MIA MI, FL (February 26, 2019) – National YoungArts Foundation (YoungArts) today announces Sahara Sidi as the recipient of the 2019 YoungArts Lin Arison Excellence in Writing Award, a $50,000 scholarship given each year to a YoungArts winner in Writing.

Now in its second year, the award is an example of YoungArts' ongoing expansion to support its artists across professional and artistic development. Sidi, who is a 2019 YoungArts winner, may apply the financial award against the cost of tuition, room and board to attend an accredited school of her choice.

"YoungArts has always been a place of opportunity, unlimited possibilities and support for me," said Sidi. "I've met some of my best friends and greatest mentors at YoungArts. In more ways than one, this foundation and its members have taught me that being an artist is as legitimate as pursuing a career in science or engineering. YoungArts propels young artists forward with all the tools they need to succeed, and this scholarship is just one example of that."

Sidi is a rising sophomore at Wesleyan University. Her work and perspective are influenced by the pronounced dichotomy between female oppression in the U.S. and her father's native Mauritania. Prose has served as a vessel to carry Sidi's meditations on gender roles, sexuality and the reconciliation of Mauritanian culture with her Western morals. Her writing has also been recognized by the National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, Columbia College Chicago and Hollins University.

SUPPORT
The 2019 Lin Arison Excellence in Writing Award is presented by the Micky and Madeleine Arison Family Foundation.

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, Wynton Marsalis, José Parlá, 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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