



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chicago Philharmonic Society Receives Its First National Endowment for the Arts Award for Commission and Performance of New Work

Chicago, IL (December 8, 2015) – The Chicago Philharmonic Society has been named the recipient of a \$10,000 Art Works grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The award will support a collaboration between The Chicago Philharmonic Society, composer Augusta Read Thomas, and Chicago-based percussion ensemble Third Coast Percussion for the creation and performance of a new work for percussion quartet and orchestra. The premiere will be presented in fall 2017 as part of the Chicago Philharmonic's 2017-2018 symphonic season.

“We are thrilled to have received our first NEA award, which will showcase three important Chicago cultural assets: iconic composer Augusta Read Thomas, the innovative ensemble Third Coast Percussion, and the outstanding musicians of the Chicago Philharmonic,” said Society executive director Donna Milanovich.

Pulitzer Prize-nominated composer Augusta Read Thomas served as composer-in-residence at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 1997 until 2006 and currently teaches composition at the University of Chicago. Third Coast Percussion is a “vibrant” (*New Yorker*) and “hard-grooving” (*New York Times*) nationally touring ensemble known for its unique collaborations across a wide range of disciplines.

This award is The Chicago Philharmonic Society’s first from the NEA, an agency that has awarded more than \$5 billion in grants to recipients in every state and United States jurisdiction since being founded 50 years ago. Today, the NEA announced awards totaling more than \$27.6 million in its first funding round of fiscal year 2016. The Art Works category supports the creation of new work, presentation of both new and existing work, lifelong learning in the arts, and public engagement with the arts through thirteen arts disciplines or fields.

The Chicago Philharmonic Society is a collaboration of over 200 of the highest-level classical musicians performing in the Chicago metropolitan area. Governed under a groundbreaking structure of musician leadership, the Society presents concerts at venues throughout the Chicago area that cover the full spectrum of classical music, from Bach to Britten and beyond. The Society’s orchestra, known simply as the Chicago Philharmonic, has been called “one of the country’s finest symphonic orchestras” (*Chicago Tribune*), and its unique chamber music ensembles, which perform as the Chicago Philharmonic Chamber Players (cp²), draw from its vast pool of versatile musicians. The Society’s outreach programs connect Chicago-area youth to classical music and provide performance opportunities for members of the community. Founded 26 years ago by principal musicians from the Lyric Opera Orchestra, the Chicago Philharmonic currently serves as the official orchestra of the Joffrey Ballet, continues its 21-year association with the Ravinia Festival, and presents symphonic concerts in Evanston and, beginning in May 2016, at the Harris Theater.

###