Americans for the Arts presents
The 29th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture
on Arts and Public Policy

Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts & Public Policy

An evening with

John Maeda

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Concert Hall
The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
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Good evening everyone and welcome to the Americans for the Arts 29th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy. Amazing.

I’m Bob Lynch, President and CEO of Americans for the Arts and I want to thank you for joining us here tonight at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

We are joined by many special guests including Congressman David Cicilline of Rhode Island, a great friend of the arts and Senator Tom Udall from New Mexico who received our 2015 Congressional Arts Leadership Award last year, and National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu who is doing a wonderful job including highlighting the NEA’s 50th Anniversary this year all across the United States.

We are gathered here because we all believe in the power of the arts to positively transform the quality of our lives and communities.

What would our world look like without artists and the arts? How would we communicate our history and our culture without artists?

Many of you here in the audience and here on stage are musicians, dancers, writers, painters, film makers, actors or singers. I’m so grateful to all of you and especially to all of the high profile artists on our Artist Committee who are helping us bring national attention to our issues, whether they’re tweeting or here with us on Capitol Hill tomorrow for Arts Advocacy Day.

They include people like nine-time Grammy nominated R&B singer Ledisi, and Elizabeth Banks recently in The Hunger Games, two of the artists who are giving their time and helping us rock around The Hill.

Let’s give a round of applause to all the artists.

Now, we know when it comes to making change happen at the federal level, it takes congressional arts leadership and evidence-based data to make our case. Thankfully, we have both.

You can see in this full-page ad that Americans for the Arts has placed in all of the political newspapers this week here in Washington, Politico, Roll Call, The Hill, both the data and the leaders who we thank at the bottom of the page there.

But a successful advocacy campaign also takes strategic grassroots lobbying to make our case. That’s why 89 of the most important national arts and civic advocacy organizations in the country, representing more than 90,000 nonprofit cultural organizations of every discipline throughout every region of the country serve as national partners of Arts Advocacy Day.

They are specifically joined by 500 state and local arts leaders, including more than 150 future leaders, emerging leaders currently enrolled in college arts administration programs.

I would like to ask all of these arts advocacy leaders and sponsors and sponsoring organizations and all the participants to please stand and be recognized for coming together in a united effort tomorrow on Arts Advocacy Day. Would you all please stand?

Thank you, thank you so much.

Now, there is one advocate here tonight who I would like to take a special moment to recognize. Her name is Betty Plumb.

You see, Betty is retiring this year after serving the South Carolina Arts Alliance for 27 years as its long-time Executive Director.
She succeeded in many, many efforts including providing every student in South Carolina with the opportunity to experience quality arts education regardless of the location or financial circumstances of the school.

Now, Betty, I have to embarrass you a little bit more by asking if you would stand and be recognized. Please join in thanking Betty Plumb for her lifetime of service to the arts.

Betty and her colleagues know how important advocacy is to advance arts policy priorities, especially in an election year. Tomorrow, we will personally bring our message to the United States Congress.

All year long, our ArtsVote2016 Campaign has been working hard to educate presidential candidates and grassroots arts advocates about the tremendous positive impact of the arts and the importance of public sector support to keep culture thriving in America.

A whopping 89 percent of Americans believe that the arts are key to a well-rounded education.

We’ve already held grassroots training sessions in Iowa, in New Hampshire, and we’ll be at both political conventions this summer in Cleveland and in Philadelphia.

Advocates have been engaging with presidential candidates all year asking smart questions about their arts policy positions and we’re documenting it all on artsactionfund.org. The campaigns are taking notice. Positions get slightly better when they see what the positions are.

Advocacy does matter. And, that’s why I want to thank each and every one of you who have dedicated your time and resources to coming to Washington today and tomorrow so that the voices of arts advocates can be heard on Capitol Hill.

Arts Advocacy Day is a power signal to lawmakers that this is an issue that the American people, constituents, and voters care about. We will not stop until the arts are thriving in every corner of this nation.

Now, your advocacy has led to some big wins for the arts in the past year. We have a long way to go, but we had some big wins including fending off budget cuts and even getting a $2 million increase for the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as enhancing arts education provisions within the newly rewritten K through 12 federal education statute. Congratulations to all of you for that one.

The charitable tax deduction which is so important for incentivizing private contributions to nonprofit arts organizations remained intact and I’m so pleased to say that the IRA tax rollover is now a permanent provision of the federal tax code.

All of these victories and more would have been beyond our grasp if it weren’t for committed arts advocates like all of you. You suit up, you show up, you speak up and advocate for the arts and that makes a difference.

But why? Why do people across the land take the time to advocate for the arts?

There are, of course, many answers to that question, but a recent public opinion study initiated by Americans for the Arts points to an important one.

This study conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs last December surveyed a very large sample of 3,020 American adults about their attitudes towards the arts, arts funding, and arts education.

It is heartening to hear what they said. A whopping 89 percent of Americans believe that the arts are key to a well-rounded education.

And, the survey suggests that the American public is in sync with federal policymakers on including the arts as part of a well-rounded education in the new Every Student Succeeds Act. Yet, at the same time, 27 percent, a third of them, believe that students in their community don’t have enough access to the arts. Most notably in suburban and rural communities. So, we have a way to go.

Fortunately, this survey also provides some information that proves that elected officials can feel secure about supporting efforts to increase funding for the arts. Fifty-four percent of the respondents support an increase in federal arts investment from the current 45 cents per capita to $1.00 per person.

Look for more public opinion findings to be released this spring. But, that one alone helps us with some real marching orders for how we can look toward what this government should be investing in in arts support in America.

We will have, as we release over the spring, further evidence that the American public wants more art in their lives and in their children’s lives and, that they believe that our elected leaders have a role to play in making that happen.

Now, of course, finding public policy sector solutions to arts policy challenges is exactly what the Nancy Hanks Lecture Series is all about starting 29 years ago with Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. But, we are equally committed to engaging with the private sector to expand access to the arts for both consumers and employees.

