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Research Division Note #39 - July 30, 1993

## ARTIST EMPLOYMENT IN 1992

According to Bureau of Labor Statistics figures, the artist labor force was up 7% compared to 1991. This represented an increase from 1,618,000 in 1991 to 1,735,000 in 1992. These figures include both employed and unemployed workers in eleven arts occupational areas including: actors/directors, radio-television announcers, architects, dancers, musicians/composers, photographers, painters/sculptors/craft-artists/artist printmakers, authors, college/university teachers of art/drama/music, and artists not elsewhere classified.

*Arts in Education*

*Challenge &  
Advancement*

*Dance*

*Design Arts*

*Expansion Arts*

*Folk Arts*

*International*

*Literature*

*Locals*

*Media Arts*

*Museum*

*Music*

*Opera-Musical  
Theater*

*Presenting &  
Commissioning*

*State & Regional*

*Theater*

*Visual Arts*

For the first time in three years, employment in these artist occupational groups increased, rising from 1,533,000 to 1,624,000 or by 6%. However, for the third consecutive year, the number of unemployed artists in these same occupational groups also increased from 85,000 to 93,000. As a consequence, the 1992 artist unemployment rate (the ratio of the unemployed to the total labor force of artist occupations) rose from 5.3% in 1991 to 5.7%.

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS OF ARTISTS 1985-92

Since 1985, the artist labor force has increased (both employed and unemployed) by 17.1% (1,482,000 to 1,735,000). This growth rate in artist employment from 1985 to 1992 was almost twice that of the rate (9.7%) for all civilian workers.

For the same period, employment for artists (16.4%) did not increase quite as much as did employment in other professional specialty occupations (20.3%). However, the unemployment rates for civilian workers, the Professional Specialty Occupations, and artists followed the same trend; decreasing from 1985 until 1989 and then increasing between 1989 to 1992. As of 1992, total unemployment for all eleven occupations was 93,000, a 9.4% increase from 1991.

### INDIVIDUAL ARTIST OCCUPATIONS 1/

This section compares the employment trends among individual artist occupations. Two categories which experienced extremely high unemployment rate increases between 1991 and 1992 were announcers, a 4.1 to 8% unemployment rate increase, and authors, a 2.3 to 4.9% increase. Between 1985 and 1992, authors experienced a significantly large increase in their unemployment rate, from 1.4 to 4.9%. The second largest unemployment rate increase during this time occurred among architects, from 2.2 to 5.6%. By comparison, teachers of art/drama/music had the largest decrease in unemployment from 2.4 to 1.4%.

The total labor force for artists increased 7.2% between 1991 and 1992. Authors experienced the largest increase among all eleven occupations, 40.9%. However, between 1985 and 1992, 'other artists' experienced the greatest labor force increase, 50%.

Total employment of all eleven occupations increased by 7.2% between 1991 and 1992. The individual artist occupation with the greatest employment increase was authors, 40.9%. Between 1985 and 1992, total employment increased by 9.7%.

1/These data are based on a sample survey and are subject to sampling errors. Small occupation groups (less than 75,000) are less likely to be accurate than the larger occupation groups. (See note at bottom of Table 1)

#### ACTORS AND DIRECTORS

The number of actors and directors employed increased 10.3% (87,000 to 96,000) from 1991 to 1992. The unemployment rate for actors and directors in 1992 was 13.5%, up from 13.2% in 1991. The number of unemployed increased to 15.4%, rising from 13,000 in 1991 to 15,000 in 1992. The labor force for this group increased 11% (100,000 to 111,000). Since 1985 there has been a 22% increase in the size of the labor force (91,000 to 111,000), with a 7.1% increase in the number of unemployed (14,000 unemployed in 1985, 15,000 unemployed in 1992).

#### ANNOUNCERS

The number of announcers employed decreased from 60,000 in 1991 to 53,000 in 1992. The unemployment rate in 1992 was 8%, up from 4.1% in 1991. The number of unemployed rose from 3,000 to 5,000. The labor force of this group decreased from 62,000 to 58,000. Since 1985 there has been a 7.4% increase in the labor force (54,000 to 58,000), and a rise in the unemployment rate (5.3% to 8%). (See NOTE in Table 1)

#### ARCHITECTS

The number of architects employed increased from 127,000 in 1991 to 138,000 in 1992. The number of unemployed increased from 7,000 to 8,000. The labor force for architects increased in 1992 after declining in 1990 and 1991. Since 1985 the architects' labor force has grown 8.9% (133,000 to 146,000).

