

## Annual Report from the President/CEO—March 10th, 2003

Greetings,

There have been a number of exciting accomplishments since the last annual letter. The most notable of these was the realization of the first NAIA Artist Conference that was held in Atlanta in January 2003. This conference focused on the professional and economic success of our membership, which is the mission of the NAIA. Through educational opportunities, shared information, informative speakers, networking, and increased communication, attendees were provided numerous ideas for self-improvement. The evaluation forms collected at the end of the conference gave the event an average rating of 5.96 out of a possible 7 so we can comfortably declare it a success. A lot was learned by all, it was an empowering and uplifting experience, and we are committed to making the next conference even better. Watch for an article in the next newsletter. You can also goto <[www.naia-artists.org/work/ac/2003/notes.htm](http://www.naia-artists.org/work/ac/2003/notes.htm)> for detailed notes on the event. For those who did not partake in the experience this year, we would strongly encourage you to attend the next Artist Conference.

The complement to the Artist Conference is the Director Conference that we have been hosting each year. Last year the DC was held in New Orleans between the two weekends of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. The Director Conference continues to be one of the most important and successful endeavors of the NAIA. This time the us-and-them barriers that sometimes exist between artists and directors were virtually nonexistent. All attendees seemed to be of one mind in their pursuit of ways to improve our profession. This was particularly gratifying because the elimination of those barriers has been and continues to be one of the top priorities of the NAIA. It is through this type of open dialogue that meaningful changes can be made. Please visit <[www.naia-artists.org/work/d-conf\\_4-02.htm](http://www.naia-artists.org/work/d-conf_4-02.htm)> for extensive notes of our latest Director Conference.

Last year a number of changes were undertaken to improve our efficiency and streamline our operation. We moved our Annual Membership Meeting from the Sunday after the Ann Arbor fairs to immediately following the Artist Conference. We also held one of our board meetings the day after the AC. This change of scheduling resulted in significant savings of both time and money. We have established the NAIA Foundation, which now has federal nonprofit 501(c)(3) status. Although in its infancy, the NAIA Foundation offers possibilities unavailable to the NAIA, which is a nonprofit 501(c)(6) organization. We also have obtained pro bono legal advice from the Georgia Lawyers for the Arts and counseling from the Georgia Center for Non Profit. These two contacts have already proved very beneficial to our organization.

Another objective was to improve communication with our membership (which is up approximately 13%!). This upcoming year we are striving for three newsletters instead of the customary two. We also have initiated electronic e-communicués on a regular basis and have additional interim communications like this letter. We also continue to add benefits <[www.naia-artists.org/resources/benefits.htm](http://www.naia-artists.org/resources/benefits.htm)> in the form of discounts. Use of these discounts can easily offset the cost of membership.

The NAIA continues to serve as a resource for directors on a regular basis. Watch for significant changes, location and otherwise, at the Lakefront Festival of Arts in Milwaukee and The Ann Arbor Street Art Fair, the Original. At their request, we were pleased to provide assistance to both of these events. Our influence throughout our profession is also reflected in improved booth fee and refund policies, wait-list procedures, prospectuses, a standardized jury slide format (the red dot!), and fewer shows requesting social security numbers on their applications.

Finally, a few weeks ago you should have received our annual survey and rankings form. This is an important opportunity to voice your opinion and provide us with valuable information so that we can serve you better. Also, through the rankings, you can inform the various shows about their strengths and weaknesses. Please take this opportunity to communicate this vital information to us and to the art events in which you participate. It is your input that initiates constructive change, so if you have not yet done so, please make your voice heard by completing and returning the survey and rankings.

It appears that we are again faced with a year of uncertainties beyond our control. Factors like the economy and the world situation may have undetermined effects on our lives. As the year unfolds, the entrepreneurial and creative spirit within can help each of us adapt and excel. Good luck in your continual pursuit of excellence and professionalism!

Sincerely,



Lawrence W. Oliverson—NAIA President/CEO