



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS
INSPIRING YOUNG ARTISTS FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE

youngARTS™

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NATION'S FINEST STUDENT-ARTISTS HONORED IN WHITE HOUSE CEREMONY

***STUDENTS ALSO PERFORMED AT THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR
THE PERFORMING ARTS AND EXHIBITED THEIR ARTWORK AT THE
SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM***

WASHINGTON D.C., (JUNE 22, 2009) Twenty of National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA)'s youngARTS™ Finalists were officially named **Presidential Scholars in the Arts** in a highly anticipated White House ceremony this past Monday. These select students were presented a Presidential Medallion by Vice President Joe Biden, awarding them the highest honor bestowed on the nation's graduating high school seniors by the U.S. Department of Education and The Commission on Presidential Scholars. In addition, the writers, photographers, visual and cinematic artists exhibited their work at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the dancers, singers and musicians performed at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; a truly life changing experience for any young artist. They were also given the unique experience of meeting accomplished Visual Artist Jean Shin, and attending her gallery talk about her new exhibition, *Common Threads*. The three day event culminated in a cocktail reception at the Kennedy Center, hosted by NFAA and sponsored by Washington Life Magazine. The event brought out philanthropic heavy hitters and arts supporters including Izette Folger and Nora Maccoby, Fred Ognibene and Sarah Valente, Steven M. Sumburg, Finlay and Willee Lewis, Richard and Betty Koshalek, Dorothy Kosinski, Bette Levin Anne DeSantis, Rosanna Maietta, Savannah Clark and Pauline Thompson, Gail West, Bob Lynch from Amer for Arts, David Levy and Carole Feld. Obie Award winning Broadway actress Donna Lynne Champlin blew the crowd away as she sang selections from her one woman show *Finishing The Hat*. Ms. Champlin was a 1989 youngARTS Winner and Presidential Scholar in the Arts.

The outstanding achievement of being named a Presidential Scholar in the Arts comes as a direct result of these students' participation in NFAA's prestigious youngARTS Week. NFAA, through its youngARTS Program, is the sole nominating agency for the division of the U.S. Department of Education and the Presidential



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Scholars in the Arts. Each year, NFAA begins with more than 6,000 applicants to its youngARTS Program and through a rigorous adjudication process nominates 60 youngARTS Finalists for consideration by the Commission on Presidential Scholars, from which 20 are ultimately named Presidential Scholars in the Arts.

"It was such a thrill for me to see our youngARTS Finalists receive this celebrated honor. We first met them back in January during youngARTS Week, and were so captivated by their talents. To see them come this far is the greatest reward possible." Says Christina DePaul, NFAA President and CEO, "everything they have accomplished in such a short amount of time is truly remarkable, they are the best of the best and I am thrilled to see them get the recognition they deserve."

The 2009 class of Presidential Scholars in the Arts joins an illustrious alumni roster which includes Tony Award nominated dancer and choreographer Desmond Richardson, American Ballet Theatre Executive Director Rachel Moore, novelist and National Book Award Finalist Allegra Goodman, Grammy Award nominated violin soloist Jennifer Koh, OBIE Award-winning actress Donna Lynne Champlin and acclaimed visual artist Kevin Berlin. Being among the select few named as Presidential Scholar in the Arts helps to open many doors for these students and presents opportunities that may not have been known to them, were it not for their passion for the arts and involvement in NFAA's youngARTS Program.

Inclusion in the Presidential Scholars Program, now in its 45th year, is the highest honor bestowed upon graduating high school seniors. Each year 141 Scholars, including up to 20 Scholars in the Arts, are selected on the basis of superior academic and artistic achievements, leadership qualities, strong character and involvement in community and school activities. This year, over 3,000 students were eligible for the program's academic component, based on outstanding scores on the SAT or ACT exam. Of these, 121 were selected as Presidential Scholars.

2009 Presidential Scholars in the Arts:

Holden M. Brown, Cinematic Arts, Mandeville, LA
Ernest F. Baker II, Dance, Opa-Locka, FL
Daniel Mitra, Dance, Woodstock Valley, CT
Kathryn L. Davis, Jazz, West Linn, OR
Andrea C. Jarrett, Music/Instrumental, Saline, MI
Leann Osterkamp, Music/Instrumental, Boulder, CO
Nathaniel P. West, Music/Instrumental, Columbus, OH
Allen Yueh, Music/Instrumental, Bridgewater, NJ
Joshua A. Arky, Voice, Brooklyn, NY
Julian A. Cook, Voice, Chicago, IL



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Julia A. Kellman, Photography, Pacific Palisades, CA
Annie M. Wentzell, Photography, Ocean Springs, MS
Rachel A. Clausen, Theater, Moorehead, MN
Steven L. Johnson, Theater, Rockford, IL
Devyn A. Tyler, Theater, Pearland, TX
Priscilla S. Aleman, Visual Arts, Miami Lakes, FL
Peter C. Ferguson, Visual Arts, Fairfield, PA
Meagan C. Jenigen, Visual Arts, Richmond, VA
Celia D. Bell, Writing, Baltimore, MD
Maggie R. Millner, Writing, Cherry Valley, NY

Student bios and photos available upon request.

For information about how to register for the 2010 NFAA youngARTS program, please call 1-800-970-ARTS (2787) or visit www.youngARTS.org.

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About NFAA and youngARTS™:

youngARTS™, the core program of the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA), identifies the nation's most talented high school seniors and other 17 and 18-year olds in nine disciplines in the performing, literary and visual arts. Based on the belief that the arts can be sustained only if they are continually renewed and refreshed by the vigor and perspective of young artists, the program offers unique educational opportunities, scholarships and awards to exceptionally talented artists. Since 1981 NFAA has facilitated over \$80 million in college scholarships and gifted over \$6 million in awards. NFAA is the exclusive nominating agency to The Commission on Presidential Scholars in the Arts; a select few receive their awards at the White House each summer. Alumni include Broadway actors, award-winning playwrights, authors, musicians, vocalists and visual artists. Additionally, Educate America has designated NFAA as a "Best Charity in America." For more information, please visit www.youngARTS.org.