That is why I’m announcing that this year, we are launching
the David Rockefeller Lecture on Arts and Business, a new annual lecture series in New York City that will feature prominent business leaders who address the vital connection between commerce and culture.

The inaugural lecture will be delivered by renowned philanthropist, David Rubenstein, who also happens to be the Kennedy Center’s Chairman of the Board. A terrific philanthropist on many, many fronts including things like restoring a number of the memorials that are here and making sure things like the Magna Carta survive.

The lecture will be held on May 4, 2016 in New York City at the New York Times Building. So, stay tuned.

Finally, please help me to thank our sponsors this evening. Nancy Stephens with the Rosenthal Family Foundation and Jessica Yas with Ovation, the nation’s only arts television network. Thank you for what you do and for your support.

When we asked John Maeda what kind of artistic performance might help to encapsulate his philosophy of STEM into STEAM of discovering points of common connection between science, technology, and the arts, he knew just who to recommend.

Kaki King is a truly multi-disciplinary artist who brings together instrumental music, live performance and cutting edge technology to create a unique and mesmerizing central experience.

She has been praised in Rolling Stone as a genre unto herself. The Los Angeles Times called her a shockingly gifted, stunning complex performer. So, we thought you'd like that.

Tonight, Kaki King will share with us selected pieces from her latest album, a latest multimedia performance entitled, “The Neck is a Bridge to the Body.” Please enjoy.

Avant-garde artist Kaki King did a dedicated performance in honor of John Maeda by mesmerizing the audience with a unique musical and visual experience using cutting-edge technology.

Wow, that was truly an amazing, unique, intriguing, wonderfully creative performance even from behind the stage seeing it.

This may be the first time many of you have experienced Kaki King, but I am willing to bet that this will not be the last time to see her and her work and the influence of her work.

Thank you again, Kaki King, for performing with us tonight.
Representative Suzanne Bonamici was presented jointly with the 2016 Congressional Arts Leadership Award by President and CEO of Americans for the Arts Robert L. Lynch and CEO and Executive Director of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Tom Cochran for her work in adding arts into STEM education.

I am now joined here by our longest standing arts advocacy partner in the country, Tom Cochran.

Tom is the long-time highly effective CEO of the United States Conference of Mayors, 24 years a partner with Americans for the Arts and, for the last 20 years, our two organizations have recognized top elected officials at the federal and at the state and at the local levels.

And, we’ve recognized them with Public Leadership in the Arts Awards for advancing the arts in America. I would like Tom to talk a little bit about this year’s Congressional Arts Leadership winner.

TOM COCHRAN: Thank you, Bob and thank all of you out there who, I hope, work with my mayors because, at the local level, at the grassroots level, the mayors are there with you and we proved it.

As Bob mentioned, for the last 20 years, the United States Conference of Mayors, now 84 years old, have had a long relationship with Americans for the Arts. I just want to thank our great Leader Lynch for the great work that you do.

It’s a special honor for me to be here tonight to introduce our 2016 Congressional Leadership in the Arts Award. I’m going to talk a little bit about what’s happened here.

They say we have a gridlock, but if you have the passion and you have the leadership and you know how to get things done, you can make it happen.

This year, I’m pleased to talk to you tonight about Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici of Oregon. She has demonstrated incredible leadership on arts policy matters in Congress.

In a relatively short amount of time since 2012 when she was elected, she has moved forward with great passion so that our children can have more opportunities to learn through the arts in school.

She co-founded the Congressional STEAM Caucus which supports integrating the arts into STEM education. Ladies and gentlemen, we need science, we need technology, we need engineering, we need math, but we need arts.

When it came time to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to a conference committee between the House and the Senate, Congresswoman Bonamici secured placement herself on that conference committee so she could be ideally situated to affect meaningful change. And, that’s exactly what she did. She put the A in the STEM, so now we have STEAM.

She introduced the amendment that was unanimously adopted and it’s the biggest rewrite of the federal education law in 15 years.

On behalf of the nation’s mayors who will continue to work for arts in our communities at the national level, who will continue to advocate this issue in this presidential election, standing with your organization, let us all congratulate the great lady from Oregon, let’s all congratulate and thank her for her leadership, Representative Bonamici. Thank you very much.
INTRODUCTION OF JOHN MAEDA
BY REP. SUZANNE BONAMICI

Thank you so much to Bob Lynch and Americans for the Arts and Tom Cochran of the Unites States Conference of Mayors for this recognition.

Your advocacy is making a difference and I thank you for your ongoing commitment to the arts and to arts education.

I also need to thank my family, my mom for raising me surrounded by arts and music, my husband, son and daughter, true STEAM believers for always supporting me, and importantly, my talented and dedicated staff who work so hard with me to move forward policies that make a positive difference in the lives or Oregonians and Americans.

The STEAM Caucus has been a refreshingly bipartisan effort to build support for the arts and especially for arts education. I thank my co-chair, Representative Elise Stefanik from New York for her leadership.

Caucus members understand that educating both halves of the brain is essential to a well-rounded education and for the future of our country and our innovation economy.

We have a lot of challenges to address in our nation and we need creative problem solvers to find better ways to do things, novel ways to use technology and more effective and kinder ways to communicate. What can help accomplish this is investing in, not cutting, the arts.

Now, someone who understands this well is our Hanks lecture speaker for this evening, Dr. John Maeda.

I first met John more than three years ago with the STEAM Caucus was only an idea. If there is someone who knows how to transform ideas into reality, it’s John Maeda.

We have a lot of challenges to address in our nation and we need creative problem solvers to find better ways to do things, novel ways to use technology and more effective and kinder ways to communicate. What can help accomplish this is investing in, not cutting, the arts.

He was with us at the Capitol for our standing room only caucus kickoff and for several briefings afterward.

Since then, I’ve wondered why? What makes John so passionate about STEAM? Why, when he was at MIT, was he advocating for the arts? Why, when he was at Rhode Island School of Design, was he advocating for integrating the arts into STEM?

