

Arts and Recreation Committee
ETHNIC ARTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Report (27.3.88) by

Principal Race Relations Adviser
Director of Recreation and Arts

Item	
BLACK ARTS - FUTURE POLICIES AND PRIORITIES E/AR 391	

RECOMMENDATION

Ethnic Arts Sub-Committee

1. The Sub-Committee agree the objectives set out in paragraph 17 (a-e).
2. The Committee agree the criteria and priorities for funding in 1985/86 set out in paragraph 19 (a-i).
3. The Committee indicate the priorities for initiative set out in paragraph 24-27.

Arts and Recreation Committee

The Committee receives this report.

Introduction

1. Committee has previously agreed to accord a high priority to the implementation of a fairly comprehensive policy on black and other ethnic minority arts. These strategies and programmes were developed by the present administration. With the extension of the political life of the administration to 31 March 1986, this report seeks to develop a continuation of the policy on black and other ethnic minority arts based on a critical assessment of the programme of action implemented in previous years.
2. There are two major components of the policy for ethnic arts - a grant-aid programme and a programme aimed at ensuring race equality in all aspects of mainstream arts. This report will thus outline the priorities and policies which ought to be adopted for 1985/86.

Grant-Aid Programme - Achievements

3. The last two years have seen a substantial increase in funding to black arts in London. For 1984/85 over 100 organisations have been approved for grant-aid out of a total budget of £1.63m. In addition, assistance was given to scores of other organisations as part of an outreach and developmental programme geared to working with the black independent voluntary sector, so that worthwhile projects can be brought to a stage of fruition and so qualify for grant-aid.
4. A critical review of the impact and benefits accruing from this extensive programme of grant-aid has been completed and will be used as the basis for calling a London-wide conference on Black Arts. The conference is planned for May and the summary of the main recommendations will be reported to the Committee in July 1985.

Race Equality Programme - Achievements

5. Having made a critical overview of mainstream arts and their institutions, it was evident that a considerable amount of racism existed there. The manifestations were noted and strategies developed for challenging them. At the same time programmes and key events were mounted as both alternatives to and essential components of programmes which could be said to be catering for all Londoners.
6. During the period under review a number of highly successful key events were mounted which provided a unique forum for black and other ethnic minority artists to demonstrate aspects of their creativity and the need for space - ideological and physical - to exhibit their work.
7. Among the most successful ventures were Third Eye: London's Festival of Third World Cinema; two Black Theatre Seasons; Black Arts and Crafts Fair; and GLC Spring Festival/New Horizons Exhibition. Additionally, a number of access courses in Arts Administration, Print and Radio Journalism and Film and Video were oversubscribed and well on the way to completion. The period also saw the start of the Black Arts Centre at the Roundhouse.
8. A number of significant policy initiatives were developed to increase the employment of black people in the Department of Recreation and Arts, to observe the Council's Anti-Racist Year Declaration in a specially devised Arts programme, and increase the representation of black people in mainstream arts institutions. (See Appendix 1 for detailed explanation of these policies.

9. The GLC has been the first local authority in the country to develop a policy for black arts and to respond to the needs and concerns of black artists with actual resources. It is also the first authority which developed a structure which allows black artists to participate in the decision making process and policy formulation.
10. The policies adopted by the LC for the support of black artists have not only benefited black arts in London but have also influenced the policies of local authorities and other metropolitan councils. In addition many of the black groups funded by the GLC have been able to take their work outside of London, thereby helping local groups to 'organise and fight for resources from local and regional authorities. The numerous Black Theatre music and dance groups receiving money from the GLC have been able to show their work outside of London. The photographic exhibitions by David Baily and Arhmet Francis have been extensively toured in the regions. Both of the exhibitions were funded by the Ethnic Arts Sub-Committee.
11. The specific focus of the Ethnic Arts Sub Committee has made it possible for assistance to be given to many black arts groups and facilitate the overall development of black arts as well as being in the forefront seeking to secure proper representation of black arts interests both with the GLC and the voluntary arts bodies funded.
12. In the light of the experience, it is now possible to say that one of the major shortcomings of the policy of creating a separate structure for funding black arts has been the lack of sufficiently detailed monitoring of performance and administration of the projects. This has meant that some funding could have been maximised to greater benefit for more Londoners.
13. Not all the projects funded under this policy had reached the appropriate stage of development and consequently not only have they not been able to take full advantage of the GLC funding, but their artistic programmes have lacked sufficiently high standards.
14. The policy of blanket funding has meant that there has been a simultaneous development of the arts in all direction. There has been no distinction or prioritisation made between funding folk, traditional, contemporary or political art.
15. It has also not been possible to develop a strategy which was more specific and focused on developing particular strands within the arts.

