

NATIONAL ARTS INDEX 2010

An Annual Measure of the Vitality of Arts and Culture in the United States: 1998–2009



Summary
Report



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INTRODUCTION

This report is the first annual update of the National Arts Index. The National Arts Index, created by Americans for the Arts, is a highly-distilled measure of the health and vitality of arts in the U.S. It is composed of 81 equal-weighted, national-level indicators of arts and culture activity that covers a 12-year period, from 1998 to 2009. Each indicator is updated annually and a new report is produced.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MEASURING THE VITALITY OF THE ARTS

The arts are a fundamental component of a healthy society, based on virtues that touch the individual, community, and the nation—benefits that persist even in difficult social and economic times:

- **Aesthetics:** The arts create beauty and preserve it as part of culture
- **Creativity:** The arts encourage creativity, a critical skill in a dynamic world
- **Expression:** Artistic work lets us communicate our interests and visions
- **Identity:** Arts goods, services, and experiences help define our culture
- **Innovation:** The arts are sources of new ideas, futures, concepts, and connections
- **Preservation:** Arts and culture keep our collective memories intact
- **Prosperity:** The arts create millions of jobs and enhance economic health
- **Skills:** Arts aptitudes and techniques are needed in all sectors of society and work
- **Social Capital:** We enjoy the arts together, across races, generations, and places

What's treasured is measured. These are the reasons that it is important to understand how the arts thrive and remain healthy, because it enables the arts to deliver these valuable benefits. It is this health and ability to sustain itself over time that we refer to as the "vitality" of arts and culture. The presence of arts and culture is seen in the 2.2 million artists in the U.S. workforce, 109,000 nonprofit arts organizations and 550,000 additional arts businesses, as well as the hundreds of millions of consumers and audiences and billions of dollars in consumer spending.

Given its significance to American life, the vitality of the arts and culture system is a matter of continuing interest, and good information about the condition of the arts is a critical element of that interest. There are many individual studies of artists, markets, and audiences, but few that focus on the whole arts system, and those are intermittent. The National Arts Index addresses this gap. One need not look far to appreciate the ubiquitous presence of indicators in our society. In other areas of broad social interest, like the stock market or the overall economy, there are standard measures that provide a common language and understanding. If someone says that the "Dow" is going up or down, or that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is rising or falling, we understand that these are broad measures of stock market performance or overall economic strength. Indicators are well understood and respected by public and private sector leaders as well as by ordinary citizens. They compress large amounts of data into one number that is calculated the same way every day (the Dow) and every year or calendar quarter (the GDP), making it easy to compare performance between time periods. The National Arts Index provides an annual measure of the arts with these same qualities, at annual intervals.

The National Arts Index is a tool to stimulate public dialogue about the value of the arts as well as improve policy and decision-making—one that is more considered and lacks the fervor often associated with the typical

impetus for such conversations (“Funding cuts!” or “Public art controversy!”). It provides a common currency of language, a way for more people to talk in an informed manner about the arts, using similar information and terms, about why change is occurring, where things are going in the future, and how the arts can stay vital.

The National Arts Index helps to advance the public discourse about the arts in three ways:

1. We widened the lens to look at all of the different arts sectors—nonprofit arts organizations, for-profit arts businesses, individual artists, as well as amateur levels of activity. Taken together, this gives us a fuller picture of the arts world.
2. The data are contextualized against a backdrop of annual changes in population, economy, inflation, and employment. This ensures that arts changes are distinguishable from trends affecting all sectors. For example, if attendance at a particular art form increases 0.5 percent per year—while total population grows 1 percent—then that art form is losing market share. This context provides “The Honest Look.”
3. We take a systems approach to understanding the ecology of the arts industries. We created the Arts and Culture Balanced Scorecard, a logic model that relates all 81 indicators to each other in a systemic way by grouping the indicators into four key components:
 - Financial Flows—philanthropy, artist income, business revenue—payments for artistic services.
 - Capacity—artists, organizations, employment
 - Arts Participation—consumption of arts activities, attendance, experiences
 - Competitiveness—the position of the arts compared to other sectors—market share, how the arts compete for philanthropy, discretionary spending