Well, it might have something to do with tofu.

John grew up in Seattle and his family had a business making and selling tofu. Now, family business meant the kids worked there. So, at an early age, John learned the value of making things and the connection between making things and making a living.

The path he has taken in life reflects this connection from MIT to RISD and now to venture capital where he helps people with ideas turn them into reality, where he helps others turn making things into making a living.

The path he has taken in life reflects this connection from MIT to RISD and now to venture capital where he helps people with ideas turn them into reality, where he helps others turn making things into making a living.

Now, John works a lot in the Silicon Valley where he discovers and helps find funding for successful ideas.

What are those? Well, probably not tofu, but ideas where art and technology combine, where a good design meets cutting edge products, where imagination leads to innovation that results in better ways to do things, where human dimension intersects with technology and thereby captures attention.

I know he will capture our attention this evening. So, please join me in giving a very warm welcome to Dr. John Maeda.
So I am so glad that Nina [Ozlu Tunceli] reached out. When I told her that I like Kaki King’s music, she said that we’ll get her. And she was right. Americans for the Arts is like Santa Claus or something, you know?

First of all, let me share some background. In the 90s, I was someone who took a MIT education and combined it with an art education. I call it the Reese’s Peanut Butter Cup style of education, you know? The chocolate and the peanut butter taste better together. And I used to make things like this for the computer in the 90s back when people didn’t do this.

You were transported in a way that you didn’t have to understand or even want to understand, because that is what art does to us. It lets us go to that unstable place and feel peaceful at the same time.

Now, I have to tell you that—everyone doesn’t know, so not a big deal—but I have to tell you that when you do things that people don’t do, people don’t like it.

When I did this in 1993, my professors in art school said you have to stop doing this. This is not right. You should use your hand to draw things. Don’t write computer programs. So it was tough. It was tough, but I persevered.

And to give you context, this is sort of my life in kind of a landscape I drew last year for a report. <=My father went to a parent-teacher conference and heard my teacher say that John is good at math and art, which is why he, the next day, told a customer that John is good at math.

It always bothered me. I was like what’s wrong with the art thing? Oh, art is bad, art is bad. You won’t make a living making art. Math is good, you know? So that was how I was raised, like many people actually today. So I think it is not uncommon.

And what happened was I went to MIT as a dutiful son. It was my parents’ dream for us to go to one of two schools: MIT or Harvard. That’s all they knew.

So I went to MIT, and went to art school, came back to MIT and was a professor at a place called Media Lab. That year was 1996, and it was all a really great place to grow as a young professor, but then there was something dark looming, you know, like the eye in Lord of the Rings.
That something was of course, as we know, the dot-com crash. That drop is actually NASDAQ.

So that was a dark thing. But I luckily had no idea what was happening because I had no money.

Some of the other senior faculty had money, and so I just saw them putting their faces in their hands, saying, “Oh no, I’ve lost so much, what’s happening?” There was some restructuring at MIT, and people kept telling me, “Don’t worry about the money.”

And this began to happen in my mind.

(Instrumental music from *Lord of the Rings* begins to play)

Do you know this theme song? Do you know that? It’s that journey, it’s the starting of a journey. When that crash happened, I began wondering, what is this thing, money, that people care about?

What is this? I don’t understand it. What happened is I’d have all these people telling me, “John, you’re the creative person, so don’t worry about the money.” And when five people tell you that, you start worrying about the money!

So what I did is I went to get an MBA to understand what this money thing was. That was very helpful, and I began wondering, oh, it’s this money thing, design thing, how does this all connect?

So again, the MIT Media Lab was a great place to grow as a person in the 90s because it was happening. There’s a woman named Muriel Cooper who was the first Design Director of MIT Press and she was one of the first people to put together design and technology. She was crazy in a wonderful way. She showed me a way that maybe I should leave MIT.

And years later in Japan, when I was a designer, I was working with a designer, Ikko Tanaka. So I was combining old-style design with new-style technology, trying to find my way. I did a lot of things, made different things for different people. Luckily, that worked out okay. I think it was in 2001, I got the big award (National Design Award in the U.S. and the Mainichi Design Prize in Japan) and I thought I could die now, so I can stop.

I began wondering, what else should I do? And I wasn’t sure, really. I was looking, and this STEM to STEAM thing was interesting. I want to tell you why STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) to STEAM (adding arts to STEM education) became interesting to me. If you Google STEM to STEAM, you get Google ads. Trying to get you.

This ad is kind of cool. It’s a D.C. initiative, and this ad over here is trying to sell you classrooms. Just to give you context, last night I Googled every STEM to STEAM link. Not every, but a lot. It got a little bit scary.

I got to 20 pages, and don’t do this at home, because if you type STEAM and some words, some steamy stuff comes up.

So I will do this for you. I took out those images, don’t worry. I wanted to take you through a bunch of screenshots very fast, and just look to see how many institutions are really taking STEAM in their lives. It is kind of amazing. I kept screen-capping, screen-capping, screen-capping, and libraries, magazines, clubs, governments, national governments, all are using this acronym to somehow make the case that STEM alone is not enough.
It is pretty amazing. I see all these things. Let me slow down for a second. You can pin on a STEAM board. There’s actually all kinds of pin boards for STEAM. Also there are—people who don’t like STEAM, so they can critique it. This is America. There’s a lot of people who will critique it, you know? Like, “Oh, I don’t really like this STEAM thing.” But that is beautiful because it creates friction, it creates discussion.

This one is a page where I found there are many people who invented the acronym STEAM, so this person claimed it. But Representative Bonamici is everywhere in the STEAM boards. It’s like, whoa, Dr. Seuss, everywhere.

Here you have a resource page on Edutopia for STEAM. Here you have the Kennedy Center also has STEAM. You have Sesame Street. Grover, love Grover. Grover loves STEAM.

Parents Magazine, sounds so proper. Parents like STEAM. You have PDFs also on the web. So, that looks very official. Then you have a PDF paper. So it feels very official.