POLICY AND STRATEGY FOR 1985/6

16. It is recognised that the core elements of previous policies and strategies in this area have resulted in significant benefits to Londoners. Any priorities and policies for the coming year must thus recognise this as well as the harsh reality of continued central government indifference.
17. For 1985/6, it is therefore proposed that the highest priority be given to the promotion of black and other ethnic minority arts. The main objective of this policy should thus be:-
 - a) To consolidate and encourage the development of black arts organisations and groups previously funded and supported whose work reflect the contemporary political issues and experience of London's black communities.

- b) To aid in the development of networks and the infrastructures established as the result of funding.
 - c) To enable groups and organisations to acquire the technical, performing and administrative skills in order that they may be able to successfully compete for resources and funding.
 - d) To assist in the realisation of a vibrant, articulate, organised and autonomous black arts sector.
 - e) To continue to seek the implementation of equal opportunity and Anti-Racist policies in mainstream arts institutions and events.
18. The priority for the GLC for 1985 should be to help consolidate the foundations already laid so that black arts and artists are able to stand on their own and challenge the establishment for their rights to resources, employment, representation, training and recognition.

GRANT-AID PROGRAMME 1985/6

19. Based on the research findings on funding and development strategies already referred to above, it is proposed that criteria and priorities for funding in 1985/6 be as follows:-
- a) Organisations whose primary objectives are the development of contemporary black arts and are innovative in form, content and aesthetics should be given a high priority.
 - b) Priority consideration will be given to black arts projects concerned with experimental work.
 - c) Support for the publication of works, criticisms and research will be given a high priority.
 - d) Projects aimed at creating central communal institutions and resource centres which will be of long term benefit to all Londoners will be given favourable consideration.
 - e) Priority will be given to projects which provide adequate training opportunities in technical and administrative skills.
 - f) Where applicants can demonstrate compliance with any of the above, an additional criterion will be to demonstrate that funding, other than from the GLC, is forthcoming.
 - g) Favourable consideration shall be given to programmes aimed at facilitating a greater cultural exchange with black artists from abroad and which, additionally, lead to the sharing of skills and experiences so gained.
 - h) Priority will be given to projects which encourage a greater participation of women and youth.
 - i) Both the main Arts and Recreation Committee Community Arts Sub Committee will be encouraged to fund black arts projects directly and jointly with the Ethnic Arts Sub Committee.

RACE EQUALITY PROGRAMME 1985/6

20. The Arts and Recreation Committee has already agreed a programme for implement a race equality programme for 1985/86 by establishing a Race Equality Unit (AR 1907) and the creation of a programme of action for mainstream arts and their challenge to racism (AR 1778).
21. For 1985/6 it is proposed that these two policy initiatives be implemented as a matter of urgent priority and that the details of these programmes be worked out within the broad policy parameters already identified in the two reports identified above.

INITIATIVES FOR 1985/86 AIMED AT CONSOLIDATING THE SPECIFIC ART FORMS AND THE BLACK ARTS SECTOR GENERALLY

22. The following proposals have emerged from a series of consultative meetings held with the range of black arts groups, organisations and individuals funded by the Ethnic Arts Sub-Committee. Similar meetings for Dance, Literature and Publications are planned and the outcome will be reported to the Committee at a later date.
23. It is proposed that these proposals put forward by Music, Theatre, Film and Video and Visual Arts be incorporated into the work programme of the Race Equality Unit and the specific projects outlined be developed over 1985/86.

24. Black Music

- (a) Develop a programme of concerts aimed at promoting black music in mainstream venues.
- (b) Organise prison tours of Black Musicians throughout the prison system.
- (c) Assist in the establishment of a Black Music Agency concerned with the promotion of Black Musicians and the distribution of production.
- (d) Organise a London-side seminar on the Black Music business.
- (e) Seek input from the music advisers on the assessment of all music applications to the Ethnic Arts Sub-Committee.
- (f) Ensure the participation of Black Musicians and promoters in all the GLC organised arts and entertainment events. Officer to report regularly to the committee on the implementation of this policy.
- (g) Encourage a policy of joint funding with Community Arts Sub-Committee and the main Arts and Recreation Committee.

25. Black Film and Video Workshops

- (a) to consolidate the already funded franchised and non-franchised black vilm and video workshops.
- (b) To assist in the establishment of the Latin American Media Association and Media Resource Centre in West London.
- (c) To assist in the establishment of an Association of Black Film and Video Workshops.

