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January 24th, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

In my capacity as the Executive Director at the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) over the past fourteen years, I have encountered many visual artists with unique and compelling ways of communicating their artistic intents. As a nonprofit that works to support individual artists in all disciplines, I am always seeking, but not often finding, artists who are willing to volunteer their time and technique to the promotion of NYFA on behalf of NYFA so that our services, and why we provide them, can be marketed to as many artists and financial supporters of artists as possible. It is a difficult challenge because the artist has to be able to correctly communicate the core of NYFA's mission to an audience often unfamiliar with our programs and services in a way that entertains while at the same time conveys the importance of artists in their lives.

Mari Jaye Blanchard is one of those artists. For the past seven years, she has annually created short animated films for NYFA to send out as holiday greetings. These films have ranged in technique from hand-drawn to stop motion to painting with light. When it came time for our 2019 fundraising appeal video, she created a text-based animation that communicated with creative and easily understood visuals the need to support artists. It was a 2 minute piece that kept the viewer engaged the whole time, which is quite a challenge in today's social media few seconds byte absorption digital users. With uplifting music in the background to accompany the fun ever evolving landscapes of words and pictures the viewer is taken on a journey of all the things that NYFA does for artists that encourages one to learn more or desire to support. This is no easy task but now that the fall appeal is over, I can point to the results of the campaign to demonstrate that Mari Jaye captured the audience. In our last fiscal year, we were able to bring in approximately \$40,000 from individual donors through our yearly appeal campaigns. In this fiscal year, which is now just entering its third quarter, we have already met the \$40,000 reach of last year! People respond to Mari Jaye's work. She has somehow figured out how to bring noble intent to commercial appeal, while never compromising her artistic process. We are grateful to Mari Jaye, and I hope this letter will serve to support consideration of her receiving tenure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Royce". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Michael Royce
Executive Director

New York Foundation for the Arts

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