#### AUTHORS

The number of authors employed increased 37.4% between 1991 and 1992, from 91,000 to 125,000. The number of unemployed in this category went from 2,000 (2.3%) to 6,000 (4.9%). The authors labor force experienced an increase of 40.9% in 1992 (from 93,000 to 131,000). Since 1985 the labor force for authors has grown from 71,000 to 131,000, an increase of 84.5%. (See NOTE in Table 1)

#### DANCERS

The number of dancers employed increased from 18,000 in 1991 to 20,000 in 1992. In 1992, 2,000 were unemployed for a rate of 7.3%. The labor force for dancers increased 10% in 1992 (20,000 to 22,000). The labor force for dancers has risen 29.4% since 1985 (17,000 to 22,000), and employment 33.3% (15,000 to 20,000). The data on unemployment for dancers prior to 1992 is not provided since it was not possible to make reliable estimates given the small size of this category.

#### DESIGNERS

The number of designers employed increased 6.7%, from 217,000 in 1991 to 232,000 in 1992. The 1992 unemployment rate for designers was 4.9%, down from 5.4% in 1991. There was a 2.3% increase in the labor force (557,000 to 570,000) and a drop in the total unemployed (30,000 to 28,000). Since 1985 there has been a 13.1% increase in the labor force (504,000 to 570,000) and a 12% increase in the number employed (484,000 to 542,000). The number of unemployed persons increased from 20,000 to 28,000, raising the unemployment rate from 3.9% to 4.9%.

#### MUSICIANS/COMPOSERS

The number of musicians and composers employed increased 20.5%, from 156,000 to 188,000. The number of unemployed rose from 6,000 to 9,000, increasing the unemployment rate from 4.0% to 4.8%. The labor force for musicians and composers increased 21.6% in 1992 (162,000 to 197,000). Since 1985 the labor force increased 20.9% (from 163,000 to 197,000). During the period of 1985-92 there has been a 18.2% decrease in the number of unemployed musicians and composers (11,000 to 9,000) and a decrease in the unemployment rate (6.5% to 4.8%).

#### PAINTERS/SCULPTORS/CRAFT ARTISTS/ARTIST PRINTMAKERS

The number of employed in this category increased 6.7%, from 208,000 in 1991 to 222,000 in 1992. The number of unemployed in this category rose 11.1% (9,000 to 10,000), raising the unemployment rate from 4.0% to 4.3%. The labor force for this group increased 6.9% in 1992 (217,000 to 232,000). Since 1985 there has been a 12.1% growth in the labor force (207,000 to 232,000) and the number of unemployed rose from 7,000 to 10,000 (the unemployment rate increased from 3.2% to 4.3%).

PHOTOGRAPHERS

The number of photographers employed decreased by 5.2%, from 136,000 in 1991 to 129,000 in 1992. The unemployment rate for photographers dropped in 1992 from 4.8% to 4.1%, while the labor force decreased from 143,000 to 135,000. Since 1985, there has not been any steady trend in either growth or decline for this category.

TEACHERS OF ART/DRAMA/MUSIC (higher ed.)

The labor force for this group decreased 15% in 1992 from 40,000 to somewhat more than 34,000 (because of estimations, the change in the number of teachers employed is identical to that of the labor force). The number of unemployed declined to an estimated less than 1,000 for 1992. Since 1985 there has been a 19% decrease in the size of the labor force (42,000 to 34,000) and a corresponding decrease in the number of employed (41,000 to 34,000). The number of unemployed has consistently remained at or below 1,000. (NOTE: Many of those employed in this category are counted among higher education occupations rather than arts).

OTHER ARTISTS

The number of employed artists not classified elsewhere in the survey (which includes such varied professions as animators, comics, puppeteers, and translators) increased 14.5%, from 83,000 in 1991 to 95,000 in 1992. The number of unemployed declined from 6,000 to 4,000 causing a drop in the unemployment rate from 7.3% to 4.3%. This group had a labor force of 99,000 in 1992, up 11.2% from 89,000 in 1991. Since 1985 this category has grown 50.0% (66,000 to 99,000) and the number of unemployed has remained constant at 4,000. This is reflected in a decrease in the unemployment rate (5.6% to 4.3%).