New for 2010 are five new indicators, bringing us from 76 to 81, that provide a fuller picture of the visual arts world, live concert revenues, and music sales data that enables us to capture more of the fast-growing online sales. Issued in January 2011, the National Arts Index bears early witness to how the “Great Recession” of 2008 and 2009 affected the arts. The findings and messages are not all new. We can, however, newly pay attention to many of them using an evidence based platform in lieu of our empirical observations. The following pages show the bright and challenging areas of the arts, points out some danger signs, and some ways that the arts can stay vital in a society that needs a healthy arts sector for its own overall vitality.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2009, the National Arts Index fell 3.6 points to a score of 97.7, the lowest point reached in the 12 years measured and the largest single-year change recorded. Losses during the 2007-2009 recession nearly doubled the gains made between 2003 and 2007 (-6.2 percent vs. +3.9 percent, respectively). This reflects declining attendance at larger cultural institutions and is compounded by losses in charitable giving—all of this as the number of nonprofit arts organizations continues to grow. In any given year, some indicators are up and others are down. In 2007, half of the indicators rose; in 2008 one-third were up; and in 2009, just one-quarter increased.

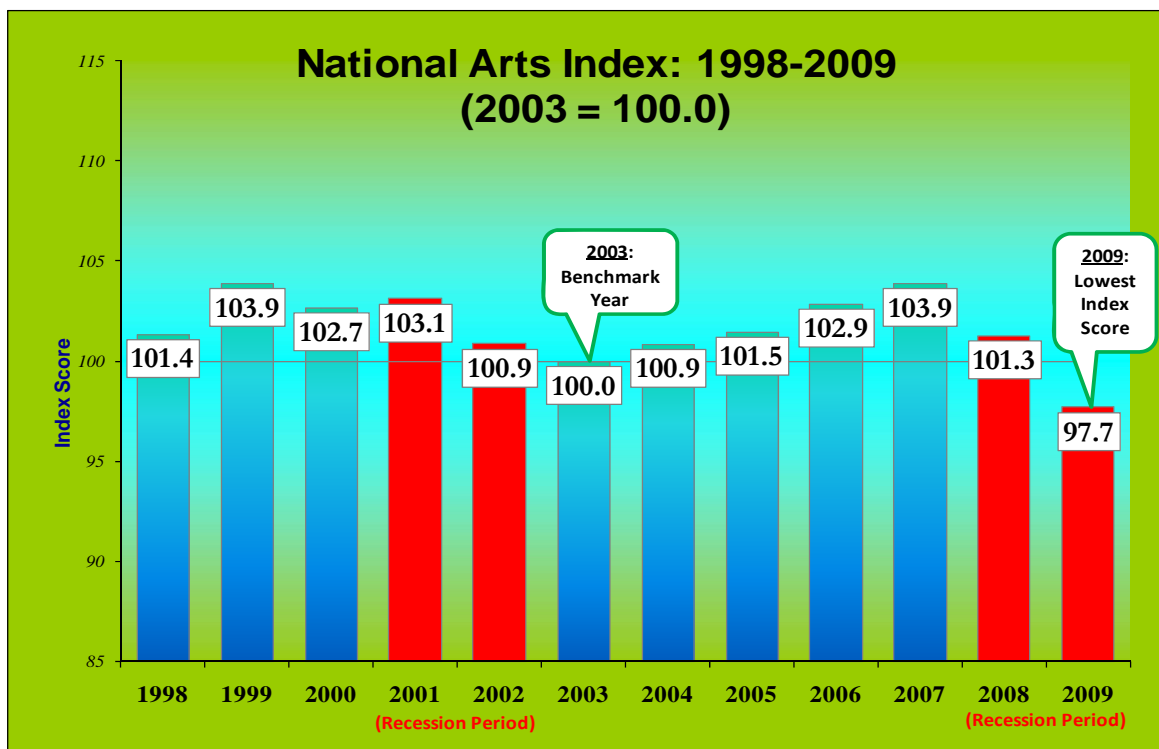


FIGURE A. NATIONAL ARTS INDEX

The 2010 National Arts Index offers the first comprehensive national picture of how the arts fared during the Great Recession period of 2007-09. It is composed of 81 national-level research indicators—the latest available data produced by the federal government and private research organizations—and covers the 12-year span of 1998 to 2009. The Index is set to a base score of 100 in 2003; every point difference represents one percent change.

