YOUNGARTS AND JORGE M. PÉREZ FAMILY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE NEW ARTIST GRANT AT NATIONAL YOUNGARTS FOUNDATION BACKYARD BALL

$1.5M RAISED TO SUPPORT EMERGING ARTISTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Camille A. Brown and The Haas Brothers receive Arison Awards

Alumni performances directed by Grammy-nominated musician Jake Goldbas featuring special tribute to jazz great and 1988 YoungArts alumnus Roy Hargrove

IMAGES AND B-ROLL AVAILABLE

Miami, FL (January 14, 2019) – On Saturday, January 12, 2019, the National YoungArts Foundation (YoungArts) welcomed approximately 750 guests and raised $1.5 million at the organization’s largest annual fundraiser, the Backyard Ball performance and gala, presented by Harry Winston, Inc. A high point of the evening was the announcement of the inaugural Jorge M. Pérez Award, a new unrestricted grant for emerging and mid-career artists to receive mentorship and $25,000 to advance their practice.

In its maiden year, the Jorge M. Pérez Award, generously funded by The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation, recognizes the contributions of Latinx artists who have succeeded in strengthening their community through artistic endeavors, with future editions set to honor artists across a diverse range of mediums and areas of focus. Inaugural award recipients Chat Travieso (2003 YoungArts Winner in Visual Arts & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts) and Kathia St. Hilaire (2013 YoungArts Winner in Visual Arts) have both demonstrated artistic excellence and shown promise of future achievement.
“We pride ourselves on offering the nation’s most promising artists the space, funding, professional development and mentorship they need to thrive in their artistic journeys,” said Sarah Arison. “Words alone cannot capture the sense of community, connection and affirmation they experience through YoungArts. It’s a feeling that will lift them up during National YoungArts Week, and encourage and embolden them for years to come.”

“Artists play a more important role in today’s society than ever before. Not only do they inspire us with their work, but they push social boundaries and express the frustrations and ecstasies of countless others around them. While this year’s beneficiaries are two Latinx visual artists, future recipients will be selected from a wide variety of creative fields at the intersection of art and activism.” said Jorge M. Pérez. “I am blown away by Kathia and Chat’s work and sincerely hope their success and recognition inspires other aspiring artists to follow in their footsteps.”

The celebratory evening honored prolific choreographer and bold visionary Camille A. Brown (1997 YoungArts Winner in Dance & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts), and singular interdisciplinary designers and YoungArts mater teachers Simon and Nikolai Haas of The Haas Brothers, with the 2019 Arison Alumni Award and Arison Award, respectively, for their contributions and commitment to the arts.

Reclaiming the cultural narrative of African American identity through dance and interdisciplinary performance, alumna Camille A. Brown is also a Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellow, four-time Princess Grace Award winner, Guggenheim Fellow, Jacob’s Pillow Dance Award recipient, USA Jay Franke & David Herro Fellow, TED Fellow and Doris Duke Artist Award recipient, to name a few. Through her company Camille A. Brown and Dancers, Brown provides outreach activities to students, young adults and incarcerated women and men across the country. Currently, she is performing her new work “ink,” the final installation of the company’s trilogy about culture, race and identity.

Twins Nikolai and Simon Haas founded The Haas Brothers in Los Angeles in 2010, and are known for their exceptional craftsmanship as cross-pollinators in creative disciplines such as fashion, film, art and design. They recently opened their first solo museum exhibition at The Bass Museum of Art, and have exhibited at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York, Design Miami during Miami Art Week, and the San Jose Museum of Art in California, among others.

Capping off National YoungArts Week, YoungArts’ signature program celebrating 160 Finalists in the visual, literary, design and performing arts, the Backyard Ball was presented by fine jeweler Harry Winston, Inc, for whom philanthropy is a longstanding tradition, with VIP Host Partner UBS. Hosted by co-chairs Oxana and Steven Marks, Jackie Soffer and Craig Robins, and honorary chairs Darlene and Jorge M. Pérez, the Backyard Ball brought together the nation’s most promising artists, industry leaders, and artistic and cultural luminaries including the 2019 Backyard Ball Gala Leaders Committee Sarah Arison, who wore earrings and a necklace from the Diamond Loop Collection by Harry Winston, Asha and Jamie Elias, Jay Franke and David Herro, Bill Jones and Rey Hernandez, Amy and Richard Kohan, Lisa Miller, Remi and Oti Roberts, Laurinda Spear and Bernardo Fort-Brescia, Sandra and Tony Tamer, Ellie and Bruce Taub, Judy and Charlie Temel, and Maurice Zarmati. Additional guests included Todd Bishop, Adriana Cisneros and Nicholas Griffin, Brian and Andrea Cullinan, Marvin Ross Friedman and Adrienne Bon Haes, Danielle and Greg Garbo, Russell Granet, Alan and Diane Lieberman, Lourdes Lopez, Bob Lynch, Michael Moser, Jay Parker, Ariel Penzer and Jeremy Milgroom, Victoria Rogers, Mera and Don Rubell, Dennis and Debra Scholl, and artists, curators and musicians Naomi Fisher, Naiomy Guerrero, Rosie Gordon-Wallace, Michael McElroy, Joan Morgan, Yara Travesio and Betty Wright.
When presented the Jorge M. Pérez Award, the Miami-born and Brooklyn based artist, designer and educator Chat Travieso talked about his experience during National YoungArts Week, and how working as a master teacher with the 2019 Finalists in Design has inspired him. “If these artists are any indication of the future, I have hope—the hope we really need right now.”

