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WESLEYAN'S CENTER FOR THE ARTS RECEIVES GRANT FOR INNOVATIVE ART/SCIENCE EXPLORATION

GRANT WILL SUPPORT *FEET TO THE FIRE*, AN INTERDISCIPLINARY
PROJECT TO EXPLORE GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Middletown, Conn., May 23, 2007— Wesleyan University's Center for the Arts (CFA) recently received a \$200,000 grant from the Association of Performing Arts Presenters Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program, a program funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The grant will support *Feet to the Fire*, a project that combines the teaching power of art and field science to help students and the community better understand the implications of global climate change.

It is one of only eight grants given to challenge campus-based performing arts presenters to integrate their programs more organically within the academic environment.

Feet to the Fire will: 1) address the need for a deeper understanding of issues surrounding global climate change through multiple lenses; 2) use art as a catalyst for innovative thinking, scientific exploration and student engagement; and 3) galvanize campus and community collaboration by having campus-based artists and non-artists share research methods, pedagogies and modes of inquiry on a single research topic.

Visiting choreographer, director and conceptual artist Ann Carlson will conceptualize *Feet to the Fire* and work with a project management team at Wesleyan to execute each component. "I look forward to understanding the science, the politics, the predictions, the resistances, the messy mixture of capitalism and environmental policies as well as personal issues of longevity, sustainability, individualism, deep denial of death, urbanity, industrial production, and in general the impact of our lives on the life of our planet," Carlson says.

Along with Carlson, the project management team will include Pamela Tatge, director of the CFA, and Barry Chernoff, the Robert Schumann Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences, professor of biology and director of the Environmental Studies Certificate Program. Project strands will also be developed in collaboration with Middletown community partners, the Green Street Arts Center and the Jonah Center for Earth and Art and consortium partner, the Center for Creative Research.

"Feet to the Fire will be an extraordinary opportunity for all three divisions and the Middletown community to explore a common topic together: the implications of global climate change," says Pamela Tatge, "I'm excited to work with Barry Chernoff, Ann Carlson, faculty members and our community partners in the coming months to shape the project which will kick-off next January, and hope to engage as many people as possible in the work."

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Project components to be refined in the coming months and to be implemented between January 2008 and June 2009 include:

- The creation of a course co-taught by Carlson and Chernoff resulting in earth-based performance works created in situ by artists and scientists. In 2008, the site for the course will be the landfill in Middletown's North End. In 2009, the site will be tropical forests in Guyana.
- The integration of arts pedagogies and research methods as a means of understanding global warming's implications in various fields including: anthropology, economics and environmental studies.
- The integration of campus scientists of global climate change and their pedagogies into three existing music department courses. Coursework will be served by commissioning a composer who works on the intersection of sound and the natural world to expose their process of research to students and faculty.
- The creation of a common experience for first-year students using arts research and practice methods to illuminate issues of global climate change. Culminating events will take place on campus and in the community.
- A collaboration with the Jonah Center to draw attention to the landfill in Middletown's North End, including the commissioning of a visual artist to create a work there, and the integration of a global climate change unit into the arts/science track at Green Street's afterschool program.

The Association of Performing Arts Presenters (Arts Presenters) is the largest national service and advocacy organization for the performing arts, and is dedicated to bringing artists and audiences together through presenting and touring. With over 2,100 members worldwide, Arts Presenters is committed to increasing community participation, promoting global cultural exchange and fostering an environment for the performing arts to thrive. www.artspresenters.org.

The mission of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation is to improve the quality of people's lives through grants supporting the performing arts, wildlife conservation, medical research and the prevention of child maltreatment, and through preservation of the cultural and environmental legacy of Doris Duke's properties. The foundation's assets currently total approximately \$1.8 billion. Of its grants totaling close to \$473 million to date, the foundation has approved approximately \$156 million to support nonprofit performing arts organizations throughout the United States. www.ddcf.org

The Center for the Arts (www.wesleyan.edu/cfa) is an 11-building complex on the Wesleyan campus that houses the departments of art and art history, music, theater and dance, and also film studies classes and activities. It serves as a cultural center for the region, the state and New England. The CFA includes the 400-seat Theater, the 260-seat Cinema, the World Music Hall (a non-Western performance space), the 414-seat Crowell Concert Hall and the Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery.

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