News and Information

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Contacts:  
Catherine Vacovsky  
Americans for the Arts  
202-712-2054  
cvacovsky@artsusa.org  
@AFTAPress

Elena Temple  
U.S. Conference of Mayors  
202-286-1100  
etemple@usmayors.org

Grammy Award®-Winning Musicians John Legend and The Roots to Receive 2013 Citizen Artist Awards from Americans for the Arts and U.S. Conference of Mayors

Santa Fe, NM Mayor David Coss, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu and Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley Honored With 2013 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans for the Arts, America’s leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education, and The United States Conference of Mayors, today announced that Grammy Award®-Winning Musicians John Legend and The Roots will receive the 2013 Citizen Artist Awards. In addition, Sante Fe, NM Mayor David Coss, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu and Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley will receive the 2013 Public Leadership in the Arts Awards.

The awards honor elected officials and artists who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in the advancement of the arts. Recipients will receive the honor on Friday, January 18 at The United States Conference of Mayors’ 81st annual winter meeting in Washington, D.C. Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors have given out the awards annually since 1997.

“John Legend and The Roots have been extraordinary advocates for the arts and arts education, showing that a quality arts education is the key to arming the workforce of the future with the skills they need to succeed: creativity and innovation,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts. “Mayors Coss and Landrieu and Governor O’Malley have all demonstrated immense dedication to the development of arts programming within their respective communities and state. Their extraordinary leadership and commitment to cultural initiatives and advancement of the arts showcases the key role the arts play in spurring economic growth while simultaneously enhancing quality of life.”

“Every year, the U.S. Conference of Mayors recognizes the efforts of those who believe as much as we do, that the arts are the heart of our society. Arts and culture help shape a city’s
quality of life, but mayors also understand the connection between the arts and business and the arts’ impact on the local economy,” said U.S. Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran.

Citizen Artist Awards

**John Legend** is a prolific recording artist and longtime social activist who was named one of Time Magazine’s 100 most influential people in 2009. He has won nine Grammy Awards®, including two for *Wake Up!,* a compilation of R&B music with themes of awareness and social engagement, released in 2010 with The Roots. In 2007, Legend created the *Show Me Campaign,* a nonprofit organization whose mission is to break the cycle of poverty using solutions that have been proven to improve people’s lives and to give them the opportunities to survive, thrive and succeed. Believing that equal access to quality education is the civil rights issue of our time, the *Show Me Campaign* fights for education reform in the United States. In 2010, Legend joined the national board of Teach For America. He also sits on the boards of The Education Equality Project, the Harlem Village Academies and Stand for Children. He serves as co-chair of the Harlem Village Academies’ National Leadership Board. Legend has testified before Congress in support of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and is a member of Americans for the Arts Artists Committee. In 2007, Legend received the Young Artist Award for Artistic Excellence at Americans for the Arts National Arts Awards. In 2010, Legend and The Roots collaborated on the album *Wake Up!,* which won two awards at the 53rd Annual Grammy Awards® Ceremony: Best R&B Album and Best Traditional R&B Vocal Performance for “Hang On In There.” The album also won Legend and The Roots two NAACP Image Awards—one for Outstanding Album and one for Outstanding Duo, Group, or Collaboration.

**The Roots** are the influential and critically acclaimed Philadelphia-based band described by *Rolling Stone* as “one of the greatest live acts in the world.” The band has won numerous awards for its jazz-influenced, eclectic approach to hip-hop, and they currently serve as the house band of “Late Night with Jimmy Fallon.” The Roots have been active with Philadelphia-based foundations such as the GrassRoots Foundation, Triple Threat Foundation and D.A.S.H. Annually, they organize and perform at the Roots Picnic Festival in Philadelphia and at the Philly 4th of July Jam concert. The Roots have been strong advocates for arts education and support the work of the Save the Music Foundation. Since their debut album *Organik* in 1993, The Roots have played such notable venues as New York City’s Radio City Music Hall, Lincoln Center and the Apollo Theater, performing more than 200 shows annually. Their 1999 release *Things Fall Apart* reached number four on the Billboard chart, and 2004’s *The Tipping Point* debuted in the same position. The Roots’ lineup includes original members rapper/MC Black Thought (Tariq Trotter) and Ahmir “?uestlove” Thompson, who were classmates at the Philadelphia High School for Creative Performing Arts. They later added Owen Biddle, James “Kamal” Gray, Frank “Knuckles” Walker, Kirk “Captain Kirk” Douglas, Damen “Tuba Gooding Jr.” Bryson, and James Poyser.
"I am grateful to Americans for the Arts and The United States Conference of Mayors for honoring me with this award,” said Legend. “As you can imagine, the arts and arts education have meant so much to me and have made me who I am. The arts are inseparable from a great education. They help students perform stronger academically, instill self confidence and creativity, and prepare them to lead with empathy and a collaborative spirit in a diverse world."

