



For Immediate Release

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**APAP|NYC 2020 Honors Ping Chong, Founder of American Contemporary
Theater at APAP Awards Ceremony;
National Endowment for the Arts Honors
APAP CEO Mario Garcia Durham with Proclamation**

January 13, 2020 - The Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP) honored artists, visionaries and advocates in the performing arts at its annual gathering, [APAP|NYC 2020](#), which took place at the New York Hilton Midtown today. APAP hosted its Annual Awards Ceremony, in celebration of those individuals and organizations that have demonstrated a significant impact on the industry and communities they serve both in the US and abroad.

The National Endowment for the Arts honored Mario Garcia Durham, APAP President and CEO, with a proclamation commemorating his more than 20 years as a performing arts professional, leader, and advocate for our field.

“As our industry welcomes a new decade, this year’s honorees exemplify those individuals and organizations that have charted extraordinary paths for the progress our field has made in advocacy, achievement and artistic endeavors,” said Mario Garcia Durham, President and CEO of APAP. “Our arts ecosystem is stronger today because of their efforts and commitment to the field.”

“We artists work because we must. We create in the hope of connecting with other human beings,” said Ping Chong, APAP 2020 Award of Merit honoree. “This honor that APAP has gifted me confirms that a connection has indeed been made. I am deeply humbled this award.”

Ping Chong + Company produces theatrical works addressing the important cultural and civic issues of our times, striving to reach the widest audiences with the greatest level of artistic innovation and social integrity. The company was founded in 1975 by leading theatrical innovator Ping Chong with a mission to create works of theater and art that explore the intersections of race, culture, history, art, media and technology in the modern world. Productions range from intimate oral history projects to grand scale cinematic multi-disc productions featuring puppets, performers, and full music and projection scores.

Winners are nominated by their peers for having had a significant impact on the industry and on communities worldwide.

This year's APAP Award recipients include:

- **THE SIDNEY R. YATES AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ADVOCACY ON BEHALF OF THE PERFORMING ARTS:** The League of American Orchestras (Jesse Rosen, President and CEO; Heather Noonan, Vice President for Advocacy)
- **THE WILLIAM DAWSON AWARD FOR PROGRAMMATIC EXCELLENCE AND SUSTAINED ACHIEVEMENT IN PROGRAMMING:** Emil Kang, Executive and Artistic Director, UNC Chapel Hill
- **THE AWARD OF MERIT FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN THE PERFORMING ARTS:** Ping Chong, internationally acclaimed artist and pioneer in the use of media in theater
- **FAN TAYLOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE TO THE FIELD OF PROFESSIONAL PRESENTING:** Rena Shagan, President, Rena Shagan Arts, Inc. (RSA)

This year's NAPAMA (North American Performing Arts Managers and Agents) award recipients will be presented by Mike Green, president, NAPAMA, and are:

- **NAPAMA PRESENTER OF THE YEAR:** Shane Fernando, Executive and Artistic Director, Wilson Center at Cape Fear Community College
- **NAPAMA LIZ SILVERSTEIN AWARD FOR AGENT-MANAGER OF THE YEAR:** Rachel Cohen, Executive Director, Cadence Arts Network, Inc. APAP|NYC's daily plenary sessions, as well as the annual awards luncheon, will also be streamed on Facebook Live.

BIOGRAPHIES

League of American Orchestras (Jesse Rosen, President and CEO, and Heather Noonan, Vice President, Advocacy) - Yates Award

The League of American Orchestras leads, support and champions America's orchestras and the vitality of the music they perform. Its diverse membership of more than 2,000 organizations and individuals across North America runs the gamut from world-renowned orchestras to community groups, from summer festivals to student and youth ensembles, from conservatories to libraries, from businesses serving orchestras to individuals who love symphonic music. The only national organization dedicated solely to the orchestral experience, the League is a nexus of knowledge and innovation, advocacy and leadership advancement. Founded in 1942 and chartered by Congress in 1962, the League links a national network of thousands of instrumentalists, conductors, managers and administrators, board members, volunteers, and business partners. Headquartered in New York and with a satellite office in Washington, D.C., the

League is committed to working in close collaboration with national and international partners to lead, activate, and advance advocacy in the arenas of government arts funding, education reform, international cultural activity, and nonprofit and philanthropic policies.

