



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Americans for the Arts Announces 2004 National Arts Awards

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Americans for the Arts will present the 9th annual National Arts Awards on Wednesday, October 13, as part of National Arts and Humanities Month. The annual awards recognize those artists and arts supporters who exhibit exemplary national leadership and whose work demonstrates extraordinary artistic achievement. They are organizations and individuals—artists, advocates, business leaders, patrons, and educators—who understand that the arts enrich people and communities alike.

The awards will be presented at a gala dinner in New York City, chaired by Veronica Hearst with Caroline Kennedy as Honorary Chair. The Chairman's Committee for the event includes Eli Broad, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Vartan Gregorian, Agnes Gund, Marie Josee Kravis, David Rockefeller, Gail Gregg, and Arthur Sulzberger, Jr.

Following are this year's National Arts Awards Recipients—brief bios are attached:

- Philanthropy in the Arts — **Raymond D. Nasher**
- Artistic Leadership and Arts Advocacy — **Chuck Close**
- Lifetime Achievement — **Paul Taylor**
- Young Artist — **Mena Suvari**
- Corporate Citizenship in the Arts — **A.G. Lafley of Procter & Gamble**
- Special Arts Recognition Award — **New York City Public Schools - William Bassell, Principal, Long Island City High School**

The National Arts Awards have been presented by Americans for the Arts since its inception in 1996. Past honorees have included, among others: Brooke Astor, Alec Baldwin, Peter I. Bijur, John Brademas, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Frank Gehry, Agnes Gund, Jacob Lawrence, Gerald M. Levin, Wynton Marsalis, Midori, Natalie Portman, Cindy Sherman, Beverly Sills, David Rockefeller, Isaac Stern, Uma Thurman, Sanford I. Weill, and Pinchas Zukerman.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, it has a record of more than 40 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating

opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

About the National Arts Award Recipients:

RAYMOND D. NASHER

Raymond D. Nasher is a leading collector of modern and contemporary sculpture. He was one of the first real estate developers in the United States to place art, primarily sculpture, in commercial retail complexes. Nasher established the Dallas Business Committee for the Arts, which contributed to increased business support of the arts in Dallas from \$4.5 million in 1988 to approximately \$24 million annually today. He serves as a member of The National Council of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and on the International Council of the Tate Gallery in London. In addition, he has been a board member of the Dallas Museum of Art, The Dallas Opera, and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth.

CHUCK CLOSE

Artist Chuck Close is widely known for his large-scale portraits and has been on the forefront of the contemporary art scene since the 1970s. His artwork is found in the public collections of major museums around the world and has been the subject of more than 100 exhibitions including a retrospective organized by the Museum of Modern Art. He is a recipient of the National Medal of Arts from President Clinton in 2000 and is a member of the Americans for the Arts Artists Committee. Close currently sits on the board of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

PAUL TAYLOR

Paul Taylor is one of the best choreographers in the world. He studied dance at Juilliard in the late 1940s, assembled his own company in 1954, while also dancing with the Martha Graham Dance Company. After retiring as a performer in 1975, Taylor devoted himself fully to choreography, creating such classics as *Esplanade*, *Cloven Kingdom*, *Airs*, *Arden Court*, *Lost, Found and Lost*, and dozens more. Taylor was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Clinton in 1993, named one of 50 prominent Americans in recognition of his outstanding achievement by the Library of Congress's Office of Scholarly Programs, and granted three Guggenheim fellowships. Awards for lifetime achievement include a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship.

MENA SUVARI

Mena Suvari has become one of the most sought after young actresses in Hollywood. She began her career at age 12 as a model and was already acting in television by the following year. Her breakthrough role was as Kevin Spacey's underage object of desire in the 1999 Academy Award-winning film *American Beauty*, for which she was nominated for Best Supporting Actress by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts. In 2003, she made her stage debut opposite Paul Newman, Jack Nicholson, Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts, and Matt Damon in *The World of Nick Adams* at the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood. Suvari has just completed filming the feature *Rumor Has It*, directed by Rob Reiner, in which she stars opposite Jennifer Aniston, Shirley McLaine, and Kevin Costner.

ALAN G. (A.G.) LAFLEY, Procter & Gamble

A.G. Lafley was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors in 2002, in addition to his current responsibilities as President and Chief Executive. Under Lafley's guidance, Procter & Gamble provides substantial support to the arts. Among its many corporate contributions, The Procter & Gamble Fund recently awarded The Cincinnati Opera a \$600,000 grant to assist in the creation of a new opera based on the life of Margaret Garner. A.G. Lafley is a member of the Board of Trustees, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, member, Board of Trustees, Cincinnati Institute of Fine Arts, and a member of the Lauder Institute Board of Governors (Wharton School of Arts & Sciences).

WILLIAM BASSELL, Principal, Long Island City High School

William Bassell, Principal of Long Island City High School, is a staunch advocate of arts education. He teaches his own opera appreciation class and ensures that high level academic expectations for all are combined with aesthetic education in art, music, technology, and culinary arts to create a first rate secondary education. Bassell is receiving the Special Arts Recognition Award in honor of his extraordinary accomplishments as well as to celebrate New York City's commitment to arts education.

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