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NEA APPROVES \$25,000 GRANT FOR SEATTLE ARTS & LECTURES TO SUPPORT WRITERS IN THE SCHOOLS

Seattle, WA—June 15, 2017: National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu has approved more than \$82 million to fund local arts projects across the country in the NEA’s second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2017. Included in this announcement is an Art Works award of \$25,000 to Seattle Arts & Lectures to inspire and engage more than 5,000 K-12 students in the power of writing during yearlong classroom residencies with local professional writers. The NEA received 1,728 Art Works applications and will make 1,029 grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000.

“The arts reflect the vision, energy, and talent of America’s artists and arts organizations,” said NEA Chairman Jane Chu. “The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support organizations such as Seattle Arts & Lectures in serving their communities by providing excellent and accessible arts experiences.”

Since 1994, SAL’s Writers in the Schools (WITS) program has matched local professional creative writers with public schools to inspire more than 100,000 students to tell their stories, improve their writing, and explore their imaginations through sequential and innovative creative writing lessons. The WITS program seeks to inspire student and teacher excellence in the literary arts, and to establish the foundation for a life-long commitment to reading, writing, and creative expression.

“We are profoundly grateful to the NEA for their longstanding support of our Writers in the Schools program, and their commitment to supporting transformative arts experiences in communities across our country,” said SAL Executive Director Ruth Dickey. “Public support of the arts sends an incredibly powerful message to young people about the importance of their voice and their creativity. We are grateful for the NEA’s commitment to making the arts accessible to all, and proud to partner in this important work.”

About Seattle Arts & Lectures: Founded in 1987, Seattle Arts & Lectures champions the literary arts by engaging and inspiring readers and writers of all generations in the Puget Sound region. SAL's programs include the Literary Arts Series, Poetry Series, Women You Need to Know (WYNK), Sherman Alexie Loves, SAL Presents, Hinge, Local Voices, Summer Book Bingo, the Youth Poet Laureate (YPL) program, and

Writers in the Schools (WITS), an award-winning reading and writing program that places professional writers in public elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as at Seattle Children's Hospital. Last year SAL served more than 29,000 children, youth and adults. For more information about SAL, visit lectures.org.

Photos available upon request.

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