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youngARTS JAZZ FINALISTS HEAT UP THE STAGE AT THE VAN DYKE WITH NICOLE HENRY!

Miami, FL (Jan 16)- The Van Dyke was the place to be last night, as the youngARTS Jazz Finalists performed for a packed house alongside acclaimed songstress, Nicole Henry. The gifted youngARTS Jazz Finalists band includes **Kate Davis on Bass, Mark Whitfield on drums, Adam Larson on saxophone, Armand Hirsch on guitar, Ben Benack III on trumpet and Emmet Cohen on Piano**. Remember these names because being selected by youngARTS means that they are rising stars! "Tonight was the perfect culmination of youngARTS Week and our jazz finalists proved definitively that they are the best of the best in the nation" says youngARTS National Panelist, Dr. Ron McCurdy, renowned jazz musician in his own right, Chairman of the Department of Jazz Studies and Professor of Music at the Thornton School of Music at University of Southern California.

Webcast to thousands and those who had the pleasure of being inside, this event was truly a night to remember. The youngARTS Jazz band performed with renowned jazz vocalist, youngARTS Adjudicator, Nicole Henry, who had the crowd captivated with her voice for two sets. Henry has had an impressive career as a songstress, garnering praise for her sultry, smooth sound. She has earned awards such as Best New Jazz Artist and Best Vocal Jazz Album and has been proclaimed as "one of the most impressive live performers of the great American songbook". Henry has previously served as an adjudicator for youngARTS, where she helped to select the national finalists for the youngARTS Competition. This year as a special treat, Henry shared the stage with the talented youngARTS Jazz Finalists.

This event was a first of its kind for youngARTS, and will be remembered forever as a rousing success. The youngARTS Jazz band had the crowd on their feet as they each mastered their respective instruments and came together to create a sound creating a stellar sound, astonishing everyone in the audience. "Truly unbelievable" says Judy Block, Vice President, Communications for youngARTS. "These kids have proven that they are the best in the country. You will be seeing these kids again, mark my words! We couldn't be prouder to be the National organization that identifies and supports such amazing talent. That's what youngARTS is all about." The youngARTS Jazz Finalists will top off the week in Miami at the *Affair of the Arts* Performance and Gala to celebrate all of the youngARTS Finalists success.

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About youngARTS™:

youngARTS™ is the core program of the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA). youngARTS identifies the nation's most talented high school seniors in nine different disciplines in the performing, literary and visual arts. The program offers unique educational opportunities as well as scholarships and awards to artists who demonstrate extraordinary talent. youngARTS is based on the belief that the arts sustain their power only if they are continually renewed and refreshed by the vigor and perspective of young artists. Since 1981 youngARTS has facilitated more than \$80 million in scholarships for higher education institutions throughout the country and has gifted over \$6 million in awards. youngARTS is the exclusive nominating agency to The Commission on Presidential Scholars for the annual selection of the Presidential Scholars in the Arts; the selected few receive their awards at the White House each summer. Alumni include Broadway actors, award-winning playwrights, published authors and numerous esteemed musicians and visual artists. Christina DePaul, an accomplished, award-winning artist and educator, is the new President and CEO of youngARTS. For more information, please visit www.youngARTS.org.