Last spring, when the president spoke at the Andrew W. Mellon Dinner at the National Gallery in Washington, he recalled, "I first came here as a young student at Georgetown. Later when I was a governor and came [to Washington] for stuffy old meetings, on occasion I would sneak away from wherever we were convening and come here—and think I would never do anything remotely as important as paint

some of the things that hang on these walls."

The Clintons still try to work in museum visits when they can. Last year, when asked by her husband and daughter what she'd like for Mother's Day, Mrs. Clinton replied, "To see the Barnes Collection." Her wish granted, the first family had an impromptu tour of "Great French Paintings from the Barnes Foundation" at the National Gallery of Art. During their D-Day commemoration trip to Europe last June, the Louvre was held open until 2:30 A.M. for their visit, arranged by Ambassador Pamela Harriman, and architect I. M. Pei took them on a private tour.

As of this writing, the Clintons are still waiting for an opportune moment—"after hours, so we won't disturb the flow of people going through"—to see "Willem de Kooning: Paintings" at the National Gallery. "We will go," she says. "I love that de Kooning painting upstairs," she adds, referring to *Untitled XXXIX*. "The colors are in perfect harmony with the decor in the second-floor center hall."

The painting came to the White House as a result of a conversation between the first lady and her designer from Little Rock, Kaki Hockersmith, who redecorated the family quarters, the Lincoln Sitting Room, and the Treaty Room. "We talked about the policy against works of art by living artists," Mrs. Clinton recalls. "It's a very sensible policy, but it did seem a shame that we

didn't have any art by a modern master that we could display." Finding that the policy does not exclude a living artist from loaning works directly to the president to display in the family quarters, Hockersmith made inquiries through a collector friend, Rita Pynoos. Pynoos and Hockersmith then went to the de Kooning warehouse in New York to look at the stored paintings. Lisa de Kooning, the artist's daughter, offered to lend *Untitled XXXIX* (1983).

The Mosquito Net (1912), by John Singer Sargent, is another favorite of the Clintons, and it is regarded by art historians as one of the painter's finest works. "There's another Sargent I love in the National Gallery—the young woman dressed in white, leaning on the couch like this...." Mrs. Clinton assumed the pose of Sargent's model in *Nonchalant*



The president's favorite White House painting is Childe Hassam's *Avenue in the Rain*, 1917.



Willem de Kooning's 1983 painting *Untitled XXXIX*, on loan from the artist's family, hangs upstairs in the Clintons' private residence.

(1911). "Sargent usually did full frontal portraiture, but he also painted those [reclining pose] pieces, which I think are really well done." Sargent's White House lady is also reclining. The portrait of a sensuous, mysterious woman in white, veiled in a mosquito net, hangs in the Green Room, in view of the 19th-century presidents on the wall.

Mrs. Clinton remarks that she and the president both think that the George P. A. Healy study of *John Tyler* (1859), in the Blue Room, is a "magnificent portrait. I like it because of the composition and the emotion," says the first lady. "And of course my husband likes it because Tyler is crumpling up the newspapers!"

"It's wonderful to live with the art that's been collected over the years. I'm just grateful to everybody who has lived in this house," exclaims Mrs. Clinton, noting that she likes the way the Bushes arranged the family quarters, and also referring to the contributions of previous first ladies who worked to preserve and enhance the executive mansion. "One of my favorite paintings is the Mary Cassatt, of the young mother and child. I've seen pictures of it forever, but I never knew where it was. And [here] you find it on the second floor of the White House!"

When Lady Bird Johnson, who had accepted the painting as a gift to the White House in 1965, came to visit Mrs. Clinton recently, she stepped out of the second-floor elevator and exclaimed, "Ah, there it is!" Mrs. Clinton told Mrs. Johnson how much she appreciated the painting and the two spent a moment discussing Mary Cassatt.

From the easels in the Map Room, Mrs. Clinton found her favorites of the early 20th century and placed them in the private family quarters. High on the list is Thomas Eakins's *Ruth* (1903)—a stunning portrait of a pensive, preadolescent child in a white dress, wearing a pink ribbon in her hair—which hangs in the second-floor corridor.

When the Clintons moved in on January 20, 1993, they

brought art from their own collection, which had been with them in the Governor's Mansion in Arkansas—"our idiosyncratic little collection of stuff that we have accumulated over the years," laughs Mrs. Clinton. "a pot-pourri of pieces. We have paintings from friends of ours—and a Will Barnett lithograph, Thomas McKnight's *Constitution*, and a Picasso plate.

"We've never collected, as such," she explains, "but we have acquired things that we've bought or received as gifts—or given each other as gifts over the years. I gave my husband for Christmas a life-size portrait of Chelsea when she was four. That would be his favorite thing!" That portrait, by Arkansas painter Ovita Goolsby, is in the family sitting room upstairs. Works by Arkansans Barry Thomas and Doris Mapes, and Maryland painter Greg Mort are also in their collection.

Mrs. Clinton has also introduced American crafts from all over the country into the White House. These works, selected by Michael Monroe of the Smithsonian, are currently on display.

"We've tried to elevate the role and visibility of American artisans," says Mrs. Clinton, "because there is some very fine work being done. We look at some of the things that were given to the White House as gifts or were purchased during the 19th century—and they were crafts of their time," she continues, "so I think it's important that we appreciate the artistry of crafts of our time."

Using the White House as a "bully pulpit" to focus on the arts is a goal of the Clintons. Mrs. Clinton believes that the attention paid to all the arts from the White House can stimulate a rekindling of support throughout the country. The president's appointment of actress Jane Alexander as head of the National Endowment for the Arts was hailed as the first appointment of an artist to that position. Alexan-



For his study, Clinton chose Theobald Chartran's *The Signing of the Peace Protocol between Spain and the United States, August 12, 1898, 1899.*

MRS. CLINTON SAYS THAT *Picasso's Guernica*, which she first saw as a sophomore in high-school, had a lot to do with pointing her toward social activism

der's indefatigable cross-country cheerleading for local support of the arts is encouraged and applauded by the Clintons. Last October, Mr. Clinton awarded a National Medal of Arts for visual art to Robert Rauschenberg, and both Clintons spoke at the White House ceremony, where a special medal was also given to collectors Walter and Leonore Annenberg for their contributions to art and education.

"We've tried to use the White House more publicly to support art and artists this past year," says Mrs. Clinton, "everything from the Arts and Humanities dinner, which we hosted, to awarding the American Academy of Rome's prizes, to celebrating [as host head of state] the Praemium Imperiale—the Japanese arts prizes that are equivalent to the Nobel Prizes of the arts."

Despite the Clintons' honoring the arts and artists, some arts organizations and artists are disappointed that administration support has not taken the form of more dollars for arts funding. The National Endowment's \$170.2 million budget has not increased appreciably in a dozen years—nowhere near the rate of inflation. In rebuttal, the White House points out that the endowment budget survived, while 100 other programs didn't. That budget, however, was cut by 5 percent by the Senate and 2 percent by the House last summer. "We don't have enough money to do a lot of what we want to do in many of the areas including the arts, but we can use the White House as a showcase and as a motivator to encourage people to become more supportive of the arts," Mrs. Clinton contends.

Arts support for Mrs. Clinton comes very personally—in the role of arts in education. "When the education legislation—Goals 2000—was passed by the Congress and signed into law by President Clinton in March 1994, six original goals were met, and then two were added. One of them had to do with adding arts to the curriculum—and that's something we feel very strongly about," she says.

"Even when my husband was a governor and doing accreditation standards for schools in our state, we required that students take a semester of art before they graduated. We really believe that if you don't have some exposure to art or to art appreciation—it can be either active or scholarly interest—you're really not as well educated as you need to be. And through the new education legislation [by the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, *arts*, history, and geography, the bill states] we want to promote that. I think we've really seen a cutback in arts courses for children just at the time when we need it most! I hope, through the legislative effort that the president has accomplished, we will be able to elevate the role of the

arts again and provide more funding for training people to be arts instructors and to have more traveling scholars or artists in residence—the kinds of things that could make a difference in a child's life."

And she points out the difference art has made in her life. *Guernica* had a lot to do with pointing her toward social activism. "I am still very moved by visual arts that have some social content," she reflects. She talks about the effect of the artist Matushka—photographed nude with a searing scar



John Singer Sargent's *Mosquito Net*, 1912, regarded by art historians as one of his finest works, hangs in the Green Room.

where her breast had been—on raising awareness about the epidemic of breast cancer.

After her time as a White House tour guide, the president's wife, relaxed and congenial in the Map Room—Franklin Roosevelt's top-secret communications center during World War II and a place Mrs. Clinton likes for holding small meetings—says, "This is fun. We should talk some more." Then, on her way to her next appointment, she turns to Betty Monkman, associate curator of the collection. "What happened to *Boys Crabbing*?" she asks, referring to William Ranney's delicate 1855 painting of a morning on the New Jersey shore, with four boys on a pier fishing for crabs. The painting had hung over the mantel, before being replaced by President Roosevelt's wartime maps.

"That one is in storage," Monkman replies.

"I want to bring that back out because I like it so much," says the first lady.

Mary Lynn Kotz, a contributing editor of ARTnews, is author of *Rauschenberg Art and Life*.

Arts for Our Sake

By Hillary Rodham Clinton

This is an ominous time for those of us who care deeply about the arts in America. A misguided, misinformed effort to eliminate public support for the arts not only threatens irrevocable damage to our cultural institutions but also to our sense of ourselves and what we stand for as a people.

One of the great successes of the arts in America is that they are not the preserve of any "cultural elite." Through museums, libraries, schools, dance companies and concerts, the arts are truly part of the

form whole communities by bringing the arts and artists to millions who otherwise might never have had the opportunity to explore first-hand our shared artistic heritage.

The President has shown that we can balance the budget over the next 10 years without undermining our commitment to the arts. The N.E.A. budget accounts for less than 0.02 percent of the Federal budget. Eliminating this small but vital agency would have grave consequences for local economies. Federal support for the arts helps attract tourists, stimulate business, expand the tax base and improve the quality of life — a huge return on a small investment.

Despite a 30-year bipartisan commitment to the arts, there are those who argue that public support is a luxury we can no longer afford. They mistakenly suggest that the arts are enjoyed only by a small, wealthy minority. But if public support for the arts disappears, those most affected will not be the richest Americans but the millions of citizens who rely on the N.E.A. to bring the arts to their local schools and communities.

I find it ironic that those who talk the loudest about America's loss of civility, character and values (particularly those arising from Western civilization) are often the first to recommend obliterating the agencies responsible for promoting and arts programs that make Sophocles, Shakespeare, Mozart and O'Keefe available to our children.

They fail to appreciate what every generation of Americans has intuitively known — that the artistic imagination is critical to our civilization and our democracy. They forget the prescient words of John Adams: "I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study

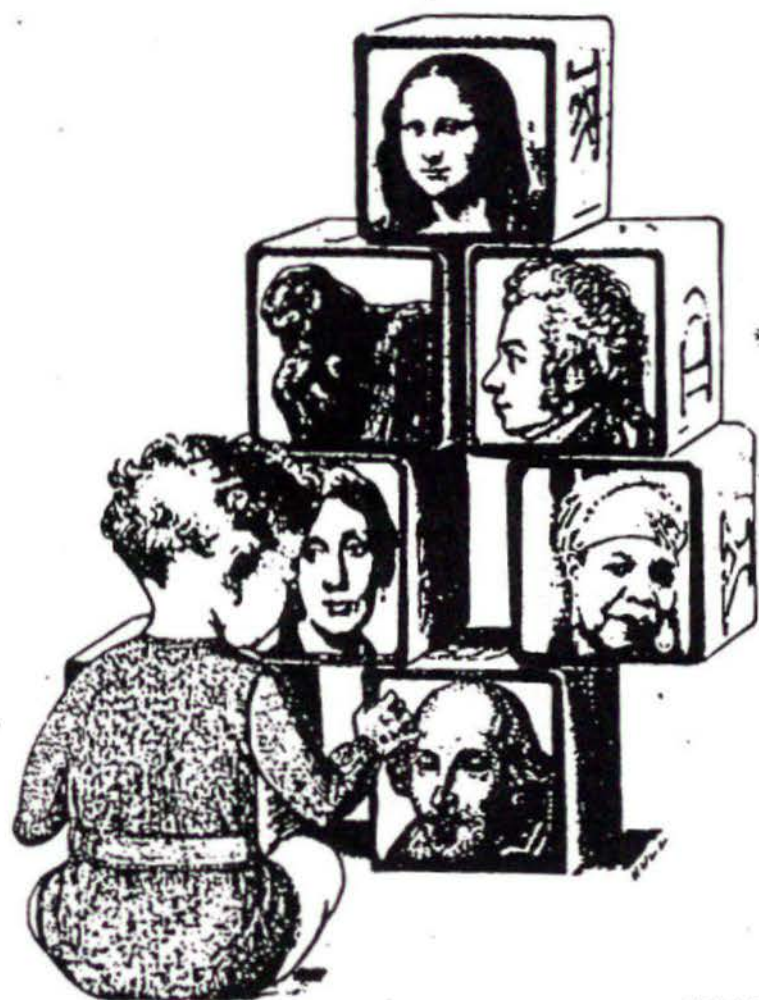
mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy ... in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music."

The power of the arts is not simply to provide pleasant esthetics but to help move us forward as a democracy. Human expression, as conveyed through the arts, enables us to under-

stand better the complexities of life and gives us a bridge to the world preceding and surrounding us. Most important, exposure to our cultural traditions enriches the lives of our children.

Too often, we see children who, instead of discovering the joys of painting, music, sculpting or writing, express themselves through acts of frustration and even violence. The arts offer an alternative to the more disturbing elements of our popular culture, and a safe haven that allows children to explore their creative potential, transporting them beyond the bounds of their difficult circumstances. Their exposure to the roots and diverse richness of human civilization will enhance their understanding of their own heritage and the world in which they live.

Clearly our nation faces difficult choices. But as the rhetoric heats up over the role of government in our society, I hope we will remember that public support for the arts is a down payment on our future. It is an investment in the values we claim to honor and in the cultural traditions in which democracy has flourished for 218 years. Now is no time to turn our backs on that legacy or its promise.



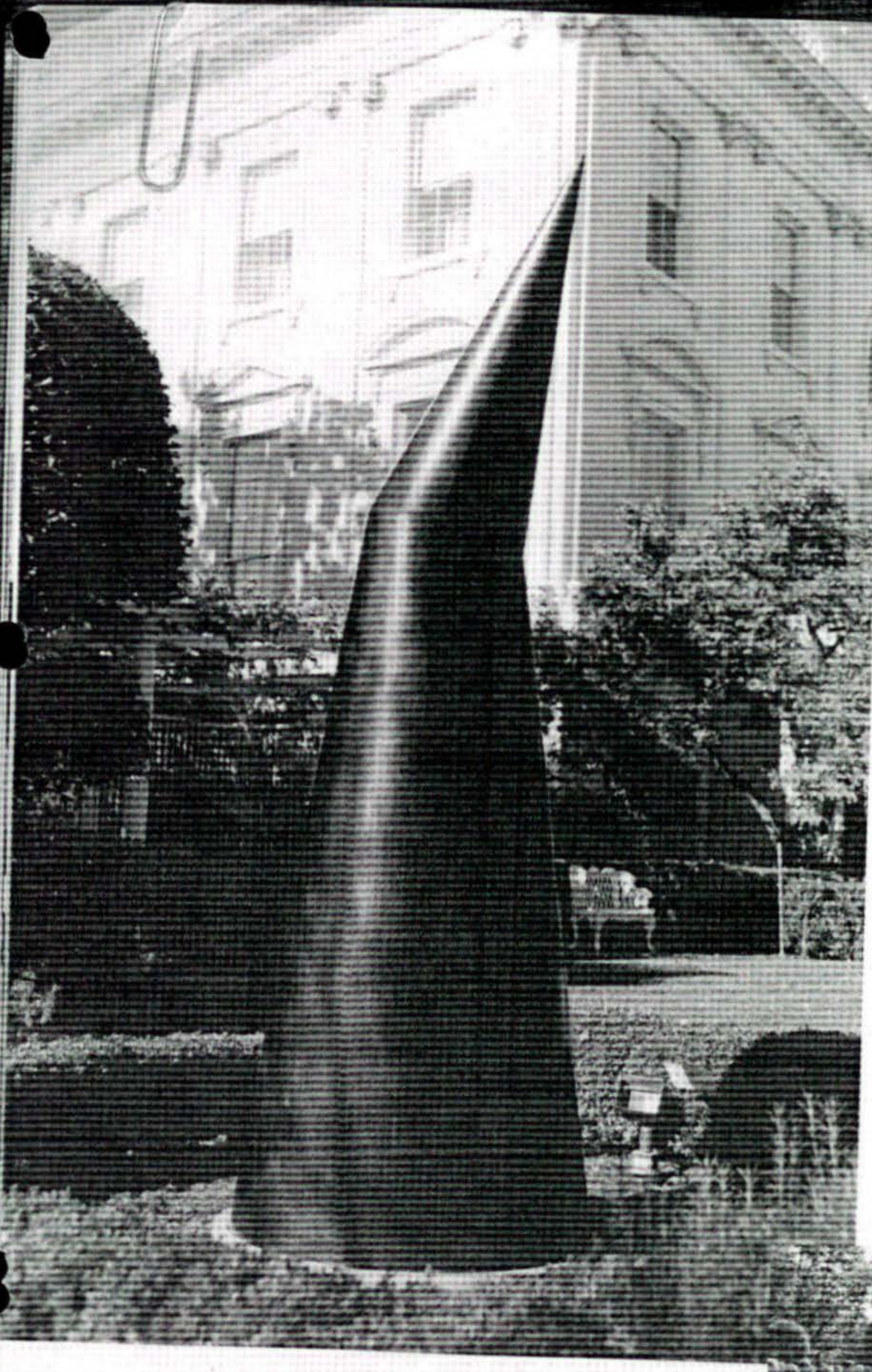
Cathy Noll

Cutting support for the N.E.A. will hurt children.

Public domain, accessible to all and capable of encouraging every person's artistic expression and sensibility.

The National Endowment for the Arts, in partnership with individuals, corporations, foundations and other patrons of the arts, has helped trans-

Hillary Rodham Clinton is honorary chairwoman of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. This article is based on her remarks at the Metropolitan Museum of Art earlier this month.



At the
White
House:

The *First*
Lady's
Sculpture Garden

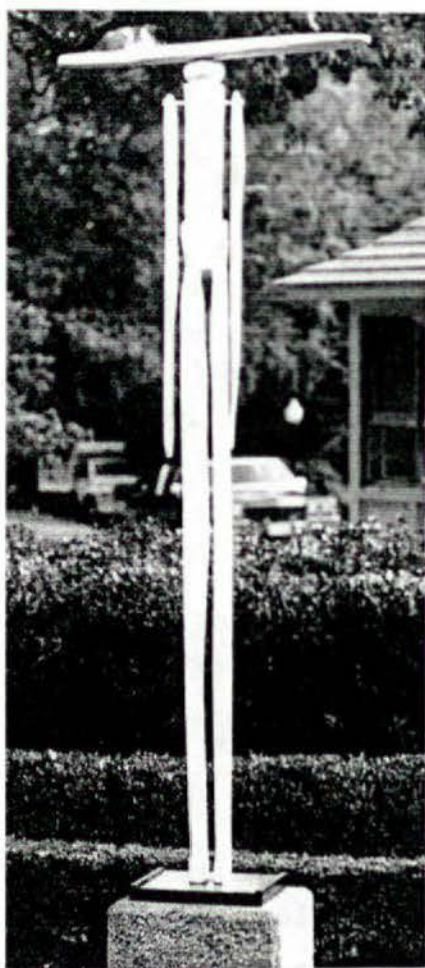
by Mary Lynn Kotz

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, an avid fan of contemporary art, has quietly introduced 20th-century American sculpture to approximately six million visitors to the White House over the past four years. Since 1994, six sculpture exhibitions from museums across the United States have been prominently on view in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden, which is directly across from the glass-walled corridor through which visitors enter the Executive Mansion. The first four exhibitions presented work on loan from art museums in four regions of the country; a fifth featured sculpture from the nation's capital. Currently on exhibition are works by contemporary sculptors of Native American heritage. At least two additional exhibitions are planned: one yet to be announced and a special exhibition commemorating the millennium.

At the first exhibition's opening, Mrs. Clinton expressed her hopes that "this celebration of America's creative spirit will enable each of us to gain a greater appreciation of the rich cultural traditions we share as a nation and as a people."

"I have always loved sculpture," she explains. In her own life, it was Henry Moore who first brought Hillary Rodham and William Jefferson Clinton together as they stood in line to register at Yale Law School. "We started talking and went for a long walk," she recalls, "and we ended up in front of the Yale Art Gallery. They had a Mark Rothko exhibition inside and a Henry Moore exhibition in the sculpture yard. Bill wanted to show me both of them, but we found the doors closed because of a labor dispute." So the innovative Clinton "offered to pick up the trash, which he and his young companion did—and enjoyed a private tour of the Henry Moore works."

The idea for the White House sculpture exhibition began with the First Lady's desire to focus official attention on America's artists. "I was trying to make several statements," says Mrs. Clinton. "The first was just how important the arts are as part of our public life, but also as an integral part and contribution to our private lives. And I wanted to celebrate living artists."



