

For Immediate Release  
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## Midori to be Honored by World Economic Forum Prestigious Crystal Award in Recognition of Community Engagement Work



Midori / Timothy Greenfield-Sanders

**Hilde Schwab**, chairperson and co-founder of the **Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship**, has announced that the violinist **Midori** will be given the prestigious **Crystal Award** at the **World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland on 25 January 2012**. The award is in recognition of Midori's 20-year devotion to community engagement work worldwide. "I'm very excited to be receiving the Crystal Award," says Midori, "It serves as an encouragement for my future work. I greatly look forward to meeting the World Economic Forum's community of socially conscious world leaders at Davos." The World Economic Forum bestows the Crystal Award on artists who have used their art and influence to contribute to international society. Winners of the Award in previous years have included the cellist Yo-Yo Ma, "El Sistema" founder Jose A. Abreu, and Indian dancer Mallika Sarabhai.

Midori's involvement with community engagement began in earnest in 1992, when she was just 20 years of age. Upon learning of severe cutbacks to arts education in the U.S., she conceived of an organization she called *Midori & Friends*. What started with just individual personal visits by Midori to schools, hospitals and institutions in underserved neighborhoods, has over the last 20 years blossomed into a number of programs to bring music to those who don't have access to the arts. In New York City, *Midori & Friends* conducts a multi-tiered course for school children of up to 26-weeks, featuring instrument instruction, elementary music theory, choral singing and community concerts. Over the years, almost 200,000 children have participated in *Midori & Friends* programs in every borough of New York City ([www.midoriandfriends.org](http://www.midoriandfriends.org)).

With the belief that classical music in small communities deserves support, Midori took the money she won as part of the Avery Fisher Prize in 2001 and established a new organization, *Partners in Performance*. The raison d'être of the organization is to stimulate and reinforce local interest in classical music, especially in smaller communities



Midori at P.S. 180 / Gil Gilbert

without the advantages of large urban centers, which are automatically included in every major concert tour. To the winning applicant organizations, *Partners in Performance* awards a recital donated by Midori, and often a Young Artists Program recital by a rising star at substantially reduced rates - both to be played as part of the winning organization's regular season. Proceeds from the concerts are used by the community to support its classical music programs. Midori has encouraged other established artists to participate in *Partners in Performance* programs, and in the 2009-2010 season pianist Jonathan Biss joined the team. This season, *Partners in Performance* will sponsor concerts by Midori in Morehead, Kentucky and Melbourne, Florida ([www.pipmusic.org](http://www.pipmusic.org)).

In 2004, Midori established her *Orchestra Residencies Program*, an initiative designed to reach out to young musicians in youth orchestras in the U.S. Each year two winning applicant youth orchestras are chosen by independent committee for week-long residencies by Midori, who collaborates in a wide range of activities with both the youth orchestras and their partner professional orchestras. Midori rehearses and performs with the youth orchestra, participates in local fund-raising, political arts advocacy, masterclasses, chamber music workshops and team-building social events that serve to strengthen morale, establish new partnerships, and solidify the standing of the youth orchestra in the community. In previous years, *Orchestra Residencies Programs* have been conducted in Alaska, Minnesota, North Dakota, Iowa, New Mexico, South Dakota, Vermont, North Carolina, Illinois, Alabama, Montana, and Tennessee. In 2011-2012, Midori will bring programs to Alexandria, Virginia and Eugene, Oregon. In 2010 Midori expanded the mission of the program to include collaborations with orchestras outside the U.S. The first of these initiatives, in the 2009-2010 season, took place in Costa Rica; the second, in the 2010-2011 season, in Bulgaria. Midori started the 2011-2012 season in September

with an international *Orchestra Residencies Program* in Peru. Plans are underway for a residency in the Middle East in the 2012-2013 season.

*Music Sharing* is an organization based in Tokyo whose goal is to augment the Japanese music curriculum by bringing Western classical music and traditional Japanese music of the highest caliber to young people throughout Japan. Midori and other visiting artists bring performances to children in schools, hospitals and institutions for the disabled. *Music Sharing* aims to raise cultural awareness, provide a well-rounded education, and inspire in children an appreciation for the life-changing power of live music. In 2006 *Music Sharing* expanded to include international programs (*ICEP: International Community Engagement Program*). Each year Midori and young musicians chosen by international audition engage in a two-part program, first spending two weeks in a host country in Asia bringing Western chamber music to young people and learning in turn about native musical traditions; the second a series of concerts and



Midori with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon  
U.N. Photo / Mark Garten

workshops in Japan later in the same season. The purpose of ICEP is to offer children, especially those in difficult circumstances, the opportunity to experience the beauty and joy of music and, equally, to offer the participating young visiting musicians an opportunity to widen their horizons and learn more about community engagement. ICEP programs have taken place in Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia and Laos; the next program is planned for Bangladesh in December 2012.

In addition to her community engagement work, Midori typically plays 95 concerts a year, and is Jascha Heifetz Chair and Chair of the Strings Department at the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California. In 2006 she was designated a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum, and in 2007, she was named a Messenger of Peace by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations.

Midori was born in Osaka, Japan, in 1971 and began studying the violin with her mother, Setsu Goto, at a very early age. In 1982, when Zubin Mehta first heard her play, he was so impressed that he invited her to be a surprise guest soloist for the New York Philharmonic's traditional New Year's Eve concert, on which occasion she received a standing ovation and the impetus to

begin a major career. In 2000, she received her bachelor's degree in Psychology and Gender Studies at the Gallatin School of New York University, graduating magna cum laude, and in 2005 received her Master's degree in Psychology. Midori lives in Los Angeles. In her spare time away from USC and the concert hall, Midori enjoys reading, writing and attending the theater.

For more information about Midori, call 831-620-1332 and visit [www.kathrynkingmedia.com](http://www.kathrynkingmedia.com) and [www.GoToMidori.com](http://www.GoToMidori.com). For more information about the World Economic Forum, visit [www.weforum.org](http://www.weforum.org).

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