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These national employment statistics are obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Survey, which reports employment information on over 325 occupations, including eleven artist occupations. A respondent (16 years or older) is considered employed if during the survey week he/she did any paid work in his/her business, profession, or farm. To be considered as working in one of these artist occupations in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' survey, one must be working during the survey week and have described that job/work as one of the eleven artist occupations. It is important to note that those holding more than one job are counted in the job in which they worked the most hours during the survey week.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics counts a person as unemployed if they did not have a job during the survey week, were available for work, and had made specific efforts to find a job during the prior four weeks. In order to be counted as unemployed in a particular occupation, an unemployed person's last full-time job must have been in that occupation. Therefore, to be counted as unemployed in one of the artist occupations, one must not have had a job in the survey week, been available for work, have made specific efforts to look for work in the last four weeks, and last worked in an artist occupation.

The reader should be cautious about comparing these data to other estimates of employment and unemployment in artist occupations since differences in definition and methodology can cause wide variances. 2/

2/One example of disparate methodology is Actors Equity Association's tracking of its members' employment. In its December 1992 issue of "Equity News," the Association reports that its paid membership is 33,516, of whom 14,451 are working under Equity contracts. Actors Equity defines its paid membership as those people who are registered members of Actors Equity, fully paid in dues, and eligible for Equity-contracted work. Consequently, Actors Equity bases its employment figures on the number of work weeks for which the total membership was engaged and compensated in Equity-contract work. Actors Equity does not collect information on the employment status of its membership that did not work under Equity contracts. Therefore, whether these members are holding acting jobs outside of Equity contracts, or working at jobs other than acting, or are without any job is not known.

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#### ARTIST OCCUPATIONS COMPARED TO OTHERS

Between 1991 and 1992, the labor force for all civilian workers increased .6% (125,303,000 to 126,005,000). For professional specialty occupations, a broad group of occupations that generally requires substantial professional training and/or education and includes the eleven artist occupations, the labor force increase over the year was .2% (16,451,000 to 16,825,000). For the eleven artist occupational groups, the increase from 1991 to 1992 was .2% (1,618,000 to 1,642,000).

Over the year, total civilian employment increased by .2% (from 116,877,000 to 117,583,000). Employment among professional specialty occupations was up .2% in 1992 (16,058,000 to 16,393,000). Aggregate employment in the artist occupations increased from 1,533,000 in 1991 to 1,642,000 in 1992.

Nationally, unemployment remained constant from 1991 to 1992, totaling 8,422,000 persons. Unemployment in professional specialty occupations increased 8% over the year, from 393,000 to 432,000. The increase in unemployment among artist occupations was 8% (from 85,000 in 1991 to 93,000 in 1992).

The unemployment rate for all civilian workers stayed the same from 1991 to 1992. The unemployment rate for professional specialty occupations rose from 2.4% to 2.6% from 1991 to 1992. The artist occupations had a rise in the unemployment rate from 5.3% in 1991 to 5.7% in 1992.

CAVEATS: This Research Division Note is the tenth of an annual series utilizing the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) adapted by the Current Population Survey in 1983. Changes in the occupational classification system improved the consistency in measuring employment in the artist occupational groups. Caution should be used when comparing these data with pre-1983 data.

Research Division Reports and Notes of related interest:

Reports

- #1 Employment and Unemployment of Artists: 1970-1975
- #16 Artist Employment and Unemployment: 1971-1980

Notes

- #2 Artist Employment in 1982
- #7 Artist Employment in 1983
- #11 Artist Employment in 1984
- #15 Artist Employment in 1985
- #22 Artist Employment in 1986
- #29 Artist Employment in 1987
- #31 Artist Employment in 1988
- #33 Artist Employment in 1989
- #35 Artist Employment in 1990
- #37 Artist Employment in 1991

Sourcebook of Arts Statistics: 1989, Research Division, April 1990

1992 Addendum to the Sourcebook of Arts Statistics, Research Division, April 1992

Table 1. Artist Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment, 1985-92

