



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**WaterFire Providence and Community MusicWorks  
Receive National Recognition and Funding from ArtPlace  
to Support Creative Placemaking Initiatives**

***ArtPlace releases 47 grants supporting creative placemaking initiatives in 33  
communities nationwide***

(Providence, RI, June 12, 2012) WaterFire Providence and Community MusicWorks received national recognition today by ArtPlace, a philanthropic collaboration of the nation's top foundations in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and other federal agencies. Both organizations are embarking on exciting creative placemaking initiatives to strengthen the Providence community through the arts.

WaterFire and Community MusicWorks are the only two Rhode Island recipients of this highly competitive award. This year, ArtPlace awarded \$15.4 million nationwide to 47 creative placemaking initiatives in 33 communities with grants ranging from \$75,000 to \$500,000.

"Congratulations to Waterfire and to Community Music Works for being nationally recognized by the celebrated ArtPlace Initiative," said Mayor Angel Taveras. "I thank ArtPlace for its investment in two of our city's leading arts organizations. This honor is further evidence that Providence is truly a leader in the Creative Placemaking movement and home to one of the most vibrant communities of artists and arts organizations in America."

**WaterFire Providence**

WaterFire will receive a \$454,000 grant to launch a public art incubator to create new art works

and public programs with a wide variety of arts and culture organizations to experiment with original ways to add vibrancy and economic impact to the city of Providence. The intention is to build on WaterFire's past success and develop new techniques to present the arts to a wide audience to further engage the city and build community. A second focus of the grant is to advance the national understanding and dialog about the most effective methods to feature the arts in creative placemaking.

"We are deeply honored to be selected by ArtPlace for inclusion in this important program and for their recognition of how successful WaterFire has been in bringing new vibrancy and vitality to downtown Providence." said Barnaby Evans, Executive Artistic Director. "Over 15 million people have made the trip to Providence over the past 18 years to see WaterFire."

The ArtPlace grant to WaterFire will create two new programs. The first will create a public arts innovation incubator where WaterFire will create new public art elements and will also partner with a range of artists and cultural organizations across Providence to collaborate on new art installations and on inventing experimental placemaking techniques. The second program will develop a creative placemaking learning lab which will collect and share the latest and best practices from WaterFire, Providence and around the world. WaterFire anticipates developing a series of workshops, symposiums or even a conference on public art and creative placemaking.

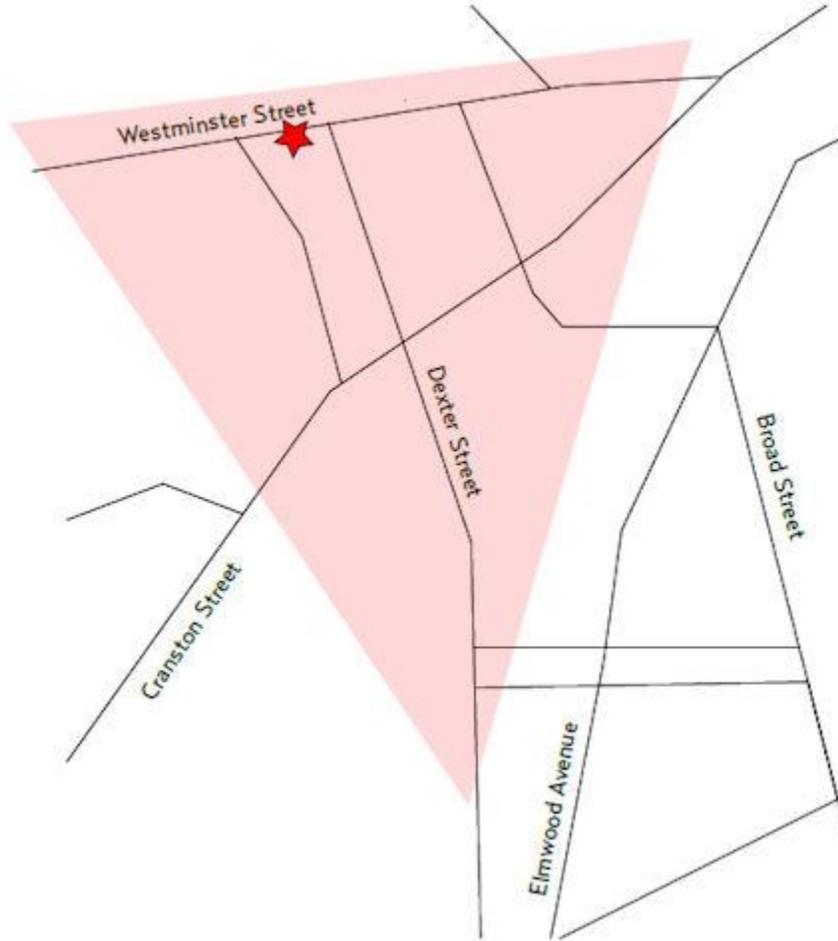
"Providence is the ideal city in which to further explore creative placemaking." said Evans. "It has a perfect walkable scale, deep resources of world-class artists and design talent, beautifully preserved architecture, a cluster of superb universities, and city and state leadership that fully supports and understands creative placemaking through the arts. Our goal is to inspire the city and its residents, to make Providence a more vibrant place and an international model to demonstrate the power of the arts for creative placemaking."

