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Turning up the Volume

Nurturing Music and Opera Artists and Audiences Nationwide

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has been assisting the music field in America for more than 40 years, and has witnessed the evolution of a dynamic musical landscape. The number of orchestras grew from just over 100 in 1965 to more than 1,800 in 2008, performing in excess of 36,000 concerts annually. The current economic situation facing everyday Americans, however, is likewise contributing to the challenges that nonprofit organizations are beginning to experience. Needless to say, when nonprofits are in a positive, balanced position, they are more likely to invest in new artistic works, demonstrate an increased commitment to arts and arts education, and invest in creative and community partnerships. And that is where the Arts Endowment comes in.



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ON THE COVER:

Plácido Domingo pays homage to NEA Opera Honors recipient Leontyne Price backstage at the awards ceremony at Washington, DC's Sidney Harman Hall at the Harman Center for the Arts, October 31, 2008. Photo by Henry Grossman



PHOTO BY FADI KHEIR

Music and Opera Director Wayne S. Brown at the May 2008 announcement of the NEA Opera Honors in New York City.

For projects like the New World Symphony's orchestral academy, which provides professional development to emerging artists, or the Boston Early Music Festival production of an opera that has rarely been seen in four centuries, NEA support is crucial. Through NEA investment, these organiza-

tions receive validation for their projects that often leads to increased audiences and financial support.

Music grants, however, cover more than just classical and opera. NEA support for jazz programming has been strong from the beginning of its history, increasing from \$20,000 in 1970 to \$1.5 million in 1980 to \$2.8 million in 2005. Jazz projects supported by the agency have included festivals and concerts as well as special projects such as NEA Jazz Master Billy Taylor's Jazzmobile in New York.

In addition to grantmaking, the NEA supports the music field in other substantive ways. Over the past six years, Chairman Dana Gioia has expanded national music programs like the NEA Jazz Masters initiative to include touring, broadcasts, and educational programs. In addition, NEA Opera Honors, a new lifetime achievement program—the first in 26 years—was created this year to recognize a stellar group of American musical greats in that field.

In these pages you will read about these projects and initiatives and more that demonstrate the creative vision and achievement of the music and opera fields in America.

Wayne S. Brown
Director, Music and Opera

Music to Our Ears

The NEA's Support for Music and Opera in America

Given that founding members of the NEA's National Council on the Arts included Marian Anderson, Leonard Bernstein, and Duke Ellington, it's not surprising that the NEA has a strong tradition of support for music and opera. Since 1965, the Arts Endowment has invested more than \$535 million, providing catalytic support to orchestras, chamber ensembles, and choirs for more than 15,000 diverse music and opera projects, festivals, music education, and professional training.

While the NEA funds numerous presentations of the standard classical, jazz, and choral repertoires, it also supports the creation and performance of new work by American composers. For example, New York's Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra received NEA support for a project in which the small-budget orchestra commissioned a new work by composer Joan Tower that was then performed by 60 similarly sized orchestras in all 50 states. The success of the resulting work, *Made in America*, led to a new public-private partnership program, Ford Made in America, which is supporting a commissioned work, Joseph Schwantner's *Chasing Light . . .*, which will be performed by small and regional orchestras in all 50 states from 2008–10.

The Arts Endowment also helps to bring music and opera performances to new audiences. For example, in the early 1990s, the Arts Endowment collaborated with Chamber Music America on the Rural Residencies Program, which gave young professional chamber musicians the opportunity to engage with local communities through intimate concerts, open rehearsals, and other activities that fostered a sense of connection. Great American Voices, a recent initiative in collaboration with OPERA America and with support from The Boeing Company, enabled 24 opera companies to bring live performances of selections from opera and musical theater masterpieces to 41 military installations across the country. Many of the

free performances, which included such favorites as *Porgy and Bess* and *La Traviata*, incorporated active-duty military personnel into the performances as vocalists and narrators.

Today, the NEA's support for music and opera includes grants for an array of projects, including residencies, commissions, concerts, tours, recordings, and professional development. Through its American Masterpieces category, the Arts Endowment has previously supported choral music festivals held across the country to celebrate American choral composers. The program now focuses on introducing more Americans to the chamber repertoire in its various incarnations.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL MASON, COURTESY OF GLENS FALLS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra performing Joan Tower's *Made in America*.

The projects profiled on the following pages offer a quick primer on the far-reaching scope of the NEA's support for music and opera—from premiering opera works about historic U.S. figures to expanding the reach of choral performances through recordings to preparing young artists for musical leadership positions to introducing contemporary audiences to masterworks from the Baroque era to bringing high-quality performances of jazz and blues to underserved audiences.

