Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friend of the NCTA,

Since 1933, the National Council for the Traditional Arts has celebrated diversity and tradition-based creativity in American society through programs that provide powerful, cultural experiences—inspiring people to connect, to cultivate common ground, and to appreciate the richness and diversity of our nation’s complex culture. Thank you for supporting the oldest folk arts organization in the nation for another year.

Through partnerships that stretch across the country, it is rewarding to see the impact of our work on American communities and on the keepers of our nation’s cultural heritage. This year marked the 79th National Folk Festival, and our second year in Salisbury, Maryland. It was a stunning success, with more than 153,000 people attending. The festival leveraged community infrastructure improvements, promoted civic pride throughout the region, and had a robust economic impact of over $46 million for the surrounding community.

NCTA partnered in presenting several other highly successful traditional arts festivals—including the Montana Folk Festival, the Lowell Folk Festival, and the Richmond Folk Festival. The Richmond Folk Festival celebrated its 15th anniversary with a compilation album of live recordings from past festivals.

On behalf of the National Endowment for the Arts, the NCTA once again managed and produced the National Heritage Fellowships—the highest honor the United States bestows on traditional artists. Our partnership with the National Park Service helped parks across America create and present meaningful traditional arts events and programs. And, the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress continues to safeguard the NCTA archival collection for years to come.

All the best in the coming year,
Lora Bottinelli
2019 Season Highlights

766,000+
Event attendees

1,500+
Artists presented
79th National Folk Festival

The City of Salisbury carries forward the National Folk Festival, the longest-running folk festival in the nation, for its second year in the heart of the Delmarva Peninsula.

September 6-8, 2019
Salisbury, MD
33rd Lowell Folk Festival

Growing from the National’s residency (1987–1989), the ever-vibrant Lowell Folk Festival is widely recognized as one New England’s most important cultural events.

July 26-28, 2019
Lowell, MA
15th Richmond Folk Festival

The Richmond Folk Festival, National host city from 2005-2007, had its largest crowds yet for the 15th anniversary.

October 11-13, 2019
Richmond, VA

Find the 15th-anniversary album at richmondfolkfestival.org

Photos courtesy Michael Stewart
12th Montana Folk Festival

The Montana Folk Festival continues to captivate audiences since the National’s residency 2008-2010.

July 12-14, 2019
Butte, MT
National Park Service

Since 1970, the NCTA has had a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service to assist parks with research, development, production and documentation of cultural programs, exhibits, and special projects. Our Park partnerships include:

• Blue Ridge Parkway/ Blue Ridge Music Center (BRMC)
• Richmond National Battlefield Park
• Lowell National Historical Park
• New Orleans Jazz National Heritage Park
• Jean Lafitte National Historical Park
• Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor
• Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historic Park
• Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument
National Heritage Fellowships

Since 1982, the National Endowment for the Arts has honored our nation’s master folk and traditional artists with the National Heritage Fellowships. This lifetime achievement award recognizes the ways these individuals demonstrate and reflect our nation’s living cultural heritage and the efforts of these artists to share their knowledge with the next generation. The NEA National Heritage Fellowships celebrate the vitality of America’s folk and traditional arts, supporting ethnic and cultural diversity as a strength national of character.

On behalf of the NEA, the NCTA once again managed and produced the National Heritage Fellowships ceremony and concert, September 18-20, 2019 in Washington, D.C.
National Heritage Fellowships

The 2019 NEA National Heritage Fellows are:

• Dan Ansotegui, Boise, ID
• Grant Bulltail, Crow Agency, MT
• Linda Goss, Baltimore, MD
• James F. Jackson, Sheridan, WY
• Balla Kouyaté, Medford, MA
• Josephine Lobato, Westminster, CO
• Rich Smoker, Marion Station, MD
• Las Tesoros de San Antonio—Beatriz (La Paloma del Norte) Llamas and Blanquita (Blanca Rosa) San Antonio, TX
• Bob Fulcher, Clinton, TN

To learn more about the fellows, including photo credits, full bios, podcasts and videos visit: arts.gov/honors/heritage
Folk & Traditional Arts Touring Network