Learn more at [www.waterfire.org](http://www.waterfire.org)

### **Community MusicWorks**

Community MusicWorks (CMW) will receive a \$100,000 grant to curate a monthly series of musical and community-building events in the Providence neighborhood where the organization's storefront headquarters is located. The project will offer diverse audiences distinctive experiences that integrate music and community, while drawing resources, people, and ideas to Providence's West End.

This experimental series of free events, taking place in a number of locations within a targeted area (a triangle bounded by the John Hope Settlement House, West End Community Center, and West Broadway Neighborhood Association), will offer designed experiences involving food, music, and conversation. Events will take place in unusual locations and will involve exciting visiting artists and commissions by locally and nationally known composers.



Founded in 1997, Community MusicWorks is a “revolutionary organization” (The New Yorker) that creates cohesive urban community—through music education and performance—that transforms the lives of children, families, and musicians in Providence.

CMW is anchored by a team of classical musicians-in-residence who staff CMW’s youth programs, rehearse in CMW’s storefront, and perform throughout the neighborhood as well as further afield. When asked about this unusual neighborhood-based residency model, longtime CMW cello student Carolina Jimenez responded, “I don’t think it’s strange to have a string quartet in the neighborhood. I think it’s perfectly normal because I grew up with it.”

Learn more at [www.communitymusicworks.org/artplace.htm](http://www.communitymusicworks.org/artplace.htm)

## ArtPlace

**ArtPlace**, a new national collaboration of 11 major national and regional foundations, six of the nation’s largest banks, and eight federal agencies, including the National Endowment for the Arts,

works to accelerate creative placemaking across the U.S. To date, ArtPlace has raised almost \$50 million to work alongside federal and local governments to transform communities with strategic investments in the arts.

ArtPlace launched last year, but this was the first open and competitive application process for the program. Art Place received almost 2,200 proposals from organizations nationwide with projects seeking funding from the \$15.4 million available this year for grants. A listing of all the ArtPlace awards can be found at [artplaceamerica.org](http://artplaceamerica.org).

"Across the country, cities and towns are using the arts to help shape their social, physical, and economic characters," said NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman. "The arts are a part of everyday life, and I am thrilled to see yet another example of arts organizations working with city, state, and federal offices to help strengthen and revitalize their communities through the arts. It is wonderful that ArtPlace and its funders have recognized this work and invested in it so generously."

"These two projects receiving ArtPlace funding exemplify the best in creative placemaking," explained ArtPlace's Carol Coletta. "They demonstrate a deep understanding of how smart investments in art, design and culture as part of a larger portfolio of revitalization strategies can change the trajectory of communities and increase economic opportunities for people."

ArtPlace has been discussing the success of WaterFire and using it as an example of successful placemaking for some time. "We've been singing their praises for so long, we thought we should finally back it up," said Colletta. WaterFire's plans for a creative placemaking learning lab to explore and promote best practices and ideas she finds particularly interesting. "Personally, that's something I'm really looking forward to. We think Providence has a lot to share in this area."

In September, ArtPlace will release a new set of metrics to measure changes over time in the people, activity and real estate value in the communities where ArtPlace has invested with its grants.

Participating foundations include Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Ford Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Rasmuson Foundation, The Robina Foundation, The William Penn Foundation and an anonymous donor. In addition to the NEA, federal partners are the departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Education and Transportation, along with leadership from the White House Office of Management and Budget and the Domestic Policy Council.

A listing of all the ArtPlace awards can be found at <http://artplaceamerica.org>.

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WaterFire Providence is an independent, non-profit arts organization whose mission is to inspire Providence and its visitors by revitalizing the urban experience, fostering community engagement and creatively transforming the city by presenting WaterFire for all to enjoy. For more information or to donate, visit:

[www.waterfire.org](http://www.waterfire.org) or [www.facebook.com/waterfireprovidence](https://www.facebook.com/waterfireprovidence)