Emil J. Kang – Dawson Award

Until 2019, Emil J. Kang was the executive and artistic director of Carolina Performing Arts at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, a major multi-disciplinary performing arts program he founded in 2005. Kang served as professor of the practice in the Department of Music and as special assistant to the chancellor for the arts. He also founded Arts Everywhere. He currently serves as program director for arts and cultural heritage at The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation where he leads the Foundation's grant making program that seeks to nurture exceptional creative accomplishment, scholarship, and conservation practices while promoting a diverse and sustainable ecosystem for the arts. In 2012, President Barack Obama appointed Kang to the National Council on the Arts. Currently, Kang serves on the boards of the Martha Graham Dance Company and the International Society for the Performing Arts.

Ping Chong - Award of Merit

Ping Chong is an internationally acclaimed artist and pioneer in the use of media in the theater. Since 1972, he has created over 100 productions which have been presented at major theaters, festivals and museums worldwide including Collidescope: Adventures in Pre-and-Post Racial America, Alaxsxa|Alaska (2017 LaMaMa, Anchorage Center for the Arts), Throne of Blood (2010 Brooklyn Academy of Music, Oregon Shakespeare Festival), Cathay: Three Tales of China (2005 Kennedy Center, New Victory), Kwaidan (1998 Henson International Festival), Deshima (1990 Mickery Workshop) and Angels of Swedenborg (1984, 2011).

In 1992, he began the Undesirable Elements project, an ongoing series of over 60 community-based oral history projects to date, working with real people to explore issues of culture and identity. Representative works: Difficult Lives (2019 Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre), BEYOND SACRED: Voices of Muslim Identity (2015 LaGuardia Performing Arts Center) and INSIDE OUT: Voices of the Disability Community (2008 Kennedy Center). TCG published two volumes of his plays "The East West Quartet" and "Undesirable Elements: Real People, Real Lives, Real Theatre."

He has received a USA Artist Fellowship, two BESSIE awards, two OBIE awards, a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a 2015 Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellowship and a 2014 National Medal of Arts.

Rena Shagan - Fan Taylor Award

Created in 1979 by Rena Shagan, Rena Shagan Arts, Inc. (RSA) aims to provide management for a small group of companies touring in the United States and

abroad, RSA specializes in developing and managing touring activity for major dance and theater companies and has worked with among others, Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wuppertal, Royal Swedish Ballet, Martha Graham Dance Company, Vesturport Theatre and the companies of four MacArthur “genius” fellows: Susan Marshall, Meredith Monk, Trisha Brown and Elizabeth Streb. RSA also works closely with and values its relationships with the presenter partners who bring the artists' work to the stage.

RSA maintains a high profile nationally and internationally, attending performances, festivals, and conferences, and contributing to the field by serving on the boards of ISPA, WAA, Dance/USA, NAPAMA and the American Arts Alliance as well as serving as panelists for the National Endowment for the Arts, regional and state arts agencies. Rena Shagan is author of *BOOKING AND TOUR MANAGEMENT FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS*, the “bible” on booking and tour management used by Arts Administrators world-wide.

For a complete list of sessions, speakers and to learn more about the conference program, please visit www.apap365.org See more about the conference at APAPNYC.org, @APAP365, #APAPNYC and facebook.com/APAPNYC. APAP membership information can be found at APAP365.org. APAP|NYC is also founding partner of JanArtsNYC, the most comprehensive annual celebration of the performing arts around the globe and annual convergence of 13 major performing arts industry forums and public festivals. 2020 event dates and descriptions of all 13 partnering events available at JanArtsNYC.org.

About APAP

The Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP), based in Washington, D.C., is the national service, advocacy and membership organization dedicated to developing and supporting a robust, performing arts presenting field and the professionals who work within it. Our 1,600 national and international members represent leading performing arts centers, municipal and university performance facilities, nonprofit performing arts centers, culturally specific organizations, foreign governments, as well as artist agencies, managers, touring companies, and national consulting practices that serve the field, and a growing roster of self-presenting artists. As a leader in the field, APAP works to effect change through advocacy, professional development, resource sharing and civic engagement. APAP is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization governed by a volunteer board of directors and led by President & CEO Mario Garcia Durham. In addition to presenting the annual APAP|NYC conference—the world's leading gathering and marketplace for the performing arts (Jan. 10-14, 2020)—APAP continues to be the industry's leading resource, knowledge and networking destination for the advancement of performing arts presenting.

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