

September 10, 2008

Glenn Farr
P.O. Box 1226,
Santa Monica, Ca. 90406-1226

NEA National Heritage Fellowships
Folk & Traditional Arts
National Endowment for the Arts
1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW,
Room 720
Washington, D.C. 20506-0001

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of John Bilezikjian, who may be reached at, P.O. Box 2434, Laguna Hills, Ca., 92654-2434. John is a perfect candidate for a NEA National Heritage Fellowship by virtue of his life long commitment to Armenian music. And more precisely because of his achievements of composing and performing Armenian music for the Oud. The Oud being the predecessor of the Lute and Guitar.

Mr. Bilezikjian has performed professionally as a soloist and leader of his own ensemble for decades to the delight and inspiration of audiences here in America and throughout the world. His performances and recordings are a matter of public record domestically and internationally.

If you have seen the feature film, *The Nativity Story* from New Line Entertainment, you have heard John's oud performance on the soundtrack. *The Dreamworks Pictures, animated feature film, The Prince of Egypt* has a wonderful soundtrack that features John performing all the Middle Eastern musical instruments used in the recording of the score.

The indie prod feature film *Pomegranate* includes a score that was composed and produced by John. He also performed the oud parts of that score. John has performed on many other feature film soundtracks over the years as a featured soloist on the oud and other instruments.

Having done two world tours with Leonard Cohen you have heard John's oud solos on the cd albums produced from those live performances.

John is a master of the oud. A master of Armenian traditional folkloric music. This is especially significant because of the special place Armenian culture and music has. In 1915 the first Genocide of the 20th Century was perpetrated against the entire Armenian population of Ottoman Turkey. Some 1.5 million Armenians were slaughtered by order of the Ottoman Empire's leaders. Because of the fact that Armenian arts and culture were nearly disappeared from the face of the earth it is vital for the preservation of Armenian music that a maestro such as John Bilezikjian be supported and honored.

If John Bilezikjian were to be honored strictly for his accomplishments as an Armenian musician and composer, those would be reasons enough. But there is much more to the man and his devotion to music. John sings and performs in many languages with great facility and showmanship. He has performed domestically and internationally in concert and cabaret venues in his own right for many years.

John is continually pushing the envelope musically. He is a master of improvisation with the oud. Creating a fusion of music that weaves Armenian, Middle Eastern, Jazz and Western Classical forms. The results are at once astonishing and lyrical in their complexity and accessibility to the listener.

I strongly urge your organization to consider John Bilezikjian for the NEA National Heritage Fellowship.

Sincerely,



Glenn Farr

September 10, 2008

Professional CV of Glenn Farr

Glenn Farr is a film editor and filmmaker. He has been working in those capacities professionally since 1966.

He is currently editing a TV series at Warner Bros Studios in Burbank, Ca., for the CBS TV Network.

Glenn's list of feature film and TV credits may be found on the IMDB website, imdb.com or by contacting his agent, Ivana Savic, ivana@gsktalent.com .

For the 1983 Warner Bros feature film, *The Right Stuff*, Glenn was awarded an Oscar for Best Editing. He also received an "Eddie" Nomination for Best Editing of a Feature Film by the American Cinema Editors organization the same year.

Glenn is an active member of the AFL-CIO IATSE Hollywood Local 700 Motion Picture Editors Guild. He joined that film workers union in 1971.

In 1984 Glenn was invited to join the AMPAS, (Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences), Editors Branch. He is an active member of AMPAS and annually serves as member of it's Foreign Language Film Committee's, Best Foreign Language Film nominating group. He is also an annual script reader/voter for the AMPAS, Nicholl Screenwriting Fellowship.

Glenn is a member of the Board of Directors of the Armenian Film Foundation which has produced a trilogy of feature documentary films about the Armenian Genocide. On those films he served either as a producer or consultant. Some have said that the trilogy is the best and most comprehensive film examination of the first genocide of the 20th Century.

Throughout Glenn's career as a professional film worker and filmmaker the concept of mentorship has played an important role. Having first been on the receiving end and over the last 20 years or so on the giving end of mentoring, he knows the benefit that may accrue to the truly talented.