Setting Themselves Apart

New World Symphony Mentors a New Generation of Leaders

Twenty-six-year-old Katherine Bormann has been playing violin since age four, but she never dreamed she would one day take lessons with composer John Adams, conductor Emmanuelle Haim, and violinist Christian Tetzlaff. At Miami Beach's New World Symphony (NWS), the country's premier full-time orchestral academy, these once-in-a-lifetime experiences happen all the time. Under Musical Director Michael Tilson Thomas, NWS develops the skills of young musicians to prepare them for positions with the country's top orchestras, including the Chicago Symphony and the Kennedy

phony also facilitates private lessons, master classes, and dress rehearsals via Internet2, an innovative Web-based program. Internet2 allows students an unprecedented opportunity to study and work with internationally known artists, such as cellist Yo-Yo Ma, soprano Renée Fleming, and flautist Paula Robison, via real-time video conferencing. As Borman recalled, "We played the U.S. premiere of a piece by Augusta Read Thomas, *The Soul is Light*. The piece was so new, and we had questions about pitches and articulations. For somebody like her, being very busy, we wouldn't have been able to meet with her without Internet2."

NWS coaches students in more than just musicianship. The program also helps the fellows to develop their skills as leaders by having almost all of the musicians sit principal chair throughout the fellowship season, taking responsibility for leading their peers through concerts and rehearsals. The NWS fellowship program also includes a mentor program with local junior high schools. Fellows tutor the junior high schoolers

one-on-one, helping the youngsters grow as musicians and individuals, while the musician-instructors benefit from the invaluable teaching experience.

Linville explained that "musicians today need to have a wider range of skills than they did 20 or 30 years ago." This new skill set includes entertaining donors, interacting with the media, and presenting themselves on camera as well as live. Added Linville, "[Musicians] have to be ambassadors for the arts, and ensure that the art form can continue. The skills learned at New World Symphony help to make these young performers extremely marketable, which, combined with superior musicianship, sets them apart at auditions and in the public eye."



During a New World Symphony performance, composer John Adams makes an appearance via Internet2 to discuss the piece.

Center Opera House Orchestra. Dean of Musicians Michael Linville characterizes the NEA's support for the program as crucial. "In terms of the support we've received since the beginning of the institute, it validates what we do educationally and artistically."

The approximately 1,000 post-baccalaureate musicians hoping to get one of 30 coveted three-year NWS fellowships undergo a rigorous application process, including both a video and live audition. Once selected, fellows receive housing, access to world-class facilities, and the occasional travel grant. In addition to daily rehearsals and weekly performances, New World Sym-

Time Travel

Boston Early Music Festival Premieres a Lost Opera

Each year, the NEA helps fund the premieres of roughly a dozen new operas. In 2007, however, the Arts Endowment supported a rather unique debut—the North American premiere of an opera more than 400 years old. The Boston Early Music Festival (BEMF) received a \$20,000 grant toward its production of *Psyché*, a French Baroque opera by Jean-Baptiste Lully.

Outside funding is especially important for the operas, says Co-Artistic Director Paul O’Dette, because staging an original production is more costly than booking an established early music ensemble like the Boston Camerata or the King’s Noyse. Before naming the opera that will headline each biennial festival, O’Dette and Stephen Stubbs, the BEMF’s creative team, consider countless scores, including many that have not seen the light of a stage for centuries. In *Psyché*, O’Dette and Stubbs found an opera that would be both dramatically and musically challenging.

Lully first set the myth of Cupid and Psyche to music in 1671, when he wrote incidental music for a tragic theatrical staging with extended dance scenes. Seven years later, he reworked the music into the score for an opera with a libretto by Thomas Corneille. O’Dette and Stubbs did their best to stage the opera as it would have been presented in 17th-century Paris: a showstopper that impressed Louis XIV. “We believe the original production had enormous dramatic impact and integrity,” O’Dette said. He compared the premiere of an opera to a big-budget Las Vegas variety show. “These productions were about spectacle; they were about shock and awe.”

Unlike many contemporary productions of work from the early music repertoire, O’Dette and Stubbs’s staging of *Psyché* gave more credence to the historical record. While they didn’t recreate the flying chariots and



PHOTO BY ANDRÉ COSTANTINI

Young Cupid (Frederick Metzger) visits *Psyché* (Carolyn Sampson) in Boston Early Music Festival’s 2007 production of the French Baroque opera *Psyché*.

cloud machines from the original *Psyché*, they did require the tenor playing Cupid to fly around on wires, and raised and lowered a throne from the proscenium arch. All the singers consented to such acrobatics in advance.

