

# NATIONAL SAWDUST

For Immediate Release

## National Sawdust Hosts Third Annual Gala In Honor Of Heroes Philip Glass And Renée Fleming And Artist In Residence Of The Year Helga Davis, With Speakers David Byrne, Julianne Moore And Ann Ziff

May 3, 2017  
At Gotham Hall in New York City

Gala Chair: Ann Ziff  
Co-Chairs: Olivia Chessé, Elizabeth Madigan Jost,  
Kristin Soong Rapoport

**April 13, New York—National Sawdust**, a cutting-edge contemporary music institution based in Williamsburg, hosts its third annual gala on Wednesday, May 3, 2017 in New York at Gotham Hall. The gala will honor heroes **Philip Glass** and **Renée Fleming**, and National Sawdust artist resident of the year **Helga Davis**.

With speakers **David Byrne**, **Julianne Moore** and **Ann Ziff**, along with notable gala committee members including **Helena Christensen** in attendance, the evening will celebrate and benefit National Sawdust's commitment to guiding audiences through musical discovery and providing artists with invaluable resources to advance and expand their practice at pivotal stages in their careers, through the artist residency program. Funds raised during the gala will also ensure accessible ticket prices.

**Paola Prestini, Composer and Director, National Sawdust**, says, "As a young nonprofit organization we are committed to the discovery and support of fresh innovative voices. The gala offers us the chance to champion our cause and is our single most important fundraising moment of the year. The gala directly supports our residency program, which offers financial and professional support to artists and helps them reach the next stages of their careers. We are

thrilled to have Ann Ziff join our cause by helping us celebrate pioneering artists who, in addition to leading explorations in performing arts, continue to inspire and support the next generation of artists in the field.”

### **Evening Performances**

Dinner guests will enjoy performances by **Timo Andres & Anthony Roth Costanzo, Kinan Azmeh, Brooklyn Youth Chorus & Caroline Shaw, Choir of Trinity Wall Street & Paola Prestini, Helga Davis & Yuka Honda, Gogol Bordello & Rapper Latasha Alcindor, and Magos Herrera.**

Cocktails will be held from 6 – 7pm, followed by a seated dinner with performances until 10pm. An auction will feature special experiences headlined by a private in-home concert with percussionist Glenn Kotche of Wilco and a meal prepared by James Beard Award-Winning Chef Patrick Connolly of Rider — the neighboring restaurant to National Sawdust’s Williamsburg space — as well as by a private voice lesson with Renée Fleming, jewelry designed by Tamsen Z, Ann Ziff’s jewelry line, tickets and backstage tour for two to *Hello Dolly!*, starring Bette Midler and David Hyde Pierce, and a weekend stay for two at The Betsy Hotel in South Beach along with a private dinner prepared by James Beard Award Winning Chef Laurent Tourondel and a private musical performance.

### **National Sawdust Benefit Committee**

The Benefit Committee is comprised of the following leaders and patrons: **Hilaria and Alec Baldwin, Olivia and Jean-Pierre Chessé, Helena Christensen, Kevin Dolan, Agnes Gund, Elizabeth Madigan Jost, Elena Park, David Hyde Pierce and Brian Hargrove, Kristin Soong and Phillip Rapoport, Diana and Jonathan Rose, Kris Sebastian and Alberto Cribiore, Catharine and Jeffrey Soros, Daisy M. Soros, Jill and Bill Steinberg, Diane and Stephen Volk, and Karen Wong.**

### **About Philip Glass**

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Philip Glass is a graduate of the University of Chicago and The Juilliard School. In the early 1960s, Glass spent two years of intensive study in Paris with Nadia Boulanger and while there, earned money by transcribing Ravi Shankar’s Indian music into Western notation. By 1974, Glass had a number of innovative projects, creating a large collection of new music for The Philip Glass Ensemble, and for the Mabou Mines Theater. This period culminated in *Music in Twelve Parts* and the landmark opera *Einstein on the Beach* for which he collaborated with Robert Wilson. Since *Einstein*, Glass has expanded his repertoire to include music for dance, theater, chamber ensemble, orchestra, and film. His scores have received Academy Award nominations (*Kundun*, *The Hours*, *Notes on a Scandal*) and a Golden Globe

(The Truman Show).

In November, the Washington National Opera premiered a revised version of Glass's opera, *Appomattox*, created in collaboration with librettist Christopher Hampton. Glass recently celebrated his 80th birthday on January 31st, 2017 with the world premiere of his 11th Symphony.

### **About Renée Fleming**

Renée Fleming is one of the most beloved singers of our time. Recipient of the National Medal of Arts, America's highest honor for an individual artist, and the 2013 Grammy Award for Best Classical Vocal Solo, she has sung for such distinguished occasions as the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony and the Diamond Jubilee Concert for Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace. In 2014, she became the first classical artist ever to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the Super Bowl. Known for bringing new audiences to classical music and opera, Renée has hosted a wide variety of television and radio broadcasts, and has sung not only on the world's greatest opera stages, but also with Elton John, Sting, and Joan Baez. A four-time Grammy winner, her honors include Germany's Cross of the Order of Merit, Sweden's Polar Prize, France's Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, and the Fulbright Lifetime Achievement Medal.

[www.reneefleming.com](http://www.reneefleming.com)

### **About Paola Prestini**

Paola Prestini is "the imaginative...enterprising composer and impresario" (New York Times) whose interdisciplinary vision is helping to shape the future of new music. Named one of Musical America's "Top 30 Musical Innovators 2016" and one of the "Top 100 Composers in the World under 40" (NPR), Prestini's music has been commissioned by and performed at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, BAM, and the Barbican Centre, among others. She is the Creative and Executive Director of National Sawdust, and the "visionary-in-chief" (Time Out New York) of VisionIntoArt, the multimedia production company she co-founded in 1999. Prestini's honors include two ASCAP awards, fellowships from Paul & Daisy Soros and Carnegie Hall, and the Sundance Institute. Current works include *Two Oars*, a new opera with Robert Wilson, and *The Hubble Cantata*, to premiere with LA Opera and the Kennedy Center.

### **About National Sawdust**

National Sawdust's mission is to build new audiences for classical and new music by providing outstanding resources and programmatic support to both emerging and established artists and composers. National Sawdust's programming is centered on discovery within music: we introduce audiences to new artists and styles, and we introduce artists to new audiences. We also provide artists the space, time, and resources they need to create new work. Additionally, with adjoining restaurant Rider from James Beard award winning

chef Patrick Connolly, National Sawdust embraces the blending of cultural and culinary experience.

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