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U.S. Hiring 300 Artists for a Year To Work on Community Projects

By JUDITH CUMMINGS

The selection of 300 artists for a federally financed community art project was announced yesterday by the Cultural Council Foundation. The project has the dual goal of providing a year of steady work for jobless artists and enriching the cultural resources available at the community level.

The Federal jobs program, under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), is the same one that has financed close to 28,000 public-service jobs in the city in the last two years, according to New York City Department of Employment figures.

The artists, who will be paid \$10,000 each, plus benefits, for one year's work, were drawn from the visual, literary and performing arts and include dancers, cinematographers, poets, painters and composers.

In addition to the 300 jobs sponsored by the Cultural Council Foundation, the \$4 million Federal grant is paying for 200 jobs divided among four other organizations: La Mama Experimental Theater, Hospital Audiences, Theater for the Forgotten and the American Jewish Congress.

Rochelle Slovin, director of the artists project, who announced the jobs at a news conference at Parks Department offices in Central Park at 64th Street, said the work will start Jan. 16. The Cultural Council Foundation is a 10-year-old organization that acts as a liaison between the city Department of Cultural Affairs and arts programs that are seeking funding; it also helps about 150 small arts and cultural programs manage their financing, according to the executive director, Sarah Garretson.

3,700 Were Screened

A review panel of working artists from each field screened 3,700 applicants in the last two months before arriving at the final selections, Miss Slovin said. An orientation program to prepare them for work with children, the elderly and other special groups served by community programs is scheduled to begin next Tuesday at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

Applications from community centers, programs for the elderly and public schools are being accepted through the Borough President's office or arts council in each borough, and about 100 have already been received, according to the project's sponsors. The American Museum of Natural History, the Arthur Kill Rehabilitation Center on Staten Island and the Bronx County Historical Society are among the institutions that have requested workers.

In the early stages of matching the artist-workers to agencies that need them, new ensembles are planned for the Brooklyn Philharmonia and the Jazzmobile, Miss Slovin said, and the hope is that other new entities will follow.

Because of the often unconventional manner in which artists work, project sponsors said that a strict system of checks and balances had been established

to insure, for example, that sponsoring agencies verified time put in on the job.

"The main difficulty is we're dealing with creative people, sensitive people who are not accustomed to a clocking-in, clocking-out mentality," Miss Slovin said. "It is our challenge to help them come to terms with the necessity for these very strict accountings of their time."

The American Jewish Congress, one of the groups administering its own program, is employing 50 people, a spokesman said, to work in "Jewish dance, drama, and photography of Jewish cultural events" from a base in the Steinberg Center, 16 East 85th Street.

An issue of major concern among artists involved in the Federal program has been who will retain the rights to works produced during the year of service. Many have taken the position that they should be awarded copyrights, because their future income depends in large measure on revenue generated by past works.

Mrs. Garretson said that under the agreement as it now stood, rights would belong to the city, but that the foundation was negotiating with the United States Department of Labor for a change that would grant permanent rights to the artist but give access rights to the city.



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Rochelle Slovin, project director of CETA artists project, speaking at a news conference yesterday.