MEDIA ALERT *** MEDIA ALERT *** MEDIA ALERT

JAZZ TRUMPETER AND COMPOSER TERENCE BLANCHARD AND CONTEMPORARY ARTIST TERESITA FERNÁNDEZ HONORED BY NATIONAL YOUNGARTS FOUNDATION

Annual Backyard Ball Performance and Gala Raised more than $1.7M to Support Emerging Artists Nationwide

Artists Ilana Harris-Babou and Mateo Nava Receive Jorge M. Pérez Award

Evening’s Special Performance Directed by John Heginbotham
WHAT:

On Saturday, January 11, 2020, National YoungArts Foundation (YoungArts) welcomed more than **800 guests** and raised over **$1.7 million** at the organization’s largest annual fundraiser, the **Backyard Ball performance and gala**, presented by **Harry Winston, Inc.** and supported by VIP Host Partner **UBS Financial Services, Inc.**, as part of National YoungArts Week. The event honored jazz trumpeter and composer **Terence Blanchard** (1980 YoungArts Winner in Classical Music) and contemporary artist **Teresita Fernández** with the Arison Alumni Award and Arison Award, respectively, for their vital contributions and commitment to the arts. The evening also celebrated the achievements of the 2020 YoungArts Winners, the nation’s most accomplished young artists in the literary, visual and performing arts.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the **Jorge M. Pérez Award** to New York-based sculptor and installation artist **Iliana Harris-Babou** (2009 YoungArts Winner in Visual Arts) and Miami-based sculptor and painter **Mateo Nava** (2013 YoungArts Winner in Visual Arts & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts). The Jorge M. Pérez Award, funded by The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation, provides a $25,000 unrestricted award to YoungArts Visual Arts alumni who have demonstrated artistic excellence and shown promise of future achievement.

Proceeds from the event support YoungArts’ programs in Miami, Los Angeles, New York and Washington D.C., which offer aspiring artists opportunities to work with leading artists in their fields; present their work at major venues; collaborate across disciplines; be considered for residencies and fellowships; and apply for additional financial support. Backyard Ball guests applauded the 2020 YoungArts Winners and celebrated the culmination of the organization’s signature program, National YoungArts Week, which took place from January 5 through January 12.

The Backyard Ball was hosted by honorary chairs **Sandra and Tony Tamer**, and co-chairs **Sarah Arison and Thomas Wilhelm, Jay Franke and David Herro**, and **Oxana and Steven Marks**. In addition to the chairs, the Backyard Ball gala leaders committee included **Jeffrey Davis and Michael Miller, Asha and Jamie Elias, Lisa Heiden-Koffler and Adam Koffler, Carolyn and Alex Hurst, Amy and Richard Kohan, Diane and Alan Lieberman, Darlene and Jorge M. Pérez, Remi and Oti Roberts, Laurinda Spear and Bernardo Fort-Brescia, Ellie and Bruce Taub, Ana and Sean Wolfington and Maurice Zarmati**.

In attendance were newly-appointed YoungArts board members **Derrick Adams, Doug Blush** (1984 YoungArts Winner in Film), **Natalie Diggins, Glenda Pedroso** and **Jim Shreve**, as well as many renowned artists and alumni like **Zoë Buckman, Claire Chase** (1996 YoungArts Winner in Classical Music & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts), **Khirma Eliazov, Dr. Ron McCurdy, Dr. Joan Morgan, José Parlá, Vernon Scott, Michael Trusnovec** (1992 YoungArts Winner in Dance & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts) and **Betty Wright**.

Community leaders in attendance included Miami City Ballet Executive Director **Tania Castroverde Moskalenko**, ICA Miami Artistic Director **Alex Gartenfeld**, curator **Rosie Gordon-Wallace**, Pérez Art Museum Miami Director **Franklin Sirmans** and Director of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs **Michael Spring**.

Philanthropists present at the event included **Olga Blavatnik, Norman and Irma Braman, Adriana Cisneros and Nick Griffin, Daniel and Veronica de la Vega, Stacey and Jared Galbut, George and Margot Grieg, Michi and Charlie Jigarjian, William L.**
and Jan Morrison, Marvin Ross Friedman and Adrienne Bon Haes, Jane and Robert Toll and Terry Zucker.

