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**AMERICA'S MOST-RENOWNED ARTISTS JOIN
NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE ARTS
APRIL 24TH TO HONOR YOUNG RISING STARS**

MIAMI, FL (March 9, 2006) -- A star-studded cast of America's most-recognized artists, including Mikhail Baryshnikov, Michael Tilson Thomas, Ramsey Lewis, Kurt Vonnegut, and Christo and Jeanne-Claude, will be on hand **Monday, April 24, 2006** to bestow the highly-coveted Gold and Silver NFAA ARTS Awards to 37 young artists from throughout the U.S. during the annual Body & Soul event hosted by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA). Dedicated to empowering the arts for America's future, NFAA's mission is to identify emerging artists and assist them at critical junctures with their educational and professional development; and to raise the appreciation for, and support of, the arts in American society. The six Gold awardees will receive \$10,000 each and the 31 Silver awardees will receive \$5,000 each, for a total of \$215,000 in cash prizes.

"NFAA is very excited that such an outstanding group of presenters will recognize our medalists for their extraordinary talent," said NFAA president Bill Banchs. "These students have proven to be the top in their field, and it is only fitting that these legendary artists celebrate the next generation of talent."

A champagne reception for dinner patrons begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Baryshnikov Arts Center, 450 W. 37th St., New York. The awards ceremony and a performance by the NFAA ARTS Award winners takes place at 7 p.m., followed by dinner at 8:30 p.m., featuring the students as the guests of honor. The event is co-chaired by Micky & Madeline Arison, Mrs. Ginny Mancini, and Kitty Carlisle Hart. Tickets are \$350 for the champagne reception and dinner. The performance is free and open to the public by reservation only. To RSVP or for more information, please call Laura Hall at 1-888-637-3702 or visit www.NFAA.ARTSawards.org.

The students are high school seniors who were chosen as NFAA Arts Recognition and Talent Search® (ARTS) Week National finalists from an original pool of more than 6,500 applicants. NFAA ARTS Week is a once-in-a-lifetime experience allowing students to participate in master classes, workshops, readings, exhibits and enrichment activities while also given the chance to perform in front of renowned artists and arts educators. Showcasing their talent in one of nine artistic disciplines - dance, film and video, classical, pop and jazz music, photography, theater, visual arts, voice and writing – the 160 finalists were judged against a standard of excellence within their chosen discipline and granted one of six awards: Gold, Silver, Level I, Level II, Level III, and Level IV. NFAA, a not-for-profit organization pays all expenses, including airfare, hotel, meals and ground transportation for NFAA ARTS Week and the Body & Soul event.

(more)

Page 2/Body & Soul Event

Through an exclusive partnership with the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, NFAA'S winners are the only students who are considered for the honor of being named a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts.

For a complete list of ARTS finalists or more information about NFAA call 1-800-970-ARTS(2787) or please visit www.NFAA.ARTSawards.org.

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ABOUT NFAA:

Dedicated to empowering the arts for America's future, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA) is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 by businessman and visionary Ted Arison. NFAA's mission is to identify emerging artists and assist them at critical junctures with their educational and professional development; and to raise the appreciation for, and support of, the arts in American society.

Arts Recognition and Talent Search® (ARTS) is a program of the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA). The NFAA ARTS program is sponsored, in part, by: Carnival Cruise Lines; The Coca-Cola Company; Gibson Guitar, Baldwin Piano and The Gibson Foundation; International Association for Jazz Education; The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Trust; The John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts; PricewaterhouseCoopers; Smithsonian Magazine; and SunTrust. ARTS Week 2006 was made possible, in part, by support from American Airlines; the Miami Herald; the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Affairs Council, the Tourist Development Council, and the Mayor and the Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners; The State of Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more information about NFAA, visit the website NFAA.ARTSawards.org.