The opera was staged in two locations. For five nights in June of 2007, *Psyché* played to crowded houses at the Cutler Majestic Theatre in downtown Boston. The following week the entire cast, crew, and musicians hopped on the Massachusetts Turnpike and staged the opera at Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington. All seven performances attracted journalists, musicologists, and dance historians from around the world. Then it was back to Boston and New England Conservatory’s famed Jordan Hall, where the singers and musicians recorded *Psyché* for Germany’s CPO label. The recording may not capture the costumes and special effects, but it does preserve an important musical event.

Monk's Blues

The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz's Blues and Jazz Program

The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, located in Washington, DC, in 2007 began The Blues and Jazz program, which presents two-week educational tours for public school students. This past year, with NEA support, the program featured W. C. Handy Award-winning blues guitarist Joe Louis Walker, internationally renowned saxophonist Bobby Watson, and noted jazz vocalist Lisa Henry, who took the tour to Memphis, Kansas City, and Chicago, where they were joined by NEA Jazz Master Herbie Hancock. The NEA spoke with Thelonious S. Monk, Jr., chairman of the board of trustees of the Thelonious Monk Institute, about the program and the importance of these African-American musical styles.

NEA: Why present a program on blues and jazz to students?

THELONIOUS S. MONK, JR.: Well, the relationship with blues and jazz actually goes to the heart of [American] history and American popular music. The majority of African-American music was developed by African Americans basically on their own—we start with the call-and-response in the slave fields and we move from that to gospel in the church, and of course the blues (blues people say the blues is really gospel with your head down). And what you have to look to—beyond the actual technicality of music—is the form itself, because the form of the blues, the original blues, is a very free form, and that form influenced all the other music. And when you take the harmonic and the melodic influences of the blues, and combine them with European classical music, you end up with things like jazz, without a doubt. Jazz came directly out of the blues and ultimately gave us rhythm and blues, funk, hip hop, all of which is pop music.



Saxophonist Bobby Watson performing in Memphis during The Blues and Jazz tour by the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz.

NEA: How did students react to these performances and educational activities?

MONK: Yelling and screaming. Seriously. Standing ovations everywhere. We've been fortunate to have Alvin 'Youngblood' Hart and Joe Louis Walker, and the kids' response to these major blues names was immense.

Just like jazz has become recognized as a serious art form of the country, there's no doubt that the blues need to occupy the same place. Americans tend to marginalize our own creative efforts. When you have an art form like the blues or jazz, which has impacted the entire planet, it needs to be taught. Right now, kids 20 and younger are very deficient when it comes to their musical history. Yet our music influences everybody. When you look at the earliest interviews with Mick Jagger and Paul McCartney, they'll say their influences were the blues. Our job has been to frame it in a fashion so the average American can understand it.

When I see a young player get involved in jazz and the blues, their minds explode musically. You can do something that impacts on the lives of young people, and that's what really matters.

PHOTO BY THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL/MATTHEW CRAIG

American Voices

Cantus Records New Choral Collection

For a vocal ensemble like Cantus, recording an album serves many purposes. There's the exposure on classical music radio stations, the opportunity to sell CDs while out on tour, and the potential that one fan will recommend the disc to several friends. What Cantus did not know, going into the studio in June 2007, was that recording *While You Are Alive* would make them a better ensemble.

Artistic Director Erick Lichte co-founded Cantus in 1996 when he was studying music at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. At the time, his primary instrument was the cello, not his voice. But one day he and three friends put down their bows and started singing together. They realized they could harmonize, both literally and figuratively. Ever since, Cantus has been an all-male, a cappella ensemble dedicated to collaborative singing. The nine-member group remains based in Minneapolis, but performs some 70 concerts around the country each year.

While You Are Alive is Cantus's eighth professional recording and its first album dedicated to new American music. Although they have received NEA grants before—including support for in-school residencies and collaborations with other Twin Cities choral groups—this was the first time Cantus requested funding for a

recording. In 2007, the ensemble received a \$12,500 NEA grant toward their ambitious project.

"This was an opportunity to allow some American voices—both the singers within our group and especially these composers—to be heard in a different light," Lichte said. "This grant was a perfect fit for what we wanted to do."

Musical ensembles have to think pragmatically about their recording projects, he explained. Cantus burned

just 2,500 copies prior to the August 2008 release, and shipped about 200 of those to classical radio stations. The album features music by Eric Whitacre, one of America's most prominent choral composers, as well as works by lesser known names and pieces written by Cantus members. Several works were commissions, including "A Sound like This," an extended piece by Edie Hill, with texts by the Indian mystic poet Kabir as translated by Minnesota poet Robert Bly. That commission was funded by Chamber Music America, and as per that grant's requirements, Hill composed one part for each voice. *While You Are Alive* also includes Maura Bosch's "The Turning," a three-movement work that delves into the dark consequences of domestic abuse, commissioned in conjunction with the American Composers Forum.



