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**NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS ANNOUNCES GRANT
TO RHODE ISLAND PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
\$30,000 grant will support *PHILHARMONIC ON FIRE!*
*a collaboration with WaterFire Providence***

May 17, 2011 — PROVIDENCE, RI — Rocco Landesman, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, today announced that the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra has been recommended for a grant of \$30,000 to support *Philharmonic on Fire!* the Orchestra's collaboration with WaterFire on Saturday July 30, 2011. The Rhode Island Philharmonic is one of 1,145 not-for-profit national, regional, state and local organizations recommended for a grant as part of the federal agency's second round of fiscal year 2011 grants. In total, the Arts Endowment will distribute more than \$88 million to support projects nationwide.

An independent agency of the federal government, the National Endowment for the Arts advances artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman said, "NEA research shows that three out of four Americans participate in the arts. The diverse, innovative, and exceptional projects funded in this round will ensure that Americans around the country continue to have the opportunity to experience and participate in the arts."

David Beauchesne, Executive Director of the Rhode Island Philharmonic, said, "We are thrilled that our *Philharmonic on Fire!* collaboration with WaterFire Providence has received support from the National Endowment for the Arts. *Philharmonic on Fire!* pairs the magic of WaterFire with the power of live symphonic music for a truly unique community arts experience. Last year's debut included dancers from Providence Festival Ballet and soprano Diana McVey and drew an audience of more than 75,000. With this grant, our artistic planning and fundraising will kick into high gear."

Philharmonic on Fire! is scheduled for Saturday, July 30 at 9pm. The Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Resident Conductor, Francisco Noya, will present a spectacular evening of live orchestral music performed at the Turks Head Plaza in the heart of downtown Providence, and the concert will be broadcast live along the three rivers of WaterFire and in Waterplace Park. Approximately 3,000 chairs will be placed in the Plaza for audience members who want to listen to the entire concert, while tens-of-thousands more will listen throughout the city.

THE RHODE ISLAND PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA is widely recognized as one of the premier regional orchestras in the United States, AND it **is the largest fully integrated professional orchestra and music school in the country**, placing it in the unique position of presenting great music through both our performance and music education programs. Under the artistic leadership of Music Director **LARRY RACHLEFF** and Resident Conductor **FRANCISCO**

NOYA, the Philharmonic Orchestra has achieved national recognition for its outstanding performances.

The Philharmonic combines exceptional symphonic performances with an emphasis on the highest quality music education at our **Music School**. The School serves approximately 14,500 children, youth and adults this year with lessons, classes, ensembles and community engagement programs. The Philharmonic Music School provides private instrument and vocal lessons, classes and performance ensembles of all sizes, ability levels and instrumentations from classical, pop, jazz and rhythm and blues to the Youth Orchestras, Wind Ensembles and an adult Community Orchestra.

WaterFire Providence, Barnaby Evans' award winning fire sculpture installation on the three rivers in downtown Providence, has been praised by Rhode Island residents and international visitors alike as a moving symbol of Providence's Renaissance. A series of 100 bonfires blaze just above the surface of the three rivers that flow through downtown Providence. Black-clad volunteers in boats pass quietly tend the fires from sunset to past midnight.

WaterFire is an experience that impacts all senses. The crackling flames, the fragrance of cedar and pine, the flickering firelight and the extraordinary music evoke unique emotions from the many thousands who attend.

The National Endowment for the Arts was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector. To join the discussion on how art works, visit the NEA at arts.gov.