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## PS21 awarded grants from NEA, Council on the Arts

CHATHAM — PS21 / Performance Spaces for the 21st Century will receive a \$244,000 matching grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) for capital improvements to its Pavilion Theater and a \$15,000 Grant for Arts Projects award from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to support PATHWAYS 2023 initiative. The NYSCA grant will allow PS21 to install a new retractable riser system in the theater and add a dedicated rainwater remediation system to the building's current rain guards and swales.

The grant for capital improvements is part of a record funding initiative by NYSCA, which totals over \$42 million to 144 capital projects across New York State.

The new riser system, a 250-seat, 4-unit telescoping seating platform will allow for easy, safe reconfiguration for their varied artistic and institutional purposes. The new system, which will allow the risers to be quickly reconfigured or even removed altogether allows PS21 to present innovative new work that requires flexible performance space and audience participation. The theater's high, curving roofline requires a custom-fabricated rainwater drainage system. As architect Evan Stoller, who will also act as project manager, explains, "This is a gutter as well as a fascia, creating a continuing line along the curving eaves. No standard gutter could work in this situation."

Since the state-of-the-art theater was inaugurated in



Photo contributed

### "Save the Last Dance for Me"

2018, PS21 has evolved into the Hudson Valley's mecca for innovative programming by leading and emerging artists in music, dance, theater, contemporary performance, and the visual and multimedia arts.

"We are also dedicated to offering performances that blur aesthetic boundaries, like contemporary circus, a new artistic practice rooted in accessibility and shared public space that is possible on a large scale only in a theater equipped with a flexible riser system. The ability for the facility to adapt to different programmatic needs is a key to our purpose," Executive and Artistic Director Elena Siyanko explains, also in the release.

NYSCA Chair Katherine Nicholls said, "These capital project grants are an investment from the people of New

York to the people of New York and will have positive impact on our communities for many years to come. On behalf of the council and staff, I congratulate PS21 and look forward to seeing all that will flourish from this project."

The NEA grant assures the future of PATHWAYS, which brings leading and emerging American and international artists into contact with local community members. This free and low-cost season-long series of art installations, participatory theater, educational workshops, processional arts, and interactive events engages area residents in creative endeavors and environmental stewardship; fosters collaboration among regional and local organizations who bring the arts to — and into — non-urban communities with

ensure that all people can benefit from arts, culture, and design."

As Matthew Gold, director of Community Initiatives, explains, "Last season, we held 42 events, plus weekly classes and self-directed experiences on our unspoiled grounds, free or at very low cost, geared to families and people of all ages and backgrounds. We thus bridge the accessibility divide that too often bars area residents from discovering the cultural and intellectual richness of the performing arts. At PS21, we take innovative work out of the context of a proscenium stage, and through partnerships with local organizations, cities, and towns, bring performance and cultural experience to where people are."

PATHWAYS 2023 offers more than 45 events from May through October. Highlights of the 2023 Season include the Resistance Revival Chorus celebrating Juneteenth at Promenade Hill Park in Hudson; Invisible Cities, a roving performance installation inspired by Italo Calvino's unclassifiable meditations; Alessandro Sciarroni's "Save the Last Dance for Me," the centerpiece of PATHWAYS Day, a rediscovery of the Bolognese courtship dance, the polka chinata; the North American premiere of "FA" by Amoukanama Circus (Guinea); and "Anima," an immersive work from French visual artist Noémie Goudal and director Maëlle Poésy about earth's climate future.

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limited access to work of this caliber; and highlights the links between the performing arts, the community, and the environment.

PS21's PATHWAYS is among 1,130 projects across the country, totaling more than \$31 million, that were selected during this second round of Grants for Arts Projects fiscal year 2023 funding.

"The National Endowment for the Arts is pleased to support a wide range of projects, including PS21 PATHWAYS 2023, demonstrating the many ways the arts enrich our lives and contribute to healthy and thriving communities," said NEA Chair Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD. "These organizations play an important role in advancing the creative vitality of our nation and helping to