- (d) To assist in the establishment of a Black Distribution Network concerned with the active promotion of films produced by the Black Independent Film and Video sector here in Britain and the production of information sheet on the availability of Black and Third World Films from existing distributors.
- (e) To assist in the development of a cinema circuit for the promotion of Black and Third World films.
- (f) To develop long-term training programmes aimed at getting people employment and union tickets. Such training schemes to be developed in conjunction with CH4 and the National Film and Television School.

26. Black Visual Arts

- (a) To assist in the establishment of a Black Visual Arts Forum.
- (b) The Sub-Committee should initiate a research project tracing and recording the contribution of Black Visual Artists over the last 45 years. The research should be developed in the context of an historical perspective which reflects the experience of Black people and not an anthropological view of Black people. The completed research should be published and distributed widely. The research to be conducted in conjunction with the Black Visual Arts Forum.
- (c) To fund a series of small exhibitions around individuals or themes linked to the research and aimed at providing a visual documentation of the contribution of Black Visual Arts. The selection of the exhibition to be made in conjunction with the Black Visual Arts Forum.
- (d) The Sub-Committee should organise a series of seminars on Black Visual Arts with an historical and contemporary perspective.
- (e) To assist the Black Visual Arts Forum in the mounting and presentation of a major Black Visual Arts exhibition at a mainstream art gallery.
- (f) To assist in the establishment of a Black Visual Arts touring circuit including mainstream and community based art galleries.
- (g) To assist in the acquisition of a building for the purpose of converting into small working studios for use by Black Artists.
- (h) The Sub-Committee should establish a fund to buy works of contemporary Black Artists.
- (i) The Sub-Committee should establish a permanent collection of Black Arts.

27. Black Theatre

- (a) Theatres funded by the GLC should be obliged to make provisions for the inclusion of Black companies in their programming. Theatres should be required when devising their artistic policy to demonstrate an equal opportunities policy not only in employment, but also in making the theatre available to Black companies. Such a policy would bring into being a circuit of venues for Black companies. It would also open up a dialogue between the theatres and the Black companies.
- (b) To assist in the establishment of a marketing agency responsible for the marketing, advertising and public relations of the Black theatre companies. The agency would also be able to do the same for other art forms.
- (c) To assist in the acquisition of a theatre which is managed and programmed by the Black Theatre Companies.
- (d) Support for the Black Archives. The need for a Black Theatre Archive is essential. It is felt that such an archive would duplicate the work of the Black Archives. Black Archive should be supported to the extent that they can also pay particular attention to the acquisition of plays and theatre related material.
- (e) To assist with the establishment of the Black Theatre Forum.

WOMEN'S EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS

28. Implicit in the race equality programme is a general concern for a similar gender dimension and in all initiatives proposed due consideration will be given to ensuring that the needs and concerns of black and other ethnic minority women are incorporated.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

29. Liaison with the specialist ethnic minority adviser in the Disabilities Team will be maintained to ensure that adequate consideration of ethnic minority persons with disabilities are taken on board.

GAY MEN AND LESBIAN CONSIDERATIONS

30. The specific needs of black gay men and black lesbians will be given due consideration.

Committee
ITTEE

Appendix 1: Ethnic Arts Policy Achievement to date

1.0 Policy Organs

RECO

The GLC's achievement would not have been possible without the positive policies developed by the GLC Arts and Recreation Committee under the leadership of Tony Banks and continued by the present chair Peter Pitt, and Ken Little, chair of the Ethnic Arts Sub-Committee to support the black arts. The most significant development within the state institutions has been the establishment of an Ethnic Arts Sub-Committee with its own budget, set up following the Ethnic Arts Conference in May 1982.

1.2 The Ethnic Arts Sub Committee, made up of 17 non voting advisors from the black arts world, was set up with the objective of advising the GLC on grants and on policies and programmes aimed at securing a race dimension in the overall work of the Arts and Recreation Committee.

2.0 Grants Policy Achievements to date

2.1 This has been the most direct way in which the policies of the GLC's Arts and Recreation Committee have impacted on the development of black arts in London. The Ethnic Arts Sub Committee which began with a budget of £300,000 has steadily increased this in order to meet the demands made by the black artists at the first consultative meeting. These demands were for more resources in the form of rehearsal facilities, space, transport, materials funding and training programmes in administration, technical and performing skills. While the Ethnic Arts Sub Committee has developed priorities and criteria for funding, the general policy has been to fund all art forms and organisations.