Above: Louise Bourgeois, *Observer*, 1947-49. Bronze and white paint, 76.25 x 29 x 10 in. **Opposite, above:** Robert Therrien, *No Title*, 1985. Bronze, 90 x 32 in. **Opposite, below:** Hillary Clinton addresses the audience during opening ceremonies.

The State rooms of the White House itself are off limits to the work of living artists, according to a policy set in 1964 by the Committee for the Preservation of the White House. The idea of contemporary art *outside* the White House was born the day after the inauguration, as Mrs. Clinton and her friend, designer Kaki Hockersmith from Little Rock, talked about bringing art into the living quarters and the Oval Office. "It was very clear we were both fans of contemporary art," recalls Hockersmith. "We went for a walk in the snow to check out the grounds—18 acres of lawn and trees. Hillary said, 'I can't believe there's no sculpture on the grounds.'" Mrs. Clinton's attention soon focused

on the "First Ladies" Garden, conceived by Jacqueline Kennedy and designed for her by Mrs. Paul Mellon with Perry Wheeler, near the East entrance to the mansion. The 120-by-60-foot garden was a sculptural space in itself, with eight niches, like keyholes, in the shrubbery bordering a rectangular grassy lawn. "When I moved in here, and started wandering around the various parts of the house and yards and gardens, I kept coming back to that garden, which I found restful and private," says Mrs. Clinton. "I spent a lot of time there, sitting in the little trellised area, or out on one of the stone benches, and it just looked to me like a garden that should have some sculpture in it. It looked as though at some point someone had landscaped it with that in mind."

She asked Hockersmith to investigate. Working with former White House curator Rex Scouten and current curator Betty Monkman, Hockersmith went first to Arts and Communications Counselors in New York, then helped Mrs. Clinton prepare a presentation for the Committee for the Preservation of the White House. This committee was formed by the executive order of President Lyndon Johnson in 1964, to continue the historic restoration of the mansion begun by Mrs. Kennedy. Committee member J. Carter Brown, director emeritus of the National Gallery of Art, brought his considerable institutional memory to bear. The niches could hold sculpture beautifully, Brown remembers, just as they had for a White House Festival of the Arts, which brought abstract contemporary art to the White House East colonnade and South lawn for the first time in 1965, during the Johnson Administration.

Mrs. Clinton appointed Brown to facilitate the new White House sculpture exhibitions, and he suggested that only outdoor sculpture from public collections be shown in the garden. Brown brought the project to a meeting of the Association of Art Museum Directors in Seattle, and together with the association's then president, Evan Maurer, director and CEO of the Minneapolis Institute of Art, decided that there should be four shows, one from each region of the country. The series of exhibitions, Brown explained,



Above: George Rickey, *Two Lines Oblique*, Atlanta, 1969. Stainless steel, 35 ft. high. Right: Lonnie Holley, *Leverage*, 1993. Concrete, found wood, paint, and straw, 79.5 x 45.5 x 17 in.

would showcase the museums of America, in addition to its sculptors. "To initiate the program, we went to George Neubert, the director of the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, who is a modern sculpture specialist—and a sculptor himself."

The Midwest was chosen to be first, to represent sculpture collected in the heart of the country and also, Mrs. Clinton surmises, smiling, "because I am from Chicago." In addition to representing the Midwest collections, Neubert also chose to present in the initial exhibition an overview of sculpture in the 20th century. "We looked for the best in American sculpture," he says, "from the early representationalists to contemporary artists such as Ellsworth Kelly...The first consideration was scale—what would fit harmoniously in those spaces and with other pieces?"

In addition to scale, Neubert's aesthetic goals "were to work with the verticality of the formal, French-cut topiary holly trees, and to portray the



human form—in abstraction as well as in representation." He looked for historical development as well as a variety of materials. "There was some anxiety at first," he recalls, "on just how some of these avant-garde pieces would be received—by the press, by the public, and especially by the anti-art forces in Congress."

Some members of the committee and the White House staff worried especially about Gaston Lachaise's *Standing*

Woman, a monumental 1932 bronze nude. "Some on the committee were skittish politically," recalls Brown. The First Lady stood up for the sculpture: "It's obviously very important: a landmark piece in art history and representative of a whole style."

Politically, it was important that no taxpayer money go into the exhibitions. "Traditionally, if one museum borrows from another, the borrower pays," Brown explains. However, few of the museums had funds to ship large pieces of sculpture to Washington and back. A private donor was the answer. The Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation of Los Angeles (art collector and patron Iris Cantor had initially arranged for the loan of a Willem de Kooning painting to the Clintons for the upstairs White House living quarters), came forward to pay all the expenses of the exhibitions—including the little four-by-four-inch souvenir catalogues prepared for visitors to the Mansion. Fine arts photographer David Finn donated his photographs of the sculptures. Then Rex Scouten and Betty Monkman supervised the logistics. Along with the National Park Service, which oversees the White House, the curators ordered cranes to remove the heaviest sculptures from their trucks and set them in place on the lawn.

Exhibition 1: The Midwest,
October 1994 through February 1995
The first of the series of exhibitions (collectively titled, "Twentieth-Century American Sculpture at The White House") opened on the Clinton's 19th wedding anniversary, with 10 works in the garden by sculptors Louise Nevelson, Alexander Calder, David Smith, George Segal, Bryan Hunt, Louise Bourgeois, Manuel Neri, Judith Shea, Ellsworth Kelly, and Gaston Lachaise, and, inside the corridor, Paul Manship.

The only logistical problem with the show was the wind caused by the presidential helicopter landing on the South lawn of the White House, which set Calder's *Five Rudders* (1964), a red and black painted standing mobile spinning like an electric blender. "It was a rugged test," recalls Hocker-Smith. "It usually turns slowly in the wind, but now it was really whirling. We were startled—and almost panicked." But the Calder held up to the turbulence.

The organizers of the show and the White House staff were moved by the reactions of the artists who attended the opening. Even the most acclaimed

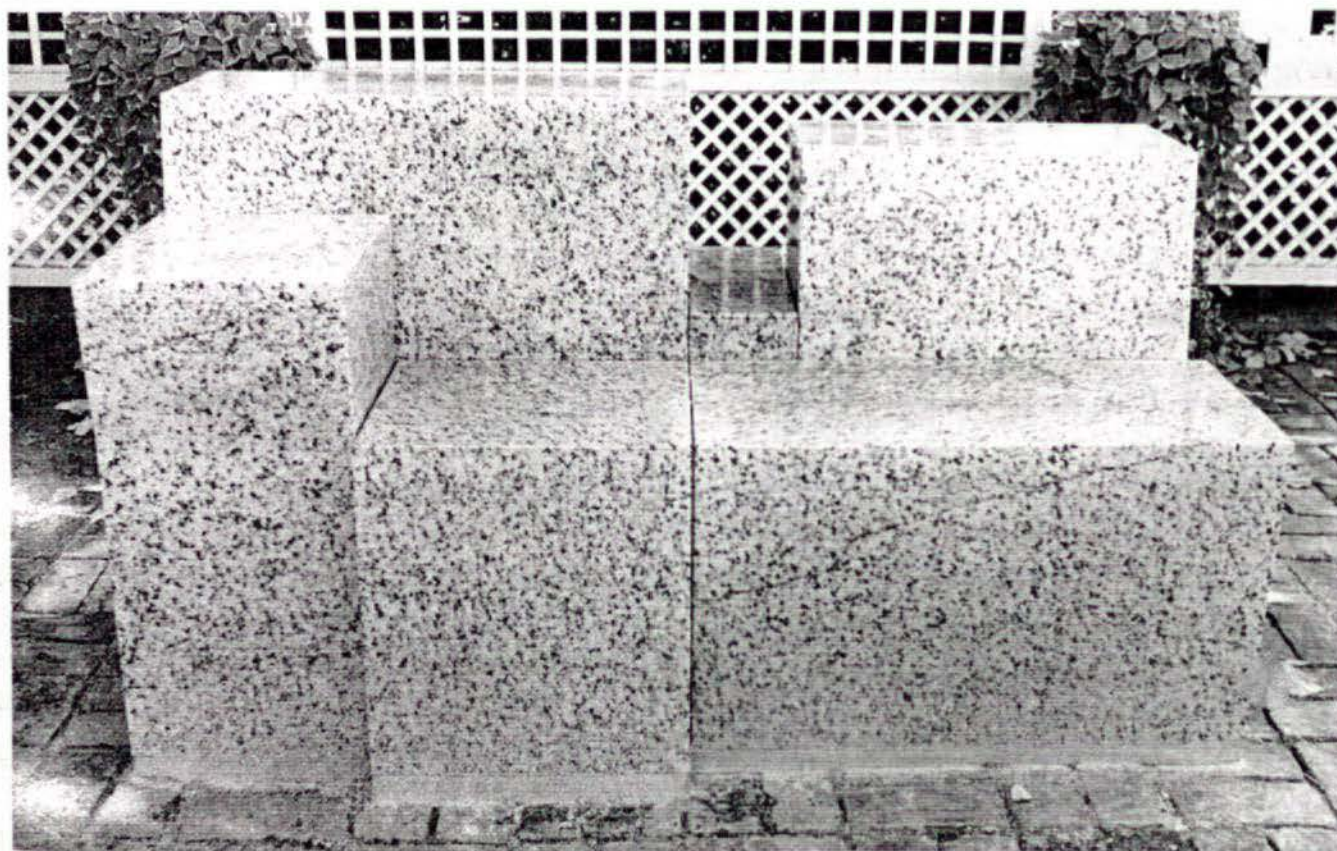
of them responded with awe to being in the great house. Ellsworth Kelly, whose work had been in the 1965 White House Arts Festival, nevertheless was touched by the experience of seeing *Curve VIII*, his thin 1974 aluminum sheath standing tall, sleek, and serene between Nevelson's *Tropical Tree III* (1972) and Bourgeois's linear humanoid *Observer* (1974). Kelly, 71 at the time, told Mrs. Clinton, "I wish my mother and father could be here. My mother never really understood what I was doing, and my father died at the age of 56." Kelly added that "A government should recognize the art of the time."

George Segal had not been to the White House since Lyndon Johnson's inauguration. At the Sculpture Garden opening he said he was surprised and impressed by Mrs. Clinton, who he described as "articulate and well informed about the art being shown." "As an artist and a person," Segal said, "I find myself in enormous sympathy with the way they [the Clintons] are interpreting their job. The federal government is to be praised for expressing interest in the needs of ordi-

nary people." Segal and many of the artists viewed the exhibitions as meaningful to them personally as artists and citizens, and also stated that the First Lady has established an important precedent for both government and the private sector.

Exhibition 2: The Southeast,
April 1995 through September 1995
The regional vane turned South for the second exhibition, again recognizing the first family's history. Townsend Wolfe, director and chief curator of the Arkansas Art Center, was chosen by Brown and Maurer to select sculpture from museums throughout the South. "Since the overview had been presented, my concept was to show works made since 1965," says Wolfe. His criteria were hard to fulfill: works by living artists that exemplify racial, ethnic, and gender diversity, as well as diversity in geography and materials—all in outdoor sculpture within a scale that lends a human dimension to the collection.

Below: Scott Burton, *Granite Settee*,
1982-83. Granite, 36 x 65 x 35 in.



Logistics then became the biggest challenge. New Orleans artist John Scott's brightly colored *Target I* (1993), with polychromed steel humanesque figures standing behind a circle of welded steel, almost did not make it in time for the opening on April 3. "The large piece was so long (116 by 75 by 5 feet) it had to be loaded on a flatbed truck," says Wolfe, "and of such a size that the truck could only travel through certain states and on certain days!" That colorful, arresting sculpture was placed to face the walkway where tourists first enter the mansion, showing its black-and-white "checkerboard" side, described by Wolfe as a "humane comment on racial equality."

At the opposite end of the garden stood George Rickey's *Two Lines Oblique, Atlanta* (1969). The 35-foot stainless steel sculpture, a kinetic parallelogram that Mrs. Clinton described as "not unlike a television antenna," was built to explore the essence of nature—the "waving of branches, trembling of stems," explained Rickey. It moved

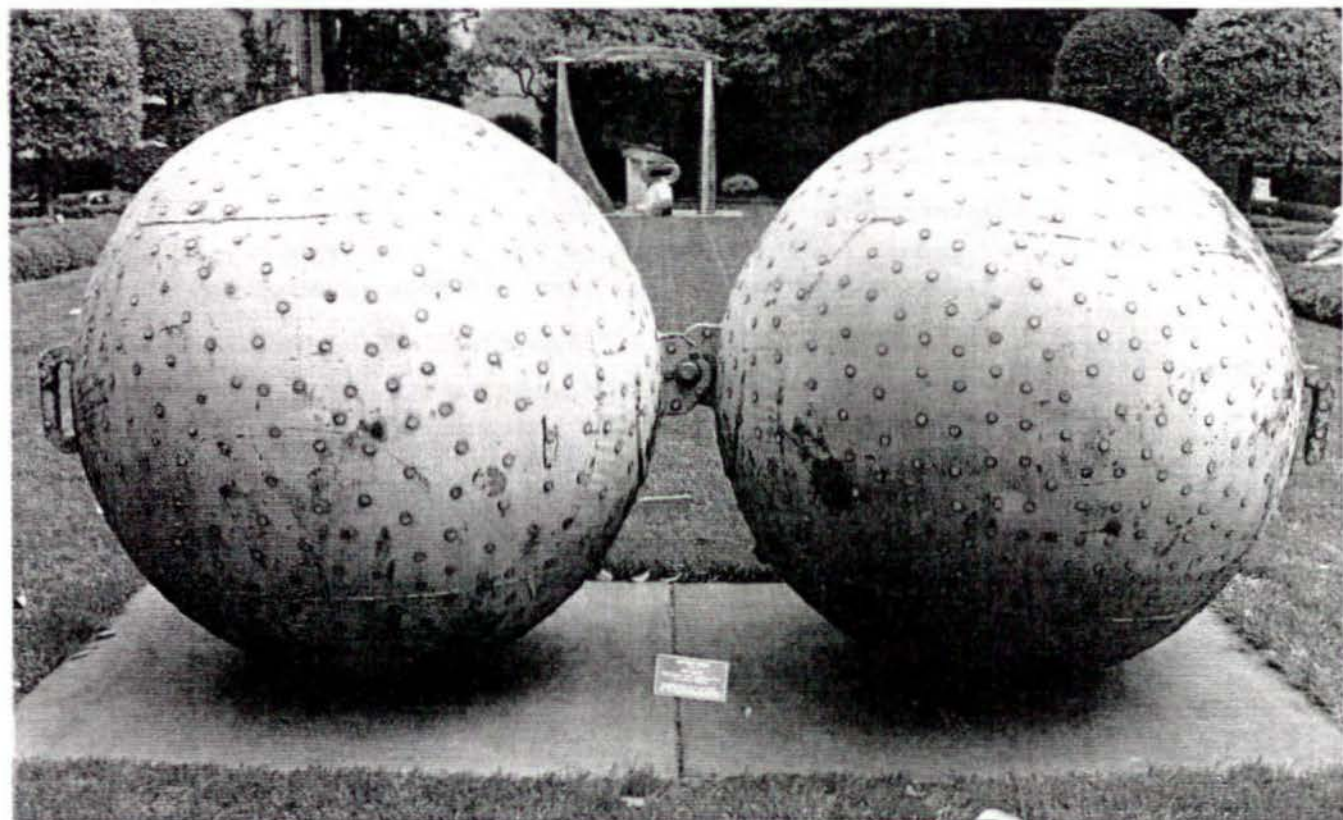
slowly in the wind, and quivered mightily with the helicopters' propeller wash. The sculpture mesmerized its hosts. "We would sit there and watch it," recalls Mrs. Clinton. "Bill and I sometimes had meals out there—or we'd just sit there and we'd watch it, those arms just swinging in the wind. I loved it. I love that whole idea of moving sculpture." Rickey's sculpture, adds the First Lady, was among her favorites in the series of exhibitions—along with another work in the same show, *Vertical Void* (1994), by Carol Hepper, among the younger sculptors shown. Hepper's undulating sculpture, made of copper tubing and steel wound in a spiral, recalls the twisting, bound strands of willow branches—one of the organic materials used by Hepper in her native South Dakota. "I first stood in front of it for four or five minutes at a time," said the President's wife. "I loved the way it looked."

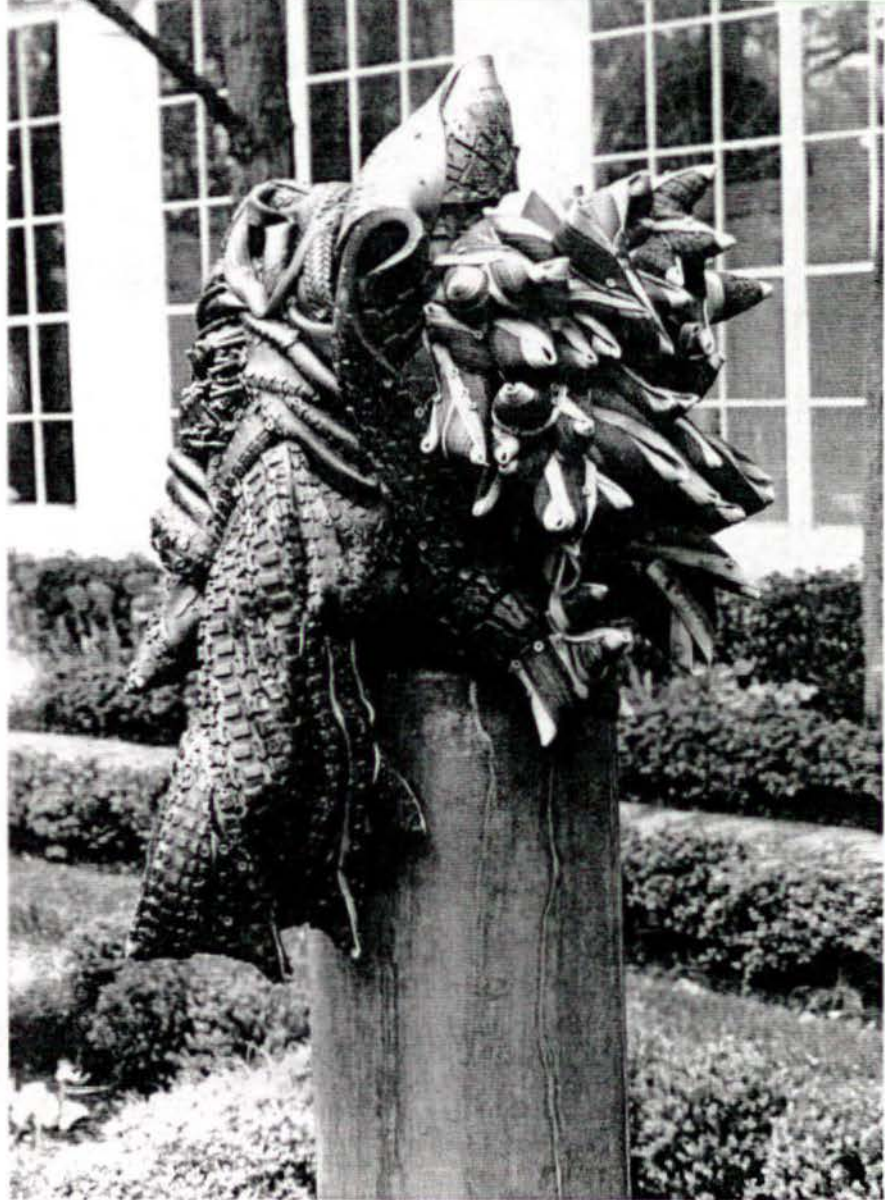
Exhibition 4: The West,
October 1995 through March 1996
Peter C. Marzio, director of Houston's Museum of Fine Arts and organizer of the third exhibition, said that the White House Garden "is quite wonder-

ful for mid-size sculpture—if it were any smaller, it wouldn't be worth it; and bigger, it would be too big." He adds that "The fact that the White House took it seriously elevated the project." Marzio and curator Alison de Lima Greene tracked down sculpture that had Western reference—as well as work in museums from Texas to California that "has transcended regional designation."

Their selections were on view in the garden and adjacent foyer. The works included Joseph Havel's *Exhaling Pearls* (1993), Jesús Bautista Moroles's *Moon Ring 3* (1982), Scott Burton's *Granite Settee* (1982–83), and William Tucker's *Track* (1981). The exhibition's opening had to be postponed from its scheduled November 1995 date; the federal government was shut down by an appropriations impasse. When the celebration finally took place on January 5, 1996, Mrs. Clinton pointed to the "difficult and challenging time in Washington and in our country," adding that contemplating sculpture can "make our spirits soar, reminding us of life's possibilities...and gives viewers a chance to think about what their own lives mean."

Below: Donald Lipski, *The West*, 1987.
Painted steel, corroded pennies, and silicone adhesive, two elements, each 60 in. dia.





Left: Chakaia Booker, *Repugnant Rapunzel (Let Down Your Hair)*, 1995. Rubber tire, wood, and metal, 35 x 25 x 22 in.

