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This year, four ChiArts scholar-artists received recognition for their talents from the National YoungArts Foundation, the premier educational and developmental organization for high school artists across the country. For this application period, 693 students nationwide were honored by YoungArts. The following students were among thousands who applied for their work or performance to be evaluated in the hope of earning scholarships and educational experiences with world-renowned artistic mentors.

Guadalupe Campos
Finalist, Visual Arts
Lupe (’17) was honored as a Finalist for her Visual Arts portfolio. She has been invited to participate in National YoungArts Week in Miami, Florida, where she will work with professional artists to develop her work, participate in master classes, meet her fellow finalists from around the country, and be eligible for nomination as a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts.

Cameron Collins
Merit, Visual Arts
Cam (’17) was named a Merit awardee for his Visual Arts portfolio. To apply, an artist must submit a portfolio of 10 works, at least 5 of which must relate to a single theme. Cam received two Silver Keys from the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards last year for Digital Art and Drawing and Illustration.

Sarah Kingsbury
Merit, Popular Voice
Sarah (’19) was named a Merit awardee for her vocal performance submissions. In the Popular Voice category, a vocalist must submit four video recordings in a variety of styles and genres.

Andrea Reyes
Finalist, Photography
Andrea (’17) was honored as a Finalist for her photograph. Like Lupe, she has been invited to participate in National YoungArts Week in Miami. This is Andrea’s second recognition by YoungArts, having been awarded an Honorable Mention for her work last year.
SCHOLAR-ARTISTS PRODUCE SCHOOL’S FIRST HISPANIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION

As an organization founded on the importance of diversity in the arts, it makes ChiArts overwhelmingly proud to see its students carry that mission on their shoulders. On September 29th, a group of talented and ambitious students self-produced ChiArts’ first Hispanic Heritage Celebration assembly to recognize the impact of Latin culture on the arts and honor its significance as a crucial part of the identities of so many of our scholar-artists.

The assembly consisted of a visual arts exhibit of work derived from Latin themes, flamenco, salsa, merengue, bachata, and Bomba dancing, and performances of songs like “La Vida Es Un Carnaval,” “Yo No Sé Mañana,” and “Paloma Negra” with accompaniment by ChiArts musicians. All aspects of the show, from the curation of the visual arts exhibit to the selection of performers, the emcees, the lighting, the direction, and the sound, were managed by scholar-artists from all conservatories.

The show was met with tremendous support from the performers’ audience of peers, as each number received deafening waves of cheers and applause from the packed auditorium of students who had as much fun encouraging their friends as their friends had performing.

The Hispanic Heritage Celebration is an example of ChiArts putting into practice all that it preaches, by providing pre-professional artistic opportunities for a diverse group of students to express themselves in a supportive environment and share the heritage that fundamentally makes them who they are. This series will continue in February with the second annual Black Culture Showcase, a celebration of heritage that nearly half of our students share.

OUTREACH CONTINUES WITH TOUR OF SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK LIVE!, JR.

As part of an increased outreach and recruitment effort to elementary schools throughout the city, ChiArts has developed a touring theatrical production to introduce future scholar-artists to our school and its mission.

Since October, two casts of students have traveled to auditoriums and school gymnasiums to entertain young audiences with performances of Schoolhouse Rock Live!, Jr., a stage version of the beloved educational TV program. The stage version includes several of the iconic numbers from the original show, like “I’m Just A Bill,” “Interjections!,” “Do The Circulation,” “Interplanet Janet,” and “Elbow Room.”

After a recent performance at Humboldt Community Christian School, ChiArts was flooded with positive reviews. One teacher at the school wrote, “We are so thankful for the performance. Thank you so much for displaying your gifts and talents and for helping our students learn! We will continue singing and singing them!”

Schoolhouse has given our scholar-artists the valuable professional experience of traveling to perform and adapting to new venues and audiences, and it has engaged hundreds of Chicago’s youngest students with the mission of ChiArts. The tour will go on next semester and is still booking shows.
SAVE THE DATES

Two of ChiArts’ favorite events, the Parent Support Organization’s silent auction and our annual benefit Kerfuffle!, return early next year for the second and sixth time, respectively.

PSO SILENT AUCTION
ChiArti Gras, the PSO-run silent auction fundraiser will be held Saturday, February 4th at the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts & Culture. Last year’s ChiArti Gras featured a silent auction with over fifty donated items, a 50/50 raffle, catered food and drinks, and dozens of live performances by ChiArts scholar-artists. Thanks to the hard work and generosity of ChiArts’ friends and parents, the event raised over $15,000 for the school.

This year, guests can expect all that and more at our New Orleans-inspired, Cajun-style, Bourbon Street-inflected party. We anticipate donations of sports memorabilia, artwork, arts supplies, dining and entertainment packages, and much more on which guests can bid. To buy a ticket, donate an item, or volunteer at ChiArti Gras 2017, visit bit.ly/ChiArtiGras.

