



**Media Contacts:**  
Dejha Carrington, National YoungArts Foundation  
[dcarrington@youngarts.org](mailto:dcarrington@youngarts.org) / 305-377-1140

Julia An, Polskin Arts & Communications Counselors  
[julia.an@finnpartners.com](mailto:julia.an@finnpartners.com) / 212-715-1694

**\*\*\*POST-EVENT MEDIA ALERT\*\*\***

## **ROSIE PEREZ, ROBERT WILSON AND TONY YAZBECK HONORED BY NATIONAL YOUNGARTS FOUNDATION**

**35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary *Backyard Ball* Raised more than \$1.6M to Support  
America's Most Talented Young Artists**

**MaxMara  
Inaugurated the MaxMara Visionary Award**



**WHAT:** On Saturday, January 9, 2016 the **National YoungArts Foundation (YoungArts)** kicked off its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the organization's annual *Backyard Ball* performance and gala. Themed "Celebrating 35 Years Through the Lens of the Future," the evening honored director and actress **Rosie Perez** and director **Robert Wilson** with Arison Awards, and performer, Tony Award-nominee, YoungArts Master Teacher and 1997 YoungArts Winner in Theater **Tony Yazbeck** with the Arison Alumni Award.

Raising more than \$1.6M to directly support the organization's contributions to the artistic development of the most promising young artists around the nation, the festivities marked the culmination of the organization's signature program **National YoungArts Week**. Guests at the *Backyard Ball* applauded all of the 2016 YoungArts Winners—approximately 170 of which were invited to YoungArts Week in Miami out of over 12,000 applications, the largest number to date.

The *Backyard Ball* was presented by Italian luxury brand **Max Mara** and hosted by co-chairs **Tracey and Bruce Berkowitz** and **Margarita and Armando Codina**, as well as 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee Chairperson **Sarah Arison**. The celebratory evening welcomed more than 700 guests, including prominent artists and alumni, community leaders, philanthropists and celebrities: Max Mara US Director of Retail **Maria Giulia Maramotti**; L.A.

Music Center's newly appointed president **Rachel Moore** (1982 Winner in Dance); Pritzker Prize winning architect **Zaha Hadid**; **Alex Blavatnik**; **Monica Kalpakian**; **Marvin Ross Friedman & Adrienne bon Haes**; **Michael Margulies**; **Daniel Novela**; **Tony Cho**; **Sylvia Cubina**; **Adriana Cisneros & Nick Griffin**; **Susanne Birbragher**; **George Lindemann**; **Franklin Sirmans**; **Kristy Edmunds**; **Robert Lynch**; **Alex Gartenfeld**; **Michael Kaiser** and more. Maria Guilia Maramotti was dressed in Max Mara as were co-chair **Tracey Berkowitz**, **Lydia Pinnell**, **Stacey Galbut**, **Erin Newberg**, **Angela Birdman** and **Diane Lieberman**.



The evening was emceed by the vivacious **Billy Porter** (1987 Winner in Theater), who also debuted a song from his album with 36 YoungArts Winners. The elegant black-tie reception and seated dinner by **STARR Catering Group** was conceived with an intimate backyard garden theme. Throughout the night, performance vignettes directed by Yazbeck featured YoungArts alumni, including **Desmond Richardson** (1986 Winner in Dance and U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts), **Dave Eggar** (1987 Winner in Music and U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts), **India Carney** (2011 Winner in Theater, Voice and U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts), **Andrew Nemr** (1997 Winner in Dance), **Jake Goldbas** (2007 Winner in Jazz), **Pascal Le Boeuf** (2004 Winner in Jazz and Music), **Riley O'Flynn** (2014 Winner in Dance), **Anne Malin Ringwalt** (2013 Winner in Writing), and **Anais Perez** (2015 Winner in Visual Arts).

Performance highlights included India Carney singing a medley of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" and "Roar;" a tap and cello duet between Andrew Nemr and Dave Eggar that celebrated their mentors and received a standing ovation; a duet about the battle between technology and personal interaction with Riley O'Flynn and Desmond Richardson; and all of the 2016 YoungArts Finalists singing "I Celebrate" with the full cast. The evening concluded with the Backyard Bash, where guests enjoyed dessert and danced under the stars to music by **DJ Cassidy**.

