

**Arts Planning Committee**  
**Renewed Charge: January 2006**  
**Rob Oden**

My original charge to the Arts Planning Committee asked you “to shape a vision and outline a plan to relocate the arts more centrally in the educational program at Carleton and to position the College to be a national leader in the arts for decades to come.” Even months ago, when first I wrote this charge, I hoped that you would offer to the College a “transforming vision.” You have more than fulfilled this hope. Thank you for imagining to “reinvent the presence of the arts on the College’s campus and in its curriculum.”

Now I am asking you to guide us to a tangible plan for beginning to achieve the two powerful recommendations you made for attaining a “consciously creative campus.” It is my hope that you will address and embrace the four educational goals you wisely identified as crucial to the role that the arts should play in a liberal education.

You will have completed your work when you can communicate how the imagined programs offerings will move the campus toward the broader goals of curricular and learning development that you outlined. In this renewed charge, I am asking you to link your intended curricular and programmatic initiatives with physical planning and space requirements. When you have completed this second stage in your work, I believe it may make sense for us to hold an architectural competition for the development of a “state-of-the-art Center for the Arts.” That effort will be necessarily informed by and based upon your next report and the imagination it represents. Our ability to build support for the Center for the Arts in the broader Carleton community beyond campus will depend in large part on the vision and specific objectives you can help us to identify.

As before, I ask you to think collaboratively and boldly. Your praiseworthy ability to overcome provincial perspectives in the last report needs to define this next stage as well. Doing so may well prompt you to consider new and different approaches, not simply because they are new, but because they derive from a more integrative vision of the arts and their importance for “understanding ourselves and for comprehending the world in which we live.”

We have seen that many other fine colleges have had collaborative ambitions for the Arts, but we have also learned that too often these ambitions have not been fulfilled. We cannot mandate that disciplines and the students and teachers in them work with and learn from one another, but we can make such joint investigation possible, and even alluring. How do we here succeed where others of wisdom and insight have fallen short?

Both for funding reasons and because so many of our needs in the arts are so pressing, we need you to advise the College on the pacing and chronology of what we define and pursue first and what, if anything, we might defer until later.

Although I hesitate to put a deadline on your work, the sooner you get us to the next stage, the better. Let me suggest that I would be very appreciative of a plan by the end of September, but I would be the more pleased if it were completed before this year’s graduation. It is unlikely that any of us (ever) will have the opportunity to shape a campus in more fundamental ways than through achieving your vision of a consciously creative campus. Your charge is weighty and my confidence in your ability to respond to it is sure. Thank you.