

National Medal of Arts



Created by Congress in 1984, the National Medal of Arts is conferred annually by the President to honor persons and organizations who have made extraordinary contributions to the excellence, support, growth, and availability of the arts in the United States. Unlike other arts awards, the National Medal of Arts is not limited to a single field or area of artistic endeavor.

The National Endowment for the Arts solicits nominations for the award, which are reviewed by the National Council on the Arts and then forwarded to the President for final selection. The awards, which are non-monetary, are presented each year at a special White House ceremony. The National Medal of Arts was designed by internationally renowned sculptor Robert Graham.



Dancer and director Mikhail Baryshnikov receiving the National Medal of Arts. (Photo by Jocelyn Augustino)

National Medalists for 2000

Maya Angelou
Poet and Writer

Eddy Arnold
Country Singer

Mikhail Baryshnikov
Dancer and Director

Benny Carter
Jazz Musician

Chuck Close
Painter

Horton Foote
Playwright and Screenwriter

Lewis Manilow
Arts Patron

National Public Radio, Cultural
Programming Division
Broadcaster

Claes Oldenburg
Sculptor

Itzhak Perlman
Violinist

Harold Prince
Theater Director and Producer

Barbra Streisand
Entertainer and Filmmaker