



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Americans for the Arts Announces 2006 National Arts Awards

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans for the Arts will present its annual National Arts Awards on Monday, October 16, in New York City as part of National Arts and Humanities Month. The 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, business leaders, and patrons—who understand that the arts enrich people and communities alike.

The following are this year's National Arts Awards honorees—brief bios are below:

- Lifetime Achievement Award — **Aretha Franklin**
Award will be presented by **Victoria Rowell**, actress, *The Young and the Restless*, and member of the Board of Directors of Americans for the Arts.
- Young Artist Award for Artistic Excellence — **Jake Gyllenhaal**
Award will be presented by **Robert Downey, Jr.**, Academy Award-nominated and Golden Globe-winning actor.
- Special Recognition for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts — **Kitty Carlisle Hart**
Award will be presented by the Honorable **Mario Cuomo**, former governor of New York.
- Frederick R. Weisman Award for Philanthropy in the Arts — **Sheila C. Johnson**
Award will be presented by **Tim Gunn**, chair of the Department of Fashion Design at Parsons the New School for Design. Gunn is also seen regularly on the hit television series *Project Runway*.
- Artistic Achievement Award — **Jeff Koons**
Award will be presented by **David Bowie**, singer, songwriter, and pop star.

- Corporate Citizenship in the Arts Award — **United Technologies Corporation** Award will be presented by **Gary Tinterow**, the Engelhard Curator in Charge of the Department of Nineteenth Century, Modern, and Contemporary Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The honorees will receive their awards at a gala dinner chaired by Maria Bell, member of the Americans for the Arts Board of Directors. Co-chairing the event alongside Ms. Bell are Stephanie and Peter Brandt, Edythe and Eli Broad, Lietta and Dakis Joannou, and Samantha and Aby Rosen.

Support for the National Arts Awards has come from individuals, foundations, and corporations. Ovation—The Arts Network is the visual media sponsor for the gala. Other sponsors of the event include:

- American International Group, Inc. (AIG)
- Target
- United Technologies Corporation
- Gagosian Gallery
- Agnes Gund
- Sheila C. Johnson
- Brenda Potter and Michael Sandler
- Sonnabend Gallery

The National Arts Awards have been presented by Americans for the Arts since 1996. Past honorees have included, among others: Edward Albee, Alec Baldwin, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Leonard Bernstein, John Brademas, Chuck Close, Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Pierre Dulaine, Frank Gehry, Martha Graham, Agnes Gund, Helen Hayes, Jacob Lawrence, Gerald M. Levin, Wynton Marsalis, Natalie Portman, Cindy Sherman, Beverly Sills, David Rockefeller, Isaac Stern, Mena Suvari, Paul Taylor, Uma Thurman, Kerry Washington, and Sanford I. Weill.

About the National Arts Awards Honorees

- **Aretha Franklin**
Lifetime Achievement Award
Aretha Franklin, 17-time Grammy Award winner, began her prodigious career as the embodiment of 1960s soul music and continued to top the charts into the 1990s. Franklin's rousing, thumping version of Otis Redding's "Respect" was released at an eventful moment in time, with civil rights, feminism, and sexual liberation all emerging into the forefront of American culture. Her fervent performance epitomized these movements and the record served as a theme song for social change. She won

Grammy Awards every year from 1969 to 1975, and has continued to reinvent herself since that time, covering pop songs by the Band, the Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, Elton John, and Paul Simon, among others.

- **Jake Gyllenhaal**

Young Artist Award for Artistic Excellence

Academy Award-nominated Jake Gyllenhaal has established himself as one of the most promising young actors of his generation. With an impressive and diverse list of film credits, he continues to gain attention from audiences and critics alike with each new character that he brings to life. Last year's performances were no exception; his powerful portrayal in *Brokeback Mountain*, garnered Gyllenhall Best Supporting Actor nominations from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Broadcast Film Critics Association, the Chicago Film Critics Association, and the Screen Actors Guild. Gyllenhaal won the Best Supporting Actor award from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) and the National Board of Review for his outstanding work in *Brokeback Mountain*.

- **Kitty Carlisle Hart**

Special Recognition for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts

Kitty Carlisle Hart has made significant contributions to the arts as an artist, patron, and advocate. A participant in a wide range of public service activities, Hart was appointed vice chair of the New York State Council on the Arts by Governor Nelson Rockefeller in 1971 and chair of the Council by Governor Hugh Carey in 1976; she was later reappointed to the position of chair by Governor Mario Cuomo. Governor Nelson Rockefeller also named Hart to the post of Special Consultant on Women's Opportunities. She was appointed to the 1990 Independent Commission to review the National Endowment for the Arts and received the National Medal of Arts from President George Bush in 1991.

- **Sheila C. Johnson**

Frederick R. Weisman Award for Philanthropy in the Arts

Sheila C. Johnson, CEO of Salamander Hospitality, LLC, and a partner in Lincoln Holdings, LLC, has enjoyed success in many arenas. One of Johnson's primary philanthropic goals is to create opportunities for children and young adults to express their creativity through the arts; she is also dedicated to ensuring that the world is a safe place for children. Johnson's support of the arts in education for children has included generous gifts to Strings for Schools in Philadelphia; Urban Gateways in Chicago; and, closer to home, The Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts in Vienna, VA, where she has supported early childhood education programs. She also

established the Sheila C. Johnson Performing Arts Center at the Hill School in Middleburg, VA.

- **Jeff Koons**

Artistic Achievement Award

Jeff Koons has garnered extensive critical recognition during his career as a contemporary artist. His work has been exhibited internationally and can be found in numerous public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, the Guggenheim Museum, and The National Gallery, to name a few. Koons has won renown around the world for his public sculptures, which include *Puppy*, a floral sculpture shown at Rockefeller Center in the summer of 2000; *Balloon Flower*, installed in Berlin's Potsdamer Platz as part of Daimler Chrysler's permanent collection; and *Split-Rocker*, a floral sculpture exhibited at the Papal Palace in Avignon, France.

- **United Technologies Corporation**

Corporate Citizenship in the Arts Award

The arts are one of United Technologies Corporation's (UTC) three areas of philanthropic focus. As a company of scientists and innovators, UTC values artists for their originality and expressiveness, and because they challenge us to experience the world in new ways. In 2005, the company celebrated 25 years of support for the arts. That quarter century of philanthropy included the sponsorship of 54 exhibitions of visual art in 13 countries on four continents. The company's latest public art project features commissioned works by Chuck Close, Mitch Epstein, and Dayanita Singh that capture changing urban environments. Entitled "Cities in Transition," this outdoor photography exhibition is on view in New York City, Boston, and Hartford this fall.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 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.

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