You’ve got TeenLife. You know, teens, but STEAM is okay.

We have diversity in STEAM, where will.i.am received the Davos Crystal Award this year for STEAM. We have a STEAM Expo in Florida. We have Power Automations Systems advertising STEAM. Not sure why.

We have STEAM Day. Did you know November 8 is STEAM Day? There you go. STEAM Day.

We’ve got a master’s in STEAM? Okay. You’ve got like a Barbie STEAM.

You have VH1 STEAM, you know? These guys are great. They have a STEAM Carnival, which is a really cool event.

We have littleBits, which is a STEAM platform. Tonight, they are launching a STEAM Student Initiative at SXSWedu, so a whole tech startup is devoted to STEAM and led by Ayah Bdeir, amazing engineer artist.

You have of course Suzanne Bonamici everywhere. The Force Awakens. You can just see her everywhere, and I’m going to show you for a second about that.

So everywhere you see STEAM, you see Suzanne Bonamici, right? Check this out.

So STEAM, you’ve got Americans for the Arts, Suzanne Bonamici. They are always connected; you see this? Americans for the Arts, where’s the Bonamici? Right there, see that? I feel like Google Images now. Right there, see that? Everywhere.

And when people ask me why did I get involved in STEAM, and as Representative Bonamici explained how I went from MIT to RISD, it was because at MIT I realized I could only advocate for the arts in a certain way. I’d have many people come up to me and say why doesn’t MIT care about the arts? And I would say what does the “T” in “MIT” stand for? Technology, not arts, right?

By going to RISD, I thought I would understand a way that the arts are capitalized, lowercase, et cetera, I could go deep into that.

As a new leader of an institution, as many of you here know who have led things, it is kind of hard. I read this book called The Audacity of Hope in 2008. I got really excited about being American, and I thought “Oh, I should do something bigger in my life.”

When Spencer Stuart, the headhunting company, called me up and asked if I wanted to be president of a college, I said that I can’t do that—I have never been a department head or a dean or a vice provost or provost, so I can’t do that. But then I thought of this book, and it said yes I can.

The first thing they said to me is, “John, you’ve got to read a First 90 Days Book.” I had never heard of these kinds of books, so I bought three of them.

I have two First 90 Days and one First 100 Days. I discovered the paradigm is variable.

Every book would say one thing very clearly. It would say as the new leader, whatever you do, don’t have a vision, because the vision comes from the people.

So I said, okay, don’t have a vision. What happens to the new leader when they show up? What’s everyone’s favorite question? What’s your vision? And I said, “Oh, the book said I can’t tell you what that is. It’s supposed to come from you. I am not supposed to have a vision.”

I like to do testing, and so I had the opportunity to address a group of young people my first week as president, and they were in the pre-college program from high schools around the country, and also all over the world.

I’ll never forget it. You’re the new president, you’re in an auditorium that isn’t so beautiful like this, it was a little bit sweaty, it’s summertime, you know, and they’re all wearing fierce T-shirts.
and have amazing color hair and you’re a little bit afraid.

So you walk in and I scribbled down a few sample visions, and I said to them, “I am going to test this right here. Could you applaud for the vision that you like?” I thought that was a safe place. There was no Twitter back then, so it was okay.

So my first idea was something like I found in a college president book something like lifelong education and arts and design and I asked for the applause meter, and it was very bad.

Second one I thought would get them in the ego. It was like becoming the next generation of the Damien Hirst or whatever. And that got a dad-like applause.

I was kind of giving up. But I said I’m going to try this one. I tried this one, and it was building a justifiable case for creativity in the world. Then everyone started applauding. It was like a Bono moment.

I am not sure, but that worked, that’s good, let’s leave now.

I was shopping in the alumni shop an hour later, and a young woman came up to me and said, “I am so glad you said what you said in there.”

I asked, “What did I say?”

She said, “Well, I’m a sophomore from Nebraska. You know, I am the creative one. I am the weird one. No one takes me seriously. And you said in there you would fight for us.”

I said, “Whoa.” I understand what to do. So I have been on a journey to understand this justifiable case for creativity ever since my dad said I was good at math.

So I have been on a journey to understand this justifiable case for creativity ever since my dad said I was good at math.
about was STEAM. That was my job, to place the word STEAM everywhere as if it was always there, and all we did was sort of pull it together.

We even formed a fellowship program to enable art and design students to work anywhere in the world on art projects in the policy space…alongside policymakers.

And one important part was that I am a romantic believer in students. I can’t help it. I realize it now. I was an MIT professor for 12 years. I’ve been in academia a total of 18 years. I really believe in the student thing. I am sure many of you here who are educators know what I am talking about.

I really believe in them. One of my happiest things was STEAM began to migrate into the students at RISD, and there was one young woman from Rhode Island, Sarah Pease, who began to bring STEAM into the students’ space, and it has been amazing to watch that evolve. Now, many universities have STEAM clubs, and so this is a way they’re coming into the university on their own, which I think is quite exciting.

Example of the fact that I would hear so often from people who would tell me in a sort of a giving up way, “Well, you know, students, John, they come and go. They don’t matter because they come for four years, and they leave. Care about who is on campus now.”

But I had always cared about the students. I found them so interesting because they were going out there, changing things. When they made the STEAM club, they showed how they could keep it in the bloodstream, not of just one school, but now many schools, and that is an interesting phenomenon we’ll see more and more of I believe.

So what we did is we took the signal out there in STEAM and just made it more coherent, made it heard in the technology sector, which I think needed to hear that badly.

There were three women who were totally instrumental in the back end to make things happen to create STEAM. They are Rachael Bornstein in Representative Bonamici’s office, Kirtley Fisher, who at the time was in Representative Langevin’s office, and of course Babette Allina who I had the fortune of recruiting to bring in a new era of government relations for RISD.

I want to pause for a second on Babette. I will never forget when Babette joined. Where is Babette? I can embarrass her a little bit.

