



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

Contemporary Composer Receives Prestigious Heinz Award

*Orchestra Composer and Disc Jockey, Mason Bates, blends
traditional classical music and electronica*

PITTSBURGH, September 12, 2012 – Teresa Heinz and the Heinz Family Foundation today announced Mason Bates, a contemporary symphonic composer, as a recipient of one of five prestigious Heinz Awards. Mr. Bates' award-winning compositions combine an expanded orchestral palette, often including electronic sounds, with large-scale, imaginative narrative forms that approach topics ranging from earthquakes to energy. Through widespread performances by symphonies around the country, his music has moved the orchestra into the digital age and dissolved the traditional boundaries of classical music. At 35, he is one of the youngest-ever recipients of a Heinz Award. Mr. Bates will receive an unrestricted cash prize of \$250,000 as the winner of the Heinz Award in the category of Arts and Humanities.

Mr. Bates currently serves as the Mead Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, for whom he both composes new works and curates the MusicNOW series. He was named the 2012-2013 Composer of the Year of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and accepts frequent commissions from the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.

“Mason Bates illustrates what can happen when a truly talented artist dares to stretch and even reinvent the boundaries of an art form. By merging symphonic orchestration with electronic sound and tackling broad creative themes, he is breathing new life into orchestral music and translating it for a new generation,” Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation, said today. “Tinkering with an art form as sacred as classical music requires a level of skill and audacity that few possess and fewer still can pull off, but that is precisely his genius. He brings a joy and exuberance to his work that is expressed through both his compositions and his commitment to mentoring the even younger composers coming up behind him.”

Mr. Bates has one foot in some of the most prestigious symphony halls and another in the halls of late-night dance clubs where he deejays. He brings the two musical worlds together not only in his electro-acoustic music, but also through his efforts to introduce new music to new spaces. His classical/club project Mercury Soul integrates classical performances into an evening of DJing in alternative venues and has attracted large crowds to events created for the Chicago, San Francisco and New World Symphonies.

Mr. Bates often uses relevant, real-world sounds to expand the imaginative bounds of his compositions. In *Alternative Energy*, premiered by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 2012, these sounds ranged from new percussion instruments constructed from old car parts to recordings of a giant particle collider made at FermiLab.

When he was just 15 years old, Mr. Bates was discovered by Robert Moody, a conductor from Winston-Salem, N.C. His first composition was commissioned when he was 17, and he subsequently enrolled in the Columbia-Juilliard program. His primary studies were with John Corigliano, and he also worked with David Del Tredici and Samuel Adler. Further studies at the University of California, Berkeley Center for New Music and Audio Technologies under Edmund Campion highly informed his approach to electronic sounds.

“The orchestra is alive. It’s never stopped evolving, and I am so grateful that so many orchestras recognize that and have welcomed my expanded sound world into their halls. There’s no reason the orchestra can’t expand into digital sounds. After all, it’s been the world’s greatest synthesizer for centuries,” said Mr. Bates.

When not composing, Mr. Bates generously offers his time mentoring emerging composers and musicians while exploring innovative ways to engage a wider, younger audience with classical music. With the future in mind, Mr. Bates looks to continue expanding his musical contributions and explore composition in the realms of theatre, opera and film.

In addition to Mr. Bates, the 18th Heinz Awards honor the following individuals:

- **Environment: Richard J. Jackson**, M.D., M.P.H., University of California, Los Angeles, Fielding School of Public Health, (Los Angeles, Calif.), for his visionary approach to promoting public health through smarter urban planning and designing healthy communities
- **Human Condition: Freeman Hrabowski, III**, Ph.D., University of Maryland, Baltimore County, (Baltimore, Md.), for inspiring minority students to the highest levels of excellence in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)
- **Public Policy: KC Golden**, Climate Solutions, (Seattle, Wash.), for his role in bringing the Pacific Northwest to the forefront of communities taking action to curb climate pollution and promote sustainable prosperity
- **Technology, the Economy and Employment: Jay Keasling**, Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley; Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; Joint BioEnergy Institute, (Berkeley, Calif.), for his innovations in the emerging field of synthetic biology impacting medicine, chemistry and clean energy

About the Heinz Awards

Established by Teresa Heinz in 1993 to honor the memory of her late husband, U.S. Senator John Heinz, the Heinz Awards celebrate the accomplishments and spirit of the Senator by recognizing the extraordinary achievements of individuals in the areas of greatest importance to him.

The awards, administered by the Heinz Family Foundation, annually recognize individuals for their contributions in the areas of: Arts and Humanities; Environment; Human Condition; Public Policy; and Technology, the Economy and Employment.

Nominations are submitted by invited experts, who serve anonymously, and are reviewed by jurors appointed by the Heinz Family Foundation. Award recipients are ultimately selected by the Board of Directors.

In addition to the monetary award, 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 Pittsburgh, Pa. on October 11. For more information about the Heinz Awards or the recipients, including photographs, visit www.heinzawards.net.

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