

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Wharton Esherick Museum
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Wharton Esherick Museum to receive \$12,500 Grant from the NEA to Support Programs for Blind and Visually Impaired Visitors

Malvern, PA—National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu has approved more than \$80 million in grants as part of the NEA's second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2018. Included in this announcement is an Art Works grant of \$12,500 to the Wharton Esherick Museum for "Insights for New Audiences," an initiative that seeks to engage blind and visually impaired individuals through accessible tours and multi-sensory programs. The Art Works category is the NEA's largest funding category and supports projects that focus on the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts, and/or the strengthening of communities through the arts.

"The variety and quality of these projects speaks to the wealth of creativity and diversity in our country," said NEA Chairman Jane Chu. "Through the work of organizations such as the Wharton Esherick Museum in Malvern, NEA funding invests in local communities, helping people celebrate the arts wherever they are."

A unique aspect of the Wharton Esherick Museum, which houses over 300 of the artist's work within his handcrafted home and studio, is that visitors are permitted and encouraged to touch the larger pieces of Esherick's wood sculpture, furniture and furnishings. Recognizing that this type of tactile interaction lends itself well to programs and touch tours for blind and visually impaired, the Museum partnered with Philly Touch Tours to develop these programs. Philadelphia-based Philly Touch Tours works to provide equal opportunities in cultural settings for people with vision loss.

Julie Siglin, Executive Director of the Wharton Esherick Museum said, "We are over the moon to have received support from the NEA for this project. Cultural accessibility is near and dear to my heart and we are so very excited to open Esherick's door to a wider audience."

For more information on projects included in the NEA grant announcement, visit arts.gov/news.

About the Wharton Esherick Museum:

The Wharton Esherick Museum, located just outside of Valley Forge Park in Malvern, PA is the handcrafted home and studio of Wharton Esherick (1887-1970) and exhibits over 300 of the artist's work including sculpture, sculptural furniture, woodcut prints and paintings. Wharton Esherick was a leading American sculptor and artist of the early 20th century. Working primarily in wood, he is considered to be among the most influential furniture designers of the 21st century. The Museum is open for tours Tuesday – Friday (for groups of 5 or more) from 10 am to 4 pm, Saturdays from 10 am – 4 pm and Sundays from 1 pm - 4 pm (no minimum requirement on weekends). Advanced tickets are required, and can be purchased at www.whartonesherickmuseum.org. For more information call 610-644-5822 or email info@whartonesherickmuseum.org.

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