



## **PRESIDENT OBAMA AND THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS BESTOW DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION WITH 2014 NATIONAL MEDAL OF ARTS**

### **DDCF Honored to Receive Nation's Most Prestigious Award in the Arts in Recognition of its Support for Creative Expression Across the Country**

**WASHINGTON, D.C., September 11, 2015** — President Barack Obama yesterday presented the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) with a 2014 National Medal of Arts in special recognition of the foundation's support of creative expression across the United States and "bold commitment" to artistic risk, which has helped artists, musicians, dancers and actors share their talents and enriched the cultural life of the nation. Established in 1984 by the U.S. Congress and administered by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the medal represents the highest honor given by the federal government to artists and patrons of the arts.



"Because of their raw talent, their passion and need to create, but also because our country invests in the arts and humanities as great national assets, some of those once obscure and unknown talents are rightly being recognized," President Obama said of the recipients in his opening remarks. "That's what we celebrate here today—our fellow citizens, from all walks of life, who share their gifts with all of us, who make our lives and our world more beautiful and richer and fuller and, I think, most importantly, help us understand each other a little bit better."

This year, DDCF became only the second charitable foundation to be recognized in the 18-year history of the National Medal of Arts. The foundation was distinguished alongside 10 other honorees for 2014, including visual artists John Baldessari and Ann Hamilton, actress and director Miriam Colón, actress and filmmaker Sally Field, authors Stephen King and Tobias Wolff, tenor George Shirley, arts presenter University Musical Society, theatre director Ping Chong and composer and singer Meredith Monk—the latter three of which are also previous DDCF grantees. Representing the foundation at the White House ceremony were DDCF President Ed Henry, Program Director for the Arts Ben Cameron and Senior Program Officer for the Arts Cheryl Ikemiya.

"We are thrilled and humbled to be honored for the work of the foundation in support of artists, arts organizations and audiences throughout the country," said Ed Henry, president of DDCF. "Our trustees have maintained a consistent commitment to the arts, with a clear belief that the arts help create a better society for all. We are proud to join the honorees in the arts and humanities who have all inspired, provoked and served communities across our nation."

The awards ceremony was streamed live online on the White House Web site and is now available online [here](#).

### **About the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**

The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is a private foundation with a mission to improve the quality of people's lives through grants in the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and child well-being. In the performing arts, the foundation supports artists and arts organizations in the creation, production and performance of new works in jazz, dance and theatre in all 50 states.

Through unrestricted funding and commissions to thousands of emerging and established performing artists, such as Anthony Braxton, Bill Frisell and Nicole Mitchell in jazz; Basil Twist, Ping Chong and Anne Bogart in theater; and Bill T. Jones, Raneé Ramaswamy and Mark Morris in dance, the foundation has nurtured the creative contributions of American artists. It has also assisted U.S.-based arts organizations, including Hubbard Street Dance, Steppenwolf, the Public Theater, Urban Bush Women and many more, in engaging with audiences and providing services to schools and communities throughout the country. With inventive support mechanisms, the foundation has addressed the limitations of traditional funding to the performing arts—designing initiatives to help individual artists save for retirement and multi-year awards that attend to performing artists' and arts organizations' long-term needs, among other unique approaches to grant making.

The foundation was established and endowed through the will of philanthropist Doris Duke, who was a passionate patron of and participant in the performing arts, including jazz piano and composition as well as modern dance, which she studied with celebrated choreographer Martha Graham. Since making its first grants in 1997, the foundation has distributed more than \$1.4 billion in funding. In addition to its grant programs, the foundation operates Duke Farms, a 2,700-acre center for environmental stewardship, and Shangri La, a center for the study of Islamic arts and culture, and funds Rough Point, Doris Duke's former residence in Newport, RI through the Newport Restoration Foundation. Led by President and CEO Ed Henry and Board Chair John Zuccotti, the foundation is headquartered in New York, New York and governed by a board of 11 trustees.

### **About the National Medal of Arts**

The National Medal of Arts is the highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the federal government. It is awarded by the President of the United States to individuals or groups who are deserving of special recognition by reason of their outstanding contributions to the excellence, growth, support and availability of the arts in the United States.

The National Endowment for the Arts manages the nomination process on behalf of the White House. Each year, the Arts Endowment seeks nominations from individuals and organizations across the country. The National Council on the Arts, the Arts Endowment's presidentially appointed and Senate-confirmed advisory body, reviews the nominations and provides recommendations to the President, who selects the recipients.

The National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities were established by the Congress in 1965 as independent agencies of the Federal Government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$5 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with State arts agencies, local leaders, other Federal agencies and the philanthropic sector. The National Endowment for the Humanities brings the best in humanities research, public programs, education and preservation projects to the American people. To date, NEH has awarded \$5 billion in grants to build the nation's cultural capital—at museums, libraries, colleges and universities, archives and historical societies—and advance

our understanding and appreciation of history, literature, philosophy and language. Both Endowments are celebrating their 50th anniversaries this year.

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