

# GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities



## PRESS RELEASE

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## WINNERS OF THE 26<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MAYOR'S ARTS AWARDS ANNOUNCED

*Individuals and Organizations Honored for Demonstrating Commitment to  
the Arts in our Community*

(WASHINGTON, DC) – Mayor Vincent C. Gray awarded seven individuals and organizations for their commitment to upholding artistic excellence in the city Wednesday night during a ceremony at the Kennedy Center for the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Mayor's Arts Awards. The program, hosted by performer Maurice Hines, was attended by more than 600 individuals and featured performances by acts including the Manzari Brothers, Post-Classical Ensemble, and ELEW, creator of "ROCKJAZZ."

**Transformer**, a non-profit gallery that promotes emerging artists, and **The Shakespeare Theatre**, tied for the **Excellence in Artistic Discipline** award; **Capital Fringe**, a performing arts festival and year round training factory, won the **Excellence in Service to the Arts** award; **Solas Nua**, the only contemporary Irish arts organization in the United States, won the **Innovation in the Arts** award; **Dance Place** won the **Outstanding Contribution to Arts Education** award; **Ellie Walton**, a documentary filmmaker who is native to DC, won the **Outstanding Emerging Artist** award; **Thomas Pierre** from Ludlow-Taylor Elementary School won in the **Excellence in Teaching - Performing Arts** award; and **Nafeesah Shabazz** from Thurgood Marshall Academy Public Charter School won the **Excellence in Teaching - Visual Arts** award.

"For over a quarter of a century, the Commission has had the esteemed privilege of presenting the Mayor's Arts Awards to honor the District's premier individual artists, arts organizations and patrons of the arts", explained Ayris Scales, Interim Executive Director of DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. "I am proud of the diversity of artistic excellence being awarded this year. This ceremony celebrates their accomplishments and the amazing impact that they have in the furthering of our City's rich artistic and cultural heritage."

The Mayor's Arts Award is the highest honor conferred by the District of Columbia in recognition of artistic excellence and service among artists, arts organizations, and arts patrons in the city. The host, Dr. Anne Ashmore-Hudson, Chair of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, presented a special Mayor's Award for Visionary Leadership in the Arts to The Jones Haywood Dance Company.

Finalists were chosen by the Mayor's Arts Awards Advisory Jury comprised of prominent members of the District's arts community with expertise in dance, music, theatre, literary arts, visual arts and arts.

A recording of the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Mayor's Arts Awards is available at:  
<http://www.kennedycenter.com/explorer/videos/?id=M4625>

For additional information on the Mayor's Arts Awards or other D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities programs, please visit [www.dcartsonline.org](http://www.dcartsonline.org) or call 202-724-5613.