So Babette shows up and the first thing she keeps asking me is, “John, okay, so you’re the new president. What you want to do is go to Washington, DC to take more money from the capital and raise money for RISD and the arts.”

I said, “No, I don’t want to do that.” What I want to do instead is try to affect policy. It took a year to get Babette to believe that I actually cared about that. She was kicking and fighting—“let’s talk to this person and ask for money.” I said, “No, we’re not going to ask for money. We’re going to see if people will listen to transformation.”

After a year, Babette came into my office and said, “I get it. I get it, and I think we can do it. I can do this.”

From that, a lot of things happened. So, I just want to thank Babette here. She is an unsung hero in this way. Can you please applaud for Babette a little bit?

Somehow all the people are interconnected in a wonderful way. Powered by Babette, I went to every living, breathing person, man, woman, dog, cat, bird with these slides. Where people didn’t know what STEM was, I would teach them. This is STEM. Now let’s have a happy “A” bounce in there (for arts). Everyone loves the “A.” Oh my gosh, the “A,” why wasn’t it there in the first place?

Every place I went to, whether Davos or TED or whatever, STEAM, STEAM, STEAM. So, the signal was out there. It became heard, so it’s a wonderful thing.

Where is Representative David Cicilline? You were key to me. Thank you. I love you.

Representative Langevin was also great to keep making it happen. Of course, look at that. Representative Bonamici, right there, see that? Everywhere, everywhere.

Right there. See that? See that? Man, that is so cool. She gets stuff done.

Now design. When we talk about STEAM, people always say, “Well John, what about STEAM? Why isn’t it STEAMD or STEMD or whatever kind of thing?”

Now what is design? Everyone in 2016, if you say design and business, you can’t help but say the (other) A word, right? Apple. Apple loves design. Apple is this mystical place; it makes
amazing dot-colored things and I want it, you know? I totally love this design thing. Why don’t you talk about STEMD? Why STEAM? Why art, you know? Why not STEM D? A lot of what I try to do is explain to more people that you don’t have design if you don’t have art. It is because they’re mated together, you know?

I mean design is the part that can help create solutions, and art is the part that helps to make questions. The two together are a powerful force of questioning and solution-making.

To many technologists, I have explained, this is actually exactly the same as another dichotomy you’re aware of, which is engineering versus science. Engineering makes solutions, science makes questions.

So once people see that it is actually quite similar, they get it. They say, “Oh, you mean that this design thing needs the art thing, and the art thing needs the design thing, like the Reese’s Peanut…”—see, it always works.

That has been an important part of what I have tried to do is to show that the two exist, and they need to exist, and they feed off of each other, which all of you know here, but I find a lot of audiences have challenges learning, but they’ll always understand engineering and science. If you use that, it may help you explain whether they’re symbiotic.

Because art is kind of hard to understand, right? It’s about the heart. It’s a sort of intangible thing. It’s about feeling, and feeling is hard, right?

I love how I saw recently on a bumper sticker series, how the word “art” is in “heart.” Isn’t that so cool? It’s like in there, first of all.

And secondly, the word “earth” has “art” in it. And somewhere it says if you take the “art” out of “earth,” you get “eh,” right?

So that also works as a kind of mathematical proof, but not really, but you know what I mean.

People say to me, “Well John, you know, the only place I can go to see art is museums.”

I’ll say, “No, actually, you know, there is art everywhere.” I get stuck in airports all the time, and I’m sure all of you do too. There is art everywhere.

I was stuck in Santa Barbara one time. There was this beautiful sailplane sculpture floating there in this sort of abstract art, sort of like concrete, and I enjoyed it very much. People will say to me, “Well sometimes, the airport I am at does
not have any art.”
And I say, “Don’t worry, just go to the bathroom.”
I have a collection of bathroom art. Don’t worry, not that kind of bathroom art. But I have a collection of bathroom art I want to show you.
So this is a machine—
I walked into the men’s bathroom at Boston Logan Airport. Isn’t it beautiful?
I could have sat there forever, but someone walked in, and they thought I did it maybe, so I had to stop.
But it’s just so beautiful.

There’s that kind of art, which is kind of kinetic art, unique, abstract art. I’m not sure how to describe this, maybe postmodern. So you know how when you go to a stall, you have the toilet paper, and you want it to be hermetically sealed in the aluminum, but it’s not there, you know? It makes everybody nervous, right? Not sanitary, right?
In this stall, I found this odd situation where they were all laid out like this, you know? Like what is this insulation? I am not sure.
These kinds of moments happen. People ask me, “Well, is that art?”
I say, “Well, it’s how artists can think. It’s how you can pull in the world and make sense of it, or maybe make sense of it. And it’s just okay like that.” The enigma. We’re okay with the enigma with art.
If you get that art is valuable and that art drives design, then you see in the business world, design’s wholehearted embrace by the business community. This is the cover of Businessweek, mind you, last year’s May issue. Do you see, the design issue?
That was pretty significant. I kind of like fell out of my chair when four months later, the cover of Harvard Business Review was design. Now that means something for people who are business people. That’s the magazine.

I also noticed that it came with a black turtleneck, so it wasn’t that serious, so I am still working on that.
Now, why is business curious about design, and why is technology curious about design? The answer is very simple. The answer is that in the old days, who had this computer? Can you raise your hand? Remember that computer? It did nothing, right? It just took all your desk space and just blinked at you, right? It didn’t do anything at all, and having one at home was embarrassing because, we don’t have that, we have like a foosball table, or we have—what is this thing, you know, a computer?
There was an era where we didn’t need computers, but because of Moore’s law, the doubling of transistors every 18 months took place, the computer got so fast that it became useful, and we began to need it to do word processing, do our bills, et cetera.
At some point, the computer was so fast that we stopped wanting it. We stopped buying a computer every year at some point. Luckily, a company like Apple extended the life cycle of digital tech by making design a factor in how we wanted it.
In the old days, we wanted it because it was faster. In the new days, we want it because it feels better. This is not an idea that Apple invented. It happened in the car industry as well. In the 1950s, car sales were tapering off, and GM introduced the idea of design to keep model year changes occurring and imagining a new America.
That wasn’t the only reason why cars began to take off in America in the ’50s. It also took off because of one other phenomenon, and that is that President Eisenhower put in the Interstate Highway System. It was put in place to make sure that nuclear bombers could land, apparently. Didn’t know that. But it also meant you could actually travel longer distances, state-to-state, take the family to the Grand Canyon, drive longer distances, and so the car you rode in couldn’t be uncomfortable. It also had to say who you were as an
So for the same thing with computers, once we have mobile phones, same thing. We all have mobile phones. We have the interstate highway of our minds today, and that is why design is important. It has become DE, dollar sign design, more rapper style. It is also international, Euro-compliant. So it really drives demand, design.

