



PRESS RELEASE
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**WaterFire Providence receives National Endowment for the Arts grant
to support creative placemaking**

Grant is one of 817 NEA Art Works grants totaling \$26.3 million in funding nationwide

Providence, RI — National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Acting Chairman Joan Shigekawa announced today that WaterFire Providence is one of 817 nonprofit organizations nationwide to receive an NEA Art Works grant. WaterFire is recommended for a \$50,000 grant to support and measure creative placemaking projects in Providence, RI.

WaterFire Providence's Livability Experiments project is an expansion of activities during its multidisciplinary urban arts event in downtown Providence, RI. WaterFire will create, develop, present, and analyze up to seven new interactive, collaborative arts activities which will include fire performances, guerilla art events, street band interventions, a Bolivian Aymara festival, a Native American powwow, and a public art project featuring furniture designed by students at the Rhode Island School of Design. WaterFire will also partner with Rhode Island College's Program in Geography and Department of Political Science in researching creative placemaking outcomes associated with their Livability Experiments project.

Acting Chairman Shigekawa said, "The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support these exciting and diverse arts projects that will take place throughout the United States. Whether it is through a focus on education, engagement, or innovation, these projects all contribute to vibrant communities and memorable opportunities for the public to engage with the arts."

In August 2012, the NEA received 1,547 eligible applications for Art Works grants requesting more than \$80 million in funding. Art Works grants support the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts, and the strengthening of communities through the arts. The 817 recommended NEA grants total \$26.3 million and span 13 artistic disciplines and fields. Applications were reviewed by panels of outside experts convened by NEA staff and each project was judged on its artistic excellence and artistic merit.

WaterFire Providence creator and executive artistic director Barnaby Evans said, "Providence has been at the forefront of the creative placemaking movement because we have so many incredibly innovative arts organizations and artists as well as supportive local, state and federal government leaders. We are honored to have been awarded an NEA grant to continue to advance our work of using public art to inspire, build and transform community."

For a complete listing of projects recommended for Art Works grant support, please visit the NEA website at arts.gov.

WaterFire Providence is a 501(c)3 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. Created in 1994 by the artist Barnaby Evans, each year approximately one million visitors come to Providence to experience WaterFire making it one of the largest tourist attractions in the State of Rhode Island.

For more information about WaterFire Providence, please visit <http://waterfire.org> or call 401-273-1155.

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