PHOTO BY JEN CRESS

The nine-member vocal ensemble, Cantus, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

"This repertoire pushed us in so many ways," Lichte said. "That recording session made us better, and that has infused everything else that we've done, whether that be working with over 10,000 students, as we do every year, or singing pop concerts, or whatever it is that we are doing to bring our music to our audience."

August 4, 1964

Dallas Symphony Orchestra Pays Tribute to LBJ

Lyndon Baines Johnson served as president of the United States during a time of cataclysmic change. Sworn in hours after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, Johnson went on to lead the country toward equal rights for African Americans and to war in Vietnam. To commemorate the 100th anniversary of his birth, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra (DSO) commissioned a new oratorio that premiered in September 2008.

Mark Melson, the DSO's vice president for artistic operations, said there was never any question of whether or not there should be a commission, only of who should receive it. Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Steven Stucky has Texas connections—he graduated from Baylor University—and librettist Gene Scheer had extensive experience in writing historical operas, including Tobias Picker's *An American Tragedy*. Their names quickly rose to the top of the pile. When it came time to seek funding, applying for an NEA grant was also an obvious option.

"I can't think of any project more deserving for funds

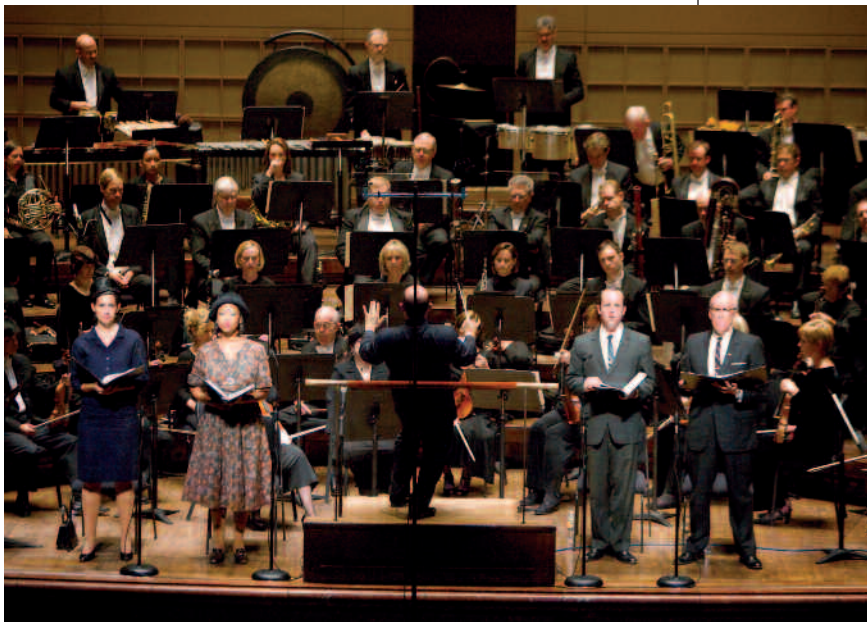
from this country's National Endowment for the Arts than a piece by two leading American artists—a composer and a librettist—about one of our larger-than-life presidents, a president who presided over one of the most turbulent eras in this country's history," Melson said.

Stucky and Scheer interviewed members of the Johnson administration and spent hours doing research at the Johnson Presidential Library in Austin. Scheer pored over six years' worth of documents and decided to depict just one day of Johnson's presidency: August 4, 1964. On that day, the date that would become the title of the oratorio, authorities in Mississippi discovered the bodies of three slain civil rights workers. In Vietnam, alleged attacks against U.S. ships in the Gulf of Tonkin led President Johnson to order retaliatory air strikes in North Vietnam that same day, starting the war in earnest.

There are just four soloists in the oratorio. A soprano and mezzo-soprano portray the mothers of the civil rights workers, while a tenor sings the role of Robert McNamara, Johnson's secretary of defense. The sym-

phony cast baritone Robert Orth as Johnson, a move that amused opera fans, since Orth frequently sings the role of Richard M. Nixon in John Adams's opera, *Nixon in China*.

Even though Scheer used the historical record for 85 percent of his libretto, the oratorio hardly has the feel of a history lesson—*Dallas Morning News* critic Scott Cantrell praised the oratorio for its "moments of great beauty." Melson was pleased with the press coverage, but even more touched by the response he received from concertgoers. "A lot of our subscribers called or talked to me about this piece," Melson said. "They told me how much they were moved by it, and that's a very good barometer of the power of this piece."



The Dallas Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Jaap van Zweden, presents the premiere of Steven Stucky's oratorio, *August 4, 1964*, with soloists, from left, mezzo-soprano Kelley O'Connor, soprano Laquita Mitchell, tenor Vale Rideout, and baritone Robert Orth.