Kerfuffle!
On April 27th, the sixth annual Kerfuffle! gala and benefit will be held at the Chicago History Museum, co-chaired by Neal Zucker, Pam Strobel, and John Hart of the ChiArts Board of Directors. Last year’s Kerfuffle! included the premiere of ChiArts’ docu-short “We Are ChiArts” and a new format for our gala in which guests were encouraged to explore the event space and interact with ChiArts scholar-artists as they wrote poetry, worked on paintings, or mingled in between performances.

Kerfuffle! 2017 will feature the unveiling of a children’s book written and illustrated by ChiArts scholar-artists telling the story of our school and its impact on hundreds of diverse, artistically driven Chicago students each year.

To get involved with Kerfuffle! as a sponsor or to purchase a ticket, visit bit.ly/Kerfuffle2017.

Ysobel Gallo (above, ’19) works on a poem at her “open typewriter” station at Kerfuffle! this past April.

47 scholar-artists danced, sang, drew, painted, wrote, and played for 300 guests at Kerfuffle! 2016.
In order to provide additional instruction for ChiArts dancers, the Dance Conservatory has provided extra opportunities for instruction through after-school workshops held on-site for interested students. So far, over twenty dancers have enrolled in six-week African Dance and Tap workshops led by two impressive teaching artists from Chicago.

T. “Ayo” Alston of Ayodele Drum & Dance led the African Dance workshop that met for six weeks beginning in October. Ms. Alston was also an instructor at the ChiArts Summer Intensive earlier this year. Martin Bronson, a company member of BAM! at Chicago Human Rhythm Project, choreographer, and dance educator, leads the Tap Workshop that is ongoing at ChiArts. These workshops offer opportunities for dancers to explore their artistic interests in a comfortable and convenient environment and at an affordable price. Workshops of this caliber can cost hundreds of dollars and place an extra burden on dancers and parents coordinating transportation and payment. By hosting the workshops at school and charging only ten dollars per session, ChiArts hopes to entice students to seek further training after classes to help them discover their dance strengths and passions.

This October, several Creative Writing majors had work included in the anthology of student work published every other year by 826CHI, a Chicago non-profit co-founded by author Dave Eggers that encourages school-aged children to write and develop their creative and expository writing skills.

Compendium, Volume 5 features the best of 826CHI’s student work from the past two years. At the release party on October 16th, sophomore Haley Cao and juniors Noire Lin and Ace Hobfoll read their pieces from Compendium aloud for attendees.

In addition to this publication, the Creative Writing program hosted the second ChiArts Open Mic and held the first Spoken Word Team auditions this fall, selecting eight ChiArts students from across the school to compete in Louder Than A Bomb this year.

Top: Vocal majors with Renee Fleming. Middle: Ms. Fleming and Kay Mabie, Chair of the ChiArts Board of Directors. Bottom: A peek at the new home page for ChiArts.org.

CHIARTS WEBSITE RECEIVES AN UPDATE

After a year-long transition, ChiArts has updated its website with a brand new layout and look more in line with the organization’s identity. On the new site, visitors will find many of the same features to which they’ve grown accustomed, organized in a more streamlined fashion for simpler navigation.

In addition to a cleaner design, the site now includes a newsfeed embedded directly on the home page to keep parents, donors, and friends of ChiArts up to speed with all the goings-on at the school.

Thank you to the Efroymson Family Fund for underwriting this much needed upgrade!
A Letter from the Director

It is undeniable that the political events of this past year have forced us all to reconsider the people and systems in which we have placed our trust. The constant negative messaging has drawn lines through our communities, placing neighbors at odds and contributing to a cultural climate in which people view their fellow man with suspicion and fear rather than love and respect.

As an organization founded in large part on the celebration of our differences, it pains us to know that our differences in race, religion, and nationality have been exploited for political capital— that the same people who are expected to be leaders for all have pandered to the paranoid and the hateful at the expense of those most vulnerable.

The Chicago High School for the Arts is a home to hundreds of those vulnerable people who have been unfairly characterized. Immigrants, the economically disadvantaged, the racial and religious minorities, those seeking refuge—these are our students and our students’ families. We promise to uphold their rights, defend their dignity, and support their growth as active citizens who will strive to build a better world for all.

For so long, we have directed our attention to our fractures, rather than to those values and beliefs which bind us, no matter our politics, ethnicity, or class. One of those is a dedication to our children. Another is a respect and admiration for the arts. At the intersection of these commonalities, ChiArts stands with a continued commitment to providing opportunity in the arts for all of Chicago’s students. Through this mission, it is my hope that ChiArts will contribute to the healing of our divisions and rebuild a community of equal voices.

