

**The Hermitage Artist Retreat Announces  
Composer and Multi-Instrumentalist  
Angélica Negrón  
as the 2022 Recipient of the  
\$30,000 Hermitage Greenfield Prize**

*The 2022 Hermitage Greenfield Prize is presented to a distinguished artist in this discipline of music with a commission of \$30,000 to create an original composition along with a residency on the Hermitage Artist Retreat's historic beachfront property.*

**“Negrón’s music offers a single, sustained texture of electronics and harp; in its delicacy and calm, it doesn’t so much yearn for understanding as embody it.”**

—*The New Yorker*

**“A quirky approach to scoring with a capacity to surprise.”**

—*The New York Times*

**“Wistfully idiosyncratic and contemplative.”**

—*WQXR/Q2*

January 11, 2022 (Sarasota County, Florida) — The Hermitage Artist Retreat (Andy Sandberg, Artistic Director and CEO), in collaboration with the Philadelphia-based Greenfield Foundation, has selected innovative composer and multi-instrumentalist **Angélica Negrón** as the winner of the 2022 Hermitage Greenfield Prize (HGP), awarded this year in the artistic discipline of music. Negrón will receive a six-week Hermitage Fellowship and a \$30,000 commission to create a new work of music, which will have its first public presentation in Sarasota in 2024.

Born in Puerto Rico, Negrón writes original music for accordions, robotic instruments, toys, and electronics, as well as chamber ensembles and orchestras. She is a founding member of the tropical electronic band Balún, and her music has been performed at the Kennedy Center and the 2016 New York Philharmonic Biennial. Negrón has composed scores for the New York Botanical Gardens (*Chorus of the Forest*, 2019) and for Opera Philadelphia (*The Island We Made*, 2020), as well as the documentary films *Landfall* (2020) and *Memories of a Penitent Heart* (2016). Additional commissions and premieres of her compositions include works for the LA Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, and New York Philharmonic Project 19 initiative.

Hermitage Greenfield Prize recipients and finalists are nominated and selected by a jury of nationally recognized arts leaders. The 2022 jury included **Terrance McKnight** (chair), host of WQXR New York Public Radio and a member of the Hermitage National Curatorial Council; **Jessie Montgomery**, an award-winning composer, violinist, and educator; and **Gary Padmore**, Director of Education and Community Engagement at the New York Philharmonic.

Three finalists for the 2022 Hermitage Greenfield Prize include **Etienne Charles**, a jazz trumpeter and composer (*Creole Soul*, *Petite Afrique*, and *Carnival: The Sound of a People Vol. 1*); **Curtis Stewart**, a genre-bending violinist who has performed with Wyckleff Jean and Stevie Wonder, and at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall; and **Mazz Swift**, a violin and freestyle composition artist who has performed at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and the Royal Albert Hall, and with Whitney Houston, William Parker, and D'Angelo. All three will receive a Hermitage Fellowship, in addition to a prize of \$1,000.

“Angélica Negrón's music places value in the softest, most vulnerable, and most frequently overlooked instruments in the room,” says **Terrance McKnight**. “In her scores, even the robots find a pulse. Her compositional insight is the heartbeat of true democracy, and I am thrilled to introduce her to the Hermitage community.”

“Angélica is uniquely creative and unswayed by trends,” says **Jessie Montgomery**. “She has her own individual voice, helping to push the needle for artists to stay open and creative in the field of music.”

“Angélica’s musical language and style reflect a deep passion for the joys and realities of this world,” says **Gary Padmore**. “I am so excited for the ways in which this Hermitage Greenfield Prize will help to amplify and celebrate her creative voice.”

“I’m beyond honored to receive this year’s Hermitage Greenfield Prize and incredibly thrilled to have the chance to work on such a dream project in such a dream setting with the support of the wonderful Greenfield Foundation,” said Negrón upon hearing the news. “I’m looking forward to engaging with Sarasota’s community and together exploring what new things we can discover when we take the time to pause, notice, and listen deeply.

