

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PRESS RELEASE: Nina Simone Project announces campaign to construct the Nina Simone Archive**

*Collection spans personal and professional life of North Carolina musical and civil rights icon*

TRYON, N.C. – The Nina Simone Project (NSP) is proud to announce a \$2 million capital fund campaign to underwrite the construction of the Nina Simone Archive.

Planned since 2006, the archive will be built at 65 S. Trade St., Tryon, directly across from Nina Simone Plaza, which features the 2010 bronze statue of Simone by internationally acclaimed sculptor Zenos Frudakis. The new building will house thousands of primary and secondary documents on the life and legacy of the renowned “high priestess of soul” in downtown Tryon, not far from her childhood home – including rare recordings, scores, set lists, manuscripts, contracts, personal diaries, letters and more.

For the past 14 years, the Nina Simone Project has been quietly assembling the collection, which includes the signed, original “Spotlight on Nina Simone” column that Langston Hughes wrote for the Chicago Defender in November 1960, along with a stage cape Simone wore during performances for several years.

“This building is conceived to be the central repository for primary and secondary documents, memorabilia and ephemera associated with Simone’s life, both as a musical icon and civil rights activist,” said Dr. Crys Armbrust, founder and chair of the Nina Simone Project. “Her importance in both of these contexts should not be underestimated. We hope this collection will continue to inspire scholars, students and admirers of her work for generations to come.”

Armbrust said June 19 – Juneteenth – was specifically chosen for this important announcement, and that Simone’s words and work carry even more weight in today’s social and political climate.

“Simone was a powerful voice for a segment of American society and culture who felt that the separation of individuals into hierarchical structures is inherently wrong and inherently damaging to the well-being of the culture in general,” he said. “The Nina Simone Project looks forward to the new individual and corporate partnerships and opportunities that will develop from the Nina Simone Archive initiative.”

Tryon-based architect Dean Trakas has been selected for this project. His conceptual design of the two-story fronting structure includes an open, rooftop performance stage, ground-level gallery space and two residential spaces on the second floor for visiting artists. The rear elevation, because of the

eccentric topography of the area, allows for the inclusion of two lower floors that will be used for offices and archival storage.

The Nina Simone Project exists to honor the remarkable life, musical legacy and civil rights activism of Nina Simone, and to inspire and support talented youth to reach their full potential. A native of Tryon, N.C., Simone achieved international recognition for her talent and her formidable contributions to the arts and activism.

For more information or to donate, visit [www.NinaSimoneProject.org](http://www.NinaSimoneProject.org).

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