2.2 The main effects of this funding policy on the development of black arts have been:

Consolidation/Expansion

- (a) Direct grant aid has enabled the more established groups and organisations to consolidate and expand their work. Groups such as Tara Arts, Teatro Technis, African Dawn, Steel 'N' Skin, Academy of Indian Dance, Black Art Gallery, have developed more effective administrative and organisational structures and long term artistic programmes. There has been a marked improvement in the presentation of the arts programmes, particularly in the area of publicity and marketing. Additional resources has also meant that they have been able to undertake expanded programme

Development of Administrative and Organisational Structures

- (b) Majority of the groups and organisations funded by the GLC have been able to employ, for the first time, administrators to help organise the activities of the groups. One of the downfalls of many of the black arts groups in the past had been inefficient administration and management resulting in bad productions, publicity and marketing. Having specialist workers whose sole task has been to keep books in order, ensure proper publicity of the arts programme and regular contact with funding bodies has meant a significant professionalisation of black arts events both in their presentation and productions.

Resources/Materials

- (c) Increased funding from the GLC has also meant that black arts groups and organisations have been able to acquire materials in the form of equipment such as cameras, video monitors, editing tables, projectors, lighting, stage props, musical instruments, etc. This has been an important development in that for the first time many black arts organisations have also been aided in the acquisition of buildings, e.g., Tara Arts, while many others, e.g., Omnibus, Black Art Gallery, Umoja, and Teatro Technis have been assisted in the renovation, improvement and equipping of their buildings with new resources.

Research/Publication

- (d) A number of research projects and publications aimed at providing a record of both historical and contemporary contributions made by Black artists to British Society have been supported by the Sub Committee. These include publications of Rashid Araeen's book 'Making Myself Visible', a critical examination of the relationship and the role of black artists in Western Society; a book of poems by H. O. Nazareth; research into the History of Black British Literature and Black Arts in Britain since 1920s and a comprehensive catalogue of contemporary art exhibitions.

New Groups

- (e) A number of notable new groups have emerged as the result of GLC funding. Groups such as Umoja Theatre Company, Asian Cooperative Theatre, Sankofa, Black Audio Film Collective, Retake, Ceddo Caribbean Crafts Circle, The Arts Group, have been able to organise and establish themselves much quicker. These new groups also reflect the policy of funding under represented art forms, such as film and video, visual arts and crafts and publications.

Professionalisation of Black Arts Sector

- (f) The most significant effect of GLC funding on black arts has been the professionalisation of black arts and the emergence of a clear distinction between what is described as 'ethnic arts' and 'black arts'. There is now a clearly defined black art sector who is concerned with the development of contemporary art forms. GLC policy has enabled these groups to find a voice, which also challenges the status quo of established British Arts and Arts Institutions.

Training

2.2 Training and employment of black people in the arts professions were two of the major concerns expressed by the participants at the Ethnic Arts Conference held in May 1982. Provision for training facilities was seen as a major priority leading to the achievement of equality in the arts.

Arts Administration and Management

2.4 As a response to the basic training needs of black arts groups and organisations operating at community level, a series of short courses in Arts Administration and Management have been developed in consultation with the

Polytechnic of Central London (PCL). A specialist Training Development worker was appointed to coordinate the project, identify students for the courses and help publicise these courses within the black communities. The project which is based at MAAS has met with tremendous success with all the courses running so far being fully booked. The main benefactors of these short courses have been people already working with black arts groups and organisations.

In addition to the short courses, the Arts and Recreation Courses recently approved a one year full time training scheme in Arts Administration and Management for black artists. The course will be a combination of theory and placements with mainstream arts institutions. The courses will be run at City University and the students will qualify with a certificate.

Short Courses in Film and Video

2.5 A series of short courses in film and video for black and ethnic minorities have been running at National Film and Television School as part of their short course programme. The courses which began in August 1984 have been well received with 100% take up of all the courses. Many of the students attending these courses have been found attachments with established Television and Independent Production Companies. An advisory body consisting of professionals from black film and video workshops, Independent Production Companies, Black on Black and Eastern Eye, ACTT and CH4 has been set up to help in the selection of the students for each course to suggest potential names for tutors. The advisory body is also responsible for monitoring the effects of the courses and for suggesting future training strategies for black people in film and video.

