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MUSICIANS FOUNDATION TO RECEIVE \$25,000 GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Funds To Be Used To Organize NYC Conference Slated For Fall 2021 To Focus On Performing Artists' Needs in Time of Crisis

June 29, 2020, New York City—The **Musicians Foundation** is honored to announce that it has been granted a generous Art Works award of \$25,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Funds are to be used to organize a national conference of organizations that assist professional performing artists in times of need and crisis. The conference, which gains urgency and a new significance in the COVID-19 pandemic, is currently slated to take place in New York City in the fall of 2021 and will address the situation in which performing artists have suffered extreme loss of income as current and future engagements have been cancelled. (Depending on COVID-19 government guidelines, the conference might be postponed till spring 2022.) The conference will be organized by the Musicians Foundation in tandem with a Steering Committee of national and regional organizations, including the **Actors Fund, MusiCares, Jazz Foundation, and Episcopal Actors Guild.**

Founded in 1914 by the Bohemians, a group of musicians and music lovers, the Musicians Foundation was first led by such important figures as **Frank Damrosch, Franz Kneisel, Rubin Goldmark** (teacher to **Aaron Copland** and **George Gershwin**), and **Rudolf Schirmer**. Over the years the organization has attracted some of the world's leading musical luminaries, including **Leonard Bernstein, Enrico Caruso, Pablo Casals, Jascha Heifetz, Yo-Yo Ma, Elkan Naumberg, Jan Paderewski, Sergei Prokofiev, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Arthur Rubinstein, Gustav Schirmer, Charles Steinway, Isaac Stern, and Arturo Toscanini**, among many others.

Currently, the Advisory Council to the Musicians Foundation include **Wynton Marsalis, Joshua Bell, Meredith Monk, Robert Lopez** and **Kristen Anderson-Lopez, Spencer Myer, and Misha and Cipa Dichter**.

“These awards demonstrate the resilience of the arts in America, showcasing not only the creativity of their arts project but the organizations’ agility in the face of a national health crisis,” announced **Mary Anne Carter, Chairperson of the National Arts Endowment**. “We celebrate organizations like Musicians Foundation for providing opportunities for learning and engagement through the arts in these times.” The Art Works award is one of 1016 grants the Endowment has approved in this category and part of more than \$84 million in grants made in the fiscal year 2020.

Musicians Foundation President Lisa Megeaski expressed her delight: “The Foundation is extremely pleased to be recognized with an Arts Work award from the National Endowment for the Arts and is privileged to host the first national conference to focus on ways to better serve performing artists, sustaining their artistry for all to enjoy.”

The Foundation’s **Executive Director B.C. Vermeersch** concurred: “Musicians Foundation is very grateful to be awarded this grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. We will work with our colleagues to find best practices and the means to support the work of artists that bring joy to our world. This continues our 106-year-old mission to take care of the people who create art”.

The Musicians Foundation will convene the first national meeting of organizations that provide financial, medical, advisory, and other services to professional performing artists encountering circumstances that curtail their ability to work and remain financially stable. The project will be the first effort to draw together national and regional organizations to discuss the needs of this constituency, effective practices to meet these needs, potential partnerships for sharing information and resources, and strategies to increase public and private support of professional performing artists. The project will also compile and disseminate reliable data on the organizations and the performing artists they serve.

For over a century, the Musicians Foundation Board of Directors and Staff have been committed to helping musicians and their families in need. Thousands of financial assistance grants have been sent throughout the country to professional performers, educators and composers of all genres, so they may continue their artists pursuits during difficult times. The Foundation's charitable work is supported through concerts, donations and bequests.

For further information: www.musiciansfoundation.org