Our recent exhibit at SOFA Chicago shared space with artists and galleries from all around the world and was part of an expo that attracted 30,000 guests. The school’s touring production of Schoolhouse Rock Live! has already reached hundreds of Chicago’s elementary school students looking for a high school that will accept them and help them follow their passion. ChiArts served as a visit site for the National Guild for Community Arts Education’s annual conference, and members of the leadership team traveled to the Arts Schools Network’s annual conference in Dallas to learn from fellow attendees. Through their Hispanic Heritage Celebration, our scholar-artists demonstrated to leading members of our Humboldt Park community that ChiArts defends tradition, culture, and identity.

We will continue to spread a message of collaboration through the arts. I believe that the arts can unite, and ChiArts will be at the forefront of that effort.

Sincerely,

José Ochoa
Executive & Artistic Director
The Chicago High School for the Arts

scholar-artists performed in the Large Ensemble Concert in the ChiArts Auditorium on November 10th.

The Senior Choir performs under the direction of Bill Chin at the Music Conservatory’s Large Ensemble Concert.
In November, six Visual Arts students from ChiArts’ inaugural graduating class in 2013 had new work included in our special exhibit at SOFA Chicago (see page 14).

Jonathan Herrera (pictured, far left) is finishing his BFA in Fine Arts with a concentration in Print, Paper, and Book at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD) this year. He has been awarded two merit scholarships from MCAD and exhibited work in 10 shows since 2015. (jonathanherrerastudio.com)

Miguel Ontiveros (second from left) is a fourth-year student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His photography and collage have been published in Fotografiamagazine and earned him scholarships to Oxbow School of Art’s Summer Residency program and work experience photographing for musicians, lifestyle blogs, non-profits, and fellow visual artists. (behance.net/miguelontiveros)

Shaquita Reed (third from left) is a Fashion Design student at Columbia College Chicago. She has exhibited work in seven shows since 2014 and served as an intern for the Cheryl Pope, the Chicago Cultural Center’s Public Studio Artist in Residence.

Marie Sommers (not pictured) is a visual display artist in Madison, Wisconsin who has had work exhibited in Chicago, Minneapolis, and New York City. She currently works as a set designer for a commercial and industrial printing company, devising sets for in-house photoshoots and preparing and styling product for display. (mariesommers.carbonmade.com)

Harlan Ballogg (second from right) is a Painting student at the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan, New York. He has been included in exhibitions in Chicago, Manhattan, and Brooklyn, NY, and worked extensively with muralists since 2012. (harlanballoggart.com)

Cris R Hernandez (not pictured) is a designer and illustrator pursuing his BFA in graphic design from the California Institute of the Arts. He has interned with various design and marketing firms since 2012, creating and managing brand identities for clients like Northwestern University, FGM Architects, and Denco Chicago. crisrhernandez.com

In November, ChiArts’ production of Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream premiered in the ChiArts Auditorium as the school’s first classical production to appear on the Main Stage. The cast and crew staged four performances over the course of the November 4th weekend.

Midsummer, one of Shakespeare’s most well-known and frequently produced plays, tells the story of four young lovers whose affections are manipulated by the fairies of the forest, set against the backdrop of an impending royal Athenian wedding.

ChiArts’ production was an immensely collaborative affair. Many of the Theatre Conservatory’s teaching artists were involved as designers, director, producer, stage manager, and in a variety of other roles. Several of the artists enlisted ChiArts students as assistants, and a number of theatre artists from outside of the organization also participated in the creation of another successful ChiArts production, lending their talents to build an enriching educational theatre experience for our students and produce an entertaining show for our audiences.

Through their involvement in Midsummer, the cast and student crew, consisting of students from the Dance, Music, and Theatre Conservatories and spanning all four grade levels, gained valuable experience with elaborate costuming, makeup, movement and set design at a pre-professional level.

This fall, ChiArts was invited to join November’s SOFA Chicago expo as a special exhibitor. SOFA is one of the world’s premier art fairs held annually at Navy Pier that boasts an average attendance of 35,000 people and representation from 80 galleries worldwide.

ChiArts’ exhibit, “Four Years Later: New Work by Six ChiArts Alumni”, featured art by members of the school’s first class of scholar-artists who graduated in 2013. The show was curated by Visual Arts Department Head Whitney Bradshaw and included photography, collage, illustration and paintings, graphic design, and fashion design from our six alumni, five of whom are currently continuing their artistic education at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Columbia College Chicago, Minneapolis College of Art & Design, the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan, New York, and the California Institute of the Arts.

Additionally, five of the six young artists were in Chicago for the show and were involved in SOFA’s lecture series by participating in a live critique of their work led by Tricia Van Eck, former associate curator of the MCA and artistic director of the communal art space 6018NORTH, now in its fifth year.

Over the course of four days, thousands of people visited our exhibit and our alumni had countless opportunities to discuss their art and make valuable connections with fellow artists, gallerists, and members of the art world.

To learn more about ChiArts’ SOFA exhibit, read our essay, “ChiArts: Shaping the Unique and Diverse Voices of Chicago’s Young Artists” at sofaexpo.com.