"Norah Butterfield's bronze equine *Hina* (1990-91) perhaps most strongly signified the West for White House visitors. Butterfield says that being in the show gave her a greater understanding of the past and her connection to her Western forebears. "Being from Montana, I was moved by how much of a presence the West has in the White House...My sculpture was right outside the window from works by Frederic Remington and Charles Marion Russell," she says. "They seemed to be looking out at my horse. I felt connected to Remington and Russell in a way I'd never felt before." Butterfield says that *Hina* has its sources as far west as the country gets, being made from mountain driftwood gathered and assembled in Hawaii. The artist welded a bronze signature around the sticks, which were burned away in the casting—but the open-work effect leaves their

history, so that the work combines the earth's flora, fauna, and metal.

Joel Shapiro's bronze *Untitled* (1982), an abstract, geometric rendition of a human figure with limbs akimbo, stood in precarious balance in the garden across from Martin Puryear's *Decoy* (1990), which aimed its arched neck or snout at its neighbor, Robert Therrien's *No Title* (1985), a bold, sleek minimalist dunce cap.

Exhibition 1: The Northeast.

April 1996 through September 1997 For the final regional exhibition, representing art in the Northeast, curator Marcia Tucker, founding director of the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York City, chose more avant-garde, adventurous work. Her aim was to focus on the way artists use physical material and conceptual boundaries in sculpture—and to find

sculptors whose work had not been shown in the previous exhibitions.

From nine museums from New York to Maine, Tucker selected works made from 1971 to 1995 by internationally recognized artists as well as younger artists. Visitors entering the mansion were first greeted by the late Nancy Graves's 1984 *Dallaleve*. Maren Hassinger's *In a Quiet Place* (1985) is an excerpt from an installation in the Studio Museum in Harlem—a garden of wire, rope, and concrete, which refers to grass, weeds, limbs, and other natural elements.

"Landscape, myth, body, and spirit" were the subjects of the works, according to Tucker. Ed Shay drew from nature in his bronze *Acadian Gyro* (1987). The skeleton of a boat, with a fish head where the head of a maiden might be, was cast from latex and plaster molds found in Shay's own back yard. Shay says: "The work can be read as a sort of ancestral gyroscope; we are in part determined by who our ancestors were."

Also rooted in nature were Joel Fisher's *Seed (Egg Man)* (1986-87) and Chakaia Booker's *Repugnant Rapunzel (Let Down Your Hair)* (1995), a fairy tale character whose automobile tire tresses cascade down from the statue's sleek metal head. Robert Lobe, who worked in construction jobs to support his early sculpture work, created *Harmony Ridge #26* (1990) with anodized, hammered aluminum molded like clay to become a fictional rock. Melvin Edwards shaped his *Gate of Ogun* (1983) in silvery stainless steel. Like a shrine or altar, the piece is spiritually evocative.

Progress in the exhibition almost came to a halt when *The West* (1987), Donald Lipski's massive bronze globes studded with pennies, was stopped at the White House gates. "The Secret Service thought it looked too much like two land mines," said Carter Brown. "They said they had to be sure there were no explosives inside." Amused, Lipski said, "They wanted to bore holes to look. I didn't mind." But the Metropolitan Museum of Art, owner of the piece, would not hear of it. The

sculpture was trucked out to the X-ray facility at a government ordnance plant in Maryland. "It passed inspection, and was allowed to enter the show...where it didn't bomb," laughs Brown.

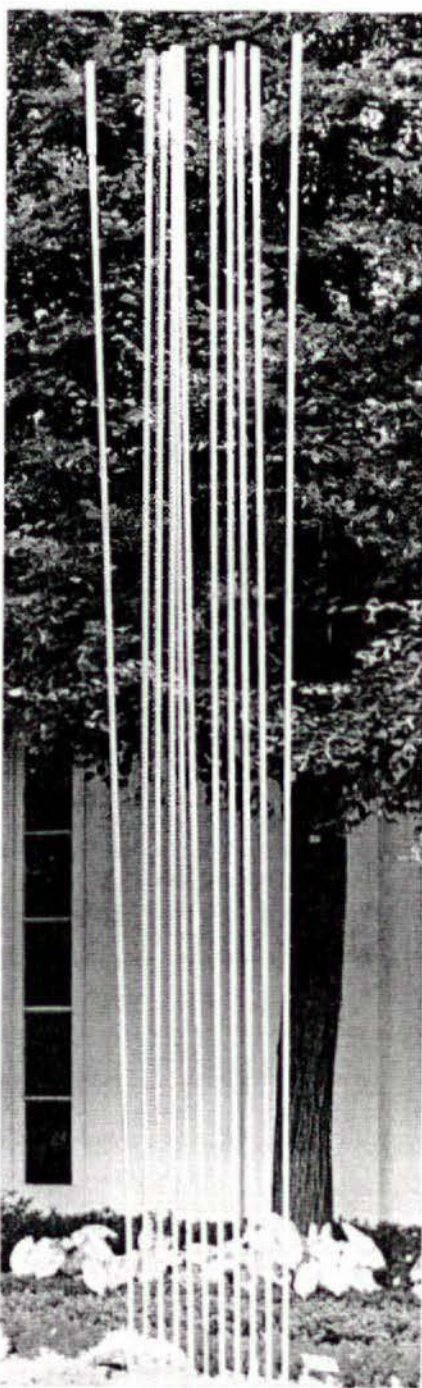
Exhibition 5: The Nation's Capital, October 1996 through October 1997
The Committee for the Preservation of the White House had planned for only the four regional exhibitions during the first term of the Clinton administration. After the Clinton victory in 1996, however, Mrs. Clinton stated emphatically that she wanted to continue the series. Knowing that every tourist would not have a chance to see every museum in Washington, she had asked Earl "Rusty" Powell, director of the National Gallery of Art, to select the dozen best examples of outdoor sculpture in town. The exhibition included Willem de Kooning's *Seated Woman on a Bench* (1972), a heavy bronze figure gnarled as if in anguish, which was centered in the row of art between the trees. Mrs. Clinton says that she could not resist touching Harry Bertoia's 1977 *Tonal Sculpture*, which would set the work into motion and cause its tall, reed-like beryllium copper rods to produce sound.

Several of the garden sculptures represented the old guard of 20th-century sculpture, including Calder's *Nenuphar* (1968), David Smith's *Agricola I* (1951-52) and *Voltri XV* (1962), Alexander Archipenko's sleek *Le Gondolier* (1914), and Isamu Noguchi's *Great Rock of Inner Seeking* (1974). More recent works included Joel Shapiro's *Untitled* (1989) and, inside, Immi Storrs's *Five Horses* (1988) and Roy Lichtenstein's solid brass *Untitled Head I* (1969-70).

Mrs. Clinton invited the artists to a closing celebration in September, though Roy Lichtenstein and de Kooning had died during the exhibition's time. Judith Shea, whose *Shield* (1990) had been in the first show, came to the White House for the first time to see her *Post-Balzac* (1991) in this exhibition. That piece, a stately bronze coat, empty and austere, is normally on view at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, also home to Rodin's famous *Monument to Balzac* (1898). "I wanted to address

how, at the end of the last century, there was both romance and optimism for the next century," says Shea. "I wanted to ask, 'Where are we a century later?' This century's technical innovations have brought horrors, with the level of destruction we are able to do. The coat is hollow—a metaphor for

Below: Harry Bertoia, *Tonal Sculpture*, 1977. Beryllium copper and bronze weights, 212 in. high, 48.33 x 48.33 in. base.



the condition of the spirit, for emptiness." Shea adds that "to present American art in the context of the White House—to show visitors, heads of state—is a great contribution."

Exhibition 6: Honoring Native America, October 1997 through October 1998

In the five previous exhibitions, Mrs. Clinton had praised the diversity among the sculptors, by race, ethnic origin, and gender. But she had noticed there were no Native American sculptors represented. Were there, she wondered, Native American sculptors working in contemporary fine arts, who would comprise an excellent exhibition?

"Several years ago I met Allan Houser," says Mrs. Clinton, "And I adored him. He was a sunbeam—just this wonderful, joyous, open look on his face. He had a really magnificent, very large sculpture of a warrior that he wanted to give to the White House. This was before I'd gotten permission to do the sculpture garden. He eventually wanted it to go to the Museum of the American Indian, which we were supposed to be building on the Mall. I wanted to take the sculpture because he very much wanted to give it to the government. He was quite sick at the time. And so I called the Vice President and said, 'How would you like to just temporarily have on your grounds this rather large Indian warrior sculpture?' Allan Houser has since died. It was so important to me that he be represented in this exhibition."

Houser's sculpture, *Earth Song* (1978), a figurative Apache carved from Alabama marble, sits like a tribal elder at the east side of the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden, an honored position for the "Grandfather of Contemporary Native American Sculpture." The artwork, on loan from the Heard Museum in Phoenix, was selected by the Heard's curator of fine art, Margaret Archuleta, who "would have chosen Houser's work to open the show even if Mrs. Clinton hadn't requested it," because of Houser's influence in bringing Native American culture into 20th-century art.

"My personal and professional goal is to include Native American art in the mainstream art world," says



Above: Truman Lowe, *Bird Effigy*, 1997. Aluminum, 42 x 240 x 132 in.

Archuleta, herself of Hispanic and San Juan Pueblo heritage. "Contemporary sculpture is a very new medium for Native American artists," she continues. "Only a handful work in sculpture, and even fewer are working on large-scale pieces that can be placed outdoors. Also, to be eligible, all the sculpture must be in a public collection. The challenge was quality in a field that was narrower than most."

In this exhibition, Allan Houser's student, Doug Hyde (Nez Perce/Assiniboine/Chippewa), echoes Houser's curvilinear traditional style with his Tennessee pink marble *Flag Son* (1983) made to commemorate tribal veterans on Veterans Day. Houser's son, Bob Haozous (Haozous is the family's original Apache name) departed from his father's style by working in stainless steel, employing a sleek, European-based rendering of line for *Woman In Love* (1983).

Sculpture by the youngest artist in all the exhibitions, Roxanne Swentzell '85, of the Santa Clara Pueblo, was shown in the foyer. Her figurative sculpture, *The Emergence of the Clowns* (1988), in mixed-media clay, is derived from ancient effigy figures and shaped in the coil and scrape method of pot building. The sacred clowns, or *Koshares*, are shown in partial human form, as if emerging from the earth.

Also reflecting the Native American cultural heritage as well as contempo-

rary sculpture influences is another work in aluminum, *Bird Effigy* (1997), by Truman Lowe (Winnebago), an art professor at the University of Wisconsin. The sculpture was inspired by the ceremonial mounds in the shape of birds found along the Ohio, Wisconsin, and Mississippi rivers. Lowe was commissioned by the Heard Museum to make the piece in time for the White House exhibition. "On the University of Wisconsin campus, there's a bird-mound with a wingspan of 50 feet and a length of 30 feet, head-to-tail," he said. "I wanted to create something out of respect for that particular culture, from 2,000 to 3,000 years ago." But Lowe's White House sculpture is also rooted in the 20th century. Fabricated of curved two-inch solid aluminum rods, the open metal frame of his bird effigy, hovering above the ground, suggests the 20th-century re-interpretation of the bird as airplane, flying low like a stealth bomber. "I wanted it to be visible from the Presidential helicopter," said Lowe. "We're in the present," he added, "and peering into the future. The new technologies allow us to re-interpret our past. We don't create new forms; it's just using the information we have—and how we think about ourselves."

The purpose of the Sculpture Garden (as it is now informally called) is, in Mrs. Clinton's words, "to make a statement about the importance of art." Through all the exhibitions, Mrs. Clinton reports, the

public reaction has been positive. "We have been deluged with comments, reviews, and anecdotal evidence about how much it has meant." For the million-and-a-half people who walk by every year, she says, "It has provided a conversation piece. It's given people a chance to talk about art while they wait in line to see the rooms in the White House."

Of her opportunity to highlight American sculpture, the First Lady is even more hopeful of an impact: "The pieces themselves were so well showcased that a lot of museum curators and art patrons would come to our various exhibitions—and come away more positive about outdoor sculpture," she says, noting that many museums have little space outdoors.

With two more exhibitions ahead, Mrs. Clinton would like to see the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden continue to feature sculpture, even into the future—and is dreaming about an endowment that might make it possible. "Obviously, whoever is here next will make whatever decisions they want to make about the sculpture garden. I hope they'll really pay attention to what it has meant and how it has finished off the look of that garden, and what it has meant to the people walking through the East Colonnade," she says. "And what it has meant to the artists, the museums, and the patrons of art—to art lovers around the country."

Mary Lynn Kotz is a writer based in Washington, D.C.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Internal Use Only

September 21, 1994

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
AT THE NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWSHIP RECEPTION

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you so much, Jane, and thank all of you for gathering here today to honor these extraordinary people. This is a great pleasure for me, because I am one who, although not talented myself, am very grateful for the extraordinary range of talents and abilities and skills that are brought to bear on our collective cultural life together.

It is so exciting to be part of this National Heritage Fellows presentation, because, all too often, our traditional arts and those who practice them and who bring joy to their communities and are able to carry on traditions that would otherwise be lost, are not recognized and acknowledged; and so I am very, grateful to have been invited to be part of this.

Each of the awardees has been judged by a panel of their peers. They have been judged to be outstanding practitioners of artistic traditions that are bodily parts of our nation's cultural life. Each is an inheritor of the best of our cultural past, someone who has upheld the highest standards of achievement forged by generations of people who came before.

The folk arts that they represent are also the cornerstones of our (inaudible). Through their (inaudible) traditional art, the National Heritage Fellows have authorized me to (inaudible) for the future as well as the monuments of our past.

Their high aspirations, creativity, determination, and hard work prove in the most vivid way the truth of that old saying, that strong roots (inaudible) roots. They also represent something which is too often overlooked and even occasionally disregarded, and that is the very rich collective, multi-stranded traditions that made up our country and made up the arts which are so critical to the

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definition of who we are as a people.

They offer us a vision of ourselves as Americans and our richness as a democratic people who are strengthened by the multitude of people with (inaudible) and have brought their own traditions to America.

The President wasn't able to join us this morning, but he has written each of the awardees a letter expressing his congratulations for their achievements, but also adds this paragraph:

"One of the greatest strengths of our nation is its rich and diverse cultural heritage. As a (inaudible) traditional artists, you have met (inaudible) standards of excellence in your craft. Your extraordinary skills are helping to ensure that the splendid legacies of our past are preserved and carried forward for generations of Americans to come."

The President and I are grateful for each of the contributions that our honorees have made and will continue to make, and I'm hopeful that their contributions will be not only honored (inaudible) today, not only recognized in this wonderful booklet that's been put together by NEA, but will really be appreciated for what they represent -- a way of demonstrating the diversity in art and culture but, even beyond that, the diversity of human experience, human aspiration, that is really at the core of the American experience.

We are grateful and appreciative and thankful that they have brought these gifts to all of us. Thank you (inaudible). (Applause.)

(End of tape.)

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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 15, 1994

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS BY THE FIRST LADY
AT DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I don't know about all of you, but I think we can just quit right now. I feel like I've had one of the best evenings in a very long time.

I want to thank Eli and Naisha (phonetic) for the best introduction done ensemble that I have ever had and ever will have. I am grateful for you for that. I want to thank Mrs. Cafritz and her (inaudible), Mr. Malone (phonetic), for realizing their dream and yours through this marvelous school and all that it represents.

Principal Wilson and representatives of the school board and board members and all of you who are gathered for this special evening, I know that you join me in a feeling of pride and even of teary eyes as I watched all of the graduates coming in, and I was privileged to get here early enough to see your performance, and I could not help but be moved by all of it, but particularly the finale. This indeed is your night. Tonight is yours, and I hope every other night from now into the future gives you the same joy that you gave all of us.

On behalf of the President, I want to extend my congratulations on 20 remarkable years, and I hope that today's editorial in the Washington Post will galvanize this community so that this school continues to be a symbol of excellence of public schools and will flourish and thrive for many years to come. All of us who have seen the results of Ellington's work should join with the supporters of Ellington to make sure that work not only continues but grows in strength.

As you probably know, I live with a President who has an abiding interest and love of the arts. It was given to him as a young child by teachers such as the ones that you

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have enjoyed here at this school. He loves music. We love together painting and museums. We love theater. We know that in a very deep way the arts represents the very soul of our nation.

And what Ellington has done is to represent young people who are fulfilling their dreams as artists and performers, and I was particularly proud that you had a role to play in the festivities honoring the Emperor and Empress of Japan, and they personally spoke to me about how impressed they were by your choir, and, after hearing you tonight, I certainly can understand that.

By now, most of you have discovered the power of human hope and imagination. Where there is imagination, there is always hope. Where there is potential for creative expression, there is always the possibility for human progress. I believe, as I know you do, that all forms of art -- music, dance, literature, painting, sculpture, poetry -- all of it has an enormous capacity to affect not only your individual lives but the lives of your larger community.

Art is not beyond. It moves people. It encourages people. It puzzles people. It provokes people. You have at your fingertips, because of your talent and your dedication and your hard work, the opportunity to not only explore your own potential but to influence people far beyond.

I was very moved to receiving the painting. It will come with me back to the White House, where it will hang in a place of honor. And I was very touched to receive the sculpture. Those two pieces of artistic work, standing on their own, carry meaning. You know, because of what you have given your lives to, that you've had to have a lot of discipline to get where you are. You've made a lot of risks and sacrifices and taken on a lot of responsibilities.

Now the question is, what will you do with all that you have been given and all that you have taken? As you look to the future, I hope you will remember there are many things that distinguish artists and performers from the rest of us, but there are at least three I would like to mention.

First, artists are willing to make sacrifices. That's something you already know because many of you have already done that. Peggy mentioned the VPIS award and Children's Defense Fund. I know from my own experience that

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many of you have already overcome great odds and have been willing to make sacrifices for your education and your art.

Second, artists are willing to take risks. They are willing to expose their ideas, their visions, their emotions to outside scrutiny in ways that other people are not. It takes courage and it takes guts to be an artist. And I hope that you will always celebrate your willingness to take risks on behalf of your art.

Robin Smith (phonetic), the president of the student body, talked recently about the hard lessons she had learned here. She said, "I have learned to accept criticism, and if you don't learn that you shouldn't go on with your career." I might add that being open to criticism means being open to learning and growing. As someone who gets more than, I think, my fair share of criticism, I have to echo Ms. Smith's words. You have to learn to accept criticism. But I would add to what she said, learn to accept it seriously but not personally. Do not let anyone else's opinion of you or your work (inaudible).

The third point of distinction I would like to share with you is that perhaps because the work of artists and performers reflects, in the words of the painter Romer Beardon (phonetic), "the soul of the people," you do have an added responsibility to make a positive difference in society. This is always the subject of commencement speeches, but in your case it is more dramatic and perhaps even more immediate than it is for the usual graduates.

For your generation, the future holds great promise and great peril, great peril because we only have to look around us to see that the world still has too much poverty, too much racism, too much violence, too much indifference, too many of the things we have struggled with since the very beginning of time.

But there are great promises embodied in the lives of every one of us, and particularly in your lives. You have what I hope you will always hold onto, what someone once called "a hard-earned optimism." I know that many of you sit here often thinking in the past four years that you might not be able to stay the course. I know that there were times when it didn't seem worth it, when you didn't feel you had the support that you needed or thought you deserved from family and friends. But it was your optimism, your willingness to

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keep going that really at the root is what will make your promise ripple out into a great promise for the larger society.

That means you must have a vision of life that does not ignore the tough realities but is based on those tough realities but is infused with hope. You know, an attitude about one's ability to take responsibility and contribute to society can be yours no matter what your personal circumstances might be. And I would only say to you what I believe with all my heart, what I see my husband doing every day, and that is, never, never give up, no matter how many obstacles are thrown in your way.

Giving up, especially when you have the talent that you all have, is an indulgence. And you only have to look at the events of the last month to realize why it is never appropriate to give up. Think for a minute about the inauguration of Nelson Mandela.

If there were ever a man who had reason to give up, it certainly was he. Twenty-seven years, longer than you have been alive, he spent in prison. I had the extraordinary privilege of attending his inauguration. I hope you saw much of the television coverage of that historic event. But I want to tell you what personally made the single biggest impression on me.

Yes, I was overwhelmed by the inaugural ceremonies, by the sight of Nelson Mandela mounting the stairs, surrounded by the military leaders of South Africa who were now part of a new constitutional government. But what really moved me and what said more to me about his greatness than anything else was what he said at a function after the inaugural, when he stood before a very large crowd of visiting dignitaries and other people from around the world and told us that he had invited to his inaugural three of his former jailers.

Stop and think about that for a minute. I felt a rush of emotion like I have never experienced. I sat there thinking, this man is great because he has learned the basic lessons of what it is to be a human being filled with hope, who continues to forgive, never to forget, but always to forgive, because a hopeful heart has no room for bitterness, has no room for vengeance, has no room for (inaudible).

And I thought to myself, if this man in this

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extraordinary act of humanity could overcome bitterness and invite his three jailers to his inaugural, certainly every one of us could change our own hearts and our own minds and begin to live with that same level of hopefulness.

And then, last week, the President and I were in Europe to celebrate the lives and sacrifices of many of your grandparents and uncles and others who lived and fought and maybe even died during World War Two. We saw many there who had survived that particular conflict, but I want to tell you about one particular gentleman.

He's not a famous person, but he is a very important man. His name is Woodrow Profitt (phonetic). He was a member of a very significant group called the Tuskegee Airmen, young African American men who believed they were as good as anybody else. Who believed in the promise of democracy and freedom and decided they wanted to make their contribution, and they formed themselves into the Tuskegee Airmen.