There is no uppermost Index score, though higher is better. For example, a score of 125 would convey that arts and culture are more highly valued as a fundamental component in American society—characterized by strong financial health, ample capacity, innovation, vigorous participation, and a vital competitive position.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL ARTS INDEX

1. **The arts follow the nation's business cycle.** The Index is high when Consumer Confidence and GDP growth is high. Figure A shows growth during the middle part of the decade and in the late 1990s when the economy was strong, both following by a decline of the Index during the two recent economic downturns.
2. **The fortunes of the arts affect a great many people.** While it may be no surprise that the arts track the economy, most people are unaware of the size of the sector: 109,000 nonprofit arts organizations and 550,000 more arts businesses, 2.2 million artists in the U.S. workforce, and billions of dollars in consumer spending. The arts are a significant social and economic force.
3. **As a broad-based consumer sector, the arts are struggling to compete.** The public's spending on the arts has remained in the \$150-\$160 billion range, though it slipped steadily since 2002 in terms of share of all expenditures (from 1.88 percent to 1.57 percent). Inevitably, as people lost jobs and had their housing threatened, their expenditures on arts and culture, a discretionary expense, went down, too.
4. **Growth in the number of nonprofit arts organizations and arts businesses.** 2009 was the first year of the 12 Index years reported that saw a slight decrease in the number of artists, arts businesses, and arts-related employment. The number of new nonprofit arts organizations, however, continues to grow annually—increasing in number by 3,000 during the 2007-2009 recession years. Putting this growth into context, in the past decade, nonprofit *arts* organizations have grown 45 percent (75,000 to 109,000), a greater rate than *all* nonprofit organizations, which grew 32 percent (1,203,000 to 1,581,000). Or to look at it another way, between 2003 and 2009, a new nonprofit arts organization was created every three hours in the U.S.
5. **Arts nonprofits are struggling financially.** More nonprofit arts organizations are ending the year with a deficit—41 percent in 2008, which is an increase from the 36 percent in 2007. In both years, larger-budget organizations were more likely to run a deficit, though no specific arts discipline is particularly more likely to run a deficit. Even during the more prosperous years of the decade, more than 1-in-3 ran a deficit. While 41 percent of the nonprofit arts organizations running a deficit is a serious cause for concern, this is actually on par with the universe of *all* charitable nonprofit organizations.
6. **Arts and culture is losing its market share of philanthropy** to other charitable areas, such as human services and health. It is noteworthy that this decline began well before the current economic downturn. The share of all philanthropy going to the arts has dropped from 4.9 percent to 4.0 percent over the past decade. If the arts sector merely maintained its 4.9 percent share from 2001, it would have received \$14.9 billion in contributions in 2009, instead of \$12.34 billion—a \$2.5 billion difference.
7. **Demand for arts in education is up.** The percentage of college college-bound seniors with 4 years of arts or music has grown steadily over the past decade—from 15 percent to 20 percent of all SAT test takers—a

confounding finding to researchers given the evidence of K-12 decreases in arts education overall, and suggesting to researchers a significant educational equity gap. College arts degrees conferred annually have risen steadily from 75,000 to 127,000 in the past decade. Reasons for this include an increase in design degrees and more double-majors, such as science and music. This is promising news for business leaders looking for an educated and creative workforce.

