



Contacts: Jeff Krakoff
(412) 394-6653
Kim O'Dell
(412) 497-5775

'Environmental Composer' Receives Prestigious Heinz Award John Luther Adams Invites Us to Hear the Whole World as Music

PITTSBURGH, September 13, 2011 – Teresa Heinz and the Heinz Family Foundation today announced John Luther Adams, a groundbreaking “environmental composer” from Fairbanks, Alaska, as a recipient of a \$100,000 Heinz Award. Mr. Adams was recognized for his ability to connect people to nature through music. He has influenced a wave of young composers, and he represents those in the arts who are reflecting the importance of the environment in their creative works.

“John Luther Adams combines music and technology to interpret and depict the beauty and variety of the American landscape,” Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation, said today. “He gives us unique ways to see and understand the environment and value it in a new way.”

Mr. Adams has drawn widespread attention with a groundbreaking sound and light installation, *The Place Where You Go to Listen*. In his musical ecosystem the composer gives voice to the rhythms of the sun, the moon and clouds, as well as earthquakes and the aurora borealis. To create this singular work at the University of Alaska Museum of the North, Mr. Adams collaborated with seismologists and physicists, transforming streams of geophysical data into an ever-changing environment of sound and light.

Mr. Adams’ music has been described as “undeniably spiritual,” reflecting the enduring influence of nature. One of his recent compositions, *Inuksuit*, received national recognition well beyond the music world when it was performed in Harlem’s Morningside Park and the Armory in New York City. Mr. Adams has worked with many prominent performers and venues, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the International Contemporary Ensemble, eighth blackbird, the California EAR Unit, Bang On A Can, Percussion Group Cincinnati, Other Minds, the Sundance Institute, Almeida Opera and the Radio Netherlands Philharmonic.

“Music is not what I do,” says Mr. Adams, “it’s how I understand the world. Music invites us to pay closer attention to this miraculous world in which we live. And when we listen carefully, we come to hear that the whole world is music.”

Now in its 17th year, the Heinz Awards honors visionaries who have made extraordinary contributions to the environment, a life-long area of commitment for the late U.S. Senator John Heinz. Mr. Adams and nine others are recognized for their significant efforts benefitting the environment. This year’s awards total \$900,000.

A former executive director of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center, Mr. Adams has served as a composer-in-residence with the Anchorage Symphony, the Anchorage Opera, the

Alaska Public Radio Network, as well as the Fairbanks Symphony and the Arctic Chamber Orchestra. In addition to his numerous recordings, Mr. Adams is the author of two books. Reviews of his compositions and recordings have been featured in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker* and *The Boston Globe*.

In addition to Mr. Adams, the 17th Heinz Awards are honoring the following individuals:

- **Richard Alley, Ph.D.**, The Pennsylvania State University (University Park, Pa.) *For his polar ice discoveries that showed abrupt climate change is possible and for engaging his students, policymakers and the public*
- **Janine Benyus**, Biomimicry Institute (Missoula, Mont.) *For inspiring us to look to nature's engineering for solutions to our biggest challenges*
- **Ian Cheney and Curt Ellis**, Wicked Delicate Films, Truck Farm and FoodCorps (Brooklyn, N.Y.) *For using humor and innovative programming to engage people about sustainable food*
- **Louis J. Guillette, Jr., Ph. D.**, Medical University of South Carolina (Charleston, S.C.) *For being a leader in the field of hormone disruption and the impact chemicals have on wildlife*
- **Joan Kleypas, Ph.D.**, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Institute for the Study of Society and Environment (Boulder, Colo.) *For conducting breakthrough research on the impacts of environmental change on coral reefs and engaging both scientists and policymakers*
- **Nancy Knowlton, Ph.D.**, National Museum of Natural History (Washington, D.C.) *For broadening the understanding of ocean biodiversity and the impacts of humans on marine life*
- **Nancy Rabalais, Ph.D.**, Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (Chauvin, La.) *For her pioneering research of severe oxygen depletion in the Gulf of Mexico and commitment to reduce water pollution through education and public policy*
- **Sandra Steingraber, Ph.D.**, Ithaca College, (Ithaca, N.Y.) *For highlighting the link between toxic chemicals and diseases through her written work, as well engaging the public as a cancer survivor*

About the Heinz Awards

The Heinz Awards annually recognize individuals creating and implementing workable solutions to the problems the world faces through invention, research and education while inspiring the next generation of modern thinkers. While this year the awards focus singularly on the environment, winners were chosen who address the intersection of the environment with one of the other award categories recognized in many previous years, including arts and humanities, human condition, public policy, technology and the economy.

The Heinz Family Foundation began as a charitable trust established by the late U.S. Senator John Heinz. His widow, Teresa Heinz, established the Heinz Awards in 1993 to honor and sustain the legacy of her late husband.

Nominations for the Heinz Awards are submitted by invited experts, who serve anonymously. Award recipients are selected by the board of directors for the Heinz Awards upon recommendation by a blue-ribbon panel of jurors.

In addition to the \$100,000 award for their unrestricted use, recipients are presented with a medallion inscribed with the image of Senator Heinz on one side and a rendering of a globe passing between two hands on the other. The Heinz Awards will be presented at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. on November 15. For more information about the Heinz Awards or the recipients, including photographs, visit www.heinzawards.net.

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