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## **youngARTS™ GOLD AND SILVER AWARD WINNERS TRAVEL TO NEW YORK FOR EXCEPTIONAL ARTISTIC TRAINING**

### **THE BEST OF THE BEST JUST GOT BETTER!**

**MIAMI (February 12, 2009)** The “cream of the crop” is the best way to describe the 42 youngARTS™ Winners converging on New York City for an incredible weeklong residency. The Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC) and Affirmation Arts, valued youngARTS partners, will be the homes of master classes, performances and exhibitions for the 2009 IN THE STUDIO, *a celebration of youngARTS’ Silver and Gold Winners*. How do we know they are the best of the best? The youngARTS adjudication process is a rigorous one and helps to identify the nation’s top artistic talent. The evaluation process began in the fall with more than 6,000 applications from across the country that was narrowed down to 140 youngARTS Finalists. These finalists were invited to Miami for youngARTS Week in January. During that week of performances and exhibitions, they were being judged on their work yet again, and now the award results are in! The Gold and Silver awards are an honor that identifies the best of the best at youngARTS Week. Recipients will receive \$10,000 (Gold) and \$5,000 (Silver) in cash awards as well as this once-in-a-lifetime New York experience.

While in New York the Gold & Silver youngARTS Honorees will participate in an intensive artistic learning experience that focuses on their development. They will have exposure to world-renowned artists, master classes with the country’s best teachers and coaches. Past master teachers include Mikhail Baryshnikov, Martin Scorsese and Plácido Domingo. In addition to classes with the masters, they will also have the opportunity for private tours of museums and galleries and more. For many, the week marks their first visit to the Big Apple. Not only will they be motivated by the creative energy that is uniquely New York, but they will be exposed to an experience that youngARTS alone can provide.

This weeklong program includes several exhibitions and studio performances at Affirmation Arts and the Baryshnikov Arts Center the first week of April. The evening will begin at 6:30 p.m. with an exhibition of the works by the youngARTS Finalists in the Visual Arts, Photography, Writing and Cinematic Arts disciplines at Affirmation Arts located at 523 W. 37<sup>th</sup> Street. This will be followed by a studio performance featuring the Winners in Voice, Music, Theater and Dance at BAC, 450 W. 37<sup>th</sup> Street. The evening will be capped off with a cabaret performance featuring the Jazz Ensemble. Tickets for the special fundraising performance and exhibition on **Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>** are \$500-\$1000, or \$10,000 for a table of 12. For ticket information or to RSVP, please contact Rebecca Gentry at (305) 377-1140 ext. 228. The week’s performances will culminate with a public



performance on **Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>**. Tickets are \$20 for regular admission and \$10 for students and seniors. Further information on purchasing tickets will be announced shortly.

youngARTS' roster of alumni reads like a "Who's Who" in the arts. Previous winners include such luminaries as former American Ballet Theatre dancer and current ABT Executive Director Rachel Moore, Josh Groban, Roy Hargrove, three-time Tony Award nominee Raúl Esparza, and actress Vanessa Williams. "It's an affirmation that you were right. Whether it was singing or dancing or acting, you knew that you were good enough to get there and people recognized it," said Ms. Williams of her experience as a youngARTS Finalist; a sentiment that has continued to be expressed by the youngARTS Alumni as they have advanced in their careers.

This off-Broadway performance by the youngARTS Winners promises to deliver the same level of talent that you would expect to see at Carnegie Hall or Lincoln Center with the added benefit of a more personal, intimate setting. The work of these young artists will give those in the audience great hope for the future of the arts in our country. For more information about the youngARTS Finalists please visit [www.youngarts.org](http://www.youngarts.org).

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#### **About youngARTS™:**

youngARTS™ is the core program of the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA). youngARTS identifies the nation's most talented high school seniors in nine different disciplines in the performing, literary and visual arts. The program offers unique educational opportunities as well as scholarships and awards to artists who demonstrate extraordinary talent. youngARTS is based on the belief that the arts sustain their power only if they are continually renewed and refreshed by the vigor and perspective of young artists. Since 1981 youngARTS has facilitated more than \$80 million in scholarships for higher education institutions throughout the country and has gifted over \$6 million in awards. youngARTS is the exclusive nominating agency to The Commission on Presidential Scholars for the annual selection of the Presidential Scholars in the Arts; the selected few receive their awards at the White House each summer. Alumni include Broadway actors, award-winning playwrights, published authors and numerous esteemed musicians and visual artists. Christina DePaul, an accomplished, award-winning artist and educator, is the President and CEO of youngARTS. For more information, please visit [www.youngARTS.org](http://www.youngARTS.org).

#### **About Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC):**

The Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC) was established in 2005 to serve as a creative laboratory, meeting place, and performance space for a vibrant community of artists from around the world. BAC is also dedicated to building audiences for the arts by presenting contemporary, innovative work at low or no cost to ticket buyers. The Center has been a partner of NFAA since it opened its doors in 2005.

#### **About Affirmation Arts:**

Affirmation Arts is a new arts complex in located Manhattan's Hudson Yards District. Comprised of a gallery space, offices and studios, the building provides an anchor to the up-and-coming arts neighborhood. The gallery offers temporary exhibition space for curators, galleries, artists and in-house shows. The Affirmation Arts Fund, with the mission to raise the status within society of art as a vocation through arts education, will begin operation in 2009. Affirmation Arts is a welcome new partner to NFAA.