CONTINUING TRENDS IN AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

- **How the public participates in and consumes the arts is ever-expanding.** Tens of millions of people attend concerts, plays, operas, and museum exhibitions every year—and those that go usually attend more than once. While attendance numbers at artistic institutions has remained relatively flat over the past decade, the percentage of the U.S. population attending these arts events is shrinking, and the decline is noticeable. Between 2003 and 2009, the percentage of the population attending art museums and performing arts events both decreased (-19 percent and -22 percent, respectively). As the following data show, the public is not walking away from the arts, but they are walking away from some traditional models of delivery.
- **Americans are seeking more personal engagement in their arts participation.** Personal arts creation and arts volunteerism is growing. The number of Americans who personally participated in an artistic activity—making art, playing music—rose 5 percent between 2005 and 2009. During the same period of time, the number of people volunteering for the arts has jumped 11.6 percent. One of the fastest growing areas of interest in the arts is culturally and ethnically diverse arts organizations, which have doubled in a decade (from 4,806 to 9,609). In 2009, there was a fractional decrease in the personal creation measure, though volunteerism continued its upward trend.
- **Technology is having dramatic effects**, which is both encouraging and concerning. In just the past five years nearly half of the nation’s CD and record stores have disappeared. Online downloads of music singles, however, have grown 7-fold to more than one billion units annually. In 2009, digital formats comprised a record 41 percent of total music sales in the United States, up from 34 percent in 2008, and 25 percent in 2007. Savvy nonprofit arts organizations are using technology to broaden their audience base and enrich the audience experience. For example, the Metropolitan Opera simulcasts 12 operas to 1,500 theaters in 46 countries—a program that sold an additional 2.4 million tickets last year alone. Also, the Washington National Opera’s annual simulcast at the Washington Nationals’ baseball stadium attracts 20,000 fans. As in past economic downturns, the motion picture industry performed well with increases in attendance and growth in the number of movie screens.

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES IN THE PAST YEAR

- **Arts employment in the arts remained strong**, especially when compared to labor market difficulties facing all sectors of the economy. A variety of labor market indicators in the Index report show relatively steady levels of compensation and employment.
 - ✓ The self-employed artist-entrepreneur—active as poet, painter, musician, dancer, actor, and in many other artistic disciplines—is alive and well, with total numbers growing every year between 2000 and 2008 (from 509,000 to 676,000).

- ✓ There was a 17 percent increase in the number of working artists from 1996 to 2009 (1.9 to 2.2 million). Artists remained a steady 1.5 percent share of the total civilian workforce.
 - ✓ Arts worker wages kept pace with inflation and showed slight real growth, to about \$49,000.
 - ✓ Songwriter/composer royalties grew from 2003 to 2009, from \$1.27 billion to \$1.66 billion, a 30-percent increase over a six-year span, even after adjusting for inflation
- **New work and innovation.** Arts organizations are settings for artistic entrepreneurship—homes to new ideas and imaginative and innovative leaders. One measure of the Index is the number of premiere performances and films. While there was a 5 percent decrease in this measure between 2008 and 2009, it is still 14 percent higher than in 2005. In 2009, audiences were treated to an impressive 1,022 new opera, theater, film and symphony premieres.
 - **Government arts funding is mixed.** Federal funding to the National Endowment for the Arts increased to \$155 million in funding in 2009, which is just a portion of the \$1.96 billion in total federal arts spending. As a share of the federal domestic discretionary budget, however, total arts funding dropped from 0.42 percent to 0.36 percent, between 2002 and 2009. Many arts programs are also immersed in the budgets of other federal agencies such as GSA, Transportation, and Defense (which boasts vigorous music programs throughout the armed services), but are not included in these totals. In contrast to the federal government, state and local arts funding are decreasing at a rate of about 10 percent per year during the recession.
 - **U.S. cultural destinations help grow the U.S. economy by attracting foreign visitor spending.** Effectively, cultural tourism by foreign visitors is a form of export by domestic arts and culture industries. Since 2003, there has been a 23 percent increase in the number of tourists who fly to the U.S. and attend arts activities as a part of their visit, including Art Gallery/Museums, Concert/Play/Musicals, Cultural Heritage Sites, Ethnic Heritage Sites, American Indian Community, and Historical Places.

