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Press Release

John B. Hagerty to receive Spoleto's ninth Mary Ramsay Civic Award

For his unwavering support of the Festival and work in the Charleston community

Luncheon to take place April 1 at the Governor Thomas Bennett House

March 26, 2022 (Charleston, SC) — On April 1 at the Governor Thomas Bennett House, Spoleto Festival USA will present the 2020 Mary Ramsay Civic Award to John Hagerty, an outstanding member of the Charleston community who has long championed the Festival and the arts, serving as general counsel to the Spoleto Festival USA Board of Directors for 27 years. During the luncheon, Stephanie Hunt will lead the afternoon's invocation, followed by an introduction from Spoleto Festival USA Board Chair Alicia Gregory.

"I've known John about 10 years through our board service to Spoleto," says Gregory, "though the entire Hagerty family has been involved with the organization for much longer. In the Festival's early days, they hosted artists and threw wonderfully fun celebrations—a thread that continues today. During Spoleto, especially if John is involved, there's always a sense of fun and adventure. He loves the Festival because of its diversity of arts, how it encourages us to engage with differing perspectives. It provides opportunities to explore our shared humanity, and that is something that resonates wholeheartedly with John."

This luncheon, sponsored by SouthState Bank and benefitting Spoleto Festival USA, had originally been planned for April 2020, then rescheduled due to the coronavirus pandemic. Recognizing extraordinary contributions of civic and charitable leadership within the Charleston community, the Mary Ramsay Civic Award was established in 2012. It is named after Mary Croghan Ramsay (1921 - 2009), who worked tirelessly to elevate causes including the performing arts, urban development and improvement, higher education, and human welfare. The award celebrates her commitment to improving the Lowcountry and seeks to honor others who follow in her path. Past recipients include Sallie M. Duell, Susan W. Ravenel, and Kathleen Rivers (2019); Wayland H. and Marion Rivers Cato (2018); Joseph H. and Evelyn McGee (2017); Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. (2016); Martha Rivers Ingram (2015); Dr. Raymond S. Greenberg (2014); Charles S. Way, Jr. (2013); and John and Norma Palms (2012).

JOHN HAGERTY

Born and raised in downtown Charleston, John B. Hagerty earned his BA in English from Harvard University (while playing both football and lacrosse), his MBA from the University of Chicago, and his JD from the University of South Carolina. Hagerty is currently a partner at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP, where he focuses on the areas of corporate and real estate law. With Spoleto Festival USA, he has served as General Counsel to the Board for 27 years as well as the Board Secretary for 9 years. His dedication and tremendous contributions have enabled the organization to achieve its status as America's premier international performing arts festival.

Hagerty's leadership and philanthropy exceed his pro-bono involvement with Spoleto. He was recently elected chairman of the Charleston Regional Development Alliance, an organization that helps businesses and entrepreneurs expand and prosper in the greater Charleston area, and he previously served as chairman of the board of directors for the Patriots Point Development Authority, which oversees the development, stewardship, and operation of more than 350 acres of property on the Charleston Harbor (home to the Naval and Maritime Museum). Hagerty and his wife, Susan Simons, are the parents of three children, Lucas, Serena, and Sophie.

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA

Spoleto Festival USA was founded in 1977 by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Gian Carlo Menotti, who sought to create an American counterpart to the annual Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy, that he had founded in 1958. Now in its 46th year, Spoleto Festival USA is internationally recognized as America's premier performing arts festival. For 17 days and nights each spring, Spoleto Festival USA fills Charleston's historic theaters, churches, and outdoor spaces with performances in opera; theater; dance; and chamber, symphonic, choral, and jazz music. Spoleto's mission is to present programs of the highest artistic caliber while maintaining a dedication to young artists, a commitment to all forms of the performing arts, a passion for contemporary innovation, and an enthusiasm for providing unique performance opportunities for established artists. Beyond its role as a launching pad for young talent, Spoleto also serves as a catalyst for cultural change and has aided in Charleston's flourishing as a top arts and culture destination. With General Director Mena Mark Hanna at its helm, the 2022 season takes place May 27 to June 12 in various locations on the downtown peninsula. Spoleto Festival USA is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization.

Images: A selection of high-resolution images can be found in Spoleto Festival USA's [online gallery](#). For more information, visit the [press room](#).