



ANIMA MUNDI PRODUCTIONS

Healing the soul of the world through the arts

March 3, 2021

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ethan Gans-Morse, and I'm the co-founder, executive director, and resident composer of an arts organization based in Jackson County called Anima Mundi Productions, which has been fortunate to receive Oregon Cultural Trust and Oregon Arts Commission funding.

I write to you today because, in our experience, the fine arts go far beyond mere entertainment. Our organization has commissioned and produced concert works and operas that address combat PTSD in our veterans, undocumented immigrants in our community, bullying & body issues in our young people, crisis in our environment, and the brutal treatment of Native Americans in our region.

Currently, we are producing a new choral work called *Six Feet Apart: Stories of Resilience and Transformation*, which uses poetry and song to document the plight of diverse Oregon communities in the face of the COVID pandemic. This will be one of four concerts that we're releasing online for free in calendar 2021.

And next year we're launching an initiative to commission new music by Black, Indigenous, and Latinx composers, addressing – through music – questions such as, “what does it mean to be a black mother in America right now?” And we're bringing national-level performing artists of color to premiere these works in Portland, Eugene, and Ashland. For each of these projects, we start with community leaders, nonprofits, and partnerships, and we go on a journey together that culminates in the concert hall, where we come together and see our less-visible neighbors' stories told on the stage, and we undergo a ritual of healing through the power of music.

So, when the OCT and the OAC support our programming, the State of Oregon is helping to support the very humanity of Oregonians in our region and beyond.

I urge you to consider what's at stake here when you make your funding decision.

With great appreciation,

Ethan Gans-Morse

Composer, Executive/Artistic Director

Anima Mundi Productions

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