



DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2021 DORIS DUKE ARTISTS

Seven Artists in Jazz, Dance and Theater Receive Doris Duke Artist Awards of Up to \$275,000 Each, Totaling \$2.2 Million in Unrestricted Funding for Performing Artists

New York, Oct. 21, 2021 — The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) today announced the 2021 Doris Duke Artists, each receiving an award of \$275,000 intended as an investment in their artistic potential and celebration of their ongoing contributions to the fields of contemporary dance, jazz and theater. Signifying the largest national award to individuals in the performing arts, the prize consists of \$250,000 in completely unrestricted funding and an additional \$25,000 dedicated to encouraging savings for retirement. Rather than being tied to specific projects, these awards are available to recipients to use in the manner they determine will best support their ability to create and thrive.

[Cynthia Oliver](#) and [Dormeshia](#) received the award for their enduring contributions to the field of contemporary dance. [Kris Davis](#), [Danilo Pérez](#) and [Wayne Shorter](#) earned the recognition for their ongoing innovation and impact in the field of jazz. [Lileana Blain-Cruz](#) and [Teo Castellanos](#) were awarded the honor for their continuing excellence in theater.

“Art is the antidote to crisis. These exemplary artists demonstrate that a time of unprecedented disruption in the arts and across society cannot stifle the power of great art to persevere,” said **Sam Gill, president and CEO of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**. “We are proud to support these outstanding creators and accelerate their phenomenal contributions to society.”

“We are thrilled to award this year’s cohort of exceptional artists with this support,” said **Maurine Knighton, program director for the arts at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation**. “With the knowledge that these performing artists excel in their forms, we recognize that they deserve funding that trusts them to best determine how to invest in their own futures. These awards are intended to enable artists with the freedom to create the way that artists are meant to create: freely, organically and without restrictions.”

Overall, the Doris Duke Artist Awards program has awarded more than \$35.4 million in funding to 129 artists since the program began in 2012. Previous Doris Duke Artists have used the funding for a wide expanse of needs -- ranging from creative research, exploration and study, mortgages for personal and professional spaces, travel and/or restoration time, childcare, healthcare costs and creation of a financial safety net, among many other personal and professional uses.

To read more about the Doris Duke Artist Awards and the 2021 Doris Duke Artists, visit www.dorisdukeartistawards.org.

About the Doris Duke Artist Awards

The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation designed the Doris Duke Artist Awards to invest in exemplary individual artists in contemporary dance, jazz and theater work who have demonstrated their artistic vitality and ongoing commitment to their field. The award is not a lifetime achievement award. Rather, it is a deep investment in the creative potential of dedicated artists. The foundation aims to empower Doris Duke Artists through the freedom of unrestricted support to take creative risks, explore new ideas, and pay for important professional and personal needs not typically funded by the project-related grants that dominate arts funding. While the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation initially conceived the Doris Duke Artists Awards as part of a larger \$50 million special initiative that finished in 2017, recognition of the program's importance in helping artists thrive spurred the foundation to cement a place for the flexible awards in its core strategy to support the arts.

About the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and child well-being, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation focuses its support to the performing arts on contemporary dance, jazz and theater artists, and the organizations that nurture, present and produce them. In 2015, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) awarded the foundation with a 2014 National Medal of Arts, presented by President Barack Obama, in special recognition of DDCF'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. For more information, please visit www.ddcf.org.

Contact:

Kristin Roth-Schrefer, Communications Director
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
kschrefer@ddcf.org | 212.974.7003

Fernanda Jiménez, Communications Associate
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
fjimenez@ddcf.org | 212.974.7006