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Program Funding Strengthens Dance *Doris Duke Charitable Foundation vital to NEFA's National Dance Project*

(Boston, MA – May 9, 2012) The New England Foundation for the Arts announces a new \$3.3 million grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) to support the National Dance Project. DDCF has provided \$25.6 million in funding for NDP since its first grant to the program in 1998.

"The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's philanthropic leadership is a driving force behind our work to build and sustain a support system for contemporary dance," said NEFA executive director Rebecca Blunk. "We are honored to be receiving this major commitment on behalf of the dance field." In addition to programmatic support, DDCF has also provided funding for general operating support to NDP production grant recipients.

Since its launch in 1996, NDP has become one of the most important programs supporting for contemporary dance in the U.S., funding both the production and touring of new dance works as well as regional initiatives and international exchange. In a field that has been historically underfunded, NDP is the only national program for dance supporting individual artists and companies, whether established, emerging, culturally-specific, or experimental. NDP has awarded funding to over 400 projects, reaching over 200,000 audience members annually. Communities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico have directly benefited.

"The National Dance Project has become the critical national effort supporting the creation and touring of new dance works in the United States," said Ben Cameron, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Program Director for the Arts. "It has a remarkable record of achievement and has had enormous impact on artists and audiences alike. The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is delighted and honored to renew our support for this landmark program."

Additional support for the National Dance Project comes from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the MetLife Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts, with funding for special initiatives from the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, the French American Cultural Exchange, and the McKnight Foundation.

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

About NEFA: NEFA creatively supports the movement of people, ideas, and resources in the arts within New England and beyond, makes vital connections between artists and communities, and builds the strength, knowledge, and leadership of the creative sector. NEFA is a 501(c)(3) that operates with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New England state arts agencies, and from corporations, foundations and individuals.

NEFA currently administers grantmaking programs of regional, national, and international scope that support the performing arts, public art, and Native American artists. NEFA also leads projects and initiatives that range from the analysis of the impact of the creative economy to the creation of online tools which link and advance the work of the cultural community. www.nefa.org.

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