People say to me, “Ah, but you know, this digital stuff is going to go away. I have seen it come and go, you know?” And this picture is on the Internet. When people say that everyone is Instagramming, on their mobile phones, they’re not focused on what’s in front of them: it has always been like this. But it’s not the same. Let me show you an illustration I made roughly half a year ago of this concept of Moore’s law, the doubling of speed, of power of computing.

So this is based upon a story that’s called the chessboard. Apparently, the story goes the inventor of chess was going to be paid by the king who commissioned this, and the person who invented chess said I’m a humble man. I don’t need much. All you have to give me is one grain of rice doubled every square. And that is all I want.

It turns out that’s a lot of rice. So let me show you. So the number 1 doubled, in the back, 256 doubled, each square. So now we’re only halfway across the chessboard, and we’re 2 billion corners of rice, or in other words, 2 billion times faster. So for those of you who raised your hand, the computer we have today is 2 billion times faster, and the computer in the future is going to be even faster.

If you look forward, the numbers get bigger and bigger and bigger, so 30 years in the future, the computer will be this much faster. Now, that number is really big. It’s not thousands, millions, billions, trillions, quadrillions. It’s 9 quintillion. That’s super-fast, right?

That is coming. That is coming, and it is not going to go away. So in that sense, how we work with it is so important as human beings today.

To reiterate the point, we used to turn the computer on once in the morning, once in the evening. If it was a bad experience, it would ouch in the morning; you’d go back to work, and it would ouch in the evening. But today with mobile phones, we unlock them at least 100 times or more per day.

Therefore, design is important. It has to feel good.

If we are checking our phone, and it’s a bad experience, it’s ouch all day long. It isn’t a pain point. It’s a pain plane.

Therefore, design is important. It has to feel good. Before, it did not have to feel good. Now it has to feel good because we use it all the time, like our cars.

Now, I had the fortune as president of RISD to have these wonderful two guys who had this idea called Airbnb. My first year as president, I asked my alumni team, I’d like to find tech entrepreneurs. I was told there were none.

But on a San Francisco trip, I found these two guys, Joe Gebbia and Brian Chesky. They had a six-person company in their apartment. Their dream? Make it possible for you to rent out your room to a stranger. I thought they were crazy, like many of us thought they were crazy. But every year, their company got bigger and bigger and bigger, and I saw just how unique what they were doing was.

So Joe would come to campus and talk to the students. I would invite him to talk to the students because he was so inspiring, but also because he was one of them. He was a designer. He was an artist. He was that sophomore in Nebraska, the creative one. He was creating a justifiable case for creativity as a startup. He was an important person to hear because he was one of them.

He would always begin talking by saying four words, “Take the next step.” “Take the next step.” So what do you do as [the RISD] president? You parrot the best thing you hear out there and say it to everybody. I would say to parents Joe Gebbia said “Take the next step.” I would say to graduates, “Take the next step.” I would tell everyone just like STEM is STEAM, “Take the next step.”

It was important because I realized that what they were doing was building this new case for creativity by making a company, but then I heard in my own mind, you know when
you give out advice, you wonder if you’re taking it yourself, right?

What happened is I was in my sixth year as president. I think I was one of 1 percent of [college] presidents in the year of 2011 who received a no confidence vote. I was focused too much on the students, I found out. I’m okay with that.

And I turned that around, righted the institution, was able to put the business model back together for the place to bring it back to number one. People said to me, “Well, John, now you get to take it easy as president.”

I said, “I don’t want to take it easy as president. That sounds terrible.” So I heard the four words: “Take the next step.” Find the justifiable case for creativity. Go after it.

I e-mailed Joe Gebbia and asked if I could get a president’s Airbnb discount. I’d like to head out to Silicon Valley.

So, I have been living for the last two plus years in Silicon Valley in Airbnb. I have no car. I Uber everywhere. I live like a millennial.

I have no belongings. It is quite exciting, really. I arrived at this great firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield Byers, and I knew absolutely nothing about venture capital.

You remember how I had that First 90 Days Book thing? I thought I’ll do the same thing, so I bought a book on venture capital. It turns out it didn’t help me at all.

Find the justifiable case for creativity. Go after it.

In my first week, I remember walking into a big meeting with strangers for the first time, and I thought they were watching CNN on the screen. You know, there’s Al Gore there. And I realized, wait, that’s actually Al Gore talking!

And it was a different world. It has been great to see how the venture capital world works in relationship to the world, and how the supply of money impacts the supply of businesses that form literally out of the ground, out of nothing,
I believe that, as an artist, this is the goal in life. It’s to be curious and go wonder how to do new things.

Now, I want to close on this note after three takeaways because I realize takeaways are important to be more clear. This is a letter I just received in the mail last week, and it was from a teacher who wrote to me because she had a special student. I love what she said to me. She wrote about this student, and she said that she lives in a small apartment in town with her father who moved to the U.S. from Taiwan and cooks at the local Chinese restaurant. I felt a connection to her being a child of an immigrant in that world—where you know that your parents don’t know how the world works, but they’re working so hard for you, so how could you ever not listen to them?