And if you followed any of the TV coverage of the invasion of Europe, you may have heard that in the two months before D-Day, 2,000 planes, 12,000 men were shot down over Europe by the Germans. The Tuskegee Airmen, who flew fighter planes that were to protect bombers making those bombing runs, never lost a single bomber. And I asked Mr. Profitt, how, in the face of the extraordinary attacks that were going on, did the Tuskegee Airmen never lose a single bomber? And he said, "That's because we knew our job, we stayed in formation, and we took care of each other." Pretty good words to live by (inaudible).

And those words echoed for me when I heard these words from someone who not only plays beautiful music, but has a lot to tell us, namely, Wynton Marsalis. Wynton Marsalis says, "Life is like playing the blues." So, in ending, let me pass on his advice. And it is as follows: "Always bring your horn. Know the tune. Learn to listen with empathy. Understand your role in the ensemble. And, most of all, enjoy playing."

Think about your own lives in that light, and go forth from this celebration with optimism and hope, courage and confidence to chart your own courses. Many people have invested in you, and I think it's an investment that has been very well made. God bless you, and good luck, everyone.

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(End of speech.)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 9, 1995

REMARKS BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
AT THE NATIONAL DESIGN AWARDS

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much. I am grateful to Roger Johnson for this opportunity to be with all of you and also with his wife Janice. I am delighted that I had the opportunity to share this platform with Jane Alexander, who is doing a superb job of pointing out the relationship between the arts and the quality of our society. And I am particularly honored that I had the chance to share this platform with Senator Hatfield, and I think, by the reception you gave him this afternoon, you too were honored by his presence.

It is a particular pleasure to be with those of you who work day in and day out with the GSA and those of you who were involved in helping to choose amongst the many designs that were presented to you as members of the jury, and particularly to all of the honorees.

I am especially glad that we are holding this honorary ceremony here, in this building, which is one of my personal favorites in Washington, but I am usually inside of this building at night, at some event or another, so to be here during the day, especially with the sun shining, is a particular pleasure.

The work that we are honoring today, certainly goes far beyond any recognition that we can give you this afternoon. Because each day, what those of you who are being honored do, affects tens of thousands and even millions of Americans, who over the course of the lifetime of the buildings-- they too feel what you have attempted to impart to them in the way of your vision, your idea of what a public building should look like. Too often public buildings do not represent the best in any society. They do not reflect the work that goes on in them or do they in any way represent anyone's vision. They are strictly utilitarian and oftentimes not even effectively that.

But today we honor work that will stand the test of time. Sometimes that is not immediately apparent to the people of a building's or a design's time. You heard Senator Hatfield talk somewhat of the history of our Capitol. Well, both the Capitol and the White House were the results of a competition sponsored by President Washington. Many, many people complained about the results for both designs. Often the President's House, as the White House was called then, was referred to as undistinguished, disproportionate. And yet today it is, as is our Capitol, a

signal and a symbol of our democracy and what we as a nation stand for that is immediately recognized and appreciated around the world. Each of your designs are making a mark in the cities in which you worked. From the energy efficient border station in International Falls to the new technology which will strengthen the structure of the US Court of Appeals in San Francisco to resist future earthquakes, to a program which asked New York school children to interpret through art the significance of an African burial ground discovered during construction of the Federal Office Building.

All of these awards that are being honored today span a wide range of designs. And the fact that we are all affected means that each of us has a stake in the work that is done. Each of us has to in some way recognize that those buildings are us. They represent who we are, who we intend to become. The GSA, in partnership with the NEA, deserves great credit for encouraging creative design in our nation's infrastructure. Together they have encouraged preeminent national designers to participate in this process. These kinds of public/private partnerships are essential to bringing out the best, not only in government, but also in the private sector. As the world's leading purchaser of design services, the federal government should be the leader in fostering design excellence. Good design can affect our lives by beautifying our surroundings, improving our productivity and helping to affect positive social change. Too often we take our surroundings for granted. Too often we forget that the spaces we work in influence the way we live and do our jobs, the way we interact with each other, how we enjoy our days. I am lucky enough to be spending my days in very beautiful federal buildings-- The Old Executive Office Building, The West Wing, The White House. They say to me every day as I walk through the doors, this is a very special country, because the people who came before cared enough to think about the designs of the buildings they lived and worked in. And they wanted their vision, whether it was the Oval Office President Franklin Roosevelt put in, or the Truman Balcony, to say something about the kind of nation we were.

Federal buildings tell us a lot about our history, our culture and how we see ourselves as a people. The designs that are commissioned should reflect not only the best execution, but, as Senator Hatfield pointed out, the wise use of taxpayer's money. This year's 14 winners reflect both criteria, and it is a great pleasure for me to be part of saying thank you and congratulations.

End

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 15, 1995

**Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
at Sculpture Garden Opening**

MRS. CLINTON: Good morning. Good morning. Oh please be seated. We're so pleased to have you on this glorious day here at the White House. It is always a pleasure to have guests and particularly those who have come from other parts of the country to be in Washington. And today it is especially a pleasure to have so many friends and lovers of art as we celebrate the second exhibition of contemporary American sculpture in the First Lady's Garden.

At a time of great debate about the role of art in society, I am particularly pleased that we can showcase American Art and artists at the White House. The president and I have always believed that art is not a marginal part of our culture nor a luxury that should only be accessible to those who can afford it. Art evokes our emotions and provokes our ideas. It enlarges our understanding of the world around us. It tells us who we are and what we can be and it ought to be experienced and shared by all Americans.

The twelve pieces assembled for this exhibition represent American sculpture since 1965. Like the sculptures in the first exhibit which some of you saw while they were on display in the fall, these sculptures embody the rich diversity of American artistic tradition and reflect the power of creative expression in our culture. I hope that you and the tens of thousands of visitors and guests who pass through here over the next few months will feel the same sensations of joy, excitement, inspiration, and intrigue, and challenge as I do looking at these particular sculptures.

I often come here at twilight after I try to do my daily exercise and sit and look at these sculptures as I did at the first ones that were here and find myself constantly being motivated and enjoying greatly the gifts that all of you have helped make possible. I hope that in seeing this exhibit all Americans will be reminded of the vital role that art plays in strengthening the democratic ideals upon which our nation is founded.

As some of you know, the idea for this exhibition was inspired in part by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. My all too brief friendship with her left a lasting impression on me as it did on so many others. It is a fitting tribute to her and

the extraordinary contribution she made to the White House to keep alive her appreciation of the arts through this ongoing exhibition of contemporary American sculpture.

Many people have helped us realize this dream. And I am so pleased that today we are able to again thank some of you who have worked hard over the last years to take an idea and translate it into reality. Once again, I want to thank the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation for their extraordinary support of this exhibition and for sculpture in general. Thank you. Iris, stand up. I also want to thank the Committee for the Preservation of the White House and the White House Historical Association some of whose members I see in the audience and I'd like to ask all the members of these important organizations to please stand and be recognized.

I owe a special debt of thanks to J. Carter Brown who has helped to shepherd this idea and to Rex Scouten, curator of the White House, both of whom have been extraordinarily helpful. I am so personally pleased to welcome back George Newburt, the director of the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden at the University of Nebraska who curated the first exhibit and got us off to such a great start when we began with sculptures from the midwest.

Today it is a special honor and pleasure for me to thank the curator of this exhibit, someone whom I have known for a long time, admired and appreciated, and had nothing to do with his selection. The Association of Art Museum Directors, in its wisdom, chose Townsend Wolfe, the director and chief curator of the Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock, to be the curator of this exhibit and we are very excited about that, Townsend. Thank you so much.

I would also like to thank Betsy Braun, the director of the National Museum of American Art, and Larry Rieger for their efforts to save and preserve our nation's outdoor sculptures through the Save Outdoor Sculpture Program which they have helped to implement.

The twelve sculptures behind me are from the southeast and they focus on American Sculpture from 1965. I am very grateful to the institutions which have lent their sculptures to this exhibit. It is not an easy decision to make.

I know that there are many of you here in this audience who are devoted benefactors and enjoy greatly the works in the institutions who are participating and we are so pleased that you would be willing to do this.

I'm also delighted that we have some of the artists with us who created these sculptures and, in fact, I think we have eight

of the eleven living artists with us and we thank them for adding beauty to our daily surroundings, for preventing us from becoming complacent about the lives we lead and the world we live in, and I would like all the artists who are with us to please stand for a moment.

This is a very exciting time for us in our country as we confront very challenging decisions about the kind of people we are, the kind of society we wish to have, the country that we will live in as we move into the 21st century and I am grateful that so many of you here for this ceremony are people who have supported the arts in your local communities and throughout the country. It is a major contribution that you make, not only to the arts but to the quality of our life together. And I would like now to invite you to again walk through the garden and then join me in the Blue Room upstairs for a reception, then in the State Dining Room. Thank you all very much. (Applause)

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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 6, 1995

Remarks by
First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
at the 125th Anniversary Celebration of the
Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York, New York

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, very much. It is such a great honor and pleasure for me to join you this evening. I am someone who is a great fan of this Museum and a great fan of the Cantors.

And to have an occasion such as this where we celebrate both is special. I want to add my word of thanks to this Museum and to all of you who have supported it, nurtured it, loved it, brought it to where it is today. I have just had an opportunity to view the proposed new galleries, for the exhibition of the collection of Greek and Roman art, as I was told, the finest collection in the Western hemisphere.

And it is very exciting to see the plans for this and to know what a contribution it will make to the continuing greatness of the Museum. None of this would be possible without all of you who have been patrons and supporters of this Museum. And tonight, we honor two people who have been especially important.

Iris and Bernie have over the years stood behind so many important causes in health care and education. And tonight, we celebrate their contribution to the arts. What they have done by their generosity has not only meant that literally millions of people have been enhanced by their eye, their passion, their commitment. But it has also, I believe, served to spur others to be similarly generous with their own love of art.

For all we celebrate tonight, I must say, though, it is something of a bittersweet moment, for those of us who care deeply about the arts in our country. Because, there is, as you know well, a movement underway to undermine the cultural traditions that all of you in this room are upholding by your presence tonight.

It is sad, that there are those among us who do not appreciate what this Museum represents - what it stands for. And who more than that, do not understand that our democracy depends upon culture. We are witnessing a full-scale assault on public support of the arts which in many ways is misguided and misinformed. One of the great accomplishments of the arts in America, is that it truly has become part of the public domain.

Accessible to all, firing the imaginations of all. I was told that Bernie saw his first Rodin here in 1945 and look where it has led. There is a proud tradition in our country of both private and public support - a unique partnership unlike what exists in many other countries not only in modern times but going back through history. Where art was either the domain of the public or of the private. But instead, in America there has been this marriage.

And that is thanks, in large part, to far-sighted people, like yourselves in both the public and the private sector. The NEA has helped to bring art to millions of Americans who would not have otherwise enjoyed it.

It has supported artists and teachers, students, men, women and children, whose daily lives have been transformed by their exposure to great art. And I would like to thank Bill Lures and the trustees, and the members of the business committee and all of you who have raised your voices in the last months on behalf of public support for the arts. I hope you will continue to do so because we cannot afford to retreat from that commitment.

I would argue strongly, that, contrary to what some say, "Public support for the arts is a luxury we can no longer afford," that it is, instead, a necessity for the continuing strength and vitality of our community of culture in this country.

It is particularly ironic that those who bemoan the loss of civility and character and the loss of values in America are the first to recommend obliterating the federal agencies, in many ways cutting back on state and local support, responsible for promoting our cultural traditions.

For example, the Greek and Roman exhibition that is being worked on now, for those who at one hand, claim they support our Western traditions and Western civilization but who on the other hand would not support the kind of exhibition that would bring to life those very traditions and roots; are living, in my view, a very ironic way of demanding we do what they say, without recognizing how important it is to give other people the chance to have the same experience that they have had.

They fail to appreciate what every generation of Americans have intuitively known, that our artistic imagination is critical to our civilization and our democracy. So I hope that, as we think about this Museum tonight and the contribution of the Cantors, we will think about ways that each of us can try to continue the traditions represented. And we will think, too, about all of the children, two hundred to three hundred thousand a year, who come to this Museum. The potential artists and teachers and lovers and patrons of the arts of the future.

To make sure that their potential for appreciating what we have today, thanks to the partnership between public and private lovers of the art; will always be there. Yes, we have hard decisions to make in America; yes, they are challenging. But let us remember what really lies at the root of greatness as a people -investing in our future, caring about the best of our traditions. And let's not turn our back on that kind of legacy.

With your help, your generosity, your energy and your commitment, I don't think we will, but I know this is a challenging time. I personally wanted to be here this evening to thank the Cantors, to thank the Museum and to thank all of you for standing up on behalf of the arts in America. Thank you all. (Applause)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Internal Use Only

June 12, 1995

**Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
At a Reception for the Washington Performing Arts Society
The White House**

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I want to welcome all of you here to the White House. I am particularly pleased that we could host this reception. And I know that we have an outgoing President, Glendonia McKinney, and an incoming President, Lenney Knat, and I love being able to welcome Presidents to the White House.

I also want to thank Muriel Alper. Not only for her work with the Women's Committee over the past twenty years, but also for the work she has done as a volunteer in my office for more than two years. I have to tell you that Muriel is something of a legend in what is called, both to my face and behind my back, "Hillaryland." There is not a person on my staff who doesn't know her, doesn't love her, doesn't do whatever Muriel tells her to do. So I want to thank you, Muriel. I want to thank you for sharing so much energy, enthusiasm, dedication and humor with me and my staff, and for making our days brighter, livelier, easier and, most of all, happier. Thank you so much.

I also want to acknowledge that the White House Social Secretary, Ann Stock, is a former member of the Washington Performing Arts Society. Ann, however, has been working so hard the past two and a half years -- we've had more events and more people in the White House than in any comparable time. In fact, we exceeded most four year terms about six months ago, and that is because Ann is indefatigable. But the down side is that she has done so much in such a short period of time, that when several of you reminded her that she had worked on some of the events of the Society, she was desperately trying to remember that far back. It's sort of a sad commentary on life in a constant activity circle, as we seem to be. And I think Ann, as she said to me, missed being part of this. She did it when she used to have a life, is what she said.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your strong support of the arts in this community, and particularly for the work you do on behalf of children and our

particularly for the work you do on behalf of children and our schools through the arts programs and the cultural exchange programs. Your efforts are critical to the people, particularly the children, that you touch. Many of them would not otherwise have any really positive exposure to our common culture, or to the cultures of people from around the world. You know, I was at one of the events celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the Metropolitan Museum in New York last week, and I thanked the people there for their commitment to that institution, as I thank you for your commitment to this.

And it really is unique in the history of the world that the arts would be supported by a public-private partnership. Some countries, in fact, most, that have had any significant support for the arts have done so publicly over the years. A few have done so largely privately, through patronage and other ways. But America is unique because here we have, thankfully, a public-private commitment to the arts. This partnership has been critical to sustaining the arts throughout our history. And I believe that it is short-sighted for some among us to try to eliminate or severely cut the public commitment to the arts, which really must go hand in hand with the kind of private efforts that you are involved in.

I know many of you have already spoken out on behalf of the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities and I urge you to continue to make sure your voices are heard. Others of you have been active in speaking out on behalf of public broadcasting, which in many parts of our country is the only vehicle, the only channel that brings great art and artistic performance to the lives of literally millions of people.

You know, 40% of the homes in our country do not have cable television, and those 40% have the majority of children residing in them. So, without public broadcasting they will not hear what we are able to hear, perhaps by going to the Kennedy Center or by going to a performance that you have helped to arrange.

So I thank you for what you have done in this community, I thank you for speaking out on behalf of the relatively meager commitment of public funds we do make to the arts in our country. But it's more than just the funds, it is a statement. It is a real statement of commitment to excellence and to what has stood the test of time. The commercial marketplace for music or for art is always new, always looking for something on the cutting edge, fads come and go. Yet we know that great art often is not even recognized in its own time, and we often are paying our debt to those who came years, if not centuries before. And if we do not support what now has been recognized and accepted as great art over the centuries, the marketplace will not. That is not

what it can do. It is not one of its better contributions.

So I urge you to speak out against these efforts to cut public support and to continue your private support of the arts. We are all the richer for it and we are grateful to you for what you have done and will continue to do. And I wanted personally to say thank you very much.

We're going to have a receiving line in the Blue Room, which is through the Green Room and on the other side of the Red Room. And here is Muriel to give me some more orders.

MRS. ALPER: I just wanted to say that last week a call came in to your office and it was a South American Embassy. The voice was very heavily accented and the person said she wanted to speak to the "Prima Dona." So I thought it was another nut call, because we sometimes get them.

MRS. CLINTON: Just a few, right.

MRS. ALPER: And then I realized that it wasn't meant in the pejorative sense at all. It was really said in the greatest respect for you, because "La Prima Dona" means "The First Lady." And that's how you're called. And I thought to myself how very fortunate we are that we have a First Lady that is first in compassion, in empathy and in caring, because you do care. And only look around at the people who work in her office, and everybody loves her, and they're the ones who know her best. So please accept our little gift...it looks big, but it's really small. It's an American craft by a woman in Kentucky and it's a candle holder. It's red, white and blue. And we thought that it would be good for you.

MRS. CLINTON: It's beautiful. Thank you so much. Thank you all. Muriel knows that I really love crafts, and particularly American crafts. We have this exhibit at the Museum of American Arts, so that is especially meaningful to me. And "La Prima Dona" is one of the nicer things I've been called, so I'll take it, whatever it means. And I look forward to greeting each of you individually.

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FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEOTAPE REMARKS FOR
THE 1995 SCHOLASTIC ART AND WRITING AWARDS CEREMONY
JUNE 17, 1995

To all of the recipients of 1995 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, their families and their teachers, congratulations and welcome to our nation's capital. I am sorry not to be with you today, but I share the excitement and pride you must feel on this special occasion.

I am delighted that America's most promising young artists and writers are being hosted at two of our nation's most important cultural institutions - The Library of Congress and the Corcoran Gallery of Art. I am also pleased to join in congratulating the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers -- its Board of Directors and national sponsors, for their important efforts to reward and promote a remarkable group of artists and authors, who will no doubt contribute much to this country's cultural heritage.

Through their original works, the 1000 awardees have distinguished themselves and their schools in their aspirations and their achievements. The level of talent and technical facility represented among these young men and women would be difficult -- if not impossible -- to duplicate anywhere else in the world. You are a microcosm of America's diverse creative and cultural heritage.

Sadly, we live in a time when arts and humanities education are being devalued. School budgets are being cut and the arts and humanities are especially vulnerable. While we respect the need for fiscal responsibility, we need to recognize that art instruction and writing ability are central to a comprehensive education. Moreover, arts education is transforming when used to enliven and illuminate other academic disciplines.

What these young people are doing in their creative pursuits is vital to the direction of our country. Through discipline and verve, they have created new standards of excellence that will help America maintain preeminence in the arts and in culture internationally.

This country has always valued imagination and creativity -- in fact, they are part of the legacy of the pioneers and immigrants who founded our nation. Human imagination -- your imagination -- is the fuel that will lead us into the next millennium. That imagination and your creative spirits must be allowed to guide us on our journey.

Thank you and congratulations to you all.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 5, 1996

**REMARKS BY FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
AT THE SCULPTURE GARDEN RECEPTION
THE WHITE HOUSE**

MRS. CLINTON: Please be seated and welcome to the White House. I wish the weather were just a little warmer so we could be out in the garden, but we are so pleased to have you here in the East Room. And I am very sorry that because of the prior government shutdown in November, we were forced to postpone the original opening, and I deeply regret any inconvenience that this necessary but regrettable postponement caused any of you. We are, as you know, in the middle of another partial government shutdown, but thankfully we were able to hold this ceremony because the White House Appropriations Bill was one of those that was passed and the President signed.

But I am happy to report that the exhibit did open in October in glorious weather, and in time for the Arts and Humanities Celebration here at the White House. A thousand or more people saw the exhibit that first day, and thousands and thousands more have been enjoying it during October, November and into December. This is the third in a series of exhibitions of 20th century American sculpture that have been installed at the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden here at the White House. As some of you know this exhibit was inspired in part by Jackie Kennedy Onassis. My much too brief friendship with her left an indelible impression on me, and the garden is a lasting, living tribute to the extraordinary artistic and cultural contributions she made to the White House. It became possible because others shared my hope that the White House could be an exhibition place for modern American art as well as the extraordinary White House collection of art that you see around you here in this room with the Gilbert Stewart and in other rooms throughout the house.

I must say that every time I come into the East Room, and particularly on an occasion like this, I am always grateful to another of my predecessors, Dolly Madison. Because it was Dolly Madison during the War of 1812, when James Madison, who was the last of our presidents actually to be Commander in Chief in the field, was out with the troops in 1814, who was here preparing a dinner for her husband and all of the officers who had returned when word came that the British were advancing, had broken through, were on their way to the house. So she, I think in one of the great heroic moments in American history, began to gather

up many of the treasures here in the house and took down the Gilbert Stewart portrait of George Washington, rolled it up and escaped right before the British.

I have said this in both Canada, where the commanding general of the British forces was based, and recently in the United Kingdom, that we don't forget -- although we are great friends. And some of you may notice on the front part of the White House we've actually left some of the stone exposed where the burn marks show. And the thing that I do find hard to forgive is that, at least I have been told, the British came into the house, ate the dinner Dolly Madison had prepared and then burned it.

