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# Mayor's Council on the Arts

Susan Green, Director

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**T**he Mayor's Council on the Arts was established in June, 1981 as a result of recommendations by the Mayor's Task Force that the arts be made more accessible to all segments of the population. As a result, the Council's statement of purpose is:

"To contribute to the cultural enrichment of the citizens of Burlington and the State of Vermont by making the arts available to all, especially those whose social or economic restraints limit their access to the arts."

This purpose is carried out by: (a) directly involving all sectors of the community in the arts process (creation, production, organization publicity, etc.) as well as in its finished product (plays, exhibits, concerts, etc.); (b) creating a complete spectrum of arts programming of the highest artistic quality at the lowest possible price to our audience; (c) providing community access to the arts by offering technical assistance as well as performance, gallery and rehearsal space, and (d) creating direct links between the business, educational, artistic and governmental communities by forming partnerships in the production of cultural events.

Since July 1983, the Arts Council has received partial funding from the City which constitutes approximately 20 percent of its annual operating budget. Both the financial and philosophical support provided by the administration reflects the desire of Burlingtonians to express their vitality and spirit through the arts. The impact of the City's commitment to the arts has spread to many other cities in Vermont and throughout the country, and has provided a model for other cities to follow.

## Some Accomplishments

Here is an overview of some of the Council's recent accomplishments from July 1, 1987 to June 30, 1988:



Well over 200 arts events were produced, either wholly or in co-sponsorship, by the Mayor's Arts Council, serving approximately 80,000 people.

More than \$100,000 in programming funds was raised from 200 sources.

More than 500 volunteers from the greater Burlington area offered their time and energy to various Arts Council projects.

About 100 free arts events were produced or co-produced by the Council.

The Council continues to provide the Memorial Auditorium Loft to local dancers and theatre performers for rehearsals, classes and presentations at very minimal cost to the artists.

In partnership with the Burlington Parks and Recreation Department, the Council organized, for the second year in a row, the Summerfun Arts Day Camp at the Barnes Elementary School in the Old North End. This program served approximately 70 children.

One hundred thirty businesses, five educational organizations, six city departments, 12 community groups, and 27 arts organizations worked in partnership with the Council in the actual presentation, production, and/or promotion of events during the fiscal year.

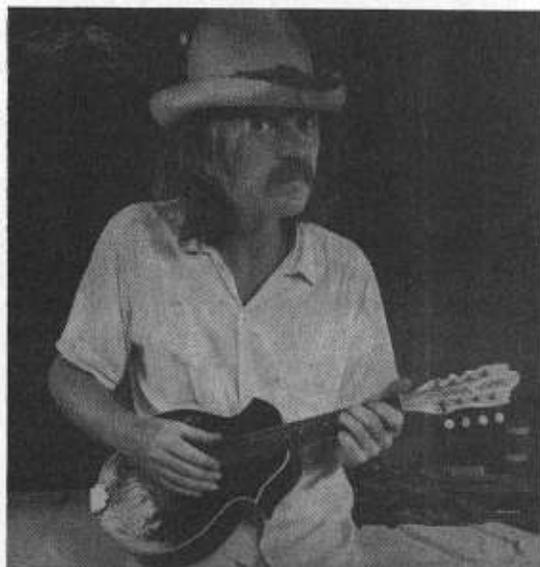
## Contois Auditorium Events (City Hall)

Sixty-five events, serving approximately 7,800 people, were held in the Auditorium. The Council offered a diverse selection of performances, such as:

**Grandpa's Birthday (La Fete a Pepere).** Micahel Parent's one-man show, with stories and remembrances of French-Canadian life, was co-presented with a number of groups, including the Champlain Valley Folklore Cooperative and the UVM Canadian Studies Program.

**An Equinox Afternoon of Poetry.** For the third consecutive year, the Council featured readings by 16 Vermont poets, including three senior citizens and 10 Burlington school children. In addition, the event spotlighted some of the state's most noted published poets, such as Cora Brooks and T. Alan Broughton. The auditorium was set up for the occasion as a 'coffehouse' with round tables. The poets went from table to table, in twos or threes, to read their work to small groups.

**Boy's Life.** Howard Korder's original play, about the ever-complex nature of male-female relationships, was presented by the Atlantic Theatre Company of New York and Central Vermont. Formed under the tutelage of Vermont's Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, David Mamet, the company went from Burlington to Broadway. "Boy's Life"



*Battery Park performer, Michael Hurley*



*Country Joe McDonald participated in the Battery Park Summer Concert Series*

opened to rave reviews and box office success at the Lincoln Center a few months after the Burlington production.

## 8th Annual Battery Park Summer Concert Series

For the first time, the popular concert series in the park had a theme this year. In recognition of the 20th anniversary of the Summer of Love—the 1967 flower power days—the series featured music of that era. National headliners were Livingston Taylor (brother of James) and Country Joe McDonald, who with his 60s band "The Fish" had sung the anthem "Fixin to Die Rag."

