



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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15 STUDENTS NAMED TEXAS YOUNG MASTERS

TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST TO PRESENT 2016 CLASS AT ZACH THEATRE, APRIL 25, 2016

FEATURING SPECIAL PERFORMANCES BY TOSCA STRING QUARTET, THE PETERSON BROTHERS,

BLACKSHEAR ELEMENTARY FINE ARTS ACADEMY CHORUS

FEATURING PRESENTATIONS BY HONORARY CHAIR FIRST LADY CECILIA ABBOTT & SPECIAL GUEST HOLLAND TAYLOR



AUSTIN, Texas – The Texas Cultural Trust (TCT) and the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) are proud to announce that 15 of the state’s most gifted rising stars, representing a diverse array of artistic talent have been chosen for the 2016 Class of Texas Young Masters. This list includes high school students in creative disciplines from Indian classical dance to mixed media visual arts, from Plano to Lubbock to Sugarland. The Texas Young Masters is a joint initiative between the Trust and TCA that awards 8th through 11th grade students scholarship grants of \$5,000 a year for two years. The program recognizes excellence in students across all artistic disciplines, including dance, literary arts, media arts/film, music, theater, musical theater, literary and visual arts. **Since its inception in 2002, the TCT and TCA have given 278 grants to 139 Young Masters, awarding \$857,500 to aspiring artists from across the state.**

The star-studded event will take place on Monday, April 25, 2016, at ZACH Theatre in Austin, Texas, with an Opening Reception at 6:00 pm, a private VIP reception sponsored by *Texas Monthly* at 6:00 pm, and show at 7:00 pm. Tickets may be purchased by calling the ZACH Theatre Box Office at 512.476.0541 or by visiting the Texas Cultural Trust website at www.txculturaltrust.org.

THE 2016 CLASS OF TEXAS YOUNG MASTERS

Todd Baker, 11th Grade, Carrollton, *Dance*
Samantha Choo, 11th Grade, Plano, *Music/Violin*

Emma Colwell, 11th Grade, Grand Prairie, *Musical Theatre*
Margaret Errickson, 9th Grade, Houston, *Visual Arts/Mixed Media*
Quinlan Facey, 11th Grade, Plano, *Music/Piano*
Niell Gorman, 11th Grade, Houston, *Visual Arts*
Shadden Hashem, 11th Grade, Colleyville, *Dance*
Mia Heckler, 11th Grade, Bellaire, *Theatre*
Bhargavi Sarangapani, 9th Grade, Coppell, *Dance/Indian Classical*
Fiona Shea, 11th Grade, Lubbock, *Music/Violin*
Emma Sutherland, 9th Grade, Dallas, *Dance*
Zane Unger, 11th Grade, Dallas, *Dance*
Olivia Vanderslice, 11th Grade, Garland, *Dance*
Johnathan Wu, 11th Grade, Plano, *Violin*
Anton Zhou, 11th Grade, Sugarland, *Visual Arts*

"The Trust wants to congratulate the 2016 Class of Texas Young Masters," said Jennifer Ransom Rice, Executive Director of TCT. "Those chosen represent not just amazing talent, but a deep commitment to their chosen artistic field as well. We are honored to be able to support these exceptional rising stars as they develop into the Texas legends of tomorrow."

"The Texas Commission on the Arts is pleased to have consistently contributed to the advancement of young Texas artists at such a pivotal point in their artistic development," said Gary Gibbs, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Texas Commission on the Arts. "The Texas Young Masters program identifies and nurtures students who have a wealth of talent and possibility, and we take great pride in that."

Multi-GRAMMY award winner and Trust board member Ray Benson will emcee the Young Masters ceremony, along with Majic 95.5 afternoon drive personality Juliet Brandon. The show includes performances by the Blackshear Elementary Fine Arts Academy chorus, as well as local favorites Tosca String Quartet and The Peterson Brothers Band. The evening will also feature performances by previous Young Masters, including: Jared Brown, 2014 Young Master in Dance; Morgan Starr, 2010 Young Master in Musical Theatre; Jay Appaji, 2014 Young Master in Music; and violinist, Charles Yang, Class of 2004. Honorary Chair, First Lady Cecilia Abbott will present the medals to the 2016 Class of Texas Young Masters. Holland Taylor, EMMY winning actress, will also be a part of the show. Taylor is currently starring in *Ann*, a one-woman portrait of the legendary governor of Texas, for which she has been nominated for a Tony Award. *Ann* is currently running at ZACH Theatre.

Sponsorships are still available. For more information, please call 512.478.5289.

The Young Masters program is made possible through the generous support of the contributors listed below:

Program Founders: AT&T Foundation, Anheuser Busch Foundation, Applied Materials, BNSF Railway, The Honorable David Dewhurst, Emerson Electric, Mrs. Gene Jones, Mr. George Mitchell, Mrs. W.D. Noel, Plum Foundation, Ray C. Fish Foundation, Raytheon

Scholarship Underwriters: Dr. and Mrs. Ernest Butler, Texas Women for the Arts, ExxonMobil, Neiman Marcus, The Scurlock Foundation, Lee Bailey, Friends of Jesús Moroles, Dian Graves Owen Foundation, Guillermo Nicolas, and Judy Robison.

For more information on the Texas Young Masters program, visit www.txculturaltrust.org/programs/young-masters.

About the Texas Cultural Trust

The Texas Cultural Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to be the leading voice for the arts in education, advocacy, and economic impact in Texas, spotlighting the artistic excellence of our state. We achieve this mission by promoting the importance of the arts in educating our children and sustaining our vibrant Texas economy, through awareness, outreach, economic research, and the development of arts education curriculum for public school students. Programs of the Texas Cultural Trust

include the biennial Texas Medal of Arts Awards, the Texas Young Masters Program, the Arts & Digital Literacy Initiative, Adventures in the ARTS—a children's book, Texas Women for the Arts and Invest in the Arts, as well as support for programs of the Texas Commission on the Arts and other qualifying state agencies. For more information about the Texas Cultural Trust, please visit www.txculturaltrust.org.

About The Texas Commission on the Arts

The mission of the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) is to advance our state economically and culturally by investing in a creative Texas. TCA supports a diverse and innovative arts community in Texas, throughout the nation and internationally by providing resources to enhance economic development, arts education, cultural tourism and artist sustainability initiatives. For more information on TCA and its programs, please visit www.arts.texas.gov.

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