Well, we are still here, and we have survived much over our history. And that is also part of what I had hoped with these exhibits, because they represent the diverse and rich talents of this extraordinary country of ours. I am thrilled that some of the artists whose works are exhibited could be with us today. And I think one only needs to look, and I hope all of you get a chance to look, at the intriguing sculptures in this particular exhibit. They embody the transformations of both 20th century and society. Among them is an abstract sculpture by Georgia O'Keefe, who many of us casual art lovers knew only as a painter. In a house full of wonderful, 200-year-old antiques, it is also a blessing to live amongst objects that represent the era in which we live.

Well, the president and I believe strongly that art should be accessible to everyone, because it has the power to evoke in each of us a deeper understanding of our lives and of the world around us. This is a particularly difficult and challenging time in Washington and in our country, but art can make our spirits soar and remind us of life's possibilities and of our human powers to imagine and to create. And it gives me great satisfaction that amongst the more than one and a half million American and foreign visitors who walk through this house, the only residence of a head of state open to tourists, that they will be able to share in this artistic exhibition. They walk down through the colonnade, and on a day like this even when it's cold outside where the sun is shining, they can look out and as their standing in line, begin to think about what it means, what their own lives mean. And for me that is a great gift that you have made possible.

This exhibition celebrates the sculptors themselves. Ann Tucker once said, "All art requires is courage." You could amend that and say, "All life requires is courage." But sometimes it is art that displays and embodies that courage for us. So I would like, on behalf of the President and myself, to thank the artists who are featured in this exhibit.

I also want to thank and recognize the people who have made this exhibit and our prior ones possible. It took enormous generosity, dedication, wisdom, planning and just plain hard work to make this happen. Special thanks to Peter Marzio, the director of the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, and Alison Delema Green, the curator of the Museum of Fine arts in Houston. I also want to say a special word of gratitude to the Iris and B. Gerald Canter Foundation and to my friend Iris Canter who is here. I don't know of any other two Americans who have done more to support and promote the arts and particularly sculpture. The White House is such a richer, more beautiful place because of their generosity. I want also to thank J. Carter Brown, who sheperded this idea that was inchoate, to say the best about it, to fruition. I also want to thank the lending institutions that are acknowledged in the program, the White House Preservation Committee and the White House Historical Association, which are such great partners in promoting and maintaining this house. A special word of thanks to the curator of the White House, Rex Scouton, and his very able and dedicated assistants, the Association of Art Museum Director and its president, Sylvia Williams. All of them deserve certainly, my thanks, but far beyond my thanks, you deserve the thanks of every American whether they see the exhibit or not -- because of what you are doing to keep inspiring us, keep giving us a sense of human possibility.

You know, in this time of great global change and as we approach not only a new century, but a new millennium, with the pace of technological change occurring at a rate far beyond the capacity for human beings to comprehend, let alone understand or adjust to -- art becomes more and more important. It is the very first way one goes back to the cave drawing and the tiny figures of women carved from bone, that people knew they were something in addition to just foragers for food and survivors against the elements. We are a long way in time from those days, but we have the same needs to understand ourselves and to appreciate what stays human despite the changes around us.

And so in this time of change and very difficult adjustments for people, we need art more than ever. So thank you for making that possible for all of us. And now I look forward to greeting you individually in the Blue Room and on to the reception in the State Dining Room. Thank you all very much.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
DURING 65TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
OF FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY

April 22, 1997

The East Room

9:23 A.M. EDT

MRS. CLINTON: Good morning and welcome to the White House. I am delighted to have all of you here. I know it was a late and glorious night last night and I am impressed that so many of you were able to make it here this morning to be part of this celebration for the Folger Library and to really commemorate the extraordinary contributions that all of you have made to the arts and culture, not only here in our Capital City, but in our country.

I know that last night was successful; I can see the looks on the faces of the people I've already greeted this morning, and I would like to thank Mrs. Faruki*, a friend of mine and a wonderful supporter, for her work on behalf of the gala, and I'm delighted that she has her entire family here with her.

I also want to give a special welcome to Dr. Gundesheimer*, who will be speaking in just a moment, for his commitment to this enterprise. And I also want to thank the Shakespeare Guild President, Dr. John Andrews, and the entertainers who have donated their time to this gala. Dame Diana Rigg, known to so many audiences in the United States, for her many, many roles. I think particularly of the chilling Mrs. Danvers -- (laughter) -- and the even more chilling Medea. (Laughter.) Among her many honors, she was named a Dame of the British Empire by the Queen in 1994, and I've always thought that that was a remarkable accomplishment and am delighted that she is with us.

Marvin Hamlisch, who has brought so much joy to so many of us because of his musical talents I know added a great deal to the enjoyment of last evening, and I'm so -- also pleased that the Miami Ballet, and particularly two of its principal dancers could be part of that celebration.

The two dancers you saw last night, Ileana Lopez* and Franklin Garner*, are not only dancers on stage, they are partners in life and, their dance, I think, as we know from watching and enjoying dance, is a universal language, as is Shakespeare.

I also want to welcome Sir, Derek Jacobi*, who is known for so many of his roles over the years. He's played Hamlet, I'm told, 379 times. And I want to congratulate Sir Derek on receiving the Shakespeare Guild's Sir John Gielgud Award for Excellence in the Dramatic Arts. Anyone who has followed his career knows how well deserved that recognition is.

But mostly, I want to congratulate the Folger and its generous patrons, so many of whom are gathered here in the East Room, for 65 years of careful curating to make available the unique and massive treasury of William Shakespeare's works to scholars and educators and audiences around the world. It is so critical -- I think it probably always has been -- but particularly today that those who are committed to the arts and all of its many manifestations are even more visible and public in that commitment to demonstrate that the arts are not a luxury, not some marginal activity that only a few people benefit from, but that, instead, it really is the stuff of life, and it gives all of us who care about the quality of our life together an opportunity to know more about ourselves, know more about one another, to deepen and richen the human experience.

I'm always struck by the debate over the arts in our country because I think that it is so misplaced. There are so many needs that the arts communities around the United States have that can only be addressed by a partnership between those in private life through individual generosity, corporate generosity, and those in government who support the arts as an integral part of our national identity.

Whenever I'm in this room thinking or talking about the arts, I remember that despite my great affection for William Shakespeare, this house was burned by the British in 1814 -- (laughter) -- and it was a rather remarkable occasion on many counts, because James Madison was our last President who actually was a Commander-In-Chief in the field, and he was out trying to stave off the ultimate disaster, unsuccessfully, and Dolley Madison, one of my predecessors, about whom I continually learn interesting facts, was here preparing a meal for her husband and his officers upon their return when word came that the British had broken through the lines. And I see the Ambassador from our great friend, Great Britain here. (Laughter.) And Mrs. Madison, Mr. Ambassador, was told to flee, and to flee immediately because the British were coming.

And what did she do? Well, she stopped long enough to take a few of the treasures from the White House, most prominently this wonderful Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington. And I often tell visitors here, and particularly members of Congress and others, that when it came down to a decision about what was emblematic of our country and what needed to be saved for future generations, it was not a balance sheet, it was a portrait of our First President, and that the arts have -- (applause) -- the arts have sustained and entertained and challenged and provoked us and no one more than I believe, than William Shakespeare. And so the work that you have done is not only significant in and of itself, but significant to all of us who care about what kind of country we live in and what legacy we leave to our children.

So I want to thank you for that, and I want to be sure that each of you know how grateful the President and I are for your leadership on this count. I was looking desperately when I returned from Philadelphia in the wee hours of the night for something I could say that would be appropriately Shakespearean, and I couldn't decide amongst all of the very many options available to me, and I was talking with Dr. Gundersheimer* as we came in and I said, well, really, you know, the play's the thing and the Folger does it better than anybody else. (Laughter.)

So with that, please let me introduce the man who has been the director of making sure the play is, indeed, the thing. (Applause.)

* * * * *

So, as Dr. Gundersheimer said, I must return to Philadelphia, and I wanted to greet as many of you individually as I could before I am rudely whisked away, and I apologize that I won't, I don't believe, get to greet all of you before I have to leave. But you are a hearty band -- (laughter) -- and we will greet as much as we can on this day.

So with that, please join me in the Blue Room for a receiving line, and then the reception will be in the State Dining Room. Thank you very much.

END

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
RECEPTION FOR FOLGER LIBRARY
65TH ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION
THE WHITE HOUSE
APRIL 29, 1997**

- Welcome to the White House, an historic home and symbol of democracy to all Americans and to people all over the world. The President and I have the honor to be stewards of this remarkable place for eight years and are especially pleased to host you, who are also the custodians of a cultural treasure that is revered by so many around the world.
- Let me begin by congratulating all of you on a very successful gala last night. I'd like to acknowledge in particular Mrs. A. Huda Farouki [HOO-da FAR-roo-key] without whose capable and tireless efforts the Gala would never have taken place. And I'd like to offer a special welcome to Folger Director Dr. Werner Gundersheimer [Goon-ders-hymer], Shakespeare Guild President Dr. John Andrews, and to the entertainers who so generously donated their time and talent to the Gala: Dame Diana Rigg, known to so many audiences in the United States who will never forget her recent portrayal of the chilling Mrs. Danvers, or her triumphant success in Medea. Among her many honors, she was named a Dame of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth in 1994.
- Marvin Hamlisch who last night performed music from our great American repertoire, to which his own compositions have added so much. We think of him for *A Chorus Line*, *The Goodbye Girl* and, of course, for "The Way We Were" from the movie of the same title. *(Please note that he will not be in attendance at the event.)*
- Iliana Lopez and Franklin Garnero are principal dancers with the Miami Ballet, one of our most celebrated dance companies, which they joined in 1987. They are partners in dance and life, performing with other companies and at festivals. Their dance, like Shakespeare, is also a universal language, which they proved in their *pax de deux* from *Romeo and Juliet* last night.
- It is truly a great honor to welcome to the White House two legendary actors whose interpretations of the Bard's various princes, kings and suitors have inspired generations of actors and touched generations of audiences: Sir John Gielgud and Sir Derek Jacobi. Sir Derek is known for his work on stage and in films, including his starring role in *I, Claudius* and his masterful portrayal as Brother Cadfael (Cad-file) in public television's *Mystery* series. But he is most acclaimed as a Shakespearean actor, playing Hamlet 379 times - a number rivaled only by Sir John Gielgud himself. He has brought so many to the love and appreciation of Shakespeare. Let me congratulate you, Sir Derek, on receiving the Shakespeare Guild's Sir John Gielgud Award for Excellence in the Dramatic Arts last night.

- I want to congratulate the Folger and its generous patrons on 65 years of careful curating and for making this unique and massive treasury of William Shakespeare's works available to scholars and educators around the world. And I thank you for your commitment to introducing more and more Americans -- especially our children -- to the life, times and work of William Shakespeare.
- All of you are here today because you have been inspired in no small part by the work of man whose characters and insight -- created nearly five centuries ago -- continue to enlarge our spirits, inform our public discourse and influence our literature to this day. In a world where words are often used thoughtlessly or lightly, it is a fine contribution to remember that Shakespeare's are alive and that they still move us and teach us and enrich our lives. And I know that with all of our continued support, we can make sure that his legacy lives on into the next millennium and for all time.

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AS PREPARED

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR THE LAUNCH OF THE WHITE HOUSE MILLENNIUM PROGRAM
WASHINGTON, DC
AUGUST 15, 1997**

[Acknowledgments: Governor John Carlin; The World Children's Choir and their artistic director, Sondra Harnes. (Their credo is: "To sing together, to create friendship, peace and health for themselves and the planet); distinguished guests and friends]

A few years ago, no one gave much thought to the approaching millennium. We didn't spend time pondering what it would be like to drop the "19" from our calendars and replace it with a "20." Rarely did we see references to the year 2000 in advertising, on web pages or in political speeches.

Recently, however, we've become more excited about the idea -- some might even say obsessed with it. We realize that we will soon be living in a rare historical moment, the conclusion of a century and the birth of a millennium.

No matter where we are in the country, celebrations of the millennium will inevitably reflect the creativity, diversity and raw energy of our people -- and no doubt will include everything from the most solemn events to the most exotic. Thousands of Americans have already booked reservations on cruise ships and at hotels for New Year's Eve in 1999. Companies are devising projects to be completed in the year 2000. Computerized clocks are busily counting down the remaining seconds of the 20th century. And from Boston to Cincinnati to Anchorage to Times Square in New York, communities are planning their own festivities to usher in the new era.

When the new millennium finally arrives -- at midnight on January 1, 2000 or January 1, 2001, depending on who you believe -- none of us will find ourselves suddenly transformed. We won't be trading our earthly jeans and T-shirts for space attire on Star Trek. The only bolts of light in the sky will be the fireworks we've already begun planning.

But still the coming of the year '00 presents us with a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the past, on where we have been, on who we are and what we hope to become.

When the President and I first began to talk about how, as a country, we could mark this turn of the calendar, we always came back to one idea: the American people's gifts to the future. Gifts that will help rekindle our spirit of democracy, renew our commitment to citizenship and unleash the full creative and intellectual potential of the American people as we chart our common future.

The question for us today is: How do we want to be remembered? And what message do we want to leave for the coming generations?

When we look back on the last 2,000 years to gain a deeper understanding of history and the lessons it has taught us, we rely on the paintings, sculpture, architecture, literature, philosophy and ideas created by the men and women of those times.

I believe that future generations, too, will look to our creative pursuits to tell them the story of our country and our era. And they will also probably consider the lives we led as individual citizens: Did we take care of our families, do our work well, and leave something of value behind for the children and grandchildren we brought into the world?

Celebrating a new century and a new millennium is our chance to create a legacy that reflects the democratic values and traditions that have made our country and our people unique in the history of the world. It's our chance to join in a national celebration of the American spirit that allows us together to honor the past and imagine the future.

I am especially pleased to be here -- in this great repository of American democracy, the National Archives -- to announce a special White House effort to recognize this important milestone. Beginning this year and lasting until 2001, the White House will lead a national Millennium Program for the American people to appreciate our common heritage and rejoice in our creativity.

As a living museum of our nation's history, the White House provides a unique venue for showcasing our nation's art, scholarship, scientific explorations and discoveries. Over the next three years, the White House will sponsor a range of cultural activities to promote a sense of optimism and restore faith in our capacity to build a better future. Among them are a White House Lecture Series, co-sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, that will feature prominent men and women who can provoke our thinking about the past and the future; and an American Cultural Showcase that will spotlight our finest artists and their talents.

And, as of today, you can even log onto a new Millennium Program website on the White House Home Page to learn more about activities that are being planned.

Other special commemorative events will coincide with the 200th anniversary of the White House, the 200th anniversary of the first meeting of Congress and the 200th anniversary of the creation of the Library of Congress, to name a few.

Around the nation's capital, some of our leading cultural institutions are working on their own millennium projects. The Library of Congress is putting part of its collection on-line for students, teachers and citizens everywhere. The Smithsonian Institution will expand its Festival of American Folklife on the Mall in the summer of 2000, and will feature 200 children from all over the world making and playing with toys unique to their countries and cultures. And some of you may already have enjoyed free performances on the Millennium Stage at the Kennedy Center that are part of a run-up to the Center's year-long artistic festival in 2000.

Each of these activities offers citizens a chance to learn about our nation's history, to remember it, and even to shape it. And each is a reminder that our nation's history is part of our own personal history too.

Yet building a future worthy of our children depends not just on what the federal government, or state governments, or corporations do. It depends as much on the gifts we give as individuals and communities.

As we reflect on our past and count all of the blessings we enjoy as citizens of a free and democratic country, I hope we will be inspired to give our own gifts to the future, whether by helping to build a new park, cleaning up a river, restoring an old theater, raising money for a library, saving family papers and photographs, encouraging children to interview their grandparents, or volunteering in our communities.

All of these are measures of ourselves as citizens in a democracy. And all are pursuits we cannot live without because they are a vital part of who we are and where we want to go as a people.

As the President said in his State of the Union address earlier this year: "Our economy is measured in numbers and statistics, and it's very important. But the enduring worth of our nation lies in our shared values and our soaring spirit."

If we preserve and strengthen the values, ideas, experiences and attitudes that are unique to us Americans, we can ensure that our country remains the world's strongest nation in the next millennium -- not only because of our wealth and might but because of our thriving culture and our boundless energy and creativity.

By giving our own gifts to the future we can make sure that, when the new millennium finally comes, we won't just be celebrating a new year. We will be celebrating the enduring strength of our democracy, the renewal of our sense of citizenship, and the full flowering of the American mind and spirit.

I hope you will join us in planning a millennium celebration for all time.

Thank you very much.

[Introduce the President]

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9/22/97 6:00 P.M.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR HERITAGE AWARDS
THE WHITE HOUSE
SEPTEMBER 23, 1997**

Good afternoon and welcome to the White House. I'd like to thank Ed Babb and the McCullough Sons of Thunder from the United House of Prayer in Harlem, New York. I think we've set a new record for the number of trombones in the White House at any one time.

Today we celebrate eleven uniquely American artists. From New York to California -- and plenty of places in between -- they have given extraordinary gifts to the rest of us. From sacred music to the blues, from Cajun weaving to Chinese opera, they speak to us -- in some cases very loudly -- of the richness and diversity of our artistic traditions. On days like this the words of Walt Whitman seem truer than ever: "I hear America singing." To that, I think, we can safely add -- and carving, quilting, banjo-picking, and blacksmithing.

As the world moves faster and faster, it is that much more important to remember where we come from as a people. Each of you in your work offers a compass, pointing us toward the importance of family, place and community. For many of you, the skills you acquired were taught by a relative or a neighbor long ago. These traditions, passed down from generation to generation, are invaluable and irreplaceable.

They bind us to our past and, more importantly, they bind us to each other. They remind us that our diversity is our strength -- and that the arts unite us as a nation.

— For each of you has worked hard to engage your audience, teaching them by your example. Americans from all backgrounds have been moved and inspired by you. They will build on the foundation you have constructed -- just as you have built on what others have left. You have seen to it that eleven vital American traditions will carry over into the new century. On behalf of Americans everywhere, I thank you.

Stewardship of our traditions has always been important. But that mission takes on special urgency as we approach the millennium. It is for this reason that the President has launched a White House Millennium program. Beginning this year and lasting until the year 2001, Americans will come together in a million different ways to honor the past and imagine the future. The White House itself will be a stage for showcasing American talent. At the heart of this project will be efforts to preserve our culture, especially our folkways. What we have is too precious to lose.

That's why I find it so surprising that every year we seem to get caught up in the same old debate over whether or not our government should support our art and our culture. To those who think we would be better off without a National Endowment of the Arts or a National Endowment for the Humanities, I urge them to see what you have done. The Heritage Fellowships we present today are indispensable in safeguarding and sustaining the many cultures that, together, make up American culture. They represent the best of the Endowments' work. Let me add that I am delighted that the Senate voted last week to reaffirm our national commitment to the arts and to our heritage. I very much hope the entire Congress follows suit.

True art is deeply personal, but at its best, it welcomes others to participate, enjoy, and understand. It is an exhilarating way to learn up close not only what a varied people we are, but also how many dreams we share in our imaginations. So many of our great artists and writers, from Zora Neal Hurston to Grandma Moses, have understood the immediate connection between past cultures and present-day creativity. No art could be more real.

William Ferris, the Director of the Center for Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi, wrote a book called Local Color that describes nine remarkable Mississippi folk artists. Each contributed in no small way to the life of his or her community. One artist, an elderly cane maker, was so well known that he received mail addressed simply to "Hickory Stick Vic, Mississippi."

In his preface to that book, Robert Penn Warren wrote, "It is far too often forgotten that art and life have an inextricably entwined rootage." That is what all of you have so beautifully shown us. Through your art and your teaching, you have helped to preserve our roots as a people. You have reminded us that in our country, the ordinary is often quite extraordinary. By reaching back to the past, and inviting us to learn from you, you have brought us all closer together. The President and I are grateful to you for this important and very democratic service.

I would now like to introduce to you someone whose service as chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts is something for which we should all be grateful: Jane Alexander.

[After awards are presented, please invite Ed Babb and McCullough
Sons of Thunder to play another song; invite guests to reception; invite guests
on their way out to view the new exhibition of Native American Sculpture on
display in the Sculpture Garden. This is the sixth in a series of sculpture—
exhibitions made up of works from museums in various regions of the
country.]

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR NATIONAL HISPANIC FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS DINNER
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 23, 1997

Acknowledgments: [from advance]

I am very happy to be here. Let me begin by congratulating everyone who worked to make this evening such a tremendous success. Jimmy [Smits] first told me about this new foundation six months ago at the White House and I am delighted to see that his dream is quickly becoming reality.

I want to thank Jimmy and all of you -- the friends of the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts -- for recognizing the important roles you can and must play in bringing more opportunities to Hispanic performers and artists. After clearing so many professional hurdles and knocking down stereotype after stereotype to get where you are today, it might be tempting to rest on your laurels. But, as pioneers in your fields, you are doing what American pioneers have always done: You are making sure that the doors you've pried open, stay open and open even wider for future generations. So I thank you for your commitment and for recognizing the responsibilities that come with success.