The evening was emceed by YoungArts alumna and Tony Award nominee Shalita Grant (2006 YoungArts Winner in Theater & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts) and featured a series of inspiring alumni performances with artistic direction by Grammy Award-nominated musician Jake Goldbas (2007 YoungArts Winner in Jazz), with Devon Yesberger (2010 YoungArts Winner in Jazz) on piano, Armand Hirsch (2009 YoungArts Winner in Jazz) on guitar and Chris Smith (2007 YoungArts Winner in Jazz) on bass throughout the evening.

The opening vignette “Diamonds in the Rough” — dedicated to the 2019 YoungArts winners — was choreographed by Chanel DaSilva (2004 YoungArts Winner in Dance & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts) and performed by DaSilva with dancers Javon Jones (2016 YoungArts Winner in Dance) and Gaby Diaz (2014 YoungArts Winner in Dance) to original music by Parisalexa (2016 YoungArts Winner in Voice) and Michael Mayo (2010 YoungArts Winner in Voice).

The second performance, a tribute to jazz legend Roy Hargrove (1988 YoungArts Winner in Jazz), featured John Michel Bradford (2015 YoungArts Winner in Jazz), Philip Dizack (2003 YoungArts Winner in Jazz) and JJ Kirkpatrick (2008 YoungArts Winner in Jazz) on trumpet. The performance highlighted Hargrove’s lasting impression on the musicians during their formative years, and how his affirmation, encouragement and wisdom helped them gain valuable confidence to pursue their artistic careers. Bradford noted, “If there was a Mount Rushmore of trumpeters, Hargrove would be there alongside Louis Armstrong, Terence Blanchard and Wynton Marsalis.”

The final vignette, a medley of music and dance entitled “A Million Dreams” featuring Lianah Sta. Ana (2016 Winner in Theater & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts) and Michael Mayo (2010 YoungArts Winner in Voice) brought the entire alumni cast to the stage, followed by all 2019 Finalists.
During the cocktail reception, models in life-sized windows showcased timeless pieces from Harry Winston's iconic collections, and guests enjoyed a seated dinner catered by Constellation Culinary Group. This year's Backyard Ball décor exuded timeless elegance in colors of rich sapphire and cream, with gold and silver metallic accents.

The evening concluded with dancing and dessert under the stars at the Backyard Bash after party on the YoungArts Plaza, featuring music by DJ Pirate Stereo.

The Backyard Ball performance and gala is presented by Harry Winston. Support for the gala is provided by EventStar Structures, Bacardi U.S.A., Inc. and The Facundo Rum Collection, Miami Herald, Miami Magazine and Power Collective.

Images and B-roll of the Backyard Ball are available at youngarts.org/press-kits.

**ABOUT THE NATIONAL YOUNGARTS FOUNDATION**

The National YoungArts Foundation (YoungArts) was established in 1981 by Lin and Ted Arison to identify and nurture the most accomplished young artists in the visual, literary, design and performing arts, and assist them at critical junctures in their educational and professional development. Through a wide range of annual programs, performances, and partnerships with some of the nation’s leading cultural institutions, YoungArts aspires to create a strong community of alumni and a platform for a lifetime of encouragement, opportunity and support.

YoungArts’ signature program is an application-based award for emerging artists ages 15–18 or in grades 10–12 from across the United States. Selected through a blind adjudication process, YoungArts winners receive valuable support, including financial awards of up to $10,000, professional development and educational experiences working with renowned mentors—such as Debbie Allen, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Rebecca Walker, Frank Gehry, Jeff Koons, Wynton Marsalis, Salman Rushdie and Carrie Mae Weems—and performance and exhibition opportunities 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). Additionally, YoungArts winners are eligible for nomination as a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts, one of the nation’s highest honors for high school students who exemplify academic and artistic excellence.

YoungArts winners become part of a thousands-strong alumni network of artists, which offers them additional professional opportunities throughout their careers. YoungArts alumni who have gone on to become leading professionals in their fields include actresses Viola Davis, Anna Gunn, Zuzanna Szadkowski and Kerry Washington; Broadway stars Raúl Esparza, Billy Porter, Andrew Rannells and Tony Yazbeck; recording artists Josh Groban, Judith Hill and Chris Young; Metropolitan Opera star Eric Owens; musicians Terence Blanchard, Gerald Clayton, Jennifer Koh and Elizabeth Roe; choreographers Camille A. Brown and Desmond Richardson; visual artists Daniel Arsham and Hernan Bas; internationally acclaimed multimedia artist Doug Aitken; New York Times bestselling author Sam Lipsyte; and Academy Award winners Doug Blush and Tarell Alvin McCraney.
For more information, visit youngarts.org, Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.
To watch a brief video about YoungArts, click here.

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Founded in New York City, in 1932, The House of Harry Winston continues to set the standard for the ultimate in fine jewelry and high-end watch making. From the acquisition of some of the world’s most famous gemstones, including the Jonker, Hope and Winston Legacy Diamonds, to adorning Hollywood’s leading ladies on the red carpet, for over eight decades, Harry Winston has been a symbol of the best there is. Headquartered in New York, the company operates retail salons worldwide, in locations including: New York, Beverly Hills, London, Paris, Genève, Rome, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Shanghai.

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