Bravo!

The Inaugural NEA Opera Honors Celebrate Four Music Greats

On the evening of October 31, 2008, four stars in the opera world were feted as the inaugural recipients of the newest national lifetime achievement award in the arts—the NEA Opera Honors. The first new lifetime honor to be created by the federal government in 26 years, the NEA Opera Honors celebrate America’s unique and significant contributions to the art form. Each year, the NEA will honor master opera artists who have made extraordinary contributions to the field in the United States. Like all of the NEA lifetime achievement

awards, recipients are nominated by the public, chosen by an NEA-convened panel of experts, and receive a one-time grant award of \$25,000.

“Our federal government has always been shy about official recognition and celebration of its living artists,” said Chairman Gioia. “These new awards, consequently, are not only important to the field of opera; they also have a broader significance in recognizing the essential importance of all the arts in a free society.”

The 2008 NEA Opera Honors recognized Carlisle Floyd, Richard Gaddes, James Levine, and Leontyne Price. Carlisle Floyd, composer of such celebrated operas as *Susannah* and *Of Mice and Men*, is renowned for work that is distinctly rooted in America in both subject and style. A respected advocate for opera, Richard Gaddes played an integral part in raising the profile of the Opera Theatre of St. Louis and the Santa Fe Opera, where he recently retired as general director. Conductor James Levine helped to forge the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra into one of the greatest orchestras in the world, leading premieres of works by composers ranging from



PHOTO BY RUSSELL HIRSHON

Chairman Gioia and the first class of NEA Opera Honorees—Leontyne Price, Carlisle Floyd, and Richard Gaddes (James Levine not pictured).

Mozart to Weill, as well as the world premieres of American operas by John Corigliano and John Harbison. The final honoree, celebrated singer Leontyne Price, is known for her elegant musical style, great recording legacy, and generosity to young artists. Known as a Verdi and Puccini specialist, Price also embraced American composers such as Samuel Barber.

“These four people have helped to make opera a special part of our lives, and we will continue to look up to them as we strive toward a glorious future,” noted Plácido Domingo, general director of the Washington National Opera, which partnered with the NEA to present the 2008 NEA Opera Honors.

The awards ceremony and concert honoring Floyd, Gaddes, Levine, and Price was held at Washington, DC’s Sidney Harman Hall at the Harman Center for the Arts. (Levine was unable to attend.) More than 750 opera lovers attended the festivities, including U.S. Senator



PHOTO BY RUSSELL HIRSHON

At the NEA Opera Honors awards ceremony, soprano Sondra Radvanovsky sings with the Washington National Opera Orchestra, conducted by Plácido Domingo.

Patrick Leahy (Vermont) and opera stars Sherrill Milnes, Kathleen Battle, and Mary Costa, a former member of the National Council on the Arts. Hosted by Chairman Gioia and mezzo-soprano Susan Graham, the evening also featured remarks by Domingo and by Marc A. Scorca, president/CEO of OPERA America, the NEA's partner in producing the 2008 NEA Opera Honors.

Each of the honorees was saluted in an individual video documentary that featured interviews with them, their peers, and their admirers. The films revealed personal insights ranging from the comedic to the poignant. Soprano Phyllis Curtin's recalled that when Floyd asked if he could show *Susanna* to her, she replied, "Please do because you'll have to help. I have been singing so much new music all summer I have no discretion left." In another clip Price movingly described

the joy singing brings her, "The youngest you can ever be is when you sing and enjoy. It is something so exhilarating it's difficult to try to explain it. But I still have it, so I'm grateful for that."

A central theme of the evening's entertainment was the honorees' support of rising talent. In the documentary salute to Gaddes, Charles MacKay, general director of the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, said, "The success of St. Louis under Richard's guidance helped to foster the kind of environment where young American singers could stay in America and develop careers." In the Price film, Renée Fleming described meeting Price for the first time: "She invited me to her home and after about five minutes I realized that what she was saying was so important and I didn't want to forget anything, so I said, 'Miss Price, could I please take notes?' And seven pages later . . ."

Levine was also praised for his ability to work with artists, and in particular, singers. Susan Graham said, "He understands our mechanics, he understands our breath, and he understands our minds." Like his NEA Opera Honors peers, Levine was also lauded for being at the top of his field. Playwright Terrence McNally said, "It's not going to be a great night at the opera if you don't have the right maestro in the pit. And Levine is always the right maestro and you wish he could conduct everything."

Continuing the theme of mentorship, the evening featured performances by members and alumni of Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, accompanied by the Washington National Opera Orchestra. Domingo remarked, "This allows us to pay tribute to living legends of American opera while we look toward the future through a new generation."

