



# Mid-America Arts Council

The new Mid-America Arts Council—individuals need apply.

Peter Milstein, director of the recently-formed arts council, is counting on finding motivated, interested and active people in Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri who would like to bring the highest grade of performing arts to the four-state area.

**The new council, to be composed of students and people in communities, plans to use group buying power to bring "professionals of New York City quality to the Midwest and eventually pull top flight organizations out of New York for four to six week residencies in the four state region," Milstein said.**

Milstein already has started finding what needs to be done by the council, although he doesn't officially take office in Lincoln until Oct. 1.

"I've found a somewhat lackadaisical attitude of getting the community and college efforts together so that both groups get maximum benefit," Milstein said. "This results in a half-done job because the organizers didn't cooperate with each other." Milstein said he has found this to be the case often because

independent groups are not aware of channels open for use in working together.

**The council will try to make this communication mesh by getting these groups working together on actual activities, outside of just introducing each other.**

Milstein said students have great potential for involvement because the student population numbers about 800,000 in the four-state area. However, community participation will be emphasized as the program will stress total involvement of the entire area.

Artists will be available not only to the population centers but also to outstate communities where the need for exposure to the arts exists even more. The council also hopes to involve artists outside the performances.

"Just having the artist visit a sewing circle brings appreciation of the arts into the community," Milstein said.

**Funding for the council is provided by the National Endowment Fund for the Arts, another part by the four-state colleges and last from private sources**

**within each state. Milstein looks on this not only as money but as encouragement for the program.**

The National Endowment Fund is looking at this as a program that could possibly be implemented elsewhere, depending upon its success here, Milstein said.

"Our main thrust will be to bring about cooperation in bringing the finest performing arts to everyone, not just students."

The long range aim of a council of this nature is to make performing arts, and as the program grows, visual arts, a more integrated part of the American heritage.

"Europeans are aware of the arts from the time they are old enough to attend concerts. Here in America we are just starting to build this. After all, we are only approaching our 200th anniversary while Europeans have a tradition of thousands of years. Less than one per cent of the American population participates in the arts in any way, and part of this is due to lack of opportunity. This council will make the opportunity available," Milstein said.

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