

Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts Ceremony
Friday, February 9, 2001
2:00 p.m.
Old Capitol Museum – House Chamber

(Message: The importance of the arts and congratulating the winners)

Talking Points

- Hello
- Thank you for allowing me to join you again this afternoon in celebrating the accomplishments of this year's award winners.
- The arts stimulate
 - The arts inspire
 - The arts open minds to new possibilities.
- New possibilities that are sometimes thought to be impossible.
- The arts are important in a child's education.
- Children need this stimulation and inspiration while developing their minds.
- A child believes anything is possible:
 - They can fly to Pluto.
 - They can hunt lions and tigers in the deep, deep jungles of Africa,
 - They can have tea with the King and Queen of Spain (ok, that may be possible for some children in MS this year).

- As a child, I remember seeing Roden's "The Thinker" sculpture and wondering why someone would sculpt a man thinking.
 - As I got older and gained just a few gray hairs, I began to understand the beauty of a thinking sculpture contemplating life.
 - Contemplating his accomplishments, his family or his future.
- The arts sometimes take a while to learn to appreciate, but almost everyone does learn to appreciate or respect its beauty and function in society.
- But children and Mississippians must continue to have the opportunities for experience the arts.
- Willie Morris, who needs no introduction, was once quoted as saying, "I've tried to put the South into the larger American perspective."
- He used his works to promote Mississippi.
- His love for Mississippi has helped shaped positive perceptions of our state.
- His ability to tell a story and help mold impressionable minds (both young and old) is in itself, an "art."
- The gift of telling a story, expressing your feelings or making a statement through painting, writing, dancing, singing or any art form is truly a gift to be shared, taught and viewed.

- The arts define our culture, our society, and our specific regions.
- They give “outsiders” a glimpse into our life.
 - They allow them to enter into our world.
- Anyone around the globe can enjoy and experience another culture through the arts.
- We must preserve and continue to support these programs.
- Remember to congratulate this year’s winners.
 - And to continue to encourage anyone you met who is preserving or supporting the arts.