The NEA Opera Honors are a vibrant testament that opera has become a vital part of the nation's culture. Perhaps Price, who retired from the opera stage in 1985, demonstrated the distinctly American approach to opera best, giving an impromptu performance of "America the Beautiful" that brought the audience to its feet and closed an evening that will surely be remembered as an important milestone in the celebration of opera in the United States.

Honoring Opera Supremely

How does one prepare to be feted at the first ever NEA Opera Honors? Honorees Carlisle Floyd, Richard Gaddes, and Leontyne Price kicked off the festivities with a visit to the Supreme Court where they were the guests of honor at a luncheon hosted by Associate Justices—and opera aficionados—Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Anthony Kennedy, and Antonin Scalia. Joining the luncheon were Chairman Gioia, OPERA America President and CEO Marc Scorca, and 11 members of the NEA's National Council on the Arts. During the festivities Price treated the audience to a surprise performance of "Un bel di" from *Madama Butterfly*. Also on the program was a presentation of presidential letters of congratulation and tributes to each of the honorees by composer William Bolcom, NCA member Terry Teachout, and former NCA member Mary Costa.

Here is an excerpt from the luncheon's opening remarks by Justice Ginsburg, who also took the stage at the evening celebration.

When Dana Gioia asked Justice Scalia, Justice Kennedy, and me to host this pre-NEA Opera Honors awards lunch, I took a cue from Nancy Reagan and just said, "Mais oui, Ja Ja, si, si." Opera has been my particular passion since age 11. Among memorable moments in my senior years: my debut as a super, together with Justice Scalia, in the WNO production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*; and my appearance with Justice Kennedy, a few seasons later, as opening night guests at Prince Orlofsky's Ball in the second act of [*Die*] *Fledermaus*.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL G. STEWART

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg speaking at the special luncheon for the NEA Opera Honors recipients.

Cheers to NEA for giving us cause to celebrate four of the brightest stars in the world of opera. . . . I have attended Santa Fe Opera performances every summer during Richard Gaddes's general director tenure, and thank him for many enchanted evenings. He has made Santa Fe the very best venue for summer opera in the U.S.A. No contemporary American composer of opera is better known, and rightly so, than Carlisle Floyd. Washington, DC audiences have been captivated by WNO's productions of his *Susannah* and *Of Mice and Men*. I can hardly describe the pleasure Leontyne Price's glorious voice has given me and legions of others at the Met and on opera stages everywhere. My husband and I had the great good fortune to be at the Met for the double debut of Leontyne Price and Franco Corelli. It was a *Trovatore* like no other we have attended.

Hailing the New Masters

The 2009 NEA Jazz Masters Awards Ceremony in New York

More than 20 NEA Jazz Masters assembled in New York City on October 17, 2008, to celebrate the 2009 class of NEA Jazz Masters: vocalist and guitarist George Benson, drummer James “Jimmy” Cobb, saxophonist Lee Konitz, harmonica and guitar player Jean Baptiste “Toots” Thielemans, trumpeter Eugene Edward “Snooky” Young, and recording engineer Rudy Van Gelder, the recipient of the A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Advocacy.



NEA Jazz Master Lee Konitz performs “Body and Soul” with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra at the 2009 NEA Jazz Masters awards ceremony.

The festivities opened with a symposium on the future of jazz moderated by poet, jazz historian, and former NEA Deputy Chairman A.B. Spellman. Panelists included NEA Jazz Masters David Baker and Billy Taylor, jazz musicians Nicole Mitchell and Helen Sung, Executive Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center Adrian Ellis, and Executive Director of the National Jazz Museum in Harlem Loren Schoenberg. The lively discussion focused on jazz education and the belief that more Americans deserve the opportunity to hear and explore jazz.

Following the symposium, Broadcast Music, Inc.

(BMI) hosted the NEA Jazz Masters for a luncheon at the Russian Tea Room, allowing the master musicians to reconnect with old friends and band mates, share on- and off-stage anecdotes, and welcome the new class of NEA Jazz Masters.

The camaraderie among the musicians was especially evident during the evening’s awards ceremony and concert, held in the Rose Theater at Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center, the NEA’s partner for the 2009 celebration. Following the annual pre-concert conversation with the new honorees, and a procession of all of the NEA Jazz Masters present, each of the 2009 recipients was presented with his award by a previous honoree. Tom McIntosh recollected hearing George Benson’s father boast about his talented son; Gerald Wilson described how his grandchildren refer to Snooky Young as “Uncle Snooky;” and Phil Woods quipped of his fellow saxophonist, “If anyone was ever overqualified to be a Jazz Master, it’s Lee Konitz.”