Established by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation (MAAF) in 2018, the Folk & Traditional Arts Touring Network (FTAN) is a presenter-based membership network designed to bolster the presentation of folk and traditional arts in the mid-Atlantic region. NCTA assisted with the development of tour concepts and content, tour coordination, and collaborative planning between FTAN presenters and traditional artists. 2019 tours included:

Lift Me Up! Gospel Masters
The Legendary Ingramettes & the Northern Kentucky Brotherhood Singers
• Carnegie Hall, Lewisburg, WV, January 19
• Augusta Heritage Center, Elkins, WV, February 9-10
• Salisbury University, Salisbury, MD, February 22-23
• Creative Alliance, Baltimore, MD, May 18 (Ingramettes only)
Folk & Traditional Arts Touring Network

*Country Blues & Dance*
Phil Wiggins Blues House Party & the Harris Brothers
- Miller Center for the Arts, Reading, PA, January 24-25
- Flushing Town Hall, Flushing, NY, May 31

*Pickers’ Paradise: From the Balkans to Bluegrass*
Tamburaški Sastav Ponoć & Danny Knicely's Next Generation
- Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, Troy, NY, May 10-11
- Lake Placid Center for the Arts, Lake Placid, NY, June 22-23

*Native Voices: From Katajjaq to Hip Hop*
Supaman & Nukariik with Shodekeh
- Salisbury University, Salisbury, MD, November 20

The FTAN network tours will continue in 2020, for more information visit www.midatlanticarts.org

Photos courtesy NCTA
Maryland Traditions

The NCTA works closely with the Maryland State Arts Council’s (MSAC) folklife program on a variety of projects, events, and initiatives. Featured projects include:

Maryland Heritage Awards
June 7, 2019
University of Maryland
Baltimore County
Baltimore, MD

2019 Honorees:
PERSON: Jay Armsworth (St. Mary’s County)
PLACE: The Arch Social Club (Baltimore City)
TRADITION: bomba y plena / Cultura Plenera (Howard County)

Photos courtesy Remsberg Inc.
Maryland Traditions

Maryland Folklife Area at the National Folk Festival

The theme for the Maryland Folklife Area at the 79th National Folk Festival was *Maryland Masters*, featuring current and past recipients of the MSAC Folklife Apprenticeship Award.

As a special promotion of the program, in summer 2019, a press event and pre-game concert were held at Oriole Park at Camden Yards, Baltimore, MD.

Photos courtesy Pat Jarrett, City of Salisbury & Remsberg Inc.
Outreach Events

The NCTA connected with supporters throughout the country at a variety of outreach events and convenings, including:

- NCTA Congressional Reception on Capitol Hill
- The National Arts Action Summit
- Maryland Arts Summit
- American Folklore Society Annual Meeting
- International Gullah Geechee and African Diaspora Conference

Academic collaborations, including:

- Rutgers University
- Goucher College
- George Mason University
- Salisbury University

Photos courtesy NCTA
The NCTA’s archive of original audio recordings dates from the 1930s, with a concentration of recordings from the 1960s to the present. The significance of the collection lies in its coverage of a broad range of traditional arts in music, dance, and narrative forms.

As the NCTA continues to document its many current programs, the audio archive is growing at a rapid rate, with hundreds of hours of new recordings added each year.

In 2001, the NCTA entered into an agreement with the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to acquire its rare and endangered archive of audio/video recordings, known as “The National Council for the Traditional Arts Collection.”
The NCTA Team

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Ari Pineda
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Sean Tomlinson
Production Assistant
Amy Millin
Development Specialist
Save the Dates

Maryland Heritage Awards
June 14, 2020

13th Montana Folk Festival
July 10-12, 2020

34th Lowell Folk Festival
July 24-26, 2020

80th National Folk Festival
September 11-13, 2020

16th Richmond Folk Festival
October 9-11, 2020

National Heritage Fellowships
Fall 2020

Photo by Pat Jarrett
The National Council for the Traditional Arts is the oldest folk arts organization in the nation, and the only one committed to producing live, multicultural traditional arts events and programs throughout the entire country. Since 1933, the NCTA has celebrated diversity and tradition-based creativity in American society through programs that provide powerful, authentic cultural experiences—inspiring people to connect, to cultivate common ground, and to appreciate the richness and diversity of our nation’s complex culture. To learn more about our work, please visit Ncta-usa.org.