Vermont performers such as the Unknown Blues Band, Bob Yellin and the Joint Chiefs of Bluegrass, and Michael Hurley, rounded out the eight-week program. An estimated 12,000 people attended the series.

## Memorial Auditorium

The Arts Council often co-sponsors performances in this larger venue. Most notably, the past fiscal year saw a co-sponsorship with the Vermont Reggae Festival committee of a concert by Jamaican reggae star Judy Mowatt.

## The Burlington Film Society

The weekly film series, now in its third year, screens classic films for consistently low

ticket prices. The Society has almost 120 members now, and regularly draws an equal number of non-members.

### Metropolitan Art Gallery

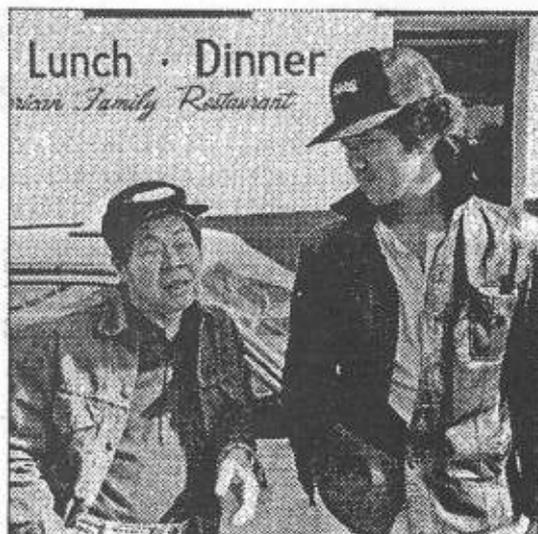
Each year, the gallery hosts one exhibit per month, thereby offering Vermont artists and photographers a chance to show their work to a diverse population. Located in the lobby of City Hall, it brings art into the lives of people who may never have the opportunity otherwise to visit a museum or gallery. In 1987-88 the gallery featured work by Burlington elementary school children in February and paintings by senior citizens in May.

### Vermont Film & Video Association

In November, the Arts Council called a conference for the state's film and video professionals. At this gathering which attracted more than 100 people, it was decided that the group would form a permanent association. After a few months of organizational meetings, the Vermont Film and Video Association was born as an independent, state-wide entity.

### The Deep Focus Broadcast Series

In the fall and early winter the Arts Council sponsored weekly video programming on

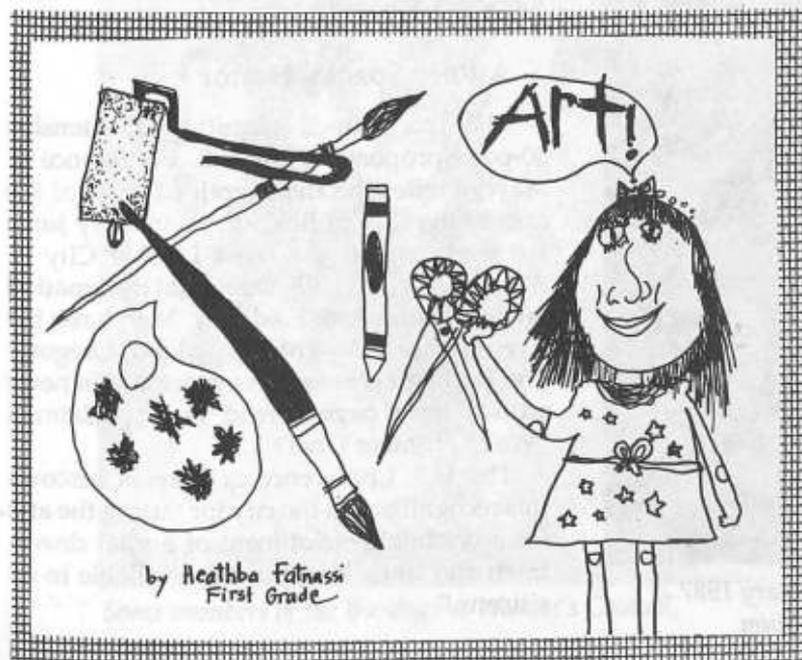


Burlington Film Society presented "Chan Is Missing," directed by Wayne Wang

Cable Access Channel 15. There were feature films from Cuba, daily television fare from Nicaragua—including game shows, soap operas, and a sort of "Managua Vice" style cop show—and American documentaries on various topics relating to peace and nuclear war.

### The Discover Jazz Festival

The 5th annual Discover Jazz Festival proved to be an astounding success, drawing



Picture by then first grader Heathba Fatnassi (C.P. Smith School) for Burlington Elementary Schoolchildren exhibit in Metropolitan Art Gallery