



January 31, 2018

Mr. William A. Donohue, Ph.D.  
President  
Catholic League  
450 Seventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10123

Dear Mr. Donohue:

Thank you for your letter regarding the National Endowment for the Arts. I appreciate your concerns and value the opportunity to set the record straight.

As you noted, the NEA did not fund the production of *Jerry Springer: The Opera* at the New Group Theatre. Moreover, the NEA is not a lead funder of the New Group Theater. The organization's budget has ranged from \$2.2 million in FY 07 to \$3 million in FY 16. Using the most recent year as an example, the NEA's \$20,000 grant represents 0.6% of their budget.

Additionally, I would like to clarify details of the 2009 grant of \$50,000 cited in your letter. In 2009, as part of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, the NEA received a one-time appropriation of \$50 million to award grants supporting projects that would result in the preservation of jobs in the arts sector during the economic downturn.

Please note, that we use a three-step grant review process to assess awards. All applications for NEA funding are first reviewed by panels of citizen experts from across the country, representing different professions, gender, ethnicity, and age. These citizen panels judge the applications on the basis of artistic excellence and artistic merit and those recommendations are then forwarded to the National Council on the Arts and lastly to the NEA chairman for final approval.

Thank you again for reaching out. Please do not hesitate to contact me in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Chu".

Jane Chu  
Chairman  
National Endowment for the Arts