2.6 Short courses in Radio and Print Journalism

A series of short courses in radio and print journalism was sponsored through Black Media Workers Association and the Polytechnic of Central London (PCL). The courses were aimed at assisting black people already working in the media, especially the black press, to develop existing skills and to acquire new ones. The short courses were followed by a one year full time course in radio and print journalism sponsored by Commission for Racial Equality. Many of the students attending the short courses were able to apply and were accepted for this full time scheme. On completion many of the students have found full time employment in the mainstream radio and print media. The first year course, which had the support of the main unions, was so successful that it has been agreed to repeat the course again.

Initiatives

2.7 The Ethnic Arts Sub-Committee has not simply responded to the demands of black arts groups, but also initiated a number of key projects. The main aim of these projects has been to give black arts a high profile in London and to present them in centrally located mainstream arts venues.

2.8 Initiatives such as Third Eye: London's Festival of Third World Cinema. Black Theatre Season, GLC Spring Festival, Black Arts and Crafts Fair, The New Horizons Exhibition have both informed policy and its implementation.

2.9 Third Eye for instance whose objectives were to present a showcase of Third World Cinema and to provide an inspiration of black film makers in London, resulted in a film and video policy for the development of black film culture. The Black Theatre Season, which is a showcase of the best of Black British Theatre, forms part of a policy to promote Black Theatre in mainstream venues. The success of the first Black Theatre Season had the effect of encouraging other theatres like Theatre Royal Stratford and Tricycle to book Black Theatre Companies for longer periods. The Black Arts and Crafts Fair in Covent Garden was the first attempt to unearth the many black crafts men and women living and working in London and was followed by the New Horizon Exhibition. Since then an active policy for encouraging the promotion of black crafts has been developed based on the needs and concerns identified by the artists. These have taken the form of direct funding, exhibitions, workshops, seminars and funding of residencies. The GLC Spring Festival helped to establish a platform for the promotion of contemporary black arts. Many of the black artists, groups and organisations funded by the GLC participated in this event which is now to become an established part of the GLC's arts and entertainment programme.

Black Arts Centre

2.10 This represents one of the most significant projects to be initiated by the Ethnic Arts Sub-Committee. The objective is to develop a centrally located facility which is professionally equipped and managed; command the same status, recognition and respect as any other major European Arts Institutions; initiates an artistic programme which promotes the best of black British art and artists for abroad and is a facility with the capacity for education and training aspiring artists.

3 Policy Initiatives

3.1 In addition to the successful direct grant aiding policy to help develop the black arts sector, there have also been a number of significant policy initiatives with regards to the employment of black people in the Arts and Recreation Department, the important role of Black artists in Anti-Racists initiatives and the representation of black people in mainstream arts institutions.

Department of Recreation and Arts

3.2 Department of Recreation and Arts has taken the following initiatives to redress the racial imbalance in its work force; development of a positive action training programme, the setting of equality targets in areas with clear under-represented absence of black people.

In addition to the above, approval has been given for the establishment of a Race Equality Unit within the Department which in addition to providing specialist advice will have the specific role of policy development and coordination. In addition the location of the Unit in the Department of Recreation and the Arts also represents a significant step in taking black arts into the mainstream.

The work of the Unit will consist of making the mainstream arts institutions aware of their responsibilities for and the talents within the black arts community. The outreach work of the Unit will consist of working with community arts funded projects to ensure the implementation of anti-racists policies and objectives. Training and employment both with the Department and the GLC funded arts projects will be another area of the Unit's work. The Unit will also continue with the administration of funding for black arts.

Anti Racists Arts Initiatives

3.3 The main objectives of the Anti Racist Arts Initiatives and Programmes has been to raise the consciousness of mainstream arts institutions and community arts, against racism. The main focus has been to challenge the institutions which exhibit, stage, screen, publish arts generally and to make them aware of their roles and responsibilities towards black arts. The emphasis has been on getting mainstream arts institutions and community arts organisations to address themselves to the issues of marginalisation, access, administration, management and decision making process.

3.4 In addition to the above policy initiatives aimed at redressing the imbalance in employment and representation of black arts in mainstream arts, a number of direct arts events have also been organised. These include: Anti Racist Film Programme, GLC Writers Competition: Anti Racist Murals, Exhibition of Contemporary Black Arts: Anti Racist Concerts at Queen Elizabeth Hall and Crystal Palace Bowl and Theatre in Education Company touring anti Racist plays in schools.

A series of lecture/seminars are planned with the objectives of encouraging a dialogue between artists of black and white communities as well as an ideological debate about the role, function and future development of black arts in Britain. A conference examining the contemporary issues of race, media and politics is also planned for the coming year.

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