America's greatest strength has always been the rich diversity of its people. In ways large and small, our multiplicity of backgrounds, cultures and beliefs has touched and enriched so many aspects of our lives -- the food we eat, the books we read, the music we enjoy. These things have helped us understand and appreciate cultures that are different -- but no less American -- than our own.

What we see in movies and on TV also shape, for better or worse, how we think about everything from the technology on Air Force One -- *for the record, there is no escape pod* -- to people of different races and backgrounds, especially those with whom we rarely come in contact in every day life.

That is why the work of this foundation is so urgent.

America will never realize its full promise unless all Americans are given the opportunity to share their talents. By working to bring more Hispanic faces, voices and talent to the stage and screen, you are not only expanding opportunities for young artists, you are also strengthening our country. You are helping Americans gain a truer image of themselves, strengthening the very bridges of understanding we must have if we are to become what my husband calls "One America" in the 21st century.

On behalf of the President, I want to invite you to join in two very important, national initiatives to celebrate and find ways to make sure that our rich -- and growing -- diversity remains our greatest strength in the next millennium.

First, I want to invite each of you to take part in the White House Millennium program. As the world moves faster and faster, it is that much more important to remember where we come from as a people. Beginning this year and lasting until the year 2001, Americans will come together in a million different ways to honor the past and imagine the future.

At the heart of this project will be efforts to preserve our culture. What we have is too precious to lose. **[One of the Heritage Awards today went to Ramon Lopez, a wood-carver, metal-smith, and painter of sacred images from Santa Fe.]**

I ask you to use your talents -- as artists, entertainers, producers and media executives -- to help celebrate, support and preserve the cultural traditions and folkways of our diverse communities. These traditions, passed down from generation to generation, are invaluable and irreplaceable. They bind us to our past, and more importantly, they bind us to each other.

As you know, the President has also challenged all Americans to begin a year-long conversation to address and perhaps finally resolve the most vexing, perplexing, and painful issue in the history of our country -- the issue of race. In the coming century, we have an opportunity to become the world's first truly multi-racial democracy. Today, the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will be true in California. And in just fifty years, there will be no majority race in America.

That is why it is so important that every one of us join this national, year-long dialogue to explore the lingering problems and limitless possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity. How can we respect -- even celebrate -- our differences while embracing the many things we have in common? We must begin by speaking frankly and listening carefully to each other. It is the only way we can root out the misunderstandings, disagreements and prejudices that continue to haunt our communities and divide our society by race and ethnicity.

On Thursday, the President and I will travel to Little Rock to help commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the integration of Central High School. We will be meeting and paying tribute to the nine students, their families, and community leaders who literally risked their lives to help our country move closer to its ideals. We know from this experience that the fight for justice is never easy, but that it is always worth it. Today, Central High is fully integrated, and one of the top high schools in the state, if not the country. But we all know that there is much further to go on the long road toward true racial reconciliation.

As members of an industry with the power to reach and touch millions of Americans, you can play leading roles in this journey. Help us remember our common values and shared priorities -- that we are a nation of immigrants, a people bound together by our faith in democracy, our love of family and of community. Together, we can make our racial diversity not the great problem, but the great promise of the 21st century.

I feel privileged to witness the birth of what I know will soon be an important American institution. And I wish you Godspeed in the very important work you do.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR NATIONAL HISPANIC FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS DINNER
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 23, 1997**

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9/30/97 5:45

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING IT OVER
OCTOBER 2, 1997**

My husband is a pretty happy guy. But he doesn't get much happier than he was on Monday, when we walked from the White House to a tent on the South Lawn. Just about anyone would have been in a good mood, because inside the tent were musicians like Tito Puente, Betty Carter, Don Henley, and Doc Watson. There were the actors Angela Lansbury and Jason Robards. And there were writers like Studs Terkel and Maxine Hong Kingston. Gathered on stage were more than a dozen other Americans who have made indispensable contributions to our vibrant and diverse culture.

The occasion was the presentation by the President of the 1997 National Medals for the Arts and the Humanities. The 21 recipients marks the largest number of people ever to receive the awards.

As I travel the country, I am privileged to see the sheer breadth and depth of our artistic and intellectual life. I am also fortunate enough to witness the contributions the arts and humanities make to the strength of our families and communities. Our artists and thinkers challenge us to see who we are and inspire us to live up to our highest ideals. They remind us that fulfilling the promise of our American motto, E Pluribus Unum, is our greatest strength -- for what we call American culture is many different cultures coming together, like rivers running

into the sea. The free flow of ideas and the diversity of expression in the United States today is a sure sign of our democracy's health.

In the last few days, the White House has hosted a number of events that underscore the scope of American creativity. Because October is Arts and Humanities Month, I thought I'd share a few of them with you.

First, there were the Heritage Awards, which honored 11 uniquely American folk artists. Before I arrived in the East Room for the ceremony, I knew something out of the ordinary was going on. The doors in the White House were shaking. The chandeliers were quaking. And all because of the full-throttle, Gospel trombone music of one of the honorees -- Ed Babb and his band, the McCullough Sons of Thunder from the United House of Prayer in Harlem.

Though not every Heritage Award recipient reached quite the volume of Mr. Babb and his band, all were unforgettable. There were bluegrass singers from Tennessee and a woodcarver from New Mexico. There were people keeping alive traditions passed on to them by relatives or neighbors long ago -- from blacksmithing to quilting to Chinese opera. Their individual work couldn't have been more different, but what they taught us was remarkably the same: That our traditional arts not only bind us to our past, they also bind us to each other.

The power of our arts to connect us to our heritage is also apparent in a new exhibition in the White House Sculpture Garden of works by Native American sculptors. Each piece, in its own way, represents the seamless fusion between ancient roots and modern spirit, the ties between past cultures and present-day creativity. It's an extraordinary collection, the sixth to showcase American sculpture since we inaugurated the garden in 1994 -- and it's there for anyone who visits the White House to see.

Museums are also crucial. In fact, after Bill finished presenting the Arts and Humanities medals, I hosted a ceremony for recipients of this year's National Award for Museum Service. In honoring the work being done by American museums from Baltimore, Houston and Indianapolis, it seemed to me that not only were these institutions stewards of our artistic and cultural heritage, they were also instrumental in building up our communities -- giving people a place to come together and teaching our young people how wide their horizons can be.

The private sector also plays a critical role in our efforts to preserve and nurture American creativity. Individuals, foundations and corporations provide the lion's share of support for art and culture in our country. So, after the museum awards, it seemed fitting to continue my "arts day" by meeting with business and foundation leaders. What was on their minds?

Most notably, arts education. We shared our concerns about the cuts in arts programs in our schools, which are depriving today's students of the chance to play an instrument or sing in a

choir or act in a play when we know that exposing children to the arts can improve academic performance and help youngsters grow into productive adults. These comments mirrored the findings of a government report issued by the President's Committee for the Arts and Humanities, which I wrote about in my column last year: cultural programs can steer young people away from crime, violence, gangs and drugs, and toward positive and fulfilling futures.

[5/21/96]

To my mind, that's just one more reason why government has an important role to play in supporting the arts and humanities. I know I've written this before, but some things are worth repeating: A modest investment in our National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities yields incredible returns by sparking local, state, and private contributions. I am proud that Bill has fought so hard to protect the federal role. I am proud, too, that he is making the preservation and celebration of American culture the centerpiece of his White House Millennium Program.

Looking at the faces of the men and women on stage to receive the arts and humanities medals, I thought of the children they had taught, the lives they had inspired, the minds they had opened. Their presence seemed the strongest possible reminder that the arts are essential; that they lift us up and unite us. From a band that plays in town on a summer afternoon to a dance class for children to a new library, the arts and humanities make a difference in our lives. We all have a responsibility to support them. And government has a responsibility to lead.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS EVENT
THE WHITE HOUSE
OCTOBER 7, 1997**

[Thank Dr. Billington for stewardship of library. Thank the Madison Council for its support of library.]

- I feel privileged to be able to host a reception here at the White House honoring the world's greatest library. Because of the devotion and generosity of the Madison Council and the friends of the library in this room, millions more Americans are connected to the Library of Congress.
- The library and the White House share much in common. Not only will they both turn 200 in the year 2000, they also represent to the world the ideals of liberty, freedom and justice.
- Unlike the White House, the first national library was completely destroyed in the War of 1812. Fortunately, President Jefferson made his books available to a young nation, enabling us to start a new national library.
- President Jefferson understood that democracy depends on communication, on the free-flow of information. "He who receives an idea from me," he wrote, "receives instruction himself without lessening mine; as he who lights his taper at mine receives light without darkening me."
- We have come together because we believe this library -- all libraries -- have the power to spread the light Jefferson spoke of across our land.
- Libraries connect us to our past -- to the entire body of human thought and knowledge. The knowledge contained within is literally the foundation for the future discoveries and achievements of humanity. Because of this, it is not accidental that the themes of the Library's bicentennial and the direction of the White House Millennium Program echo and harmonize with each other. We are pleased to be able to cooperate on ways to honor the past and imagine the future.
- The Library of Congress yesterday announced a series of important and imaginative programs to mark its bicentennial. Among these is the 'Gifts to the Nation' program which will add important new acquisitions to our nation's library. Under this initiative the Madison Council and friends of the library will also see to it that ever-more of the Library of Congress's collection is opened up to libraries around the country via the National Digital Library and the Internet. Similarly, the White House Millennium Program will be asking all Americans to give a gift to the future, to help preserve and carry with us our knowledge, culture and values into the next century. I look to you and your institution to involve other libraries and readers all over America and to reach students and teachers through through the treasures of our history and scholarship.
- Thank you for all you have done and all you will continue to do.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT FOR UNVEILING OF GEORGIA O'KEEFE PAINTING
THE WHITE HOUSE
OCTOBER 24, 1997**

3 rose bushes
synchronized different
women.

Acknowledgments: To the O'Keeffe Foundation and its president, Ray Kreuger; to William Rollnick and Nancy Ellison Rollnick -- your generosity has given our nation a priceless gift. On behalf of the President and the millions of people who will see this painting by our most famous 20th century woman artist when they walk through the White House -- thank you. I also want to thank the Committee for the Preservation of the White House and the White House Historical Association for the role they have played in bringing us to this very happy day.

[Unveil painting: Since we have waited a long time for this moment, I see no reason why we should wait any longer. So before I say a few words, why don't we get this over with and unveil the painting.]

The paintings that hang in the White House are selected for the beauty and skill they represent. But they are chosen for another reason, too: Each one tells a story or presents a vision of the promise of American life. In one way or another, the art in our nation's home offers a lesson, an example, an ideal -- a challenge for every American to live up to the sacred responsibilities and uphold the proud traditions of our country.

It is our hope that the paintings on these old walls will inspire the creativity and reflection we want to encourage in young Americans everywhere.

Today, we add a remarkable work to the White House collection: Georgia O'Keeffe's "Bear Lake, New Mexico." Painted in 1930, it is the first work of art by a major 20th century American woman artist to hang in the state rooms of the White House. "Bear Lake" will make its home in the Green Room.

If you ask an American to close his or her eyes and think of a modern American painting, chances are they will see an O'Keeffe. Her art is of this country -- and perhaps there is something uniquely American about a woman who was born in Wisconsin, grew up in Virginia, studied in Chicago and New York and then settled into a ruined adobe in New Mexico.

It is with New Mexico and the Southwest -- its landscapes, colors, textures, and shapes -- that we associate her. In "Bear Lake," we see an artist whose work is pure, unfettered by other influences, American. As the critic Robert Hughes has said of O'Keeffe's work, it is "as honest as an apple on a plate." I imagine this work held a special importance for the artist, for she kept it for herself.

It is significant, I think, that Georgia O'Keeffe made this painting shortly after her first extended stay in New Mexico. She saw a remarkable landscape with fresh eyes -- and then captured it on canvas. In turn, she has given us one of the greatest gifts any artist can render -- she has helped us to see the world anew.

As new as this vision is, it is special because it evokes an ancient place. "Bear Lake" was painted in the Taos Pueblo -- a sacred site of the Taos Indians. In this way, the painting binds us both to our past and to each other.

It is difficult, I think, to separate an artist from his or her life. We honor Georgia O'Keeffe for both. She lived with conviction, honesty, and courage, especially as a woman artist. As she invented her own art, she also invented her own life. As a result, she has inspired countless Americans, particularly girls and women, to invent theirs.

We hang this picture at a special time. For we are about to celebrate not only the 200th anniversary of this house, but also the dawn of a new millennium.

It is for this reason that the President has launched the White House Millennium Program. Beginning this year and lasting until the Year 2001, Americans will come together in a million different ways to honor the past and imagine the future. Here at the White House, we will sponsor a wide array of activities, from a White House lecture series to a White House cultural showcase to a birthday celebration for the White House itself. All these events -- indeed the entire Millennium Program -- grow out of a single-minded resolve to preserve our culture and heritage. What we have is too precious to lose.

With today's event and those that will follow, we will celebrate America's role as a beacon of democracy and creativity.

Early next month, we will host a special concert to honor America's musical traditions.

A few days later, we will celebrate past and present Native American traditions in the visual arts when we inaugurate the Native American contemporary sculpture exhibit in the White House sculpture garden.

Next, we will focus on the spirit of exploration, when we preview a new documentary on the Lewis and Clark expedition by Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan.

Alfred Stieglitz, Georgia O'Keeffe's husband, once said of her work:
"Finally, a woman on paper." Well today, I am pleased that we can say at last,
"Finally, an O'Keeffe in the White House."

Thank you very much.

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS AT EVENT CELEBRATING
DOLLEY MADISON COMMEMORATIVE SILVER DOLLAR
EAST ROOM, WHITE HOUSE
JANUARY 11, 1998

Welcome to the East Room of the White House. I want to thank all of you for joining us to celebrate the new Dolley Madison Commemorative Silver Dollar, the first U.S. coin to feature a First Lady.

[Now, after doing a little research, I found out that this is not actually the first time the Treasury has **honored** a First Lady. I doubt too many of us were alive at the time. But, about 100 years ago, in the late 1890s, the Treasury issued a Silver Certificate of Deposit featuring and celebrating Martha Washington. It was worth a dollar of silver.]

Ever since I was fortunate enough to move into this house with my husband, I've read everything I could get my hands on about all the amazing women who lived here before me. Few had more strength and skill and sheer energy than Dolley Madison. And on this, the 150th anniversary of her death, I can't think of a better way to honor her remarkable life.

She will now take her rightful place among other American leaders who have graced commemorative coins – such as Robert Kennedy, Jackie Robinson, and George Washington. And with each coin bought, 10 percent will help preserve Montpelier, her beloved home, and, with it, the pivotal chapter she and her husband wrote in our nation's history.

I want to thank everyone here who has worked so hard to make this possible: Deputy Treasury Secretary Larry Summers and the entire U.S. Mint, especially James Ferrell and Thomas Rogers, whose wonderful sculpting and engraving have brought the image of Dolley Madison and Montpelier to life.

I want to thank Michael Kowalski [Co-wall-ski], Fernanda Kellogg and all of Tiffany & Co. – which donated the extraordinary design for the coin. For generations, Tiffany has created a style that expresses our national identity. And now they've helped create a coin that will celebrate and safeguard our national heritage.

This past July, I had the opportunity to visit the beautiful grounds of Montpelier, which Dolley Madison was so proud of and which now appear on one side of this coin. Along with 3,000 others, we were there to celebrate the opening of the "Discovering Madison" exhibit, and the people who are working to preserve Montpelier and pass on its lessons to every generation. I know many of them are here today – and I especially want to thank Kathy Mullins, the Executive Director of Montpelier and Bill Lewis, the Chairman of the Montpelier Foundation.

We are also fortunate to be joined by five descendants of Dolley and James Madison; and by Mary Regula, the founder and President of the First Ladies library, who has done so much to teach us all about the contributions of America's First Ladies.

And I want to thank the members of Congress who helped pass the legislation making this coin possible: They weren't able to be here in person, but all of us owe a debt of gratitude to Senator Robb, Senator Warner, Congressman Bliley and Congressman Castle.

Of course, none of us would be here today had it not been for the vision, commitment, and leadership of Dick Moe and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. I am delighted that the Trust is the White House's private sector partner in our Millennium Program to "Save America's Treasures." They challenge us every day to preserve the past as a living reminder of who we are and where we want to go. That is, in many ways, the purpose of this celebration. And it's the idea behind the White House Millennium Council that the President and I have established.

Most of us are still having a hard time getting used to writing the numbers 1999 – and having them, for the first time, describe the current date, and not the title of a song or a piece of science fiction. There are some things we know about the turn of the century: We know they'll be lots of parties. We know there will be Millennium toothpaste and potato chips and other products.

But, my husband and I thought this time could be much more than a passing moment, more than a celebration. We have an opportunity to focus on what defines us as a nation. As the words on the coin say, *E Pluribus Unum*, out of many, we are one. We are one nation, under God. We share the same experiences, hopes and values – and all of us can give gifts to the future. Our overall theme for the White House Millennium activities is “Honor the Past, imagine the future.”

And one of the key ways we’re trying to accomplish that is through our public-private partnership to Save America’s Treasures. We’re not just focusing on our most famous monuments and documents and people. All of our historical and cultural sites and artifacts are irreplaceable. If we lose them, we lose our history. And if we lose our collective memory, we lose our bearings in the present and our compass to the future.

In addition to Montpelier, I’ve visited Thomas Edison’s laboratory, where he invented the motion picture camera; the home of Harriet Tubman, whose courage has inspired all lovers of freedom; and the home of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, whose poetry reflects the birth of our republic and our enduring ideals.

When Dick and I announced Save America's Treasures, we challenged all communities and citizens to find every imaginable creative way to preserve the culture, history and values that tell our nation's story. And that's exactly what everyone associated with the Dolley Madison Commemorative Silver Dollar has done.

Now, children can look at this coin and, in the face of Dolley Madison, understand the too often overlooked contributions First Ladies have made by helping their husbands and working for their country. I hope they will be able to imagine Dolley Madison not only as a wonderful hostess, but as a skilled diplomat, who could bring people together despite their differences, and send them back into the world in common cause.

And I hope they will see her as someone who understood the importance of saving our history – so that future generations would know what the debates and ideas the founders used to create our Republic.

One of my favorite stories about Dolley Madison occurred in 1814, during the War of 1812. James Madison was leading the troops in the field against the British forces. And she had prepared a wonderful meal for her husband and his officers to enjoy when they came back to the White House.

But then James Madison sent word that the British had broken through the lines...they were on their way to Washington and she had to flee. In a letter she wrote to her sister, she describes being within the shot of a cannon. But, still she refused to leave until she had collected the most important items in the house. What were they? Not the account books. She was determined to save the Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington, which she could only get out by breaking the frame and removing the canvas.

When she had the picture safely tucked away, she left, just in time. And when the British officers arrived, they sat down, ate the meal Mrs. Madison had prepared, and then burned the house down to the ground. You can still see some of the burn marks over on the North Portico, which have been left unpainted to remind us of the vigilance it takes to safeguard this house and all it represents.

And, the Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington still hangs proudly in this room today -- as a constant reminder of Dolley Madison's vigilance and her courage.

Whether she was saving this portrait or transcribing her husband's letters and essays when he was stricken with rheumatism, Dolley Madison understood that none of us owns our past. But we are all the caretakers of it, with the responsibility to safeguard the gifts we have received and pass them on to all who come after us.

Because of this coin, and its role in saving Montpelier, more and more people will be able to travel to that special place to learn about the contributions made by James and Dolley Madison and see a part of America's memory. They will walk through the grounds and imagine James Madison thoughts and writings that gave life to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Virginia Resolution.

And as they do, they will, I hope, gain a greater understanding of the issues we still confront today...and our ability to solve them. If they do as our founders did...and look ahead with confidence optimism. And if they do as Dolley Madison did...and honor our past, in order to imagine a future that gives great hope to this and every generation of Americans.

When Zachary Taylor eulogized Dolley Madison 150 years ago, he said, "She will never be forgotten because she was truly our First Lady for a half-century." I would only add, that she will be our First Lady for all time. Thank you all for helping to make that possible.

And now, it is my great honor, to introduce the Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, Larry Summers. It has been my great pleasure to get to know him over the last six years. His leadership – whether overseeing the U.S. Mint, spearheading our response to the global financial crisis, or helping to save Social Security – has helped improve the lives and livelihoods of the American people. I am very pleased to introduce Deputy Secretary Summers...

Remarks of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

White House Millennium Evening -- Lecture by Bernard Bailyn

East Room

February 11, 1998

I am honored to join the President in welcoming you to the White House for our first Millennium Evening. I'd like to thank everyone who made it possible, especially Bernard Bailyn; Ellen Lovell; our co-sponsor, The National Endowment for the Humanities and all the State Humanities Councils who organized discussion groups tonight; the Howard Gillman Foundation; and Sun Microsystems, who provided the technology to simultaneously bring this lecture to the world and preserve it for the ages.

Right now satellite feeds are allowing students and teachers to watch this event at 131 colleges in 42 states...and that information is then being immediately and digitally translated to the Internet. This is the very first cybercast from the White House. As we speak, people surfing the Internet anywhere can hear or read our words, e-mail us questions, and be part of digital history. We all remember Pablo Casals' concert at the White House when the Kennedy's were here...and that's because it was the first live broadcast from the White House and we could actually be part of it. Now, with the click of a mouse, we are truly bringing democracy and history into the future.