FIVE NEW NATIONAL ARTS INDEX INDICATORS IN 2010

1. Record company sales are slipping at the retail cash register, according to data newly added to the Index from Soundscan (see indicator #8).
2. The popular music concert industry has had significant growth since the late 1990s. Pollstar Magazine, the most reliable source of concert industry data, gathers raw data on almost 35,000 concert events each year. All things considered, the 2000s have been a healthy decade for the industry. Increased grosses in 2009 distinguish this industry from some other arts industries that suffered more in the economic downturn. (#9)
3. From Books in Print, we measured the number of books published annually that are coded with the terms “music,” “theatre,” “dance,” or “art.” Overall, there was an increase of about 20 percent—from under 17,000 to over 19,000—between 1999 and 2009. (#36)
4. A new measure of corporate philanthropy from the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy corroborates the Conference Board’s findings that arts support declined steadily from 2006 through 2009, from 8.0 to 6.2 percent of total corporate giving. (#66)

- Visual art performs as well as Standard & Poor’s 500 over the long haul . . . Since 1958, the Mei-Moses All Art Index shows that art has generated investment returns equal to the Standard & Poor’s 500 Stock Index—a 100-fold increase (#78).

DATA IN THE NATIONAL ARTS INDEX

The National Arts Index is composed of 81 indicators of arts and culture activity, measured at a macro, national level. Each individual indicator is analyzed and reported in a common format with data for years from (at least) 2003 to 2009, with most data sets reaching back to 1998. All indicators meet the following eight criteria:

- The indicator has at its core a meaningful measurement of arts and culture activity
- The data are national in scope
- The data are produced annually by a reputable organization
- Seven years of data are available, beginning no later than 2003 and available through 2009
- The data are measured at a ratio level (not just on rankings or ratings)
- The data series is statistically valid, even if based on sample
- The data are expected to be available for use in the Index in future years
- The data are affordable within project budget constraints

81 INDICATORS IN NATIONAL ARTS INDEX

The following table shows the indicators that met these criteria, and the organizations that provided the raw data. It also shows their “Index Scores” for years 2003 through 2009. The scores are set to a base level of 1.00 in 2003. The summary “National Arts Index” score in Figure A. is based on an average of these scores, set to 100.0 in 2003, with additional adjustments. More information on the calculation of the Index is in the full report.

Indicator	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Artists in the workforce Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics	1.00	1.01	1.02	1.01	1.08	1.06	1.05
Year end value of the Mei Moses® All Art index Source: Mei Moses Art Index	1.00	1.14	1.30	1.55	1.83	1.72	1.33
Registered arts and culture 501(c)(3) organizations Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics	1.00	1.03	1.05	1.09	1.15	1.15	1.21
Bookseller sales Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	1.01	0.98	0.94	0.93	0.88	0.88
Books published on music, theatre, dance, or art Source: American Association of Publishers	1.00	1.08	0.94	0.94	1.00	1.05	1.06
Attendance at Broadway shows in New York Source: Broadway League	1.00	1.02	1.01	1.05	1.08	1.07	1.07

