

# Lifetime Honors

It is not always possible to accurately measure the impact of a particular artist's work over his or her career. Some artists, despite their great influence, are never recognized for their effect in the arts field. In the 1980s, the NEA realized the importance of recognizing artists for lifetime achievements in addition to current projects. Three such awards were initiated: National Medals of Arts, NEA Jazz Masters, and NEA National Heritage Fellows.

## NATIONAL MEDAL OF ARTS

Created by Congress in 1984, the National Medal of Arts is conferred annually by the President to honor persons and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions to the excellence, support, growth, and availability of the arts in the United States. Unlike other arts awards, the National Medal of Arts is not limited to a single field or area of artistic endeavor.

The public recommends recipients for the award, and the National Council on the Arts nominates them to the President for final selection. The awards, which are non-monetary, are presented each year at a special White House ceremony. The National Medal of Arts was designed by internationally renowned sculptor Robert Graham.

Information on submitting a nomination can be found on the NEA Web site at [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov).

In 2006, the following artists, organizations, and arts patrons received the National Medal of Arts:

**William Bolcom**  
Classical Composer  
*Ann Arbor, Michigan*

**Cyd Charisse**  
Dancer  
*Los Angeles, California*

**Roy R. DeCarava**  
Photographer  
*Brooklyn, New York*

**Wilhelmina Holladay**  
Arts Patron  
*Washington, DC*

**Interlochen Center  
for the Arts**  
School of Fine Arts  
*Interlochen, Michigan*



*President George W. Bush and Mrs. Laura Bush with the 2006 National Medal of Arts recipients in the Oval Office: from left, Ben Jaffe and his mother Sandra Jaffe (Preservation Hall Jazz Band), Gregory Rabassa, Cyd Charisse, Roy DeCarava, Viktor Schreckengost, Dr. Ralph Stanley, Wilhelmina Holladay, William Bolcom, Jeffrey Kimpton (Interlochen Center for the Arts), and NEA Chairman Dana Gioia.*

WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY PAUL MORSE

**Erich Kunzel**  
Conductor, Cincinnati  
Pops Orchestra  
Cincinnati, Ohio

**Preservation Hall Jazz Band**  
Jazz Ensemble  
New Orleans, Louisiana

**Gregory Rabassa**  
Literary Translator  
Brooklyn, New York

## NEA JAZZ MASTERS FELLOWSHIP

Though its exact origins are often disputed, jazz is inarguably one of the nation's most vibrant indigenous art forms. In 1982 the NEA created the NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship, the highest honor that our nation bestows upon jazz musicians, to recognize

**Viktor Schreckengost**  
Industrial Designer/  
Sculptor  
Cleveland, Ohio

**Dr. Ralph Stanley**  
Bluegrass Musician  
Coeburn, Virginia

those artists who have made significant contributions to the development and performance of jazz. Each year, a one-time award of \$25,000 is presented from among various categories.

Additionally, the A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Advocacy recognizes individuals who have made major contributions to the appreciation, knowledge, and advancement of the American jazz art form as a writer, patron, or presenter.

## NEA Jazz Masters

**Toshiko Akiyoshi, Bandleader**

Over the course of a six-decade career, pianist, bandleader, and composer-arranger Toshiko Akiyoshi has made a unique and vital contribution to the art of big-band jazz. Her big band albums have received 14 Grammy Award nominations, and Akiyoshi is the first woman ever to place first in the Best Arranger and Composer category in the *Down Beat* Readers' Poll.

**Curtis Fuller, Solo Instrumentalist (Trombone)**

A remarkably fluent trombonist, Curtis Fuller’s impeccable sense of time and ambitious solos have made him a mainstay of the hard-bop scene. He has added his instrument and compositions to albums by John Coltrane, Bud Powell, the Jazztet, and Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers.

**Ramsey Lewis, Pianist**

With a style that springs from his early gospel experience, his classical training, and a deep love of jazz, pianist and composer Ramsey Lewis has built a decades-long career as one of America’s most popular performers. Lewis is the artistic director of the “Jazz at Ravinia” series of Chicago’s Ravinia Festival, the host of a weekday morning drive-time radio show on Chicago’s WNUA-FM, and the host of the syndicated radio show *Legends of Jazz with Ramsey Lewis*.

