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NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS RECEIVES MAJOR FUNDING TO SUPPORT CONTEMPORARY DANCE IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD

(Boston, MA--) New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) announced today that it has received a four-year \$5.8 million grant award from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The renewal funding from DDCF will support NEFA's National Dance Project, which provides support to artists nationally and internationally for the creation and U.S. touring of contemporary dance. Including the current grant, DDCF has awarded approximately \$18.3 million to support the National Dance Project since 1998.

Said NEFA Executive Director Rebecca Blunk, "We are elated! This money sustains and validates our deep commitment to the dance community. It is impossible to overstate the contribution of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to the world of contemporary dance. Without DDCF's support and vision, the dance world would be far less vibrant. They are great partners."

Strengthening the Dance Field Nationally and Internationally

National Dance Project (NDP) is composed of a core grantmaking program and several initiatives designed to build infrastructure for contemporary dance. NDP production and touring grants fund the creation of new dance work by supporting a project's development through its premiere and with funds paid directly to artists. Support is also provided to presenters to cover costs related to national touring. Since its inception, NDP has awarded over \$13.7 million in support, funding 243 projects by 167 different artists and companies.

NDP initiatives include programs for artists and presenters in specific regions of the country -- like the Pacific Northwest -- with concentrations of dance activity, and also within universities and contemporary art centers. Additionally, international artists are supported to bring their work to the U.S., and U.S. presenters receive support for their presentation.

"The National Dance Project is a crucial resource for artists and audiences alike. In today's landscape for contemporary dance, it is the only national program in the country that supports the creation and touring of new work," said Joan E. Spero, president of the DDCF. "We are proud to continue this fruitful partnership with NEFA, and to support such innovative and exciting work in contemporary dance."

Program Brings National Attention to Emerging Artists

The "Culture Wars" of the early 1990's resulted in severe cuts to dance funding programs at the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), leaving a void for dance that threatened the future of touring and, subsequently, dance as an art form. NDP was launched by NEFA in 1996 with NEA support in response to these conditions. Direct support from the NEA for the National Dance Project recently ended.

The NDP approach - linking all aspects of producing and touring a dance work - was created to ensure that a diversity of projects would realize their full potential. Within this system, many U.S. dance artists have reached a level of renown that may otherwise not have been possible. Rennie Harris, Pat Graney, and Ronald K. Brown are all nationally known artists who received support from NDP early in their careers.

In the words of NDP presenter Ed Noonan in Helena, MT, “NDP is the linchpin that is keeping touring alive in the field. It gets companies to places they could not have gone.”

Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (www.ddcf.org) is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, wildlife conservation, medical research and the prevention of child maltreatment, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties.

New England Foundation for the Arts

NEFA creatively supports the movement of people, ideas, and resources in the arts within New England and beyond, makes vital connections between artists and audiences, and builds the strength, knowledge, and leadership of the creative sector. NEFA is a 501c3 that operates with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New England state arts agencies, and from corporations, foundations, and individuals. For more information please visit www.nefa.org or call 617.951.0010

Additional funds for NDP are provided by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Altria Group, Inc., The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, San Francisco Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the Paul Allen Family Foundation. NEFA receives general operating support from the National Endowment for the Arts and from the six state arts agencies of the New England region.

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