Negrón's intended commission seeks to engage the senses and encourage listeners to resist distractions. Her composition will be timed with the setting sun and inspired partly by the sun’s low-frequency sounds, as captured by scientists from NASA and the European Space Agency. The piece will feature slowly evolving musical textures, shifting patterns, natural sounds, and changes in scale and dimension that play with the unfolding gradations of light and color on the surrounding land, water, and sky. Negrón hopes her commissioned work will serve as a gentle reminder to the audience to seek out and surrender to moments of inspiration.

“Amidst an extraordinary selection of finalists, Angélica Negrón stood out as an innovative and forward-thinking composer who impressed this year’s jury with her inventive and inspired approach to musical composition,” says Hermitage Artistic Director **Andy Sandberg**. “Her dedication to her craft embodies the mission of the Hermitage Greenfield Prize — to bring into the world works of art that have a significant impact on the broad as well as the artistic culture of our society. We thank our distinguished jurors for their passion and dedication, and we congratulate all of our brilliant finalists, whom we look forward to welcoming at the Hermitage. We look forward to recognizing Angélica’s work in Sarasota at the Hermitage Greenfield Prize Dinner in April, and subsequently hosting her as a Hermitage Fellow and sharing the first public presentation of her composition in Sarasota in 2024.”

Negrón will be celebrated at the **Hermitage Greenfield Prize Dinner on Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm** at Michael’s On East in Sarasota. Capacity will be limited to accommodate safe social-distancing practices, and additional health and safety

measures are anticipated for this event. *Tables and sponsorships now available; additional information can be found at [HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://HermitageArtistRetreat.org).*

In addition to the Hermitage Greenfield Prize Dinner on April 10<sup>th</sup>, the Hermitage Greenfield Prize Celebration is also expected to include talks with this year's winner and jurors. This year will also mark the Sarasota premiere of "Ocean Body" created and performed by 2019 Hermitage Greenfield Prize winner **Helga Davis**, presented in collaboration with Ensemble New SRQ and New College of Florida. The anticipated presentation of Pulitzer Prize and Hermitage Greenfield Prize winner **Martyna Majok's** new play, in partnership with Asolo Rep, was postponed due to COVID, and is also expected for 2022 at a date to be announced. The Hermitage Greenfield Prize Celebration is presented in partnership with the **Greenfield Foundation**, with the **Community Foundation of Sarasota County** serving as the lead Community Sponsor.

In addition to the Hermitage Greenfield Prize, the Hermitage Artist Retreat earlier last year introduced the annual Hermitage Major Theater Award (HMTA), newly established to recognize a playwright or theater artist with a \$35,000 commission to create a new, original, and impactful piece of theater. Playwright and director **Radha Blank** (*The Forty-Year-Old Version* on Netflix) was named the inaugural recipient of the Hermitage Major Theater Award in December of 2021.

*For more information about the Hermitage, the Hermitage Greenfield Prize, and upcoming Hermitage programs, visit [HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://HermitageArtistRetreat.org).*

***"An organization that does more for artists than any I have encountered."***

—Craig Lucas, Tony Award Nominee & Hermitage Greenfield Prize Winner

***"It was like someone opened the door and invited me to create a work that is responsive to this time, a work that can be reflective of this time... I am super grateful for that."***

—Aleshea Harris, Playwright and 2021 Hermitage Greenfield Prize Winner

***"To have space that is for you to do your own thing on your own terms — it's really one of the best gifts an artist can receive."***