In addition to presenting the *Backyard Ball* for the second consecutive year, Max Mara inaugurated the **Max Mara Young Visionary Award**—an accolade reserved for an exceptional YoungArts Week finalist at the highest financial reward level of \$10,000. Presented every year for the next three years, the award aims to further encourage young artists to pursue their dreams. The inaugural recipient will be announced at a later date.

Additional support for the *Backyard Ball* was provided by EventStar Structures, Bacardi, Braman Motors. Miami Herald, MIAMI Magazine, and Seabourn.

**WHERE:** National YoungArts Foundation Campus  
2100 Biscayne Boulevard  
Miami, Florida 33137

**WHEN:** Saturday, January 9, 2016

**IMAGES &** Available upon request.

**B-ROLL:**

**MORE** <http://www.youngarts.org/gala>  
**INFO:**

### **About the National YoungArts Foundation**

The National YoungArts Foundation (YoungArts) was established in 1981 by Lin and Ted Arison to identify and support the next generation of artists in the visual, literary, design and performing arts; assist them at critical junctures in their educational and professional development; and raise appreciation for the arts in American society. In recent years, there have been approximately 11,000 applications to YoungArts; in 2015, the organization received a record breaking number of more than 12,000 applications from 15-18 year old (or grades 10-12) artists, and from these, approximately 800 Winners are selected.

YoungArts Winners work with renowned mentors, such as Mikhail Baryshnikov, Plácido Domingo, Frank Gehry, Jeff Koons, Wynton Marsalis, Robert Redford, Rebecca Walker and Bruce Weber; receive cash awards of up to \$10,000; gain access to significant scholarships; become eligible for nomination as a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts; and perform and exhibit their work at some of the nation's leading cultural institutions, including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, D.C.), The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), The Museum of Modern Art (New York) and New World Center (Miami). YoungArts Winners also become part of the strong YoungArts alumni network artists, which offers them additional opportunities throughout their careers.

YoungArts alumni who have gone on to become leading professionals in their fields include actresses Anna Gunn, Viola Davis, and Kerry Washington; Broadway stars Raúl Esparza, Andrew Rannells and Billy Porter; recording artists Josh Groban, Chris Young and Judith Hill; Metropolitan Opera star Eric Owens; musicians Terence Blanchard, Gerald Clayton and Jennifer Koh; leading choreographer Desmond Richardson; visual artists Daniel Arsham and Hernan Bas; internationally acclaimed multimedia artist Doug Aitken; television writer, producer, and director Jenji Kohan; *New York Times* bestselling author Sam Lipsyte; and Academy Award winning filmmaker Doug Blush.

For more information, visit [youngarts.org](http://youngarts.org), [facebook.com/YoungArtsFoundation](https://facebook.com/YoungArtsFoundation) or [twitter.com/YoungArts](https://twitter.com/YoungArts). To watch a brief video about YoungArts, click [here](#)

### **About Max Mara**

Max Mara is the premier collection within the Max Mara Fashion Group and is the epitome of Italian luxury and style. As a contemporary collection for the confident woman, consisting of opulent fabrications with couture details applied to ready-to-wear, Max Mara pieces embody femininity and craftsmanship. Symbolic for impeccable silhouettes with a timeless sensibility and constructed from the most luxurious fabrics, Max Mara is revered for the classification of the coat, sharp suiting and elegant accessories. Founded in 1951 by the late visionary, Achille Maramotti, Max Mara is now available in 2,368 locations in 100 countries. Max Mara Fashion Group counts 19 different collections. The company remains privately held.

Photo Credits: (left to right, top to bottom) Rich Kohan, Maria Guilia Maramotti, John Clark, Tony Yazbeck, Sarah Arison, Richard Wilson, Rosie Perez, Billy Porter, Riley O'Flynn, Desmond Richardson, India Carney, Andrew Nemr, Dave Eggar, Anais Perez, Anne Malin Ringwalt. All images © Getty Images.