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National Endowment for the Arts gives *Art Works Grant* for Variety Theatre!

St. Louis (Feb 24, 2018) – National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu has approved more than \$25 million in grants as part of the NEA’s first major funding announcement for fiscal year 2018. Included in this announcement is an Art Works grant of \$10,000 to Variety Theatre for the fall production of *The Little Mermaid*. The Art Works category is the NEA’s largest funding category and supports projects that focus on the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts, and/or the strengthening of communities through the arts.

“It is energizing to see the impact that the arts are making throughout the United States. These NEA-supported projects, such as this one to Variety-St. Louis, are good examples of how the arts build stronger and more vibrant communities, improve well-being, prepare our children to succeed, and increase the quality of our lives,” said NEA Chairman Jane Chu. “At the National Endowment for the Arts, we believe that all people should have access to the joy, opportunities and connections the arts bring.”

“Variety Theatre is pleased to receive its fourth grant from the National Endowment for The Arts having previously received awards in 2013, 2015, and 2016. This year’s Art Works award is for our 2018 production of DISNEY’S THE LITTLE MERMAID, which marks our tenth anniversary of producing inclusive theater in the St. Louis region. We are honored that the NEA recognizes the work that Variety Theatre does to present professional musical theater featuring a children’s ensemble with kids of all abilities,” said Jan Albus, Executive Producer, Variety Theatre.

Variety empowers children with physical and developmental disabilities, also referred to as children with special needs, and improves their quality of life. Our programs highlight ability rather than disability. This holistic approach gives access to critical medical equipment and therapies, along with innovative Camp and Performing Arts programs, which provide opportunities for recreation, socialization, and artistic expression. Children gain or maintain independence, boost socialization among their friends and family, demonstrate belief in themselves, and increase skills they need to engage their world as fully as possible. www.varietystl.org

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