—Vijay Iyer, Pianist, Composer, and Hermitage Greenfield Prize Winner



## THE HERMITAGE GREENFIELD PRIZE

### **About the Hermitage Greenfield Prize**

The Hermitage Greenfield Prize (HGP) is a groundbreaking partnership between the Hermitage Artist Retreat and the Greenfield Foundation. Rotating between the fields of music, theater, and visual art, this prestigious national prize seeks to “bring into the world works of art that will have a significant impact on the broader or artistic culture.” The Hermitage Greenfield Prize is awarded annually and includes a Hermitage Fellowship, as well as a \$30,000 commission for a new piece of work to be created within a two-year time frame. A residency at the Hermitage Artist Retreat on Manasota Key in Englewood, Florida, ensures time and space in which to do the work. Past Hermitage Greenfield Prize winners include Aleshea Harris, Theater (2021); Jennifer Packer, Visual Art (2020); Helga Davis, Music (2019); Martyna Majok, Theater (2018); David Burnett, Visual Photography (2017); Coco Fusco, Visual Art (2016); Bobby Previte, Music (2015); Nilo Cruz, Theater (2014); Trenton Doyle Hancock, Visual Art (2013); Vijay Iyer, Music (2012); John Guare, Theater (2011); Sanford Biggers, Visual Art (2010); Craig Lucas, Theater (2009); and Eve Beglarian, Music (2009).

### **The Hermitage Artist Retreat**

(Sarasota County, Florida)

*Andy Sandberg, Artistic Director and CEO*

The Hermitage is a non-profit artist retreat located in Manasota Key, Florida, inviting accomplished artists across multiple disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Hermitage artists are invited to interact with the local community, reaching thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors each year with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage Fellows have included 14 Pulitzer Prize winners, Poets Laureate, MacArthur ‘Genius’ Fellows, and multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy, Oscar winners and nominees. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. Each year, the Hermitage awards the \$30,000 Hermitage Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, the newly announced \$35,000 Hermitage Major Theater Award for an original theater commission, and the Aspen Music Festival’s Hermitage Prize in Composition.

For more information, visit **[HermitagArtistRetreat.org](http://HermitagArtistRetreat.org)**.

### **The Hermitage is supported by:**

Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts; by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues; and by the Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council of Arts and Culture and the State of Florida

(Section 286.25 Florida Statutes), as well as the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

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## BIOS

### **WINNER OF THE 2022 HERMITAGE GREENFIELD PRIZE (HGP)**

#### **Angélica Negrón**

Puerto Rican-born composer and multi-instrumentalist Angélica Negrón writes music for accordions, robotic instruments, toys, and electronics as well as for chamber ensembles, orchestras, choir, and film. Her music has been described as “wistfully idiosyncratic and contemplative” (WQXR/Q2) while *The New York Times* noted her “capacity to surprise.” Negrón has been commissioned by the Bang on a Can All-Stars, Kronos Quartet, loadbang, Prototype Festival, Brooklyn Youth Chorus, Sō Percussion, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, and the New York Botanical Garden, among others. Negrón received an early education in piano and violin at the Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico where she later studied composition under the guidance of composer Alfonso Fuentes. She holds a master’s degree in music composition from New York University where she studied with Pedro da Silva and pursued doctoral studies at The Graduate Center (CUNY), where she studied composition with Tania León. Also active as an educator, Negrón is currently a teaching artist for New York Philharmonic’s Very Young Composers program. She has collaborated with artists like Sō Percussion, Lido Pimienta, Mathew Placek, Sasha Velour, Cecilia Aldarondo, Mariela Pabón, Adrienne Westwood, and Tiffany Mills, and has written music for films, theater, and modern dance. She was recently an Artist-in-Residence at WNYC’s The Greene Space working on *El Living Room*, a 4-part offbeat variety show and playful multimedia exploration of sound and story, of personal history and belonging. Upcoming premieres include works for the Seattle Symphony, LA Philharmonic, Louisville Orchestra and New York Philharmonic Project 19 initiative, and multiple performances at Big Ears Festival 2022. | [AngelicaNegron.com](http://AngelicaNegron.com)

