



**Twenty-three Fellows Chosen for the Fifth NEA Arts Journalism Institute
in Classical Music and Opera at
Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism**

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New York, October 28, 2008 -- Columbia University's Graduate Journalism School has announced that 23 critics, editors, reporters, and producers have been chosen to participate as fellows in the fifth annual National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Arts Journalism Institute in Classical Music and Opera. The program is one of three NEA-funded, discipline-specific institutes for arts journalists. Through the generous support of the NEA, the music institute will take place at Columbia University in New York City, November 8-18, 2008.

"The National Endowment for the Arts welcomes the new class of arts journalism fellows," NEA Chairman Dana Gioia said. "We cannot imagine the arts thriving in our nation without active and engaged reporting and criticism."

"At the Endowment," Gioia added, "we are also particularly concerned about the severe cuts now being made in arts coverage across the country. Those losses confirm the importance of investing in our arts journalism institutes, which provide both a training ground and support network for writers."

The 2008 fellows for music and opera hail mostly from media markets outside the nation's largest cities, though the program now accepts a limited number of journalists who work in major metropolitan regions. This year's participants represent every kind of news media outlet—print, broadcast and the Internet—in 23 cities and 14 states.

"The NEA Institutes offer vital professional training for journalists who cover the arts," said Andras Szanto, who co-directs the Institute at Columbia University with Anya Grundmann, senior producer of NPR Music, and artistic director Joseph Horowitz, the classical music historian and critic. "With the news industry undergoing rapid changes, demands on journalists are growing. The entire field, along with dozens of communities nationwide, benefit from the commitment that the NEA and Columbia's Journalism School have shown to this important institute."

“At a transitional moment when classical music is greatly challenged, a moment of flux and ferment, sharing the knowledge needed to foster an informed journalistic response is a heady and exciting undertaking,” artistic director Horowitz said. “The opportunities to learn skills, attend concerts, and make contacts in New York are a tremendous benefit to the institute participants,” added co-director Grundmann.

Participants in the 2008 NEA Arts Journalism Institute in Classical Music and Opera:

James Bash, Freelance classical music writer, Portland, OR
Robert Battey, Freelance music writer, *The Washington Post*, Arlington, VA
Marilyn Bailey, Freelance arts writer and editor, Fort Worth, TX
Dave Beck, Host/producer, KUOW Public Radio, Seattle, WA
Anne Bothwell, Director, *Art & Seek*, KERA Public Radio/TV, Dallas, TX
Emily Burnham, Staff writer and arts reporter, *Bangor Daily News*, Bangor, ME
Sara Funke, Freelance classical music writer, Dorchester, MA
Chris M. Johnson, Producer/host/commentator, Houston Public Radio, Houston, TX
Melinda Johnson, Arts editor, *The Post-Standard*, Syracuse, NY
Karen Lindell, Arts reporter and editor, *Ventura County Star*, Camarillo, CA
Janice Mayer, Freelance writer and arts consultant, *Musical America*, Rye Brook, NY
Milton Moore, Classical music critic, *The Day*, New London, CT
Karen E. Moorman, Freelance, *Classical Voice of North Carolina*, Durham, NC
Gil Mott, Freelance classical music critic, *Danbury News-Times*, Ridgefield, CT
Richard Nilsen, Art critic, *The Arizona Republic*, Phoenix, AZ
Anna Reguero, Classical music, jazz, dance critic, *Democrat and Chronicle*, Rochester, NY
John W. Sullivan, Freelance classical music writer, Middletown, CA
Jeanne Claire van Ryzin, Arts critic, *Austin American-Statesman*, Austin, TX
Rebecca Wallace, Arts editor, *Palo Alto Weekly*, Sunnyvale, CA
Jaci Webb, Entertainment writer, *The Billings Gazette*, Billings, MT
Gail Wein, Freelance writer and producer, New York, NY
Lewis Whittington, Freelance classical music writer, Philadelphia, PA
Brinda Fuller Willis, Contributing writer, *Jackson Advocate*, Jackson, MI

Attendees will work with senior journalists and faculty members to improve their viewing, analytical, and writing skills. In addition, participants attend performances that cover a wide variety of genres and styles, as well as rehearsals and behind-the-scenes meetings with artists and administrators. Finally, journalists develop a firsthand understanding of artistic creation through a physical learning component, such as a basic lesson on a musical instrument, memorization of a monologue, or a lesson in physical movement.

Some performances that this year’s participants will attend:

- Valery Gergiev conducts the Kirov Orchestra at Lincoln Center
- New Metropolitan Opera production of Berlioz’s *The Damnation of Faust*, directed by Robert Lepage
- Israel Philharmonic performs Tchaikovsky’s Fourth Symphony, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel

- Metropolitan Opera New York premiere of John Adams' *Doctor Atomic*
- Bernstein festival performance at Carnegie Hall featuring the New York Philharmonic conducted by incoming music director Alan Gilbert

Feedback from past participants:

“I have attended quite a few professional meetings, conferences and writing workshops. The NEA Institute was the most energizing, inspiring experience of my 15-year career in journalism. I didn't want it to end!”

Elaine Guregian, *Akron Beacon Journal*, Akron, OH

“I cannot say enough good things about this fellowship. It has changed me in profound ways. It was like a crucible that formed a new journalist.”

Edward Ortiz, *Sacramento Bee*, Sacramento, CA.

“We wolfed down more music and more understanding in 12 days than I thought was humanly possible.” **Thomas Small**, Freelance, *Concertonet*, Laguna Beach, CA

Additional information is available at

<http://www.arts.gov/national/aji/index.html>

and

<http://www.journalism.columbia.edu/conferences>

About the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

For almost a century, the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism has been preparing journalists in a program that stresses academic rigor, ethics, journalistic inquiry, and professional practice. Founded with a gift from Joseph Pulitzer in 1903, the school offers master of science, master of arts, and doctor of philosophy degrees. For more on the Graduate School of Journalism, visit www.journalism.columbia.edu.

About the NEA

The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established, bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Arts Endowment is the nation's largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases.

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