The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis saluted each 2009 honoree with a special selection that reflected his style or career. NEA Jazz Masters Candido Camero and Tom McIntosh also took the stage along with four of the evening’s honorees, including Toots Thielemans, whose harmonica version of “What a Wonderful World” brought the house to its feet. Lee Konitz took the stage after Thielemans, asking, “How do you follow that?” before giving a performance of “Body and Soul” described by the *New York Times* as “a quiet astonishment, both inventive and respectful.” For the more than 1,000 people in attendance, as well as the thousands more who listened to the live broadcast on WBGO and Sirius XM, the immense skill and experience of each NEA Jazz Master testified to exactly how deserving each recipient was of our nation’s highest honor in the field of jazz.

Pass It On

Berkeley Symphony Orchestra's Music Education Program

According to Berkeley Symphony Orchestra Education Director Ming Luke, the mission of the orchestra's Music Education Program, a collaboration with the Berkeley (California) School District, "is for every single student in the district, not just the best ones, but for every single one of them to have a minimum level of music education and experience." A brief excerpt from Luke's conversation with the NEA is below. Read more at http://www.arts.gov/features/index.php?choose-month=2009_1.

NEA: Tell me about Berkeley's Music Education Program.

MING LUKE: From the very outset of the program, the idea was that this education program should be in a true collaborative fashion with the school district. [We wanted to look at] what the district music teacher's needs are and create programs that are beneficial for all of them, not just impose [a curriculum] on a district. . . . We're at all 11 elementary schools every single year with a program that is tailored to each grade's curricula.

NEA: How is the program structured?

LUKE: The primary focus for the education program is that it's not hit-and-run music education. The goal of the education program is to have as many interactions with the students over the course of an entire year as possible. The three major components of the program are musician visits and Meet the Symphony concerts [in the fall], and I'm a Performer rehearsals and concerts in the spring. . . . The music teacher collaborates with the visiting musicians, as well as the classroom teachers, to figure out what would be the best topic for the students to work with. . . . And so, for instance, a fourth-grade string teacher might ask our musicians to have a specific lesson on bow hold as well as give a presentation on what's it like to be a musician. . . . Ideally if the classroom teacher has been using the curricula and the musicians have been talking about the program, [the students] get to a point where [the Meet the Symphony



PHOTO COURTESY OF BERKELEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Berkeley Symphony Orchestra's Ming Luke conducting the I'm a Performer concert at a local school.

concert] is a live demonstration of the things that they've been hearing. . . . The last major component is the I'm a Performer concerts. This is where every single student in the Berkeley elementary schools performs with the symphony.

NEA: How important is NEA support to the program?

LUKE: To have support coming from all areas of the community is incredibly important to us, whether it's local, regional, or national, as well as various types of funding, individuals, foundations, government entities. . . . It not only provides legitimacy, but it also is symbolic of the way we're trying to structure the program, which is that all areas in the community have feedback and a stake in the program.

Up Close and Personal

Conserving the Archives of Leonard Bernstein

Arguably one of the most influential figures in American classical music, Leonard Bernstein was one of the first U.S.-born, U.S.-trained music directors of the New York Philharmonic, the nation's oldest symphony orchestra. Upon his death in 1991, his children gave the conductor's archives to the Philharmonic, which now possesses tens of thousands of pages of handmarked scores, work papers, and photographs, as well as concert recordings and radio and television broadcasts. In 2008, the Philharmonic received a grant to support the restoration and preservation of this historic archive through the Save

America's Treasures program, a partnership of the Arts Endowment, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the President's Council on the Arts and the Humanities, and the National Park Service designed to protect the nation's cultural heritage.

Comfortable in the worlds of both popular and classical music, Bernstein is best known for Broadway sensations, such as *West Side Story* and *Candide*, and his orchestral conducting, especially the works of Gustav Mahler. He also wrote countless ballets and choral and symphonic works for the Philharmonic, with which he was affiliated for 40 years. Bernstein's commercial popularity was largely a factor of "being at the right place at the right time, with the right talents," according to Philharmonic archivist Barbara Hawes. "If he had been gorgeous and 45 without TV, 30 years prior, he wouldn't have had the same kind of popularity," noted Hawes.

While many of Bernstein's concert broadcasts are available to the public, still others are deteriorating in the Philharmonic's film vault, including footage from the conductor's appearance with the orchestra at the memorial service for John F. Kennedy. With Save America's Treasures support, these invaluable recordings are



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LEONARD BERNSTEIN ARCHIVES

Leonard Bernstein and his wife Felicia Montealegre with Russian author Boris Pasternak while in Moscow on a 1959 U.S. State Department-sponsored tour, one of the many items from his archive that will be preserved with a Save America's Treasures grant.

now being restored and digitized.