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### **2022 HGP FINALISTS**

#### **Etienne Charles**

Trinidad-born Etienne Charles is a composer, performer, and storyteller who is constantly searching for untold tales and sounds with which to tell them. Highlighting marginalized communities and engaging with them has been his mission, evident with projects such as his Guggenheim Fellowship Project, *Carnival: The Sound of a People Vol. 1*, *Mount Hope Road*, *San Jose Suite*, *Creole Soul*, and *Folklore*. His concerts engage, enlighten, educate, and enrich audiences with energized multidisciplinary performance utilizing original composition, thematic improvisation, dance, short films, and spoken word to create a holistic experience. A firm believer in music and performance as a tool for

provoking thought and dialogue, Charles' themes speak to the status quo while drawing parallels to history. As an Afro-descendant, his work is actively connecting the diaspora and drawing lines to the regions at the roots of migrations. Charles has been hailed by *The New York Times* as “an auteur” and by *Jazz Times* as a “daring improviser who delivers with heart wrenching lyricism.”

### **Curtis Stewart**

Multi-Grammy-nominated violinist Curtis Stewart enjoys an eclectic career bouncing between various realms of music: from MTV specials with Wyclef Jean and sold-out shows at Madison Square Garden with Stevie Wonder, Bruce Springsteen, and Seal to stints at the Kennedy Center with the Jimmy Heath Big Band and performance installations at the Whitney Museum, the Guggenheim Museum, and The Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Stewart has performed as a classical soloist at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, been featured as a special guest soloist/curator with the New York Philharmonic “Bandwagon,” held chamber music residencies at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and National Sawdust, and had appearances at the Newport Jazz Festival. His ensembles PUBLIQuartet and The Mighty Third Rail realize a vision to find personal and powerful connections between styles, cultures, and musics. Stewart has worked with many of today's most forward-thinking musicians including Henry Threadgill, Jessie Montgomery, Alicia Hall-Moran, Jason Moran, Mark O'Connor, members of International Contemporary Ensemble, Billy Childs, Diane Monroe, the JACK Quartet, members of Snarky Puppy, Don Byron, Linda Oh, Ari Hoenig, and Matt Wilson, among many others. An avid teacher, he has taught Chamber Music and “Cultural Equity and Performance Practice” at the Juilliard School, directed the Contemporary Chamber Music program at the Perlman Music Program, directed several orchestras and all levels of music theory at the Laguardia High School for Music & Art and Performing Arts for ten years. He is currently the Chamber Music and New Juilliard Ensemble Manager at the Juilliard School in New York City. Stewart graduated magna cum laude from the Eastman School of Music with a BA of Mathematics from the University of Rochester.

### **Mazz Swift**

Mazz Swift is a composer, conductor, singer, bandleader, educator, and Juilliard-trained violinist. Improvisation is a throughline in their practice across genres and instrumental configurations, and can be found in most of their works. As violinist and singer, Swift has performed on many of the world's greatest stages including Royal Albert Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, Müpa Budapest, and David Geffen Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and Damrosch Park at Lincoln Center in New York City. As composer, Swift's works include commissions by The Los Angeles Philharmonic, Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity, and the Blaffer Foundation. As an educator, Swift has performed and taught workshops in free improvisation and “conduction” (conducted improvisation) on six continents and is a performing member and teaching artist with the acclaimed Silkroad Ensemble. They are also a Carnegie Hall teaching artist, where they write and record lullabies with incarcerated mothers and mothers-to-be at Rikers Island, and coach incarcerated men at Sing Sing Penitentiary on string studies and composition. Swift is a Hermitage Fellow, a 2021 United States Artist, and a 2019 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow, continually creating orchestral compositions that involve Conduction, and

solo works that are centered around protest and freedom songs, spirituals, and the Ghanaian concept of 'Sankofa': looking back to learn how to move forward.