Indicator	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Population share attending Broadway shows in New York or on tour Source: Broadway League	1.00	1.03	1.44	1.34	1.30	1.18	1.09
Attendance at touring Broadway shows Source: Broadway League	1.00	1.04	1.47	1.38	1.35	1.23	1.15
Capital investment in arts and culture industries Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis	1.00	1.04	1.05	1.07	1.07	1.05	0.99
CD and record stores Source: Institute of Music Retail	1.00	1.00	0.91	0.87	0.79	0.70	0.62
"Creative Industries" employment Source: Dun & Bradstreet	1.00	0.99	0.96	0.89	1.00	0.94	1.00
"Creative Industries" establishments Source: Dun & Bradstreet	1.00	1.06	1.00	1.00	1.12	1.25	1.22
Citations of arts and culture in bibliographic databases Source: Proquest, Gale, Ebsco, Wilson databases	1.00	0.96	0.85	0.94	1.03	1.02	n/a
Concert industry ticket sales Source:	1.00	1.09	1.17	1.31	1.38	1.44	1.58
Copyright applications Source: Library of Congress	1.00	1.01	0.99	0.98	0.89	0.92	0.88
Corporate arts and culture funding Source: Conference Board	1.00	0.93	1.06	1.14	1.13	0.89	n/a
Arts and culture share of corporate funding Source: Conference Board	1.00	0.85	0.83	0.91	0.85	0.69	n/a
Arts and culture share of corporate funding Source: Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy	1.00	0.86	0.97	1.21	1.14	0.94	n/a
Visual and performing arts degrees Source: National Center for Education Statistics	1.00	1.07	1.09	1.11	1.12	1.13	1.18
Visual and performing arts share of all degrees Source: National Center for Education Statistics	1.00	1.02	1.01	0.99	0.97	0.96	0.94
Employees in arts and culture industries Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	1.00	1.02	1.04	1.03	1.02	n/a
Share of employees in arts and culture industries Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	0.99	0.99	0.98	0.96	0.96	n/a
Establishments in arts and culture industries Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	1.02	1.02	1.04	1.05	1.01	n/a
Share of establishments in arts and culture industries Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	1.00	0.98	1.00	0.99	0.96	n/a
Federal government arts and culture funding Source: Congressional Research Service, CBO	1.00	1.04	1.04	1.00	0.99	1.01	1.04
Federal government arts and culture funding per capita Source: Congressional Research Service, CBO	1.00	1.03	1.02	0.97	0.95	0.96	0.98
Arts and culture share of federal domestic discretionary spending Source: Congressional Research Service, CBO	1.00	1.03	0.99	0.93	0.95	0.96	0.88
Foreign visitor participation in arts and culture leisure activity Source: International Trade Administration	1.00	1.05	1.08	1.11	1.10	1.20	1.23
Foundation arts and culture funding Source: Foundation Center	1.00	1.08	1.08	1.19	1.14	1.51	n/a
Arts and culture share of foundation funding Source: Foundation Center	1.00	1.02	1.00	0.97	0.85	1.00	n/a
Musical instrument sales Source: National Association of Music Merchandisers	1.00	1.02	1.05	0.98	0.96	0.87	0.73
Local government funding of 60 largest local arts agencies Source: Americans for the Arts	1.00	0.95	0.97	1.01	1.18	1.17	1.10
Arts majors by college bound seniors Source: College Board	1.00	0.94	0.95	1.03	1.05	1.01	0.96
Attendance at live popular music Source: Scarborough Research	1.00	1.04	1.07	1.02	1.02	1.00	0.83
Population share attending live popular music Source: Scarborough Research	1.00	1.03	1.03	0.98	0.96	0.94	0.77

