



MEDIA RELEASE

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PUBLIC FUNDING FOR THE ARTS – THEN AND NOW

Discussion Program “Arts for the People” at downtown Central Library

The **Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System** will host the first of the *PastForward Discussion Series*, three community discussions focusing on aspects of WNY history during the Great Depression of the 1930s and their applications to the challenges this region is facing today, on **Thursday, October 21 from 6 – 9 p.m.** at the **downtown Central Library**, 1 Lafayette Square, Buffalo. The event is free and open to the public.

The PastForward Series is a program of the Library’s *Re-Collecting the Depression and New Deal as a Civic Resource in Hard Times* project, funded through grants from the **New York Council on the Humanities** and the **National Endowment for the Humanities**.

The program on Thursday, October 21, “Arts for the People,” focuses on public funding for the arts during the Great Depression, the rich cultural legacy spawned at that time – particularly the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and Kleinhans Music Hall, both WPA (Works Progress Administration) projects – and the role of public funding for the arts in economic policy and practice in today’s no less challenging times. The evening will include overview displays of WNY’s Depression-era arts history; a call for identifying oral history interview subjects, artifacts and other resources from the Depression for future collecting; and some technology-based tools for further exploring WNY’s Depression era and arts legacy still surrounding us today. Panelists participating in the program include Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Artistic Director Joann Faletta; local historian and author Mark Goldman; UB Professor David Herzberg; John R. Oishei Foundation Vice President Paul Hogan, and moderator Mark Sommer, Buffalo News reporter.

Two additional discussions are planned in 2011; Organized Labor in February and Public Housing in May. For more information, visit www.buffalolib.org.

Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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