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## **2022 HGP JURY BIOS**

### **Terrance McKnight, Chair**

Terrance McKnight, a proud voice resounding from the middle of the road, is the evening host on WQXR. When McKnight moved to New York City, his 96-year-old grandmother offered him a few words of wisdom: "If you've got something to say, get out there in the middle of the road and say it; don't go hiding behind no bush." From a long line of passionate citizens — his maternal family founded a branch of the NAACP in Mississippi and his father was the pastor of a church in Cleveland — McKnight and his siblings were expected to contribute to their community while growing up. Early on, he decided he would take the musician's journey. As a teenager, he played trumpet in the school orchestra and played piano for various congregations around Cleveland. At Morehouse College and Georgia State University he performed with the college Glee Club and New Music Ensemble respectively and subsequently joined the music faculty at Morehouse. While in Georgia he brought his love of music and performing to the field of broadcasting. McKnight is a member of the Hermitage Artist Retreat's National Curatorial Council, an Artistic Advisor for the Harlem Chamber Players, and serves on the boards of the Bagby Foundation and the MacDowell Colony. He is frequently sought out by major cultural organizations for his insight into the cultivation of diverse perspectives and voices in the cultural sphere. He regularly curates concerts and talks at Merkin Concert Hall, the Billie Holiday Theatre, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and the Museum of Modern Art.

### **Jessie Montgomery**

Jessie Montgomery is an acclaimed composer, violinist, and educator and a Leonard Bernstein Award recipient. Her music interweaves classical music with elements of vernacular music, improvisation, language, and social justice. Her profoundly felt works have been described as "turbulent, wildly colorful and exploding with life" (*The Washington Post*). Montgomery currently serves as composer-in-residence for the Sphinx Virtuosi and was a two-time laureate of the annual Sphinx Competition. She was awarded a generous MPower grant to assist in the development of her debut album, *Strum: Music for Strings* (Azica Records). Her growing body of work includes *Five Slave Songs* (2018) commissioned for soprano Julia Bullock by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Records from a Vanishing City* (2016) for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, *Caught by the Wind* (2016) for the Albany Symphony and the American Music Festival, and *Banner* (2014) – written to mark the 200th anniversary of *The Star-Spangled Banner*. Commissions and performances of her work include Carnegie Hall, New World Symphony, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the National Choral Society, ASCAP Foundation, Washington Performing Arts, Stanford University, Southbank Centre (London), National Arts Centre (Ottawa), the Banff Centre for the Arts, Philharmonia Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, and San Francisco Symphony. She is one of the New York Philharmonic's Montgomery featured composers for their Project 19, which marks the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. A founding member of



PUBLIQuartet and currently a member of the Catalyst Quartet, she continues to maintain an active performance career as a violinist, appearing regularly with her own ensembles as well as with the Silkroad Ensemble and Sphinx Virtuosi. She holds degrees from the Juilliard School and New York University and is currently a Graduate Fellow in Music Composition at Princeton University. Montgomery is a Hermitage Fellow.

### **Gary Padmore**

Gary A. Padmore is currently the New York Philharmonic's Director of Education and Community Engagement, where he is responsible for designing and implementing programs for people of all ages and backgrounds. Prior to the New York Philharmonic, he was the Director of Education & Community at Orchestra of St. Luke's (OSL), where he created a free concert series that celebrates works by composers of color, doubled enrollment in the youth orchestra program, and increased school and community partnerships throughout the five boroughs. Before OSL, he served as associate director of programs at Midori & Friends, which provides skill-based music instruction and enrichment programs in public schools throughout New York City. Padmore previously held the position of Education Director for the Brooklyn Philharmonic, was a teaching artist at American Composers Orchestra and Police Athletic League, and served as an adjunct lecturer at Queens College. A trumpet player and native New Yorker, he has a bachelor's degree in music from Queens College, a master's degree from Mannes School of Music, and an advanced certificate in music education from Queens College. As a steward of music and arts education, Gary is an adjunct faculty member at The New School and sits on the boards of the NYC Arts in Education Roundtable and The Dream Unfinished: An Activist Orchestra.