The NEA's grant is also helping to create acid-free storage units for fragile copies of Bernstein's personal letters, old scores, and manuscripts. Among these historic documents is a copy of the score for Aaron Copland's *Connotations*, which Copland inscribed, "For Lenny—who asked for it and created it in unforgettable fashion—This 'first' copy from a grateful composer-friend."

The Bernstein archives are often exhibited throughout the Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall, where they are viewed by nearly 1,000,000 people each year. Scholars, conductors, and music lovers can pore through the pages of Bernstein's own texts, examining notation, changes, and marks. Said Hawes, "As a historian, I don't know of another kind of document other than a music score that captures multiple experiences over a period of time." Conserving these artifacts will ensure that they are available for future generations, offering a first-hand peek inside Leonard Bernstein's genius.

In the News

President Bush Presents National Medal of Arts, Awards Cultural Leaders

In a White House ceremony on November 17, President George W. Bush presented the 2008 National Medal of Arts to nine U.S. artists and arts organizations in recognition of their extraordinary and enduring contributions to the nation's arts and culture heritage. The recipients included actress Olivia de Havilland, NEA Jazz Master Hank Jones, comic book pioneer Stan Lee, sculptor Jesús Morales, songwriting team Robert B. and Richard M. Sherman, the Fisk Jubilee Singers, Ford's Theatre Society, the José Limón Dance Foundation, and The Presser Foundation. The presentation included a stirring performance by the Fisk Jubilee Singers. The historic group had first performed at the White House during the administration of President Ulysses S. Grant, the very first African-American group to receive such an honor.



PHOTO BY JAMES KEGLEY

Chairman Gioia is awarded a Citizens Medal from President Bush at the National Medal of Arts ceremony.



PHOTO BY SALLY GIFFORD

National Medal of Arts recipient Richard M. Sherman demonstrates his prowess on the piano at the dinner for the awardees.

The President went on to surprise Chairman Gioia, National Endowment for the Humanities Chairman Bruce Cole, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities Chair Adair Margo, and former Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Director Robert S. Martin with Presidential Citizens Medals for their public service in support of the arts. A fifth Citizens Medal went to current IMLS Director Anne-Imelda Radice, who was unable to attend the event. These are the first ever Citizens Medals given to the leaders of the nation's cultural agencies.

Chairman Gioia was visibly moved as the citation to his medal was read: "A distinguished poet and educator, Dana Gioia has helped strengthen the role of the arts in our country. He has advanced some of our most treasured traditions, expanded public support for the arts and arts education, and increased the understanding and appreciation of the arts among our nation's youth. The United States honors Dana Gioia for his dedication to fostering creativity and expression and for helping preserve America's rich artistic legacy."



PHOTO BY VICTORIA HUTTER

The Fisk Jubilee Singers, 2008 National Medal of Arts recipients, performed at the awards ceremony in the White House.

Last Words

A Final Message from the Chairman

As this issue of *NEA Arts* goes to print, I approach the last weeks of my NEA tenure. I have made my decision to leave with some regret. I love the Arts Endowment and the important work we do. I especially like and admire my NEA colleagues and have enjoyed working with members of Congress. I shall never have a more interesting job.

But I am a writer. Coming to the Arts Endowment, I have given up six years of my creative life. As rich and rewarding as these years at the helm of our nation's cultural agency have been, I know that if I don't return to poetry now, I shall bitterly regret it.

In addition to writing, I have taken a half-time position at the Aspen Institute in Washington, DC, as the director of the new Harman/Eisner Program for the Arts. This is an ideal opportunity in a remarkable organization. My mission will be to expand the Aspen Institute's involvement in the arts and integrate them into their programs—not only in Colorado and Washington but elsewhere in the U.S. and abroad.

I plan to divide my time to pursue both undertakings. Washington will remain my principal residence, but I will spend part of each month in my home in Sonoma County, California, writing.

I am very proud of the work that we've



PHOTO BY MICHAEL G. STEWART

accomplished as an agency in the last six years, including the creation and subsequent expansion of *NEA Arts*. It has been a pleasure to have a vehicle for showcasing the organizations and individuals that do the real work of the agency, fulfilling our mission to bring great art to all Americans.

I look forward to receiving new issues of *NEA Arts* in my mailbox every few months, reminding me not just of my friends and colleagues at the Arts Endowment, but also of how important it is to continue promoting the value of arts and

Chairman Gioia at the Supreme Court reception for the NEA Opera Honors.

arts education. As I transition back to my life as an artist and a private citizen, I remain even more committed to do what I can to foster the arts for all Americans.

Dana Gioia
Chairman, National Endowment
for the Arts



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