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Paquito D'Rivera - Photo credit: Brenda Feliciano

Jazz Great, Paquito D'Rivera, To Be Honored at 2017 Newark Arts Honors Gala

Newark, NJ – February 17, 2017 – On March 29, 2017, Grammy award-winning jazz great, Paquito D'Rivera, will be honored at the 2017 Newark Arts Honors Gala. Newark Arts Honors recognizes accomplished creatives that have made significant contributions in their field and to the Newark community.

Paquito D'Rivera is a global icon known mostly for his artistry in Latin jazz music and his contributions as a classical composer. If there's one word to describe the Clarinetist and Saxophonist, it's prolific. D'Rivera has won 14 Grammy awards in his career and he is celebrated for his artistry in Latin jazz and his contributions as a classical composer. He has recorded over 30 solo albums, founded numerous orchestras and ensembles, and to this day continues to perform at festivals and concerts all around the world.

D’Rivera was born in Havana, Cuba. He began performing at the age of 10 with Cuba national orchestras, and studied at the Havana Conservatory of Music in 1960. It was his role as co-director of the ensemble Irakere that launched his career and put his name on map of international jazz. Irakere’s distinct sound that melds Cuban, classical, and rock music lead D’Rivera to a world tour and snagged him a Grammy in 1979.

In 1981, D’Rivera defected from Cuba and moved to the United States, citing an oppressive attitude towards American music in his home country. He began playing with the likes of Dizzy Gillespie, David Amram, and Mario Bauza. Since then, D’Rivera has established his reputation as a master instrumentalist and composer. Besides writing and composing Latin jazz, he has composed classical music and performed with philharmonic orchestras across Europe and South and Central America. He is the first artist ever to win a Grammy in both Classical and Latin Jazz categories.

Universities, art associations, and institutions all over the world have recognized D’Rivera with awards and honors. He has previously served as artistic director of jazz programming at the New Jersey Chamber Music Society. The National Endowment for the Arts website declares Rivera “has become the consummate multinational ambassador, creating and promoting a cross-culture of music that moves effortlessly among jazz, Latin, and Mozart.”



About Newark Arts (formerly Newark Arts Council)

Newark Arts is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization created to advance and expand the artistic and cultural resources of the City of Newark, New Jersey. The Council’s mission is to bring the transformative power of the arts into the lives of those who live in, work in, and visit Newark. The Council is the umbrella for the Newark Arts Education Roundtable (NAER) and is a partner with the Mayor’s Office of Cultural Development, Arts, and Tourism. The Council awards neighborhood grants through its ArtStart program, produces the Open Doors Citywide Arts

Festival every October, and will oversee Newark's Community Cultural Plan in 2017-2018. For more information, visit www.newarkarts.org.

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