I am sure many of you know that difficulty. You know they may not be right, but you respect them so much you have to listen to them.

And she wrote to me, this teacher, she loves to draw and write, but her father has insisted that she only apply to computer engineering programs. See the STEM/STEAM dichotomy happening at a young age? She asked me, “Do you have any advice?” I reached out to her, and I will be talking to her soon, apparently. We do what we can one-on-one. That’s how the world works today. There’s no complex barriers. All of you are STEAM advocates in different ways. Every little thing matters, I believe, and it is fun to try to make that difference.

Three suggested takeaways: First, I was walking around campus at RISD; I was very accessible as president. I would move students in, I would scoop food, I would hang out in the cafeterias. It would be awkward sometimes, because as president, I would walk with my tray and people would walk away from me because I was president. And, I get that, so I would just find a place to sit.

I was walking along on the street one time, and a student came up to me, and he said, “Hey, John, I saw you talking to those people over there. Don’t talk to them.” I asked why. He said, “They are talkers, not makers. We’re makers. We make things. They just talk about things. Hang out with us, the makers.”

I said, “Well, aren’t you a talker because you’re talking to me?” Why is this important? It’s important because somewhere along the way, people who make things—the pure introverts—have the joy of making, like “I’m going to sand this so perfectly that nobody knows,” but it’s awesome, it’s a safe place.

Then those people over there, they’re like talking, talking, drinking, you know, networking, whatever bad evil, evil people, like what are they doing, you know? But here I’m sanding it, and it’s going to be perfect, and I’m going to sand another block after this, you know, it’s so good.

The point is that the talkers are making things, too. They are making relationships. They are making new ideas happen at scale. On the one hand, makers are sanding that block, and it’s beautiful, but that’s the extent of what they can do. It’s a good thing to do, but talking is also good to do.

I try to tell as many makers as possible, “Don’t look down on talkers because it’s so important to bridge that gap.”

Point two: money is a medium for expression and shouldn’t be feared by creatives. There’s something about money that is perceived as bad, like money is really bad. One of the joys I had at RISD was trying to disrupt these different types of thinking.

I would visit alumni who would say to me, “You know, after I left RISD, I starved for so long because that’s how you do it the right way. That’s the right way, right? You know, you starve, but then I was so hungry that I answered a newspaper ad and it was for a costume jewelry position. Now I’m the buyer for Target, and it’s kind of embarrassing, but I’m glad it worked out okay.”

I’m just like, “You’re totally okay.” I was kind of like the angel in Touched by an Angel, where I would visit every successful person and say, “It’s okay to succeed.”
Because a large problem today is that we think that artists should starve, or that's some kind of wonderful idea. I never believed in that. I believe that artists can be fruitful components of the economy.

In the tech economy, there are so many artists participating as artists or as designers. Nobody has to starve. If you have someone tell you that's the right way, please tell them there's another way. It's okay to make money. Money is not bad.

People say, “But all those money people, they're bad people. You're in venture capital, John, right? Aren't they vulture capitalists, or aren't they bad people?” I’ve got to tell you, when they tell me this, I say, “How many bad professors are there out there? There are quite a few. How many bad artists are out there? There are a few.” So it’s not about how whether they’re good or bad. There's good and bad everywhere, so go find the good.

Last point: some artists and designers relish the creative constraints within business. There are a lot of great artists running businesses, working within business. They can see it as a creative and exciting thing, so don't be embarrassed. Don't fall into the trap of asking someone where they went to school.

I see this in the venture capital world a lot. When they find out someone didn’t go to Stanford Engineering, they say, “Whoa, not Stanford Engineering?”

I was once in a meeting where one CEO went to SVA [School of Visual Arts], and people in the room had never heard of it. I said, “Well, that's SVA, that's a great art school.” But this person is a painter, she’s a painter. Is that okay?

I said, “Well, a painter is like a physicist. They’re conceptual thinkers, the same kind of person. If you trust a physicist, you can trust a painter.” By the way, this painter can talk about LTV (loan-to-value ratio) and customer acquisition costs, so I think she’ll be okay. So both can exist in this world.

I have gotten to the end, and hopefully, you’ve all been able to hear me in the darkness. Again, I want to thank all of you for your attention and especially for Representative Bonamici’s landmark efforts. Americans for the Arts, I mean, if it wasn’t for you guys, this whole ecosystem wouldn’t exist. Thanks for coming out in the evening. You could have had dinner at a nice place instead.

Thank you.
Thank you, John, for that inspiring and thought-provoking lecture.

I am Abel Lopez, and I’m the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Americans for the Arts. Thank you. And I want to thank John and our special guests, including Kaki King, Tom Cochran, and Representative Suzanne Bonamici.

But most of all, I want to thank all of you, the arts advocates who came here from around the country to give the arts a voice on Capitol Hill.

I am certain that our advocacy tomorrow will help make great strides for the arts all around the country. Now, for those returning to the Omni Shoreham Hotel, shuttle buses are waiting outside to take you back.

Thank you again for joining us tonight, and buenas noches.
With more than 50 years of service, Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. From offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, the organization provides programs designed to:

1. Help build environments in which the arts and arts education can thrive and contribute to more vibrant and creative communities.

2. Support the generation of meaningful public and private sector policies and increased resources for the arts and arts education.

