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youngARTS SELECTS TOP STUDENT ARTISTS NATIONWIDE FOR PRESTIGIOUS 2007 CASH AWARDS

*141 Finalists Will Attend Weeklong Celebration of the Arts in Miami;
Only Students Considered as U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts*

MIAMI, FL (Dec. 12, 2006) – youngARTS, a program of the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA), has chosen 141 high school seniors as this year's national finalists for the prestigious arts awards initiative, which gives out more than \$500,000 annually for emerging talent. The students will be evaluated in a dramatic series of final auditions and showcase performances during youngARTS Week in Miami, January 8 – 14. NFAA, a not-for-profit organization, pays all expenses, including airfare, hotel, meals and ground transportation. The program was formerly known as NFAA Arts Recognition and Talent Search® (ARTS).

Students not named finalists were recognized with either a \$250 Honorable Mention Award, given to those in the top 5% of the youngARTS registrant pool, or with a \$100 Merit Award, given to those in the top 10% of the registrant pool.

youngARTS celebrates and rewards exceptional student artists from across the U.S. in each of nine artistic fields: dance, film and video, classical, pop and jazz music, photography, theater, visual arts, voice and writing. youngARTS Week is a once-in-a-lifetime experience allowing students to participate in master classes, workshops, readings, exhibits and enrichment activities while also given the chance to perform in front of renowned artists and arts educators.

The students were selected in a blind judging process from a pool of 7,300 applicants representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia, as well as all U.S. territories. Through an exclusive partnership with the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, the U.S. Department of Education and the Presidential Scholars Program, the 141 finalists are the only high school students considered for the additional honor of being named a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts.

"We're so proud to honor these extraordinary young artists," said NFAA President William H. Banchs. "The youngARTS program is a chance to gather the nation's most promising young artists to share their skills and learn from educators and their peers. Most importantly, we want to equip these students with the support, confidence and enthusiasm needed to pursue their passion and fulfill their potential."

Following youngARTS Week in early January, each finalist will receive one of the following awards:

- The coveted **\$10,000 Gold Awards**, given to up to 15 deserving finalists;
- The **\$5,000 Silver Awards**, given to up to four deserving finalists in each of the nine youngARTS disciplines; and
- Level III, II and I Awards ranging from **\$1,000 to \$3,000**.

Concluding youngARTS Week 2007 will be the annual *An Affair of the Arts* Performance and Gala, honoring this year's finalists and paying homage to jazz pianist **Dave Brubeck**, who will receive the seventh annual Arison Award, and critically-acclaimed novelist **Allegra Goodman**, 1985 NFAA youngARTS winner in Writing and a Presidential Scholar in the Arts, who will receive the second annual NFAA Alumni Award. The awards are sponsored by PricewaterhouseCoopers and Gibson Guitar and Baldwin Piano, respectively.

NFAA and its youngARTS program were established 26 years ago by Carnival Cruise Lines creator Ted Arison and his wife Lin Arison to identify uniquely gifted young artists and assist them both financially and educationally. Its roster of alumni reads like a "Who's Who" in the arts, and includes such luminaries as actress and recording artist Vanessa Williams, recent *Nashville Star* winner Chris Young, dancer/choreographer Desmond Richardson, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater principals Mathew Rushing and Linda Celeste Sims, New York City Ballet principal Philip Neal, former American Ballet Theatre dancer and current ABT Executive Director Rachel Moore, Warner Brothers recording artist Josh Groban, Philadelphia Orchestra principal clarinetist Ricardo Morales, New York Philharmonic guest solo violinist Jennifer Koh, jazz trumpet player Roy Hargrove, Broadway actors Ron Eldard and Raul Esparza, sculptor Kevin Berlin and visual artist Hernan Bas.

For a complete list of 2007 NFAA youngARTS finalists or for information about how to register for the 2008 NFAA youngARTS program, please call 1-800-970-ARTS (2787) or visit www.NFAA.ARTSawards.org.

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ABOUT youngARTS:

youngARTS is sponsored, in part, by: Carnival Cruise Lines; The Coca-Cola Company; Gibson Guitar Corporation; Baldwin Piano; Gibson Baldwin Music Education; The Gibson Foundation; The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Trust; The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; and SunTrust. youngARTS Week 2007 is being sponsored, in part, by: American Airlines, The National Endowment for the Arts, the State of Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Arts Council; and the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs; the Cultural Affairs Council; the Tourist Development Council; and the Mayor and the Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners.