

Occupy Wall Street and Arts Face Similar Themes

By Elizabeth Kramer

The Courier-Journal

October 22, 2011

As the Occupy Wall Street protests of New York City and many others recently replicated throughout the country have gained increasing attention, a report on art funding issued earlier this month loosely echoed one of the protests' primary themes — that 99 percent of the country is suffering economically because the remaining 1 percent holds most of the wealth.

Now, this report from the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy addresses what it sees as an imbalance in funding to arts groups. The report says that most money to fund the arts goes to a relatively small number of groups that serve rich, white people. The statistic it offers: 2 percent of arts and culture nonprofits have budgets of more than \$5 million, but they receive 55 percent of contributions, gifts and grants.

The report argues that even though the demographics of the country have changed in recent decades, as has looking at the way people interact with the arts, funding models haven't changed much. Titled "Fusing Arts, Culture and Social Change" and released at a conference of Grantmakers in the Arts, the report follows the rise of arts funding in the United States with its history of supporting traditional Western European high art as a means to boost civic pride, the authority of the new urban commercial elite and America's position as a civilized world power.

[Read the full article](#) .