Indicator	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Art museum visits Source: Scarborough Research	1.00	0.98	1.00	0.95	0.93	0.93	0.81
Population share visiting art museums Source: Scarborough Research	1.00	0.97	0.97	0.91	0.88	0.87	0.74
Attendance at symphony, dance, opera, and theatre Source: Scarborough Research	1.00	0.99	0.98	0.95	0.93	0.89	0.75
Population share attending symphony, dance, opera, and theatre Source: Scarborough Research	1.00	0.98	0.95	0.91	0.88	0.83	0.69
Motion picture attendance Source: Motion Picture Association of America	1.00	0.98	0.90	0.92	0.92	0.88	0.93
Movie screens Source: Motion Picture Association of America	1.00	1.02	1.06	1.08	1.09	1.09	1.10
Museum visits Source: American Association of Museums	1.00	0.98	1.16	1.10	1.04	1.05	1.04
Songwriter and composer performing rights royalties Source: ASCAP and BMI	1.00	1.06	1.10	1.14	1.20	1.26	1.30
New work in theatre, orchestra, opera, Broadway, and film Source: TCG, Opera America, League of American Orchestras, Broadway League	1.00	0.97	0.88	1.04	1.09	1.05	1.00
Capital investment in nonprofit arts organizations Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis	1.00	1.06	1.04	1.06	1.18	1.27	n/a
Revenue of arts and culture nonprofits Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics	1.00	1.09	1.10	1.20	1.28	1.25	n/a
Opera attendance Source: Opera America	1.00	1.09	1.05	1.09	1.14	0.98	0.93
Population share attending opera Source: Opera America	1.00	1.08	1.03	1.06	1.09	0.93	0.88
Payroll in arts and culture industries Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	0.98	1.02	1.06	1.06	1.03	n/a
Share of payroll in arts and culture industries Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	0.96	0.98	0.98	0.96	0.95	n/a
Personal arts creativity experiences Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	1.03	1.02	1.07	1.13	1.11	1.08
Population share engaged in personal creativity activities Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	1.02	1.01	1.05	1.09	1.05	1.02
Arts, culture, and humanities in the Philanthropic Giving Index Source: Indiana University Center on Philanthropy	1.00	1.46	1.40	1.37	1.18	1.14	0.89
Private giving to arts and culture Source: Indiana University Center on Philanthropy	1.00	1.06	0.99	1.05	1.12	1.01	0.98
Arts and culture share of private giving Source: Indiana University Center on Philanthropy	1.00	0.99	0.88	0.93	0.95	0.91	0.89
Return on assets of arts businesses Source: Risk Management Associates	1.00	1.09	0.95	0.77	1.06	0.81	1.09
Publishing industry revenue Source: American Association of Publishers	1.00	0.96	0.98	0.95	0.95	0.89	0.88
Non-commercial radio listenership Source: Radio Research Corporation	1.00	0.98	0.96	0.96	0.98	1.00	n/a
Public television viewing Source: Public Broadcasting System	1.00	0.98	0.97	0.91	0.83	0.74	0.73
Recording industry shipment value Source: Recording Industry Association of America	1.00	1.01	0.98	0.91	0.78	0.63	0.56
Total album sales Source: Soundscan	1.00	1.02	0.94	0.90	0.76	0.65	0.57
Performance of SAT test takers with four years of art or music Source: College Board	1.00	1.04	1.07	1.11	1.06	0.95	0.94
Indicator	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009

Share of SAT I test takers with four years of art or music Source: College Board	1.00	1.07	1.11	1.18	1.16	1.19	1.27
Independent artists, writers, and performers Source: U.S. Census, County Business Patterns	1.00	1.04	1.12	1.13	1.19	1.19	n/a
Personal expenditures on arts and culture Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis	1.00	1.02	1.02	1.03	1.03	0.98	0.94
Arts and culture share of personal expenditures Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis	1.00	0.99	0.96	0.95	0.92	0.89	0.86
State arts agency legislative appropriations Source: National Assembly of State Arts Agencies	1.00	0.77	0.81	0.84	0.87	0.85	0.80
State arts agency funding per capita Source: National Assembly of State Arts Agencies	1.00	0.76	0.79	0.82	0.84	0.81	0.75
State arts agency share of state general fund expenditures Source: National Assembly of State Arts Agencies	1.00	0.77	0.78	0.78	0.76	0.76	0.71
Arts support organizations Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics	1.00	1.05	1.07	1.10	1.10	1.12	n/a
Share of nonprofit arts organizations with end-of-year surplus Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics	1.00	1.03	1.05	1.09	1.10	1.02	n/a
Symphony attendance Source: League of American Orchestras	1.00	1.00	0.95	1.05	1.04	1.03	0.92
Population share attending symphony Source: League of American Orchestras	1.00	0.99	0.93	1.02	1.01	0.99	0.87
Nonprofit professional theatre attendance Source: Theatre Communications Group	1.00	0.94	0.95	0.89	0.90	0.93	0.87
Population share attending nonprofit professional theatre Source: Theatre Communications Group	1.00	0.93	0.93	0.87	0.87	0.86	0.83
Arts union membership Source: AFL-CIO + Office of Labor Management Standards, Department of Labor	1.00	1.00	1.04	1.09	1.23	1.27	1.26
United arts fundraising campaigns Source: Americans for the Arts	1.00	1.01	0.98	1.04	1.03	1.00	0.91
Volunteering for the arts Source: Bureau of the Census	1.00	0.93	0.88	0.94	0.93	0.93	0.98
Wages in artistic occupations Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics	1.00	0.91	0.93	0.95	0.97	0.93	0.98
Workers in arts and culture occupations Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics	1.00	1.09	1.09	1.11	1.15	1.16	1.17
Share of workers in arts and culture occupations Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics	1.00	1.08	1.07	1.06	1.09	1.09	1.15