This Monday, we will celebrate the birthdays of two of our greatest Presidents. The portrait of one of them, George Washington, hangs behind me. But, as I often point out, that's only because of what Dolley Madison did to save it. When her husband sent word that the British were approaching during the War of 1812, she had little time to flee, but she still managed to take Gilbert Stuart's famous painting.

She knew that this portrait -- like other treasures from our past -- is part of our common history as Americans. Despite our differences, it is this common ground, these shared values, that must continue to bring us together. And, despite the dramatic transformations taking place, it is this American story that we must continue to rethink and retell for every generation.

As we approach the Millennium, we now have a wonderful opportunity to make these next few years a time not just of celebration, but of conversation and collaboration -- a time to step back and take stock of who we were as Americans, who we are, and who we want to be.

That's the goal of the White House Millennium efforts that the President announced in August, to inspire all Americans to "Honor the Past and imagine the future." As we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the White House, this is the first of many Millennium Evenings that we will host through the year 2000. At each of them, we'll be inviting scholars, creators, and other visionaries to help us look backwards and forwards. In fact, on March 6, the renowned physicist, Stephen Hawking will lecture on "Creativity and Science in the 21st century," thereby bringing us from the American Revolution to the entire Universe in only one month.

For more than 200 years, America has been not just a place, but an idea. And few scholars have so brilliantly explored how citizens created this enduring democratic ideal as Bernard Bailyn. He began teaching at Harvard University back in 1949 and is now their Adams University Professor Emeritus. For half a century, Bailyn's creative exploration of the early American experience has earned him two Pulitzer Prizes, a National Book Award, a Bancroft Prize and the gratitude of students and citizens around the world. On March 23, he will deliver the National Endowment for the Humanities' Jefferson lecture, the highest honor in the humanities bestowed by the federal government.

Not content to look at our history through a narrow prism, Bernard Bailyn's boundless curiosity and elegant writing have allowed him to illuminate the economic, intellectual, and social dimensions of our American story. He's looked at political pamphlets floating around our country in colonial times to tell the story of the ideological origins of the American Revolution. He's examined immigration patterns in the late 18th century to tell the story of the everyday people who came here -- and the hopes and dreams that they brought to our shores. And, more recently, he's looked at the way 18th century America interacted with neighboring regions to tell the story about our enduring connection to others around the world.

Perhaps Bernard Bailyn's greatest gift -- and the one he will share with us tonight -- is his ability to take our greatest lessons from the past and make them relevant today. As he said, "Whether we recognize it or not, the sense that we make of the history of our national origins helps to define for us...the values, purposes, and acceptable characteristics of our public institutions."

It is my great honor to introduce Professor Bernard Bailyn

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 11, 1998

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
IN BRIEFING ON MILLENNIUM PROJECT

The Map Room

MRS. CLINTON: Please be seated, and welcome to the Map Room. Some of you have been here before for these briefings, and I welcome you back. And to those of you who have not, I'm delighted you could join us.

I started doing this I don't remember when, a few years ago, because I thought that there were some issues and activities at the White House or out in the country that could use some additional information and opportunity for the press to learn about. And I've really enjoyed them and have been very pleased at the interest and continuing follow-up that they have produced.

But I don't think I've ever been more excited about any event -- or briefing, certainly -- than the one we're about to have today, because this is the beginning of a multipronged effort on behalf of the priorities that the President has set for the commemoration and celebration of the millennium, under the theme of "honor the past and imagine the future." We've been working very hard in the last month, ever since the announcement was made at the Archives, to put some real substance on our goals and to provide ways for many Americans to participate.

So today we have with us a number of people who will not be speaking, but are here because of the role they played in helping to prepare us for the kickoff of all of these activities. And I just want quickly to introduce them. First let me introduce Ellen Lovell, who is the Director of the White House Millennium Council. Some of you may know Ellen from a previous incarnation as Senator Leahy's Chief of Staff and then as the Director of the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities, which she supervised the writing of a fabulous report about where we needed to be going culturally in our country and, in it, had some excellent suggestions about how we could use the millennium to advance American culture and history and arts. So I immediately stole her and put her to work on this, first on my staff and then in the newly created office about the millennium.

Dr. Sanjay Gupta is her assistant, and he is a White House Fellow, a neurosurgeon. I figured we needed a lot of help. (Laughter.) And we are delighted to have had him assigned to this effort for his commitment and his knowledge.

You will be meeting and hearing from, in a minute, Richard Moe, the President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and Rebecca Rimel, who is the President of Pew Charitable Trust. But they have with them some of the people who have actually made this happen. I just want to acknowledge them: Elizabeth Wainger, is the Director of Communications for the National Trust; Ed Norton, the Vice President for Public Policy of the National Trust; David Morris, the Director of Public Affairs for Pew; Tracey Ziemer, who's a Special Assistant to the President at Pew.

And then one of the most exciting aspects of what we're going to be doing tonight at the White House is that there have been a lot of firsts in the White House for the last 200 years. I was interested in learning that, for example, all of us remember the extraordinary concert that Pablo Casals gave when the Kennedys were here. One of the reasons we remember that is it was the first concert ever broadcast live from the White House. So it wasn't just something that happened that people then later reported on. It was something that Americans could be part of themselves.

Well, tonight, we're going to have, thanks to the sponsorship of Sun Microsystems, Inc., a cybercast of the first White House lecture. And we'll hear more about that in a minute. But it is an historic, an extraordinary first. There's never been, obviously, anything like this done from the White House East Room before. But I'm very excited because, as you'll hear, we already have an enormous amount of interest. People are going to be not only watching it on downlinks at locations all over the country, but will also be actually following it on their computers.

And with us are Greg Papadopoulos and John Leahy from Sun Microsystems, Inc., and Rhonda Lee Thomas from the Exortium Group, who has worked with them in order to do all of the technical pieces that are necessary for something like this.

Now, ever since -- I guess for the last several years, people have known that we were going to be celebrating something called the millennium. They weren't quite sure whether that meant 2000 or 2001. I think that decision has been made for easy reasons and commercial implications. It just seems like a better idea to do it in 2000. Some of the experts might argue and say that's not really when it happens. But what we decided to do in sort of typical fashion, is we decided to start celebrating in '98 and go all the way through 2000, until New Year's Eve 2001, to try to make it clear that this is a turn of a century, it's a turn of a millennium. But more than that, it's an opportunity for us to take stock of who we are as Americans, what we believe in, what we want to carry into the next century -- not only individually or through our families, but in our local communities and certainly as a nation.

When the overall theme of the White House Millennium Program was chosen -- honor the past, imagine the future -- the President wanted people to think about what gifts we would give to the future, to leave a legacy for future generations. So we're inviting states and

communities and nonprofit organizations and federal agencies and individuals to do just that. And there's already been a significant outpouring from around the country of people who were planning not only their own celebrations, but what they might do that will have lasting value.

The significance of the year 2000, though, is not only that it marks the century and the millennium. It is the 200th anniversary of the White House, the 200th anniversary of the first meeting of Congress in the new Capitol building, and the 200th anniversary of the Library of Congress. So we have these three major institutions of our government, of our history, all celebrating bicentennials at the same time. So it gives us a chance to really think about and highlight our democracy by using the White House, by using the Capitol, by using the Library of Congress.

This is also an international event. We spent some time talking with the Blairs about the plans that Great Britain has. You know, they're investing in their infrastructure, they're renovating cultural institutions, they're creating new town greens and they are building the largest dome in the world in Greenwich. But it's not only Great Britain, it's other countries, as well. And I think this is going to be kind of interesting and maybe even fun for Americans to follow. And I know that many of the networks are going to be covering a lot of these events.

Iceland, for example, is celebrating the 1000th anniversary of Leif Ericson's voyage to the new world. I know they're gathering in some large plane at midnight on some day -- (laughter) -- I don't know. I may get to go. France will have a series of symposia all over the country and then ending, of course, as you might expect, with a grand celebration in Paris. Germany will host the World's Fair Expo 2000 in Hanover. So there are many of these kinds of activities -- and there's a very serious effort underway to have an inter-faith event in Jerusalem, which I think many of the people I know -- Christians, Jews and Muslims -- are spending an enormous amount of time and effort trying to plan and pull off. So we here in the United States have been thinking hard about what we will do.

Now, we know that there will be many people who are going to be celebrating the millennium in many different ways and there will be many millennial products, I would assume. You'll be able to brush your teeth, I suspect, with millennial toothpaste -- (laughter) -- or chew millennial chewing gum. But we wanted to try to do something that would involve as many Americans as possible and, by doing so, to honor the past and imagine the future.

So tonight we'll launch one of our White House programs, Millennium Evenings at the White House. These are lectures and cultural events that will showcase our founders -- as we will do tonight -- some of our great thinkers and visionaries, some of the ideas that have really made not only America, but the world, what it is today at the end of this millennium.

We begin the Millennium Evenings tonight with a great American historian. We surveyed American historians and one name kept coming back, that if we were going to start with a historian -- which is what we wanted to do -- we should choose Professor Emeritus at Harvard University, Bernard Bailyn. He's viewed as a creative force, an original researcher, an elegant writer. He's won Pulitzer Prizes, Bancroft Prizes. His book, "Ideological Origins of the

American Revolution," probably did more to make it clear what was going on, what was the atmosphere that created these ideas that these extraordinary people were able to draw on. And he went back and read the pamphlets and other writings that Americans were reading, starting in the 1740s.

He also became convinced that it wasn't just the great men of history, but it was the average American who made a difference. And he conducted a very long study of who the Americans were, where they came from, by studying the patterns of immigration of the 18th century. Those of you who are able to attend the lecture tonight I think will find him very provocative and I hope give us all something to think about, about who we are.

The second Millennium Evening will be March 6th, when Professor Stephen Hawking, the world renowned physicist from Cambridge University, will lecture in the East Room on Creativity and Science in the 21st Century. I don't know if any of you have ever actually seen Stephen Hawking lecture -- or if you read his book, "The History of Time," which is the best selling science book of all time -- but you might remember, if you have seen him, that he is completely paralyzed. He speaks through a computer generated voice, and he gives the most amazing lectures and answers questions in ways that are just beyond imagination.

Now, tonight's lecture will be heard and discussed at 110 colleges in 40 states via satellite. It is cosponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, with support from the Howard Gilman Foundation and Sun Microsystems. Tonight features the first cybercast from the White House, so that Internet users all over the United States and the world will see and hear the lecture, and they will be sending us questions. So some of the questions that will be asked of Professor Bailyn will not just come from the audience that's in the East Room, but will come via the Internet from anyone who wishes to ask one.

I hope that in the next three years we'll have an extraordinary series of these Millennium Evenings. One will be New Masters for the New Millennium, which we are producing in cooperation with the Kennedy Center, which will showcase existing well-known masters with young up and coming talent and give us an idea of where we're going.

Now, in addition to the Millennium Evenings, which we kick off tonight, I wanted to unveil in greater detail what the President referred to in the State of the Union. And that's our effort to save America's treasures. The President's fiscal '99 budget includes funds for the National Archives to re-encase the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, all of which are endangered.

I had not realized how much at risk so many of our most important documents, monuments and other historical patrimony happen to be. But I started looking into it last spring and I was shocked at what I found. We are, I think as the President mentioned, at risk of losing the Star-Spangled Banner. But we have -- we're on the way, I hope, to salvaging that. You know, the flag that flew over Fort McHenry and inspired Francis Scott Key's poem that became our national anthem. That's the highest priority millennium project at the Smithsonian.

But it's not just in Washington, not just at our Archives or at the Smithsonian that we are faced with pending losses. Large numbers of artifacts at Gettysburg Battlefield are undocumented and disintegrating for lack of proper storage. Thomas Edison's laboratory and house in New Jersey -- the father of modern science -- are in dire condition. Our prehistoric sites, particularly places like Mesa Verde, are disintegrating because they are not properly preserved. Many of the films, photographs and historic recordings that document the 20th century are deteriorating and have to be transferred to more stable condition. We have 80 million brittle books in libraries and other collections that are at risk of not making it into the next century.

We can't save everything, we know that. So we're going to have to prioritize. And that's why the President proposed a millennium fund -- \$50 million in each of the next two fiscal years to stimulate a national effort we're calling, Save America's Treasures. The fund would be administered through the Department of the Interior; half would be allocated for the most urgent preservation projects of regional and national significance; half would go to the states through the divisions of historic preservation.

But there will also be a parallel private effort, which we actually believe will raise more money than the federal share. And that will be administered and run by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. There will be a high level advisory committee that I've already begun to speaking people. And Dick Moe, who you'll hear from in a minute, has also reached out to people who are very excited about being part of this.

So we think the public-private partnership will enable us to involve literally millions and millions of Americans, from school children to corporate executives.

Now I'd like to ask Richard Moe, who's the President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, to explain to us why we are undertaking this effort, and to talk about the trust's role in the partnership with the federal government.

MR. MOE: Thank you very much. First of all, I want to commend the First Lady and the President for making our heritage the focus of this millennium program. It's very appropriate that on the eve of a new century that we recognize our heritage and try to find ways to preserve it and use it for the future.

We in the preservation movement are enormously excited about this. I was telling the First Lady before we came in, we had a board meeting in Savannah last week and people are already eager to participate in this, and there are literally thousands of preservationists all over the country who are trying to find ways, who want to find ways to participate in this.

In my view, I think this program has the potential to be the single most significant public/private effort to preserve America's heritage in the nation's history. As it's been designed and scoped out by the First Lady and others, this is designed to reach out and involve all kinds of people in all kinds of ways.

Let me just say a word about what the National Trust is and how we hope to participate. The National Trust was chartered by the Congress nearly 50 years ago to be the nation's leading private historic preservation organization. While we have received federal funds from time to time, we are essentially a private organization. And we hold historic sites all over the country, like Decatur House across the street, the Woodrow Wilson House, James Madison's Montpelier in Virginia and others all over the country. But we're also very programmatic, and through our loan funds and our grants and regional offices and a myriad of programs, we try to help and work with state and local organizations, and individuals, to save America's heritage. That's the business that we're in. And one of the tools that we use most effectively is every year we issue a list of the 11 most endangered historic sites in America. And there is so much competition to get on this list, because America's heritage really is at risk.

The National Trust is very pleased to have been asked by the First Lady to help translate the vision of the millennium program into reality. And our role will really be twofold: to coordinate a public education campaign; and to coordinate the private committee that she mentioned, that will direct funds to the most urgent preservation needs identified at both the national level and in the states.

The millennium program aims to keep our history alive -- and it's not just the landmark buildings and documents that tell the stories of the famous, but also the streets in the older neighborhoods that are a part of every community in America. We owe it to our children and our grandchildren to pass on this legacy -- because, unfortunately, too much of our legacy ends up at the landfill. There is really an urgent need here. So much of our heritage is at risk -- whether it's buildings or battlefields or landmarks, as well as documents and artifacts and other objects that are also a significant part of our history and that express who we are as a people. These places and objects are being lost every single day.

So the millennium program comes at just exactly the right time. There are simply not enough public funds to address all of these needs. The millennium program can help to mobilize the resources and the public attention that are necessary to make America's past a living part of its present, and to leave a meaningful legacy for the future.

The strength of the millennium program, and I think the genius of it, is that it reaches out to all Americans -- from all walks of life, all backgrounds, all parts of the country -- to join together in creative and really energetic ways to save our heritage. And we all have a stake in that heritage. The public and private sector simply must join together to ensure that it is passed on to the next generation.

The millennium program reminds us not to take our heritage for granted. We have so much as a nation to be proud of and, yet, so much of our heritage is at risk. Some of these places and artifacts are in our national parks, some are in state parks, some are in private hands; but many of them are in serious trouble. These include the places that tell the story of the very earliest Americans, such as the First Lady mentioned at Mesa Verde, Chaco Canyon and other prehistoric sites; the places where Americans fought and died, the Civil War battlefields, the USS Constellation in Baltimore; the places that celebrate American inventiveness, such as the Thomas

Edison Factory in New Jersey, where more than half of Edison's inventions were developed; the places where the struggle for civil rights and equality were waged, like Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas; and the places that tell the story of the diverse people and cultures that really are America.

I just can't emphasize enough how important it is to have the direct involvement of the First Lady in this effort. I've discussed this program with her. I know how deeply she feels about it, how committed she is to it. And all of us who care about preserving our heritage are deeply in your debt for your leadership and your commitment to this millennium program.

The First Lady has challenged Americans to honor our past as we imagine the future. We are confident that Americans are going to accept this challenge as an opportunity to build a better nation for the next century, and we're very honored to be a part of this effort. Thank you.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, we couldn't do it without the extraordinary work that you and the trust have done. Rebecca Rimel, who is president and CEO of the Pew Charitable Trust, which is headquartered in Philadelphia, will be telling us today about a great gift that Pew is making, and we hope will spur other foundations, other corporations, other philanthropists, every American to follow suit.

Rebecca.

MS. RIMEL: Thank you. And I echo our appreciation on behalf of all Americans for your leadership. Life is about milestones and all of us have those. One that immediately comes to mind is turning 50, not that any of us would know what that's like. (Laughter.) We all experience it in different ways. For some of us, it brings a sense of celebration; we celebrate it. For others, we might dread it. But one thing is for certain, when that little letter comes from the AARP -- (laughter) -- you know it's a sure thing.

As with the millennium and as with 50th anniversaries, it provides a time to look back. It provides a time for reflection. It provides a time for us to count all of our blessings. And it also provides a time for us to reassess our accomplishments and our priorities and our values. But anniversary celebrations are also about looking forward. It's a chance to reaffirm our commitments, our private commitments and our public ones. It's a chance to reassess how we're going to use our talent, our time and our treasures to try and achieve our individual goals and our collective goals for a brighter and better tomorrow.

Well, that's exactly what we've been about at the Pew Trust over the last two years, because this year is our 50th birthday. And we, like all Americans, have a lot of blessings to count. We live in a strong and healthy and vibrant and free democracy. We live in a society that supports innovation, entrepreneurship, aspiration, creativity. And we also live in a place that values freedom of speech as well as freedom of action, and protects it. In fact, we also live in a country that values volunteerism, philanthropy, civic virtue, the habits of a democratic court, and also an active independent sector without which organizations like mine wouldn't exist.

Our trust founders, the women and men that gave us our resources, had very strong convictions and very strong values. First and foremost, they believed that every American, including themselves, had a strong moral obligation to give back. We also had a strong obligation to protect the freedoms and the foundations on which this great experiment in democracy is built. They, like many people of their generation, reminded us often through their word and their deed that the privilege of citizenship does carry with it certain rights, but it carries a very long list of responsibilities -- individual and collective responsibilities for the social good.

So it's in celebration and with enormous pride in America's past, and also great faith in its promise, that the Pew Charitable Trust has launched a series of projects to really protect our most important national icons. We're doing this as part of renewing our Pledge of Allegiance, if you will, and showing our love and affection for all that makes this great country so special.

Our commitments began with the rebuilding of a new Liberty Bell Pavilion in Philadelphia and the restoration of arguably America's most important and historic square mile, Independence Park. We're doing this in collaboration with the city, the state of Pennsylvania, private donors, the National Park Service and others. And as we prepare for the millennium, we're delighted today to announce partnerships beyond that for the restoration and protection of our most important touchstones as Americans -- the Charters of Freedom, as the First Lady said: the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence and the Star-Spangled Banner.

In collaboration with the National Archives, our federal partner will be providing the remaining \$800,000 to the Archives for prototyping and research for new encasements for our founding documents. We're doing this to make sure that they're protected for public viewing for generations to come. And I'm delighted today to announce for the Star-Spangled Banner, arguably the most important symbol of American freedom here and around the globe, that the Trust will be providing \$5 million for the restoration of the flag. We do this with great pride and as a way of giving back to a country that's given each of us so much.

But the work is not over. For the flag project an additional \$13 million is needed. Five additional million will go for endowment, another \$5 for interpretation and education and a new appropriate home within the Smithsonian. So we need a lot of partners. We need public sector partners. We need private partners. We need individuals and institutions to step up to the plate, to dig deep in their pockets, because this challenge is ours. We've never been in a better position as a country to take on this mandate.

But then partnership is what it's all about, isn't it? Caring and sharing is what being American is all about -- joining hands to help one another; holding firm in our commitments and our beliefs; standing tall and strong under adversity; and, most of all, I believe, exercising wise stewardship, strong but compassionate leadership and grace as we face the future.

Thank you very much.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you so much, Rebecca. And I'm just thrilled with these major commitments, and particularly the commitments to the Archives and to the Smithsonian for the Star-Spangled Banner. And I think that that in and of itself --

Q Why does that take \$5 million?

MRS. CLINTON: It takes -- as Rebecca said, it's going to take \$13 million altogether, Helen; but the \$5 million is for the restoration itself. Do you want to explain that?

MS. RIMEL: First of all, it's huge, as you know. It can't be moved out of the building for a whole range of reasons -- security and the like. It has to be taken down very carefully, kept flat, and then a whole restoration laboratory has to be built around the flag. And in fact the people that donated the flag had only one criterion -- that the flag could never be out of view from the public.

So you're going to be able to see the flag as it is painstakingly restored. People are going to have to lie on their stomachs on large, if you will, scaffolding, as they painstakingly clean each fiber and restore it. So you'll be able to sit and watch, and hear interpretation, and you'll be able to understand the history of the flag. Children will love it. Probably adults will be mesmerized. (Laughter.)