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1985</u>
<b>Total, All Civilian Workers</b>	<b>126,005,000</b>	<b>125,303,000</b>	<b>124,067,000</b>	<b>123,869,000</b>	<b>115,462,000</b>
Employed	117,583,000	116,877,000	117,914,000	117,342,000	107,150,000
Unemployed	8,422,000	8,426,000	6,874,000	6,528,000	8,312,000
Unemployment Rate	6.7%	5.5%	5.3%	7.2%	7.2%
<b>Professional Specialty Occupations</b>	<b>16,825,000</b>	<b>16,451,000</b>	<b>16,132,000</b>	<b>15,815,000</b>	<b>13,946,000</b>
Employed	16,393,000	16,058,000	15,818,000	15,550,000	13,630,000
Unemployed	432,000	393,000	314,000	265,000	316,000
Unemployment Rate	2.6%	2.4%	1.9%	1.7%	2.3%
<b>All Artists</b>	<b>1,735,000</b>	<b>1,618,000</b>	<b>1,608,000</b>	<b>1,617,000</b>	<b>1,482,000</b>
Employed	1,642,000	1,533,000	1,548,000	1,571,000	1,411,000
Unemployed	93,000	85,000	60,000	46,000	71,000
Unemployment Rate	5.7%	5.3%	3.7%	2.8%	5.0%
<b>Actors and Directors</b>	<b>111,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>108,000</b>	<b>107,000</b>	<b>91,000</b>
Employed	87,000	87,000	97,000	96,000	77,000
Unemployed	15,000	13,000	11,000	11,000	14,000
Unemployment Rate	13.5%	13.2%	10.6%	10.4%	15.4%
<b>Announcers****</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>63,000</b>	<b>55,000</b>	<b>53,000</b>	<b>54,000</b>
Employed	53,000	60,000	52,000	51,000	51,000
Unemployed	5,000	3,000	3,000	2,000	3,000
Unemployment Rate	8.0%	4.1%	5.5%	2.9%	5.3%
<b>Architects</b>	<b>146,000</b>	<b>134,000</b>	<b>147,000</b>	<b>161,000</b>	<b>133,000</b>
Employed	138,000	127,000	142,000	157,000	130,000
Unemployed	8,000	7,000	5,000	4,000	3,000
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	5.0%	3.7%	2.4%	2.2%
<b>Authors****</b>	<b>131,000</b>	<b>93,000</b>	<b>85,000</b>	<b>83,000</b>	<b>71,000</b>
Employed	125,000	91,000	84,000	82,000	70,000
Unemployed	15,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Unemployment Rate	4.9%	2.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%
<b>Dancers</b>	<b>22,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>	<b>17,000</b>
Employed	20,000	18,000	14,000	14,000	15,000
Unemployed	2,000	-	-	-	-
Unemployment Rate	7.3%	-	-	-	-
<b>Designers</b>	<b>570,000</b>	<b>557,000</b>	<b>549,000</b>	<b>548,000</b>	<b>504,000</b>
Employed	542,000	527,000	531,000	534,000	484,000
Unemployed	28,000	30,000	18,000	14,000	20,000
Unemployment Rate	4.9%	5.4%	3.2%	2.5%	3.9%
<b>Musicians/Composers</b>	<b>197,000</b>	<b>162,000</b>	<b>167,000</b>	<b>174,000</b>	<b>163,000</b>
Employed	188,000	156,000	162,000	170,000	152,000
Unemployed	9,000	6,000	5,000	4,000	11,000
Unemployment Rate	4.8%	4.0%	3.2%	2.4%	6.5%
<b>Painters/Sculptors/ Craft Artists/ and Artist Printmakers</b>	<b>232,000</b>	<b>217,000</b>	<b>224,000</b>	<b>232,000</b>	<b>207,000</b>
Employed	222,000	208,000	217,000	229,000	200,000
Unemployed	10,000	9,000	7,000	3,000	7,000
Unemployment Rate	4.3%	4.0%	3.0%	1.3%	3.2%
<b>Photographers</b>	<b>135,000</b>	<b>143,000</b>	<b>127,000</b>	<b>114,000</b>	<b>134,000</b>
Employed	129,000	136,000	123,000	112,000	129,000
Unemployed	6,000	7,000	4,000	2,000	5,000
Unemployment Rate	4.1%	4.8%	3.1%	1.9%	3.5%
<b>Teachers of Art, Drama, and Music (higher ed.)</b>	<b>34,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>46,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>42,000</b>
Employed	34,000	40,000	45,000	45,000	41,000
Unemployed	***	***	1,000	***	1,000
Unemployment Rate	1.4%	1.1%	2.7%	0.7%	2.4%
<b>Other Artists**</b>	<b>99,000</b>	<b>89,000</b>	<b>84,000</b>	<b>83,000</b>	<b>66,000</b>
Employed	95,000	83,000	81,000	81,000	62,000
Unemployed	4,000	6,000	3,000	2,000	4,000
Unemployment Rate	4.3%	7.3%	4.1%	2.3%	5.6%

\*Data base is too small for reliable estimate. \*\*Not elsewhere classified. \*\*\*Less than 1,000. \*\*\*\*Data for 1992 are not fully comparable with data for prior years because of the introduction of the occupational classification system used in the 1990 census.