LOOKING AHEAD

This first annual update to the National Arts Index provides a picture of how the arts were affected by the unusually difficult economic circumstances of the “Great Recession.” It offers an evidence-based platform to begin a long-term conversation about the arts and their value to communities and a dynamic society. With the Index score at its lowest level in the 12 years studied, and likely to decrease again in 2010, the time to start that conversation is now.

The Index highlights the changing nature of how audiences are engaging with (and spending money on) the arts and the resulting imbalance between supply and demand. There are both demand-side and supply-side solutions to be considered: how do we create more “want” for the arts by the American public using new technologies, alternative venues, and capitalizing on the public’s growing interest in personal arts experiences? And on the supply side, with large numbers of nonprofit arts organizations running deficits, should more be considering alternative business models beyond prevailing 501(c)(3) nonprofit, such as arts and business incubators, shared services and spaces, nonprofit/for-profit hybrids, support for unincorporated entities, and use of existing venues. What other funding models for a new competitive world can help funders evolve their role in advancing the arts—even providing funding to help organizations close when it’s time (“die with dignity”), or require validation by audiences? Arts organizations have much in common—even those in different arts disciplines or whether they are for-profit and nonprofit. It is important to see how they can exploit their shared circumstances in the form of collaborations, especially those that build demand. There also may be social equity issues related to arts education that need to be addressed in further conversation—who is being left out? When these issues are being discussed, the Index has a supporting role to play.

The arts are fundamental to the health of a successful society. By understanding how the arts thrive, we can better understand how to make communities thrive. The National Arts Index helps to support that conversation with a broad systemic approach and evidence to support many points of view.

The full National Arts Index 2010 report is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org/go/ArtsIndex. In it you will find much more detail about the 81 indicators, how the Index was assembled, and some future considerations for artists, audiences, arts organizations, and communities based on all of the data. .

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ABOUT AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS

Americans for the Arts is the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. For more than 50 years, it has been dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. From offices in Washington, D.C., and New York City, it serves more than 150,000 organizational and individual members and stakeholders.

Americans for the Arts is focused on four primary goals:

1. Lead and serve individuals and organizations to help build environments in which the arts and arts education thrive and contribute to more vibrant and creative communities.
2. Generate meaningful public and private sector policies and more leaders and resources for the arts and arts education.
3. Build individual awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts and arts education.
4. Ensure the operational stability of the organization and its ability to creatively respond to opportunities and challenges.

To achieve its goals, Americans for the Arts partners with local, state, and national arts organizations; government agencies; business leaders; individual philanthropists; educators; and funders throughout the country. It provides extensive arts-industry research and professional development opportunities for community arts leaders via specialized programs and services, including a content-rich website and an annual national convention.

Local arts agencies throughout the United States comprise Americans for the Arts' core constituency. A variety of unique partner networks with particular interests such as public art, united arts fundraising, arts education, and emerging arts leaders are also supported.

Through national visibility campaigns and local outreach, Americans for the Arts strives to motivate and mobilize opinion leaders and decision-makers who can make the arts thrive in America. Americans for the Arts produces annual events that heighten national visibility for the arts, including the National Arts Awards and BCA TEN honoring private-sector leadership and the Public Leadership in the Arts Awards (in cooperation with The United States Conference of Mayors) honoring elected officials in local, state, and federal government.

Americans for the Arts also hosts Arts Advocacy Day annually on Capitol Hill, convening arts advocates from across the country to advance federal support of the arts, humanities, and arts education.

For more information about Americans for the Arts, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org.



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