



United States Artists Announces the Berresford Prize with Inaugural Recipient Kristy Edmunds

The Berresford Prize is a new \$25,000 award to be given annually to a cultural practitioner who has contributed significantly to the advancement, wellbeing, and care of artists in society.

CHICAGO — United States Artists (USA) is thrilled to announce the founding of the Berresford Prize, a new annual award that honors cultural practitioners who have contributed significantly to the advancement, wellbeing, and care of artists in society.

The Berresford Prize is named for Susan V. Berresford, former President of the Ford Foundation, who co-founded USA and is still an active Trustee. The award was conceived of by several USA Fellows in response to the lack of acknowledgment for those who have dedicated their careers to the betterment of artists. Introduced in 2019, the unrestricted \$25,000 prize reinforces USA's commitment to artists by acknowledging the remarkable administrators, curators, scholars, and producers who are building platforms and creating conditions for artists to thrive.

"At USA, we are thrilled to expand our awards program to include and honor those in the cultural vanguard who support artists every day," **said United States Artists Board Chair Steven H. Oliver**. "While conceiving the prize, it was obvious to everyone involved to name it after our founder Susan V. Berresford who has worked tirelessly to ensure that artists are valued and recognized for their work at this organization and beyond. With her spirit in mind, we are privileged to establish the Berresford Prize, shedding light on all those who dedicate themselves to the advancement of artists across the country."

"We are so moved by the artists who advocated for us to launch this prize and are grateful to be able to provide this opportunity to the field. At USA, we know firsthand how many incredible practitioners make up our cultural ecosystem," **said United States Artists President & CEO Deana Haggag**. "Their work as administrators and producers ranges from curating to criticism, working independently and within institutions, as well as founding the countless projects and platforms needed for artists to bring their work to the world. Whatever their practice, the recipient of the Berresford Prize will always be someone who has advocated fiercely for artists starting with the inimitable Kristy Edmunds."

The inaugural Berresford Prize awardee is Kristy Edmunds, the Executive and Artistic Director of [UCLA'S Center for the Art of Performance \(CAP UCLA\)](#). Previously, she was the Founding Executive and Artistic Director of the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA) in Portland, Oregon, and inaugural Consulting Artistic Director for the Park Avenue Armory in New York (2009–2012). Selected by an internal nomination and review process, Edmunds has a long-established career as a thoughtful and groundbreaking cultural producer and advocate for artists.

"Art doesn't just occur on its own—it's made, shared, and recognized because spaces and conditions are created for it to happen," **said United States Artists Trustee and 2007 Fellow Ann Hamilton**. "Kristy is one of those

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condition makers whose visionary leadership and sensibility has helped so many artists make their work possible. She has dedicated a career to building radically nimble structures that support artistic processes, and invite the artist, presenter, and audience to move beyond the familiar and risk the unknowable.”

“I was astonished in every sense of the word to learn that I was being named the inaugural Berresford Prize awardee and continue to be,” said **2019 Berresford Prize recipient Kristy Edmunds**. “The fact that this award was initiated by artists and named after a woman who is held in such high esteem makes the honor a truly staggering one. I now know how acutely humbling it is to experience that your life’s work has been seen—and not only through the lens of where you work, but perhaps from *how* you do the work.”

“I am deeply humbled to have this award named in my honor,” said **United States Artists Co-founder and Trustee Susan V. Berresford**. “At USA, we champion all those who root for artists and are delighted to be able to provide this much-needed support and recognition. We are proud to name Kristy Edmunds the inaugural recipient and appreciate all that she’s done for artists across the country.”

ABOUT KRISTY EDMUNDS

As an artist, curator, artistic director, and frequent keynote speaker internationally, Kristy Edmunds has a reputation for innovation and depth in the presentation of contemporary performing arts. She is also known for placing equal emphasis on the support and commissioning of new work by some of today’s leading performance creators across all disciplines.

Edmunds was the Founding Executive and Artistic Director of the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA) and the TBA Festival (Time Based Art) in Portland, Oregon. She served as Artistic Director for the Melbourne International Arts Festival from 2005 to 2008, and was appointed the Head of the School of Performing Arts at the Victorian College of the Arts/University of Melbourne, and after one year became the Deputy Dean for the College.

Concurrently, Edmunds worked as the inaugural Consulting Artistic Director for the now critically heralded Park Avenue Armory in New York (2009–2012). Curating the initial three years of programming, she established the formative identity of the PAA with commissioned work by artists such as Ann Hamilton, the final performance event of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company; the Tune-In Festival with Philip Glass and many others. In recognition of her contribution to the arts, Edmunds was named a Chevalier (Knight) de L’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Government in 2016.

She is currently Executive and Artistic Director of UCLA’s Center for the Art of Performance (CAP UCLA) and since joining the organization in 2012, has established it as one of the leading presenters of contemporary performance on the West Coast. CAP UCLA is dedicated to the advancement of the contemporary performing arts in all disciplines—dance, music, spoken word, and theater, as well as emerging digital, collaborative, and cross-platforms—by leading artists from around the globe. Part of UCLA’s School of the Arts and Architecture, CAP UCLA curates and facilitates direct exposure to artists who are creating extraordinary works of art and fosters a vibrant learning community both on and off the UCLA campus. The organization invests in the creative process by providing artists with financial backing and time to experiment and expand their practices through strategic partnerships and collaborations. As an influential voice within the local, national and global arts

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communities, CAP UCLA connects this generation to the next in order to preserve a living archive of our culture. CAP UCLA is also a safe harbor where cultural expression and artistic exploration can thrive, giving audiences the opportunity to experience real life through characters and stories on stage, and giving artists an avenue to challenge assumptions and advance new ways of seeing and understanding the world we live in now.

ABOUT SUSAN V. BERRESFORD

Susan V. Berresford served as Founding Chair of the United States Artists Board of Trustees from its inception in 2005 to 2011 and is currently an active member of the Board. She is the former President of the Ford Foundation and served in that role from 1996–2008. She first joined the Ford Foundation in 1970 and during her 38-year tenure held numerous positions including Project Assistant and Program Officer in the Division of National Affairs; Officer in Charge of the Foundation's Women's Programs; Vice President, U.S., and International Affairs Programs; and Vice President of the Program Division.

Prior to joining the Ford Foundation, she served as a Program Officer for the Neighborhood Youth Corps from 1965–1967. From 1967–68, she worked for the Manpower Career Development Agency where she was responsible for the evaluation of training, education, and work programs.

Berresford attended Vassar College and then studied American history at Radcliffe College, where she graduated cum laude in 1965. She currently serves on the board of The Trust for Mutual Understanding, Japan Center for International Exchange, Brearley School, and the Robina Foundation. Additionally, she is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Previously, she served on the boards of The California Endowment, The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, Independent Sector, and was a member of the Vestry of Trinity Church, the Trinidad Trust Fund (California). She was also the convener of the US-Vietnam Dialogue Group on Agent Orange/Dioxin.

Today, she works from her office at The New York Community Trust.

ABOUT UNITED STATES ARTISTS

Founded in 2006 by the Ford, Rockefeller, Rasmuson, and Prudential Foundations, [United States Artists \(USA\)](#) is among the largest providers of unrestricted support to artists and cultural practitioners working and living in the United States. To date, USA has given over \$25 million to more than 500 individuals and collectives in all disciplines at every career stage.

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