Inspired by Miami’s tropical environment, the event’s decor featured spectacular arrangements of Phalaenopsis orchids, Monstera leaves and palm trees, also seen in the palm print patterns around the space, with varying shades of green and added touches of bronze and white as accents.

The House of Harry Winston, the event’s presenting partner, brought a bit of Hollywood sparkle to the Backyard Ball red carpet. Co-chair Sarah Arison was dressed in spectacular Harry Winston jewels, lighting up the red carpet and adding to the undeniable glamour of the night.

Guests were welcomed into the cocktail reception before dinner, where some of Harry Winston’s most renowned diamond collections and timepiece novelties were prominently on display.

The Backyard Ball program was hosted by emcees Natalie Gold (1994 YoungArts Winner in Theater) and Eric Liberman (1994 YoungArts Winner in Theater), who shared their YoungArts experiences with the captive audience.

A highlight of the evening was the multidisciplinary performance directed by acclaimed choreographer John Heginbotham, in collaboration with musical director Jake Goldbas (2007 YoungArts Winner in Jazz). The performance featured YoungArts alumni Alaman Diadihiou (2016 YoungArts Winner in Dance & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts), Mercedes Ferreira-Dias (2019 YoungArts Winner in Voice & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts), Ayoun Kim (2017 YoungArts Winner in Classical Music), Charlie Kogen (2019 YoungArts Winner in Voice & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts), Michelle May (2014 YoungArts Winner in Dance), Zoe Obadia (2014 YoungArts Winner in Jazz), Isha Parupudi (2019 YoungArts Winner in Dance & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts), Julius Rodriguez (2014 YoungArts Winner in Jazz), Gabrielle Stravelli (1997 YoungArts Winner in Voice) and Devon Yesberger (2010 YoungArts Winner in Jazz).
The electrifying performance opened with a percussive and tap battle between Goldbas and Rodriguez on the drums, and dancers Diadhiou and May. Following the battle, the vignette continued with Diadhiou performing “Wait For It” from the Broadway hit musical Hamilton, and a celebratory entrance of the 2020 YoungArts Finalists.

Guests enjoyed a second vignette featuring an original song by Kogen and a soulful arrangement of “Bridge Over Troubled Water” by Stravelli, accompanied by a classical Indian dance solo by Parupudi. Ferreira-Dias closed out the night with a stunning rendition of Jill Scott’s “Golden” accompanied by the full cast.

Additional support for the Backyard Ball was provided by EventStar Structures, Bacardi U.S.A., Inc, Braman Miami, Miami Herald, Miami Magazine, Power Collective and Southern Glazer’s Wine & Spirits.

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

**WHEN:**  
Saturday, January 11, 2020

**IMAGES:**  
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**About National YoungArts Foundation**
National YoungArts Foundation (YoungArts) was established in 1981 by Lin and Ted Arison. YoungArts identifies the most accomplished young artists in the visual, literary and performing arts, and provides them with creative and professional development opportunities throughout their careers.

Entrance into this prestigious organization starts with a highly competitive application process for talented artists ages 15–18, or grades 10-12, in the United States, that is judged by esteemed discipline-specific panels of artists through a rigorous blind adjudication process. In their first year, YoungArts winners, who represent the top 10% of applicants, receive valuable financial awards of up to $10,000; presentation opportunities at renowned
institutions; and the chance to learn from notable artists and mentors such as Debbie Allen, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Frank Gehry, Wynton Marsalis, Salman Rushdie and Mickalene Thomas in intimate settings.

YoungArts winners are further eligible for exclusive opportunities including: nomination as a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts, one of the nation's highest honors for high school students; a wide range of fellowships, residencies and awards; presentation opportunities at major venues nationwide; additional financial support; and access to YoungArts Post, a free, private digital network for YoungArts artists to connect, collaborate and learn about additional opportunities. YoungArts alumni include accomplished leaders in their fields such as Daniel Arsham, Terence Blanchard, Camille A. Brown, Viola Davis, Allegra Goodman, Josh Groban, Judith Hill, Tarell Alvin McCraney, Andrew Rannells, Desmond Richardson and Hunter Schafer.

For more information, visit youngarts.org, Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.

**About Harry Winston, Inc.**

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, Geneva, Rome, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Shanghai. Support for the National YoungArts Foundation is part of The Harry Winston Brilliant Futures® Charitable Program which proudly supports leading organizations that provide young people with a quality education, enable all individuals to have a healthy future, and give access to enriching experiences within the arts.