Note: These labor force statistics are based on a sample survey and, consequently, are subject to sampling errors. Relatively small changes in employment in the smaller artist occupations are often not statistically significant. For a more detailed discussion, see Research Division Report #16, Artists Employment and Unemployment 1971-1980, Appendix B, "Reliability of Current Population Survey (CPS) Statistics." All the unemployment rates shown in the table (with the exception of the rates for 'All Artists') were calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics using unrounded data.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Research Division  
National Endowment for the Arts  
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Table 2. Trends in Artist Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment, 1985-1992

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Change, 1991-1992</u>		<u>Change, 1985-1992</u>	
	<u>Level</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
<u>Total, All Civilian Workers</u>	+702,000	+0.6%	+10,543,000	+9.1%
Employed	+706,000	+0.6%	+10,533,000	+9.7%
Unemployed	-4,000		+110,000	+1.3%
<u>Professional Specialty Occupations</u>	+374,000	+2.2%	+2,879,000	+20.6%
Employed	+335,000	+2.1%	+2,763,000	+20.3%
Unemployed	+39,000	+9.9%	+116,000	+36.7%
<u>All Artists</u>	+117,000	+7.2%	+253,000	+17.1%
Employed	+109,000	+7.1%	+231,000	+16.4%
Unemployed	+8,000	+9.4%	+22,000	+31.0%
<u>Actors and Directors</u>	+11,000	+11.0%	+20,000	+22.0%
Employed	+9,000	+10.3%	+19,000	+24.7%
Unemployed	+2,000	+15.4%	-1,000	+7.1%
<u>Announcers***</u>	-5,000	-7.9%	+4,000	+7.4%
Employed	-7,000	-11.1%	+2,000	+3.9%
Unemployed	+2,000	+66.7%	+2,000	+66.7%
<u>Architects</u>	+12,000	+9.0%	+13,000	+9.8%
Employed	+11,000	+8.7%	+8,000	+6.2%
Unemployed	+1,000	+14.3%	+5,000	+166.7%
<u>Authors***</u>	+38,000	+40.9%	+60,000	+84.5%
Employed	+34,000	+37.4%	+55,000	+78.6%
Unemployed	+4,000	+200.0%	+5,000	+500.0%
<u>Dancers</u>	+2,000	+10.0%	+5,000	+29.4%
Employed	+2,000	+11.1%	+5,000	+33.3%
Unemployed	*	*	*	*
<u>Designers</u>	+13,000	+2.3%	+66,000	+13.1%
Employed	+15,000	+2.8%	+58,000	+12.0%
Unemployed	-2,000	-6.7%	+8,000	+40.0%
<u>Musicians/Composers</u>	+35,000	+21.6%	+34,000	+20.9%
Employed	+32,000	+20.5%	+36,000	+23.7%
Unemployed	+3,000	+50.0%	-2,000	-18.2%
<u>Painters/Sculptors/ Craft Artists/ and Artist Printmakers</u>	+15,000	+6.9%	+25,000	+12.1%
Employed	+14,000	+6.7%	+22,000	+11.0%
Unemployed	+1,000	+11.1%	+3,000	+42.9%
<u>Photographers</u>	-8,000	-5.6%	+1,000	+0.8%
Employed	-7,000	-7.4%	*	*
Unemployed	-1,000	-14.3%	+1,000	+16.7%
<u>Teachers of Art, Drama, and Music (higher ed.)</u>	-6,000	-15.0%	-8,000	-19.0%
Employed	-6,000	-15.1%	-7,000	-17.0%
Unemployed	*	*	*	*
<u>Other Artists**</u>	+10,000	+11.2%	+33,000	+50.0%
Employed	+12,000	+14.5%	+33,000	+53.2%
Unemployed	-2,000	-33.3%	*	*

\*Data base is too small for reliable estimate.

\*\*Not elsewhere classified.

\*\*\*Data for 1992 are not fully comparable with data for prior years because of the introduction of the occupational classification system used in the 1990 census.

See Note at bottom of Table 1.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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