



**YOUNGARTS ANNOUNCES NEW MENTORSHIP PROGRAM  
FOR EMERGING PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS**

**Inaugural Program Supports BIPOC Artists**

**Eight Award Winners Across Disciplines Selected for Mentorships with  
Shari Lynette Carpenter, Marika Hughes, Dr. Joan Morgan, Jasmine Wahi  
and Michael Benjamin Washington**

**MIAMI, FL (December 20, 2021)** – YoungArts announces a new mentorship program pairing established artists and industry leaders with emerging artists to provide one-on-one, personalized and direct support to help mentees meet their artistic goals. The inaugural year supports BIPOC emerging artists who are YoungArts award winners by pairing eight artists with five mentors for a period of six months. This program is the latest in YoungArts’ commitment to provide award winners with professional development and creative support opportunities throughout their careers.

“This is an extraordinarily talented, promising group of award winners, and we are thrilled to match them with distinguished, experienced mentors to help set them up for successful careers,” said YoungArts Artistic Director **Lauren Snelling**. “YoungArts is always looking for ways to offer award winners support at every stage of their artistic careers, and we are elated this program will provide the personal, directed mentorship that is crucial to a life in the arts. We congratulate this outstanding group of award winners, who were selected from a uniquely impressive applicant pool.”

Award-winning writer and director **Shari Lynette Carpenter** will use her decades of industry experience working with some of the biggest names in the film industry to mentor rising filmmaker and performing artist **Daryl Paris Bright** (2013 YoungArts Winner in Theater) and up-and-coming director and writer **Jayden T. Gillespie** (2017 YoungArts Winner in Film & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts).

Professional cellist and singer **Marika Hughes** will mentor **Joshua Banbury** (2013 YoungArts Winner in Theater & Voice), a vocalist and librettist gaining international attention for his work in opera, folk music and jazz.

Award-winning feminist author, Program Director for NYU’s Center for Black Visual Culture and YoungArts Trustee **Dr. Joan Morgan** will work with poet, painter and social activist **Carissa Chen** (2015 YoungArts Winner in Writing, 2016 Photography, Writing & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts) and writer and scholar **Sahara Sidi** (2018 & 2019 YoungArts Winner in Writing).

Curator, activist and Founder and Co-Director of Project for Empty Space **Jasmine Wahi** will support photographer **Zayira Ray** (2018 YoungArts Winner in Photography) and interdisciplinary artist and designer **Cornelius Tulloch** (2016 YoungArts Winner in Design Arts, Visual Arts & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts).

American actor and playwright **Michael Benjamin Washington** (1997 YoungArts Winner in Theater & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts) will mentor actor, singer and dancer **Ishmael Gonzalez** (2018 YoungArts Winner in Theater & U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts).

Artists were invited to apply to the program via open call on [YoungArts Post](#), an online network for YoungArts award winners, and were selected by each individual mentor based on the details of their proposals.

Thank you to the generous donors who have contributed \$40,000 or more to YoungArts programming as we celebrate YoungArts' 40th anniversary, including Aon; Micky & Madeleine Arison Family Foundation; Sarah Arison & Thomas Wilhelm; Jill Baufman & Daniel Nir; Tracey Corwin; Jeffrey Davis & Michael Miller; Natalie Diggins & Oren Michels; Givenchy; Agnes Gund; Hearst Foundations; Michi & Charles Jigarjian / 7G Foundation; John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; Richard & Amy Kohan; Leslie & Jason Kraus; Steven & Oxana Marks; Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; Northern Trust Bank; Prada; PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP; State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture; Sidney and Florence Stern Family Foundation; Sandra & Tony Tamer; Bruce & Ellie Taub; and Truist Wealth.

### **About YoungArts**

YoungArts was established in 1981 by Lin and Ted Arison to identify the most accomplished young artists in the visual, literary and performing arts and provide 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. Applications are adjudicated through a rigorous blind process by esteemed discipline-specific panels of artists. All YoungArts award winners receive financial awards and the chance to learn from notable artists such as Debbie Allen, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Germane Barnes, Wynton Marsalis, Salman Rushdie and Mickalene Thomas.

YoungArts award 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 seniors; a wide range of creative development support including fellowships, residencies and awards; professional development programs offered in partnership with major institutions nationwide; additional financial support; and access to YoungArts Post, a private, online portal for YoungArts artists to connect, share their work and discover new opportunities.

Past YoungArts award winners include Daniel Arsham, Terence Blanchard, Camille A. Brown, Timothée Chalamet, Viola Davis, Amanda Gorman, Judith Hill, Jennifer Koh, Tarell Alvin McCraney, Andrew

Rannells, Desmond Richardson and Hunter Schafer.

For more information, visit [youngarts.org](https://youngarts.org), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

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