



For Immediate Release

**Berkeley Symphony receives NEA grant to support
Steven Stucky and Paul Dresher commissions**

Grant part of NEA announcement of 863 grants and \$22.543 million in funding nationwide

Berkeley, CA – November 21, 2011 – The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Chairman Rocco Landesman announced that the agency will award 863 grants to organizations and individual writers across the country. Berkeley Symphony is one of the grantees and will receive \$15,000 for the commissions and premieres of Steven Stucky and Paul Dresher. The 863 grant awards total \$22.543 million, encompass 15 artistic disciplines and fields, and support projects in 47 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

This project features two award-winning composers, Steven Stucky and Paul Dresher. Both are commissioned to write new works for Berkeley Symphony, to be premiered in the 2012-13 season. Stucky's collaboration will be an extended residency program over the course of the season, while Dresher's work will feature two of his unique invented instruments, the Quadrachord and the Hurdy Grande. The former is a stringed instrument resembling a guitar, which can be plucked or bowed. The latter resembles an oversized Hurdy-Gurdy. Both composers will also act as mentors for the participants of Berkeley Symphony's *Under Construction* project.

Founded in 1969 as the Berkeley Promenade Orchestra, **Berkeley Symphony** has established a reputation for presenting major new works for orchestra alongside fresh interpretations of the classic European repertoire. Berkeley Symphony has been recognized in seven of the past nine seasons with an Award for Adventurous Programming from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). In addition to its subscription concerts and *Under Construction* new music series, Berkeley Symphony regularly partners with Cal Performances to provide music for visiting artists. Berkeley Symphony's award-winning, year-long *Music in the Schools* program reaches every public elementary school student in Berkeley. San Francisco public radio station KALW 91.7 FM is Berkeley Symphony's broadcast partner, airing all Berkeley Symphony subscription concerts.

In March 2011, the NEA received 1,686 eligible applications for Art Works requesting more than \$84 million in funding. The resulting funding rate of 49 percent of eligible applications reflects both the significant demand for support and the ongoing vitality of the not-for-profit arts community despite current financial challenges. Art Works grants are awarded based on the applications received by the NEA and how those applications are assessed by the review panels.

For a [complete listing of projects](#) recommended for Art Works grant support, please visit the NEA web site at arts.gov.