

Cabrillo Music Festival cut out of NEA budget

Cabrillo Music Festival

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Festival musicians aren't paid for performing, but are given \$52 a day for expenses. That amount hasn't gone up in five years.

The festival banks heavily on non-cash contributions and trades:

about \$140,000 comes from non-monetary donations, such as donated food.

The festival was regaining financial momentum lost after the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake and a stubborn state recession, said Fredericks.

Primack said she didn't know

whether the grant loss will be enough to put the festival under. "We need to evaluate where this puts us."

"The festival's strongest currency is not cash, but nonetheless, there is a core need for cash," Fredericks said. "There is no way out of it."

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Officials fear
loss of grant
may start trend

By ROBIN MUSITELLI
Sentinel staff writer

APTOS — A new sound came from Washington Friday — the budget blues muting the symphonies of the Cabrillo Music Festival.

Festival directors said they learned that the 33-year old festival, which enjoys a national reputation as a cutting-edge showcase for contemporary composers, has lost its entire National Endowment of the Arts grant due to federal budget cutbacks.

They warned that the festival's funding loss may only be the first of an avalanche of cuts to local artists as the impacts of NEA budget tightening filter from Congress to Santa Cruz County.

"This is where we find out what Republican policies mean in terms of support of art and culture," said Tom Fredericks, the festival's executive director.

"We're not talking about fringe artists or performance artists who deliberately push people's tolerance to the edge. We're talking about symphonies who do very mainstream work," said Fredericks.

"They've cut off funds to a contemporary music festival that champions the works of contemporary American composers and nothing else," he said. "It leaves me shaky."

The grant eliminations are in response to congressional reductions of the NEA's budget from \$162 million to \$99.5 million.

The NEA's \$13,700 grant to Cabrillo Music Festival represents about 5 percent of the festival's budget.

The impact may swell, however, when funding cutbacks to the California Arts Council take effect. The Arts Council grant from the NEA will be reduced by about 20 percent, according to Ellen Primack of the Cabrillo Music Festival.

The council gives the Cabrillo Music Festival \$5,000. A portion or all of that money may disappear, said Primack. The same state council also funds the Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County.

"It's like a food chain, and you're cutting off an important source," said Fredericks.

How the cuts from the California Arts Council will be distributed hasn't been decided, Primack said.

Nevertheless, Cabrillo's funding loss was bad news to Tim Jackson, director of the Kuumbwa Jazz Center, which has received NEA grants since 1976.

Jackson applied for \$10,000 this year and, as of Friday, had not heard whether it would be forthcoming.

"I don't think that bodes well for any of us if they cut the Cabrillo Music Festival," said Jackson.

Primack said losing the grant, although a seemingly small portion of the festival's \$270,000 budget, would be painful. The festival's budget has already withered from \$390,000 in 1991.

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