



**BOULDER
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA**

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Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra Receives Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

Funding to support a new orchestral work celebrating the centennial of the National Park Service and outreach activities including interpretive musical hikes

Today, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Park Service announced the distribution of \$797,500 in support of 33 grants in 16 states, including an award of \$15,000 to the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra to support the commission and premiere performances of an orchestral work celebrating the centennial of the National Park Service, as part of the “Imagine Your Parks” initiative. This award marks the first time the Boulder Phil has received funding from the NEA.

NEA Chairman Jane Chu said, "As the National Endowment for the Arts celebrates its fiftieth anniversary and the National Park Service observes its centennial, we want people to remember that our cultural and natural treasures are part of what makes America great. ‘Imagine Your Parks’ projects from the Grand Canyon in Arizona, to downtown Atlanta, Georgia, will inspire the imagination of people across the country. We are proud to support projects from organizations like the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra to offer more opportunities to engage in the arts." “Imagine Your Parks” is a new grant initiative from the NEA to support projects that use the arts to engage people with memorable places and landscapes of the National Park Service.

Stephen Lias (rhymes with *bias*), an adventurer-composer, will be commissioned to write the new 20-minute orchestral work, which the Boulder Phil will premiere at Macky Auditorium on the CU-Boulder campus during its 2016-2017 season, and also at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., at the inaugural SHIFT Festival of American Orchestras in March of 2017.

“We are thrilled to receive this recognition and are excited that it will help us enhance the Phil’s representation of Boulder, and Colorado, on the national stage,” said Michael Buttermann, music director of the Boulder Phil. “This grant is a great example of well-placed public investment in two areas that enhance quality of life—parks and the arts. We are delighted to celebrate the national park that’s in our

own ‘backyard’ and to be able to do so both in Boulder, as well as in our nation’s capital, at our national home for the performing arts—the Kennedy Center.”

Lias will present at the premiere performance in Boulder and will participate in a pre-concert talk with Butterman. Ancillary events to promote local engagement include interpretive musical hikes led by David Sutherland (a naturalist with the City of Boulder), public talks featuring the composer, and educational programs that further examine and interpret the national park legacy through a musical lens.

Lias comes to this project with considerable experience in joining contemporary art music and national parks. He has served as artist-in-residence at five different national parks and the resulting compositions have been premiered across the U.S. He also has a connection to Rocky Mountain National Park, the first park where he served as artist-in-residence, in 2010, resulting in the piece “The Timberline Sonata,” premiered at the Estes Park Music Festival. In September of 2014, the Boulder Phil premiered Lias’s orchestral work, “Gates of the Arctic,” with synchronized images of the national park in Alaska projected during the performance.

The news of the NEA grant comes during the Boulder Phil’s 2015-2016 season, where subscriptions and individual ticket sales have shown a significant uptick over last year’s season. Upcoming season highlights include a New Music USA-sponsored artist-in-residence program featuring the critically acclaimed American composer Missy Mazzoli in February and a semi-staged performance of Bach’s Saint Matthew Passion in April, a collaboration with Central City Opera, the Boulder Bach Festival, and the University of Colorado choirs. For concert details and events, visit www.BoulderPhil.org.

About the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra

As one of Colorado’s premier ensembles, the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra is bucking national trends with growing, enthusiastic audiences under the vision and leadership of Music Director Michael Butterman. The Boulder Phil’s main concert series—broadcast state-wide on Colorado Public Radio—is presented at Macky Auditorium, a historic jewel on the University of Colorado campus. During Michael Butterman’s tenure, the Boulder Phil’s imaginative programming has resulted in increasing numbers of sold-out concerts and a 70% increase in subscriptions.

Founded in 1958, the Boulder Phil became a fully professional ensemble under the leadership of Theodore Kuchar, whose tenure as music director began in 1996. Today the Boulder Phil is increasingly in demand across the Denver metro area, with regular invitations to perform at the prestigious Vilar Performing Arts Center in Beaver Creek.

Under Michael Buttermann's direction, the Phil has welcomed composers such as Christopher Theofanidis, Daniel Kellogg, Rony Barak, Ruby Fulton, Philip Lasser, and Bill Douglas. The Boulder Phil has performed with many of classical music's greatest stars, including Itzhak Perlman, Hilary Hahn, Yo-Yo Ma, Mstislav Rostropovich, James Galway and Richard Stoltzman. The Boulder Phil dedicated an entire concert in collaboration with the world renowned Takács Quartet and has an ongoing relationship with violinist Sarah Chang, whose first orchestral appearance was with the Boulder Phil at age 8 just prior to her debut with the New York Philharmonic.

The Boulder Phil strives to inspire the next generation of music lovers through Discovery Concerts that have reached thousands of 4th and 5th grade students in 28 schools across three counties. For decades the Phil has also fostered new talent with the annual Young Artist Concerto Competition, and Boulder Phil musicians provide mentorship through side-by-side youth orchestra concerts. In all these ways, the Boulder Phil strives to be at the center of our community's cultural fabric.

About the National Park Service

More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 401 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. To learn more about the National Park Service, visit www.nps.gov.

About the National Endowment for the Arts

Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts and the agency is celebrating this milestone with events and activities through September 2016.

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