**Jimmy Scott, Vocalist**

For more than five decades, vocalist Jimmy Scott has numbered the jazz world’s best singers among his select group of fans. Although he was, for a period, “perhaps the most unjustly ignored American singer of the 20th century” (according to Joseph Hooper in a *New York Times Magazine* profile), Scott today is once more finding a dedicated international audience for his emotionally penetrating art.

**Frank Wess, Solo Instrumentalist (Flute)**

A multi-instrumentalist whose inspired solos have kept big band jazz fresh and vital into the present, Frank Wess is one of the most influential and instantly recognizable flutists in jazz history. Wess is also revered as a smoothly swinging tenor saxophone player in the Lester Young tradition and an expert alto saxophonist.

*From left to right, top to bottom: Chairman Gioia with NEA Jazz Masters Dan Morgenstern, Phil Woods, Curtis Fuller, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Ramsey Lewis, Jimmy Scott, and Frank Wess.*

PHOTO BY TOM PICH





*Newly honored Frank Wess (left) talks with fellow NEA Jazz Masters Gerald Wilson and Jon Hendricks.*

PHOTO BY TOM PICH

### **Phil Woods, Composer-Arranger**

One of the most brilliant alto saxophonists in jazz, composer, arranger, saxophonist, bandleader, and educator Phil Woods has devoted himself to the alto saxophone since the age of 12. The three-time Grammy Award winner has composed more than 200 songs and recorded several albums with new arrangements of famous composers.

### **Dan Morgenstern, A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Advocacy**

Director of the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University since 1976, Dan Morgenstern is a jazz historian and archivist, author, editor, and educator who has been active in the jazz field since 1958. As head of the Institute of Jazz Studies, he is responsible for the largest collection of jazz-related materials anywhere.

## **NEA NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWSHIP**

The nation's folk arts—that is, the artistic expression that is at once rooted in the collective American experience and in the traditions of the nation's many ethnicities—is perhaps one of the truest windows into the American character. The nation's folk and traditional arts reflect the many tongues that make up the distinctly American artistic voice.

Since 1982, the NEA has recognized the artists who dedicate their lives to cultural traditions and arts with NEA National Heritage Fellowships. Ten NEA National Heritage Fellowships, the country's most prestigious honor in the folk and traditional arts, were awarded in 2006. The fellowships include a one-time award of \$20,000.

Additionally, the Bess Lomax Hawes Award is given to individuals who have made major contributions to the excellence, vitality, and public appreciation of the folk and traditional arts through teaching, collecting, advocacy, and preservation work.

Interviews with the 2006 awardees, as well as presentations of their work, can be found on the NEA Web site ([www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov)). The NEA National Heritage Fellowships were presented in 2006 with support from the Darden Restaurants Foundation.



## NEA National Heritage Fellows

### **Charles M. Carrillo**

*Santero* (Carver and  
Painter of sacred  
figures)  
*Santa Fe, New Mexico*

### **Delores E. Churchill**

*Haida* (Native Alaskan)  
Weaver  
*Ketchikan, Alaska*

### **Henry Gray**

Blues Piano Player and  
Singer  
*Baton Rouge, Louisiana*

### **Doyle Lawson**

Gospel and Bluegrass  
Singer, Arranger,  
and Bandleader  
*Bristol, Tennessee*

### **Esther Martinez**

Native American  
Storyteller  
*Ohkay Owingeh,  
New Mexico*

### **Diomedes Matos**

*Cuatro* (10-string Puerto  
Rican guitar) maker  
*Deltona, Florida*

### **George Na'ope**

*Kumu Hula* (Hula  
Master)  
*Hilo, Hawaii*

### **Wilho Saari**

Finnish *Kantele*  
(Lap-harp) player  
*Naselle, Washington*

### **Mavis Staples**

Gospel and Rhythm and  
Blues Singer  
*Chicago, Illinois*

### **Nancy Sweezy (Bess Lomax Hawes Award)**

Advocate, Scholar,  
Presenter, and  
Preservationist  
*Westwood, Massachusetts*

### **Treme Brass Band**

New Orleans Brass Band  
*New Orleans, Louisiana*

*From left to right, top to bottom: Chairman Gioia with NEA National Heritage Fellows Henry Gray; Diomedes Matos; Charles M. Carrillo; Wilho Saari; Benny Jones, founder of the Treme Brass Band; George Na'ope, Nancy Sweezy, Doyle Lawson, Delores E. Churchill, Mavis Staples, and Esther Martinez (who passed away September 16, 2006).*

PHOTO BY TOM PICH

