

## MEDIA RELEASE

For Release Thursday, June 14, 2018

### **NPAFE Targeting Cartier, BMW, Tory Burch, Other High-End Brands for High-Dollar Corporate Support for the Performing Arts**

*Washington DC Performing Arts nonprofit believes it is close to landing the first major corporate commitment.*

**Washington, D.C., June 14, 2018:** The National Performing Arts Funding Exchange today confirmed a promotional campaign targeting high-end brands like **Cartier, BMW, and Tory Burch** for brand-exclusive Performing Arts sponsorship opportunities in 2019 and 2020.

Sponsors can have year-plus sponsorship exclusivity, even branded video rights, for leading contemporary ballet and modern dance companies like **Paul Taylor Dance, State Street Ballet, Bowen-McCauley Dance, and Sidra Bell Dance New York** appearing at venues like the Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, and the Met.

NPAFE CEO Clifford Brody concedes that it is not easy to secure a 6- or 7 figure long-term dollar commitment for performing arts generally, no less dance. "It was the same with sports marketing not that long ago. Most corporate marketers in the late 70s were actually resisting sports marketing as too outside the box. They had the same reaction to frequent flyer miles a few years later when United started giving them away," says Brody.

The rest is history, he goes on, "except that today, with brands like Citibank, McDonalds, InBev, and Hilton walking away from the Olympics and FIFA struggling for sponsorships after Continental, Castrol, Johnson & Johnson and others quit the fold, the search is on among higher-end brands for better ways to reach people with messaging that sticks."

While NPAFE seems to borrow from sports marketing for its own campaign, it is also factoring in corporate dismay with sports marketing's ever-higher cost and inevitable brand dilution. To solve those problems, the nonprofit is emphasizing the power of performing artist influencers to deliver exclusive live settings, less "stadium" and more intimate, boutique or even one-to-one brand-to-consumer messaging. "More than any other demographic group save the very wealthiest, the people in these audiences have more disposable time and money than anyone else to choose the very best. Which they do," Brody declares.

Analyses by Deloitte, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and Nielsen underscore that major brands are increasingly desperate to reach these audiences when they are actually paying attention, says Brody. They want to tap the power of influencers who, unlike movie or sports stars, are important to people in the audience for strong emotive reasons. Insists Brody: "Large company CFOs now know something they didn't just three years ago: even the slickest social media without that emotional tie cost too much and, worse, don't drive sales."

Brody allows that until NPAFE did the research, extensive data was lacking not just about the intrinsic value of serious dance art but about the audiences loyal to it. "Now we have numbers confirming that long-term corporate funding of the Performing Arts, particularly dance, offers a better ROI than sports marketing."

Months ago, Dance Magazine recognized NPAFE's ambitious goal to build on the sports marketing model for the Performing Arts. Two European brands with major US market presence have reported back to NPAFE that the imagery in its custom-printed brand-personalized "Little Black Book" proposals successfully conveys the value of associating a brand with the live visual excellence of the performing artists associated with NPAFE.

What happens next? Brody believes that as it was when brands held back on sports marketing until Michael Jordan signed with Nike in 1984, once the first major brand is on board with NPAFE for 2019-2020, others will follow. "Then, two problems get solved. Corporate funding heroes offset the decrease in foundation and government grants for performing artists that audiences love, and brilliant business world-performing arts partnerships make the best brands look even better to the people they want to reach."

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**About NPAFE - The National Performing Arts Funding Exchange.** NPAFE is the country's only not-for-profit partnering exclusively with private sector businesses committed to advancing the performing arts, channeling funding to performing artists acclaimed primarily for compelling original work. This financial support comes from corporate sponsors intent on associating their brands with "today's generation of best and tomorrow's" among performing artists, people already applauded by loyal and discerning audiences. NPAFE provides all of its promotional services to artists at no charge.

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