Then it goes back up and the largest piece of glass that has ever been made is going to be made for this to go over the flag to protect it. It will have a lot of educational materials, obviously interpretative materials for school children and adults, and clearly for those on the Internet as well. And then \$5 million, as I mentioned, is for endowment, to make sure that it is preserved for the next millennium.

Q When will that start and how long will that take?

MS. RIMEL: They're estimating three years for the project, and it will start, I assume, once they know about this announcement, which they do today, right away -- though I want to reemphasize that \$5 additional million before they can actually get underway is required. And we are very hopeful, and actually have structured our pledge as a challenge to the American people, to say, this is the first \$5 million we need. We need \$5 million more. And wouldn't it be fabulous if we got that right away.

MRS. CLINTON: And one of the things we're going to try to work out is where people can make their contributions. I think that that could come to the Trust.

MR. MOE: Yes, indeed. (Laughter.)

MRS. CLINTON: So part of what we're hoping -- if you've ever tried to give the federal government money, you know it's very difficult. They will take it, but you can't -- they'll take it if it goes to the IRS, but if you're trying to give it to the flag you have to find the foundation that the Park Service has or the Smithsonian has, whatever. But anyone who reads what you say or hears what you say, they can make a contribution to the Trust. You know, Bill and I are going to make a contribution, and we hope every American will make a contribution, so that we can certainly take care of what needs to be taken care of with the Star-Spangled Banner.

But that gives you an idea of how complicated and expensive and time consuming a lot of this preservation work is. The person-hours required to do that is just overwhelming.

Before we get to other questions, which I want to in a minute, I want to be sure to call on Greg Papadopoulos, representing Sun, because, as some of you may know, I'm not very computer literate, sort of putting it mildly. But I've been sort of picking up some of the language, trying to sound a little more knowledgeable than I actually am. So I know about surfing. (Laughter.)

But now there is a new word that I've had to learn because of what Sun has done, and that's "streaming," which I have no idea what it means. (Laughter.) So would you tell us what it is you're doing in the East Room tonight.

MR. PAPADOPOULOS: Okay, all right, I'll try to keep this intelligible. That is so cool. (Laughter.) This is not going to sound nearly as neat as -- (laughter). But what I'd like to do is really things: give you an overview, kind of reiterate what is going to happen at a high level; try to get into a little bit about how we're pulling this all off; and then, if I can sort of extrapolate to the future, because I think there is something really very exciting that this all represents.

So first, what's happening, as you know, Sun Microsystems will broadcast the lecture live from the East Room. And there really are their two ways that people will experience it. It will be through satellite downlink, as you've heard, through universities and junior colleges. And that's all around the country. But the second way will be where really individuals or small groups can get together and listen directly via the Internet. And for this experience, really people can be anywhere, and that's just not here; it can be anywhere around the globe. You can be at home. You can be at school, at libraries. If you're in my hometown of Palo Alto, you can go into City Hall and get onto a free public Internet terminal and do it that way.

But the thing that is really cool about that is not just that this is the way that you can experience it, but then you can --there are two things about it. You can interact with it, and we'll also be archiving it. And I think it's actually the second part that is the most interesting, because it really gets archived instantly and you can view it at any time.

For the interactive part, people will be able to send in e-mail questions. And then as this lecture series progresses, we'll have more advanced sort of interactive chat that can go on, and really get sort of discussion that goes on at the same time. And those sessions are open to everyone. I mean, it's really grass-roots participation in these kinds of events.

As far as the archiving side is concerned, the lectures in their entirety will be immediately available on the Web, but they also become part of this sort of universally accessible cultural history. We're publishing, and that's -- you have to really understand that it's not just the event, but the event is happening and being published at the same time. You can appreciate that; that's sort of publishing history as it happens. And I'll get more on that in a second.

Let me give you some of the technical details. And if you want to follow up with questions, that's fine. The live video feed will come from standard four-camera setup in the East Room, and then these will be satellite uplinked, and then downlinked in the traditional satellite way that you all are familiar with. But two of downlink sites will be very special sites. There will be a site in Dallas, Texas, and another site in Cupertino, California. And what these sites will do is take the live video feed from the satellite downlinks, and they will broadcast them, publish them to the Web.

And this is where the streaming technology comes in, because what you need to do is to convert the video from the professional broadcast video you get from satellite into a format that people can view on the Web, which is a lot -- you know, in variable bit rates. We'll actually be running it at several quality levels. And remember, we'll be recording it at the same time.

So basically, these two sites -- the Dallas site is provided by Audionet, and they will publish in what's called the Real Networks video format. And the Cupertino site is provided by GTS, and they'll publish in a Java-implemented format.

But between the two, we'll be able to support for this first lecture about 10,000 viewers. And I'll just note that all of this is being served off of Sun computers at these sites, and, just as a footnote, that Sun really was responsible for building the backbone of the Internet, and most of the Internet is served from Sun computers.

But all of this technology really isn't important to people accessing it, because you don't want to have to know any of this to make this work, believe me. It's hard for us; it's really, really simple for people who want to get to it. You just point your Web browser at either the White House home page, the Millennium Project home page, or Sun's home page. And I can give you those URLs if you want them.

There is absolutely no software you need to install. It will come up. You'll see the Millennium banner. You'll see Professor Bailyn and the transcripts, or you can hear the audio as it goes on. And you'll also be able to send e-mail from any of these home pages. So if you can use the Web at all, you can participate in this event.

How many does that include here? Okay.

So much for the details. I'd like to close with a little bit of speculation, and pardon me if I get a little passionate about this. I think this is really very cool. (Laughter.) I learned the distinction between pre-history and history -- in high school, I think is where I learned this -- is what's recorded. And until very recently, what we recorded was really very highly selective and it had really precious little to do with the context of the individuals at the time that we did that. And recordings as artifacts -- whether you write them down, right -- were really difficult to replicate and would fade and deteriorate over time, as we know. And so, really, historically recording has been very expensive. It's been selective. And it's been fragile.

And where we are now, I think technologically enabled now -- this is our -- you know, the information era is something very profound. That both reporting and publishing about anything has become really cheap to do. It's durable. It's pervasive. And I think it's fundamentally democratic. Anybody can do it. So we can not only record what we like, but anybody anywhere can publish their comments. And I think that's a very rich context for the individual to capture history.

And then really it's this foundation of digital computing and the communication revolution; it's fundamentally that as everything comes digital -- from text, video pictures, audio -- as recorded it really has an indefinite life, because you can copy digital. Once it's out on the Net, too, you can't take it back. So it's there.

I would say that it's hard to know you're in the middle of a revolution when you're experiencing it, but I think this is a watershed. And my bet is that historians in the next millennium will really look back at sort of our moment in time as the beginning of, if you will, digital history; that really where a generation's legacy doesn't fog or diffuse over time.

I'd just like to thank the millennium project and Mrs. Clinton for -- this is really very progressive. I'm very excited about it. (Laughter.) But I really think we are contributing a legacy here, and it will be one that a thousand years from now people are going to be able to look at.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, thank you, Gregg. And I don't understand half, if three-quarters of what you're saying, but I am thrilled -- (laughter) -- because my daughter understands it and many people in the White House understand it. But more importantly, it is the signature of what we're going to be doing as we move into the next century.

So I would just conclude and then ask you for questions, that part of the real impetus for us to do this -- and I think you got a flavor of it from everything that has been said -- is that here we are at a time in our history where our economy is strong, we're the undisputed leader of the world by nearly any measurement you can imagine, we seem to be moving out of the kind of divisiveness and pessimism that marked previous years that really you could say that if it was not begun by, it certainly was accelerated by President Kennedy's assassination, by Bobby Kennedy's and Dr. King's assassinations, by our involvement in Vietnam, by Watergate, by the kind of intense shocks to the system that our country experienced. We are regaining our confidence. We are looking to the future. And it is an extraordinarily rich time to take stock of who we are as Americans.

Because during the last 30 years, certainly, there's been a tendency for people to withdraw, to become more connected by identity in ways that might not be directly related to being part of the American experience, but more connected to a more separatist kind of view of who they were and how they define themselves. And I've sensed as I travel around the country, as I talk with people, that there's a great yearning to be Americans again -- not hyphenated Americans, but Americans.

But what does that mean? We have to respect the diversity that makes us who we are. We have to be willing, as the President has urged us, to be honest about racial issues and the unfinished business of race in this country. But I sense that we are really making progress together on that as a nation.

So how do we define ourselves as Americans for the next century? We've always defined ourselves based on shared ideas, common values, and our history, our common experience. But that is often in danger of being forgotten with the kind of instantaneous pressure of the Information Age. And as I travel around to university campuses, as I talk to professors, one of their biggest concerns is that so many of our young people have such a limited understanding of how we got to where we are and what our history is. So we're hoping to really contribute to what I think is a national conversation about the meaning of being an American.

And I'm very excited by it. I think it has extraordinary potential for knitting us together as a nation as we move forward. And that is probably our biggest remaining challenge -- to bring everybody into the American experience, to give everybody a chance to feel that they are part of this great adventure, and move with confidence into this future that Gregg described while honoring and taking care of the past, which Dick and Rebecca have so eloquently spoken to.

So I'd be glad to answer any questions, as would any of the other participants.

Q Mrs. Clinton, this may seem like an obvious question, but why do all of these good things to celebrate the millennium? In a secular nation isn't the year 2000 a little like the car odometer turning over?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that that is a fair question, but I think that it's an event in history that is going to be marked. I mean, it's not something that we made up; that there has been an increasing interest in it and it will be marked by big parties in Times Square and people flying to try to be on the dateline when the millennium changes. But it also gives us a framework in which to think about these larger issues. And certainly some may attribute religious meaning and significance to it, but I think others see it as a way of looking back and saying, where were we as human beings a thousand years ago? Where were we as Americans 200 years ago? What have we learned in this human journey we've been on? What have we learned as Americans?

So I think there will be, whether we did anything here at the White House or not, an extraordinary amount of attention paid to this passage, so I think it gives us a good reason to try to seize this opportunity to talk in more American terms about where we've been and where we're going as a nation.

Q Have you looked back at all to what happened a hundred years ago and made any judgments if you have?

MRS. CLINTON: I'd like Dick to talk about that, too, and Rebecca as well. Yes, we have. We've looked back 100 years, we've looked back 200 years, we've looked back 1,000 years. In fact, I think -- I'm hoping that one of our Millennium Evenings will be a discussion by scholars about what was going on 1,000 years ago. We weren't around as a nation, but many interesting actions, including Leif Erikson, who I do think got here -- (laughter) -- spoken like a true Scandinavian. (Laughter.) So we do want to look at that.

But I think you've heard the President speak a number of times about how he's ruminated over the comparisons with the turn of the last century, and there are striking comparisons. And I'm not an historian or scholar in this, but certainly, based on my own reading and conversations, you have this rather significant move from the agricultural to the Industrial Age. I mean, it has been gaining steam and it had been affecting people's lives, but certainly straddling that century change between the 1800s to the 1900s made it very clear that we were moving into a different age. And people were dislocated, they were confused, they were caught in transitions that were bigger than themselves. Transportation began changing. You had the move from the very solid, regulated train to the beginning of the automobile age, where people could do anything they wanted. I mean, think of the difference that that made in how people saw themselves.

So you had economic changes, you had political changes. Many people point to Teddy Roosevelt as straddling that time, and I think that's a very fair description because he understood that we couldn't continue to do business as we had, that we had to be worried about the concentration of power, we had to be worried about the environment. You had these immense social changes -- the immigrant movements were the most obvious of that, but the rise of progressive movements against child labor, against other kinds of misuses of power. So there was a lot of very good, rich happenings there that I think we should look back and consider.

But let me ask Dick if he wants to comment on that.

MR. MOE: Well, no, I think that's right. I'm not an expert in this area, but I think it's clear that we have celebrated different milestones in the history of this country in different ways, whether through expositions or different kinds of celebrations. But think it's important to keep in mind that we're still a relatively young country and we're still making this up as we go along. And I can't agree enough with what you said about the opportunity that the millennium presents because this really is a moment and a time when change

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(Begin side two, same speaker in progress) --

-- try to preserve those things that reflect the best of our past so that they can serve us in the future.

David McCullough, the historian and a trustee of ours, is fond of saying that America is in danger of becoming an historically illiterate country. And unfortunately, that's true. There are a lot of things contributing to it. This millennium project is an opportunity to bring history alive

to Americans all over the country in ways that have great significance and that will serve future generations as well. So that's really the brilliance I think of this millennium project, is that it takes advantage of a coincidence on the calendar to really cause us to reflect, to preserve and to look forward at the same time.

MS. RIMEL: -- to say that we share a David McCullough comment on the board of Monticello, Mr. Jefferson's home, and once a year we have the privilege of dining where he did. And that really does provide the context of how young a nation we are. And I remember David saying that it's times like this, when we're blessed with so much, that other countries and other men and women have built cathedrals. And it will be interesting to ask ourselves what cathedral did we build when we were so blessed. Was it a quality education for every child, access to health care, to deal with some of our toughest problems be they conversations and resolutions about race or other matters.

But it does seem to me that we use these events both to look back and to look forward. I'm often reminded also of conversations with my own board -- the members of family. And they sit for lifeterms, and many of them, several of them have been there for now 50 years. And when we're dealing with a contemporary issue and they'll look sort of at the portraits of the founders and say, gee, what would they have done in these circumstances. The longest-standing member of our board says, they wouldn't have asked us this question, they would say, we have good minds, we have good intentions and we ought to do the best with the resources we have so that we really can be wise stewards for the future.

So I think in looking back it does prepare us. I think we do use, to your question, dates and times and events to make us stop and pause and think about how we want to be better than we might be had we not --

Q Mrs. Clinton, how do you think the President is bearing up under the present current history and headlines?

MRS. CLINTON: I think he's doing very well, Helen.

Q Is it hard?

MRS. CLINTON: Well, he's working on a lot of very important things and it's no secret that he's spending a lot of time talking with leaders around the world and consulting with his political and diplomatic and military advisors about the situation in Iraq. And that's the primary thing on his mind right now. That's what I see him spending his time on and worrying about.

Q Are you surprised, gratified perhaps, at the public response to this situation?

MRS. CLINTON: No, Bill, I think, for some of the reasons that we've just been talking about, Americans are very satisfied about what has been happening in the country in the last five years. And there's good reason, there's evidence for them to be satisfied, which I think is what you're referring to.

If we just sort of scroll back and think about the circumstances when the President took office and the way we were viewed around the world, with our huge deficit, we were being criticized and made fun of by many of our friends and allies because we seemed not to be able to get our financial house in order. We'd seen many people make loud speeches about doing something to decrease the crime rate, but it kept going up. The welfare system was everybody's favorite whipping boy, but we didn't get any progress in helping people get off dependency or getting them the child care and the health care they needed. Our education system was under a lot of challenge. I think that you can certainly go back and look at how many, many Americans felt about their prospects individually and about our prospects as a country.

And I think that for a number of reasons, but principal among them, not only what my husband has accomplished as President, but the way in which he has done it -- his constant optimism, his good humor in the face of extraordinary challenges and obstacles, his willingness to continue to reach out and work with people who had very strong opposition -- had made very strong opposition to him has sent a signal to the American people about what is important. And I think that it's an inspiration to me, personally, to see my husband get up every day and do the work he was elected to do, and be focused on trying to continue the work he has begun on the budget. And we now have for the first time in years an opportunity to address issues that we couldn't put on the national agenda because of all the other difficulties we had -- principally, budgetarily.

I think that it's been my experience just growing up in America and being privileged to travel to every part of the country that Americans are smart, fair-minded, savvy people, and I think that they see things for what they are and they draw their own conclusions, and they know the evidence of their own experience, and they are satisfied that life is better, our country is stronger, and we're in a good position to go into the next century. And those are some of the reasons why I think you're seeing the responses that you referred to.

Q Since you made the remark last week about the vast right-wing conspiracy have you seen further evidence that this is what's happening in this particular case?

MRS. CLINTON: I've seen some articles that some of your publications have written and some news programs that some of your networks have run, and I have found them to be quite interesting.

Q Do you want to retract that --

Q Has any information come to you about anything new?

MRS. CLINTON: I think there's a lot of information out there that I commend all of you for the work you've been doing to bring to public light.

Q What did you say to Dick Scaife when he came to visit --

And, of course, we all hope that diplomatic efforts will be successful. We hope that our friends and allies in the Gulf and around the world who have entered into Iraq might possibly be able to persuade Saddam Hussein of the seriousness of this if he will not listen to the United Nations Security Council or certainly to the United States. But something will have to be done. It cannot be permitted to continue.

Q I just wanted to ask you about something that Gregg said. He's obviously an Internet enthusiast. But when he talked about some of the aspects of the system -- the fact that you could say something and you can't take it back, how it's so available to everyone and instantaneous, he's raised some issues that have been issues for us in the last few weeks in our business. And I wonder if you think that this new media is necessarily an entirely good thing. And also, as somebody who has been through this crucible, in the next millennium how would you like to see this new and ever more interesting -- (laughter) -- handled of things like the issues like the personal lives of public figures.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, Kathy, I think that's one of these issues that Dick was referring to, that we're going to have to really think hard about. And I think that every time technology makes an advance -- when you move to the railroad, or you move to the cotton gin, or you move to the automobile, or the airplane, and now certainly as you move to the computer and increasing accessibility and instantaneous information on the computer, we are all going to have to rethink how we deal with this, because there are always competing values. There's no free decision that I'm aware of anywhere in life, and certainly with technology that's the case.

As exciting as these new developments are -- and I think Gregg's enthusiasm is shared broadly by Americans and people around the world -- there are a number of serious issues without any kind of editing function or gate-keeping function. What does it mean to have the right to defend your reputation, or to respond to what someone says?

There used to be this old saying that the lie can be halfway around the world before the truth gets its boots on. Well, today, the lie can be twice around the world before the truth gets out of bed to find its boots. I mean, it is just beyond imagination what can be disseminated. So I think we're going to have to really worry about this, because it won't be just public elected officials. We've seen some cases where somebody who had a grudge against a girl's mother because the family wouldn't let him date her put out on the Internet that the family were child abusers. Totally private people, never stuck their toe in public life. It can be done to anybody, and it can get an audience, and it can create a falsehood about somebody. And certainly it's multiplied many times over if you happen to be in public life.

I don't have any clue about what we're going to do legally, regulatorily, technologically -- I don't have a clue. But I do think we always have to keep competing interests in balance. I'm a big pro-balance person. That's why I love the founders -- checks and balances; accountable power. Anytime an individual or an institution or an invention leaps so far out ahead of that balance and throws a system, whatever it might be -- political, economic, technological -- out of balance, you've got a problem, because then it can lead to the oppression people's rights, it can

Q What did he say to you?

MRS. CLINTON: I was pleased to invite everybody to the White House who had contributed to the endowment fund, and that included all the people who had contributed when President Bush was here.

Q Mrs. Clinton, you've thought a lot about the Gulf War syndrome and the medical problems our veterans have faced. With the situation heating up in Iraq do you think the American people can rest comfortably that there won't be a repeat of some of the health problems the veterans faced if, in fact, we do wind up having troops there?

MRS. CLINTON: Matt, I think that's a really important question and I don't know that I'm qualified to answer that. But I really hope that you will follow up and talk with some of the people here in the White House, the Pentagon, the VA and other places who have studied this. Although we have not reached any definitive conclusions about what happened to literally thousands of our troops in the Gulf, and not only American troops, but troops from our allies who were there, who seem to have some health difficulties that go beyond what has historically been reported as a result of exposure to combat or high stress, I'm convinced that something happened.

And whether it was the blowing up of oil wells or exposure to chemical or biological agents, or whatever it might be -- and we're going to have to continue to investigate that -- I think what's driving the President and our allies and everyone who is reluctantly but firmly taking this stand against Saddam Hussein is that we know, based on the U.N. inspections, that he has continued his research and development of biological and chemical weapons. We know he is without conscience and has used such weapons against his own people. And for whatever perverse psychological reasons, he seems intent upon this standoff with the larger world community over our efforts to try to protect not only existing human beings, but future generations from this kind of warfare.

Now, anytime you go after biological and chemical agents it is very difficult. I mean, you could go through an airport security device today holding a vile of anthrax and nobody would stop you if you said, oh, it's something I use for -- I'm a painter and I use it to mix my paint, or it's part of my medication that I mix. It wouldn't probably even set off the alarms.

And so we are facing an extraordinary threat from this man. And I can't stress too much how deeply concerned the President is. And how you try to reason with someone who defies reason, and then how you strategically try to prevent him from having the capacity to do such damage to people are very difficult challenges. And, of course, implicit in your question is how do you strike against places that may hold such agents that if they are released into the air or the water system could cause extraordinary damage, at least to the population in Iraq, if not further.

So those are some of the issues that I hear my husband talking to people on the phone about, he's having meetings about, he's trying to educate himself about biological and chemical warfare and agents so that he can be a full participant in the decisions that are made militarily if that is necessary. But I just cannot stress enough what a serious matter this is for the world.

And I regret that deeply. But it certainly doesn't affect our relationship.

Q Well, do you think the special prosecutor is outside of the checks and bounds --

MRS. CLINTON: Interesting question, Helen. (Laughter.)

Q For the next millennium lecture. (Laughter.)

MRS. CLINTON: Any ideas you have for millennium lectures let me know. I would be glad to hear them.

Thank you all very much. Thanks.

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