

The Commission Project  
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**The Commission Project Receives \$65,000 Grant from New York State Music Fund**  
*\$13 million awarded by The New York State Music Fund to 153 nonprofit contemporary music appreciation programs*

The Commission Project (TCP), a national music education organization based in Rochester, N.Y., is the recipient of a \$65,000 grant from The New York State Music Fund to support TCP's composer-in-residence programs at schools in the Rochester area and New York City. The Commission Project fosters creativity through music education by commissioning original music and producing workshops and interactive music residencies in public schools across the country. TCP is one of five Rochester area organizations to be awarded funding from The New York State Music Fund.

The New York State Music Fund was created when the New York State Attorney General's Office resolved investigations against major record companies that had violated state and federal laws prohibiting "pay for play" ("payola"). The settlement agreement stipulated that funds paid by music businesses would support music education and appreciation for the benefit of New York State residents. The Attorney General's Office enlisted the services of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, one of the nation's largest and most experienced philanthropy services, to develop and manage the grant program.

"I am grateful to The New York State Music Fund for supporting our mission to reach thousands of children through music education," says Ned Corman, founder of The Commission Project. "This fund fosters the creation of music and music education as well as partnerships, which is what The Commission Project has stood for since its inception in 1994."

The New York State Music Fund published guidelines and criteria and accepted grant applications in a number of categories, including music education and public performances of music by artists working in hip hop, reggae, fusion, jazz, classical and folk music of all cultures. Applications related to recording, distribution, or broadcast through traditional or new media were also eligible. Special emphasis was placed on reaching underserved populations and broadening awareness of artists, genres or styles with limited access to commercial broadcast or other mass distribution vehicles.

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An advisory panel comprised of recognized leaders from a cross-section of the music world evaluated and recommended 153 of the 304 applications the Fund received for its first

cycle. Awards to the 153 grantees represent every region of New York state and range from \$15,000 to \$750,000. Diverse forms of popular or experimental music, including hip-hop, indie rock, fusion and reggae account for about 37 percent of grants and more than 13 percent celebrate a spectrum of jazz; 30 percent include new classical music. The state's ethnic or racial minority communities are served by 45 percent of the programs, while 47 percent target low-income communities. The Fund's size and emphasis on music of our time set it apart from other arts grant programs.

"This grant money will help to keep the creative spirit alive in our schools," says Dan MacPherson, band director at Kirk Road Elementary School in Greece, N.Y., and board member of The Commission Project. "In a day when the word 'standards' is used to measure value in education, TCP offers schools a real life opportunity for students to learn from a working composer and glimpse a potential future."

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**NOTE:** The Commission Project is one of the most active music commissioning organizations in the country. Since 1994, The Commission Project (TCP) has benefited over 23,000 students in 93 schools nationwide by commissioning 124 composers to write nearly 400 pieces for student ensembles; 104 are published; 33 have been commercially recorded and released. In the 2006-2007 academic year, The Commission Project will produce more than 40 interactive music residencies in metropolitan areas across the United States and Canada. Composers who have received commissions include Ron Carter, Paquito D'Rivera, Jeff Beal, Tanya Leon, Bob Mintzer, Tommy Newsom, Diedre Murray, Max Roach, Don Sebesky, Augusta Read Thomas, Fred Wesley, and Greg Yasinitsky. Sebesky's Joyful Noise Suite received the 2000 Grammy Award for Best Instrumental.

Much of TCP's success is due to support from and partnerships with the Arts and Cultural Council for Greater Rochester, Dorothy and Jonathan Rintels Charitable Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts, Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks New York State Senator Jim Alesi, New York State Senator Joe Robach, New York State Assemblyman David Gantt, New York State Assemblyman Joe Morelle, The Polisseni Foundation, Fred and Floy Willmott Foundation, Marie C. and Joseph C. Wilson Foundation, JPMorgan Chase, M&T Charitable Foundation, Citigroup Foundation, Ames-Amzalak Memorial Trust, Ronald McDonald House Charities, Target Stores and Wegmans Food Markets.