“We are honored to receive the 2013 Citizen Artists Award from the United States Conference of Mayors and Americans for the Arts,” said Tarik “Black Thought” Trotter. “We are aware that this role comes with responsibility, and access to quality art education has enabled us to follow our passion and to serve as trailblazers for other hip hop artists. We receive great pleasure in giving back to our hometown of Philadelphia, and feel it’s important for those of us who have been blessed to give back and give often. Cities need more than philanthropic contributions, they need leadership as well as ongoing and sustained efforts to bring about real change. With continuous work with Philadelphia-based foundations, we are proud to annually give back to our hometown by organizing and performing at our annual Roots Picnic Festival and the Philly 4th of July Jam concert, and promoting the message of an arts influenced education.”

**Public Leadership in the Arts Awards**

Santa Fe Mayor **David Coss** is actively committed to and engaged in supporting arts and culture in the community. Under his leadership, the city invests $1.7 million yearly in arts-related funding—$24.35 per resident. Santa Fe’s creative industries—comprised of 873 arts-related businesses—generates $1.1 billion annually in economic activity. What’s more, the creative industries employ one out of every six workers in Santa Fe, and for every dollar that Santa Fe invests in the creative industries it returns five dollars back to the city’s coffers. Santa Fe has more cultural assets per capita than any other city in the United States, and under Mayor Coss’ leadership, the city is taking steps to ensure that its historic downtown it will continue to be an anchor for the city’s economy.

“Art and creativity in Santa Fe are woven deep into our culture and history. We benefit from the brilliance of thousands of artists and innovators over more than four hundred years,” said Mayor Coss. “I am humbled to accept this award for leadership in the arts on behalf of my community and proud to share it with Santa Fe. I want to personally invite all of you to come visit and experience our art, creativity and history.”

Mayor **Mitch Landrieu** has had arts and culture at the center of his platforms for office for the past 24 years. In 2012, he hosted the World Cultural Economic Forum as an initiative of the City of New Orleans in partnership with The United States Conference of Mayors. Mayor Landrieu charged his office with creating the first Cultural Economy Report for the City of New Orleans. This groundbreaking report quantified the role/impact of culture on the city’s economy and workforce. Cultural enterprises are the second largest direct employers in the city, comprising more than 12 percent of the city’s workforce commanding wages of more $1
billion. When elected Mayor of New Orleans in February 2010, he created the City’s first Office of Cultural Economy, housing it within the Mayor’s Office, and he increased funding for the city’s Community Arts Grants for the first time in more than eight years. Mayor Landrieu coordinated efforts that made arts and culture part of his place-based planning, including provisions for cultural development in successful grants to HUD and the Department of Transportation.

“New Orleans leads the way for culture, music and arts and all aspects of the cultural economy, which employs 78,000 people throughout the city,” said Mayor Landrieu. “One of my top priorities as mayor is to promote, support and enhance all of those things that make our city one of the best and most unique places in the world to live and visit.”

Throughout Governor Martin O’Malley’s tenure, and in the face of the most challenging fiscal climate since the Depression, Maryland has consistently ranked among the top five states for total legislative arts appropriations per capita with funding at more than $13.2 million a year. Maryland remains one of the most stable and innovative states in the nation when it comes to growing and promoting arts and culture. Under his leadership, the arts are enriching lives and moving Maryland forward by supporting jobs, strengthening communities and spurring economic development throughout the state. In addition, Maryland schools have ranked first in the nation for five consecutive years. This record of excellence has been further enhanced by a strong arts presence in classrooms and professional arts development opportunities for Maryland teachers.

“I am honored to receive an award that recognizes the arts are moving Maryland forward,” said Governor O’Malley. “The nonprofit arts support Maryland’s identity as a dynamic, culturally vibrant place to live, learn or visit and have an annual $1 billion impact on our economy that supports jobs, pays salaries and creates revenue.”

To view a list of previous award winners, please visit: http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org/news/annual_awards/public_leadership/default.asp.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor. Additional information is available at www.USMayors.org.

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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