

Spartanburg Philharmonic receives \$20K national grant

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Last March, Spartanburg Philharmonic Orchestra executive director Kathryn Boucher wrote a letter to the National Endowment for the Arts, requesting a grant to assist with worldrenowned percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie's guest appearance with the SPO this week. It worked. In early December, NEA chairperson Jane Chu announced that the SPO was to receive a prestigious Arts Works grant for \$20,000.

In a written statement, Chu said, "I'm pleased to be able to share the news of our support through Art Works, including the award to the Spartanburg Philharmonic Orchestra. The arts foster value, connection, creativity and innovation for the American people, and these recommended grants demonstrate those attributes and affirm that the arts are part of our everyday lives."

The award puts the SPO in the company of great music programs in such major cities as Los Angeles, Detroit, New York and Chicago, which were also among those to receive \$10,000-plus grants.

From the applicants that apply nationally, more than half get rejected to receive funds from the award.

"This is the first time in our history that the Spartanburg Philharmonic Orchestra has received a grant award from the NEA," Boucher said. "We are thrilled to receive such high accolades from the NEA for this extensive project, and we're proud to be only one of the five organizations in South Carolina to receive funds."

Of the \$25,000 that was requested in the grant letter, the Spartanburg Philharmonic was awarded \$20,000. But for the SPO, it's not entirely about the money.

Boucher explained, "Don't get me wrong, the money is great. But the significance of the grant carries much more weight. I think it really speaks highly of the work (conductor and music director) Sarah Ioannides does, but it also puts the talented musicians who make up the SPO on the national radar, because the NEA grant is a nationally- recognized award.

"It also makes it more likely for us to receive awards in the future and to bring more outreach programs to the Spartanburg community."

The intention of the Art Works grant is to support the creation of art, encourage public engagement with art, lifelong learning in the arts and enhancement of the livability of communities through the arts. Glennie's visit will encompass all those attributes.

She'll first conduct an interactive improvisation workshop with the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind, during which she'll talk to students about enhancing their abilities and using their "disabilities," to their advantage.

Glennie will then present her popular TedTalk titled "Dialogue with a Difference" from 6-7 p.m. Thursday at the Chapman Cultural Center. In it, she will draw on her depth of experience and knowledge as a deaf musician and overcoming obstacles along the way.

And from 4-6 p.m. Friday at Converse College's Daniel Recital Hall, she'll teach a master class in which she'll work with students from all over South Carolina who were selected through an audition process. Glennie's visit will conclude with her guest soloist performance with the SPO Saturday at Converse College's Twichell Auditorium.

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