3. Build individual awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts and arts education.

To achieve its goals, Americans for the Arts partners with local, state, and national arts organizations; government agencies; business leaders; individual philanthropists; educators; and funders. While local arts agencies comprise Americans for the Arts’ core constituency, the organization also supports a variety of partner networks with particular interests in public art, united arts fundraising, arts education, local and state advocacy, and leadership development. Through national visibility campaigns and local outreach, Americans for the Arts strives to motivate and mobilize opinion leaders and decision-makers. Americans for the Arts produces annual events that heighten national visibility for the arts, including the National Arts Awards, the BCA 10, and the Public Leadership in the Arts Awards (in cooperation with The United States Conference of Mayors) which honors elected officials in local, state, and federal government. Americans for the Arts also hosts Arts Advocacy Day annually on Capitol Hill, convening arts advocates from across the country to advance federal support of the arts and arts education. For more information, please visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

The Rosenthal Family Foundation (Jamie Rosenthal Wolf, David Wolf, Rick Rosenthal, and Nancy Stephens) are proud to support the Americans for the Arts 28th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy. Established by Richard and Hinda Rosenthal, the Foundation embodies the belief that individuals fortunate enough to receive unusual benefits from a society have the distinct obligation to return meaningful, tangible support to that society—in the form of creative energy as well as funding. The Foundation encourages activity and commentary concerned with constructive social change and recognizes and rewards excellence in individuals and organizations nationwide. Americans for the Arts is particularly grateful to Hinda Rosenthal, who approached the organization about her foundation becoming a sponsor of the Nancy Hanks Lecture 15 years ago, and whose extraordinary support helped the program to flourish and grow into a pre-eminent national forum for dialogue about arts policy.

Ovation is America’s only arts network, whose mission is to inspire the world through all forms of art and artistic expression. Ovation programming is a one-of-a-kind mix of original and selectively curated art-centric series, documentaries, films and specials. Ovation’s signature programming includes The Art Of, A Young Doctor’s Notebook, and The Fashion Fund. Ovation reaches a national audience of over 50 million homes and is available on cable, satellite, and telco systems, such as Time Warner Cable, Bright House Networks, Comcast Cable/Xfinity, RCN, DIRECTV, DISH, Verizon FIOS, AT&T U-Verse, Charter, and Hawaiian Telcom. Ovation is also available on VOD (in both standard and high definition). Ovation’s diversified viewer experiences extend across its linear network, the popular ovationtv.com, and active social presence on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and more. Ovation is a cause based-media company and is deeply engaged with the arts both nationally and locally, providing more than $15 million in contributions and in-kind support to community organizations, cultural institutions, and arts education programs. See the Ovation Facebook page for the latest information and conversations happening across the Ovation brand and the arts: www.facebook.com/OvationTV.
THE AFTER PARTY

(L-R) NEA Chairman Jane Chu (center) with Americans for the Arts State Arts Advocacy Captains Jenny Hershour (PA); Ann Marie Miller (NJ); Betty Plumb (SC); Sheila Smith (MN); Sherron Long (FL); Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM); Presidents Committee on the Arts and the Humanities Member Jill Cooper Udall

(L-R) U.S. Department of Energy Chief of Staff Kevin Knobloch, Congressional STEAM Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, Americans for the Arts Board Member Nancy Stephens, National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu, Americans for the Arts President & CEO Robert L. Lynch, and Rep. David Cicilline

(L-R) Americans for the Arts Board Member Ann Stock, Americans for the Arts President & CEO Robert L. Lynch, and Americans for the Arts Board Treasurer Julie Muraco

(L-R) Americans for the Arts Board Member Dorothy McSweeney and John Maeda

(L-R) Congressional STEAM Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Suzanne Bonamici speaking with Americans for the Arts Board Member Floyd Green

(L-R) Americans for the Arts Board Chair Abel Lopez, John Maeda, Kaki King, Congressional STEAM Caucus Co-Chair Suzanne Bonamici, and Americans for the Arts President & CEO Robert L. Lynch
AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS LEADERSHIP

As the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in this country, Americans for the Arts works with a broad range of leadership, including corporate, philanthropic, and artistic leaders from across the country. Under the leadership of President and CEO Robert L. Lynch, Americans for the Arts' governing and advisory bodies and their leadership are as follows:

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**In memoriam**

Theodore Bikel
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Paul Newman
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John Raitt
Lloyd Richards
Billy Taylor
Wendy Wasserstein

**In memoriam**

Ted 

Peggy Amsterdam
Peter Donnelly
About the Nancy Hanks Lecture

Nancy Hanks was President of Americans for the Arts from 1968–1969, when she was appointed chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, a position she held for eight years. Until her death in 1983, she worked tirelessly to bring the arts to prominent national consciousness. During her tenure at the National Endowment for the Arts, the agency’s budget grew 1,400 percent. This year marks the 29th Annual Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy, established to honor her memory and to provide an opportunity for public discourse at the highest levels on the importance of the arts and culture to our nation’s well-being.

Past Nancy Hanks Lecturers

2015  Norman Lear, groundbreaking television producer, author and social activist
2013  Yo-Yo Ma, acclaimed musician and arts educator
2012  Alec Baldwin, actor and arts advocate
2011  Kevin Spacey, actor and Artistic Director of the Old Vic Theatre
2010  Joseph P. Riley, Jr., Mayor of Charleston, SC
2009  Wynton Marsalis, Artistic Director, Jazz at Lincoln Center
2008  Daniel Pink, best-selling author and innovator
2007  Robert MacNeil, broadcast journalist and author
2006  William Safire, columnist and author
2005  Ken Burns, documentary filmmaker
2004  Doris Kearns Goodwin, journalist and author
2003  Robert Redford, artist and activist
2002  Zelda Fichandler, Founding Director of Arena Stage in Washington, DC, and Chair of the Graduate Acting Program at New York University
2000  Terry Semel, past Chairman and Co-CEO of Warner Bros. and Warner Music Group
1999  Wendy Wasserstein, playwright
1998  Dr. Billy Taylor, jazz musician and educator
1997  Alan K. Simpson, former U.S. Senator
1996  Carlos Fuentes, author
1995  Winton Malcolm Blount, Chairman of Blount, Inc., philanthropist, and former U.S. Postmaster General
1994  David McCullough, historian
1993  Barbara Jordan, former U.S. Congresswoman
1992  Franklin D. Murphy, former CEO of the Times Mirror Company
1991  John Brademas, former U.S. Congressman and President Emeritus of New York University
1990  Maya Angelou, poet
1989  Leonard Garment, Special Counsel to Presidents Nixon and Ford
1988  Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., historian and special assistant to President Kennedy