



For Immediate Release

Feb. 11, 2014

**ANNA DEAVERE SMITH: A YOUNGARTS MASTERCLASS,
THE LATEST EDITION OF THE EMMY®-NOMINATED
HBO FAMILY DOCUMENTARY SHOW, DEBUTS FEB. 17**

Each year, thousands of high school students apply to the National YoungArts Foundation (YoungArts), hoping for a chance to be mentored by some of the world's greatest artists. In ANNA DEAVERE SMITH: A YOUNGARTS MASTERCLASS, the latest edition of the two-time Emmy®-nominated show, the acclaimed actress and playwright challenges six young actors to use their life experiences and talents to create an original theater piece to be performed in San Francisco. Emphasizing the importance of mentorship in the arts, this behind-the-scenes look at the creative process debuts MONDAY, FEB. 17 (7:30-8:00 p.m. ET/PT), exclusively on HBO.

Other HBO playdates: Feb. 20 (10:00 a.m.), 23 (noon) and 26 (2:30 p.m.), and March 13 (6:15 a.m.)

HBO2 playdates: March 14 (5:45 a.m.) and 27 (9:45 a.m.).

YoungArts is devoted to identifying and supporting the nation's next generation of artists. In ANNA DEAVERE SMITH: A YOUNGARTS MASTERCLASS, the celebrated actress works with the 2013 YoungArts winners in theater – Julian Aldana-Tejada, Jaz Sinclair, Analisa Gutierrez, Joseph Wood, Justice Smith and Melody Dailey – to help them break down their emotional walls and perform an original piece that requires them to trust themselves and rely on each other.

Contact: New York: Asheba Edghill (212) 512-7331
Los Angeles: Nancy Lesser (310) 382-3274

homeboxoffice.com

ANNA DEAVERE SMITH: A YOUNGARTS MASTERCLASS – 2

Smith interviews each of the students individually, without revealing that their responses will shape the script for the upcoming performance. Although the students are nervous about opening up and exposing their vulnerabilities, their desire to grow as actors allows them to embrace the experience, which Justice Smith describes as “overwhelming, in the best way possible.” Anna Deavere Smith selects a section of each of their interviews and then assigns it to another student – they will “perform each other” in their original show, titled “Identity.” With doubt, anxiety, excitement and nerves, the six young actors accept her challenge to “take the broad jump towards the other” and perform before an audience after just three days of rehearsals.

Previous YOUNGARTS MASTERCLASS shows have featured such artists as YoungArts alumnus singer Josh Groban, vocalist Bobby McFerrin, playwright Edward Albee, actresses Patti LuPone and Kathleen Turner, photographer Bruce Weber, architect Frank Gehry, opera singers Placido Domingo and Renée Fleming, dancer-choreographer Bill T. Jones and artist-filmmaker Julian Schnabel.

ANNA DEAVERE SMITH: A YOUNGARTS MASTERCLASS was produced and directed by Karen Goodman and Kirk Simon, whose Simon & Goodman Picture Company has received numerous awards and accolades, including a Best Documentary Short Subject Oscar® for the 2011 HBO documentary “Strangers No More.”

###