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Multiple Perspectives on the Trump Administration's Attitude to Cultural Funding

The ultimate calamity scenario in US arts funding: eliminating the national endowment for the arts

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cuts to the NEA budget will make it more difficult to achieve these goals, but it will not fundamentally divert the city.

New York City is only the most striking example of the increased commitment of states and localities to viewing culture and the arts as a fundamental dimension of social well-being. Cities have for many years seen their cultural institutions as a way to promote tourism and economic development. Increasingly, they are coming to understand that every neighborhood has cultural assets that can improve the lives of those who live in the city, as well as those who visit.

As Engels and Marx noted, history repeats itself, first as tragedy and then as farce. The current federal administration's efforts to undermine public funding for the arts, like its efforts to deny climate change, revive the coal industry, and reverse the gains of black and Latino residents, are unlikely to have a lasting effect on the nation. Rather, the continuing threat to the cultural sector and its ability to contribute to the social wellbeing of the nation's residents is the specter of social inequality. The forces driving this inequality remain deeply entrenched in our economy and society. Although we can be heartened that our political leaders are no longer ignoring the issue, it remains an open question if political commitment alone is powerful enough to reverse the impact of inequality on our neighborhoods and cultural communities.

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PERSPECTIVE

The ultimate calamity scenario in US arts funding: eliminating the national endowment for the arts

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Despite our ancestral beginnings as mostly English colonies and a shared love of Shakespeare, the US has a decidedly different mechanism for government funding of the arts. "Different" can mean better or worse, depending on who's talking, but regardless of which system is under discussion, chances are there is lamentation aplenty that the funding isn't enough.

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Notes

1 http://blog.cuseum.com/post/163492914088/6-things-you-didnt-know-about-the-nea

2 https://www.arts.gov/national/shakespeare

3 https://www.arts.gov/partnerships/nea-big-read

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