

Thursday, Dec 14, 2017

OU saxophone major wins Honorable Mention at National YoungArts competition

Brant Ford, a freshman saxophone performance major at Oakland University, was recently named a 2018 Honorable Mention award winner in Classical Saxophone by the [National YoungArts Foundation](#).

The Kentucky native is one of only two saxophonists in the nation to receive the award, according to [Jeffrey Heisler, D.M.A.](#), an assistant professor of music, saxophone and conducting at Oakland University.

“As a freshman, Brant is building quite an impressive resume of performance accomplishments,” Heisler said. “His tonal and technical prowess is mature beyond his age and what I admire most about Brant is his tremendous work ethic that is infectious to the rest of the OU saxophone studio. Brant is also a joy to teach — he has all the ingredients to become a world-class performer.”

Established in 1981 by Lin and Ted Arison, the YoungArts Foundation’s signature program is an application-based award for emerging artists ages 15-18 from across the United States. Winners are selected through a blind adjudication process conducted by an independent panel of highly accomplished artists. This year, there were 757 winners representing multiple disciplines at various levels.

“This extraordinary group of young artists represents the vibrancy of our culture for years to come and we look forward to supporting and encouraging them at key junctures in their careers,” said Carolina García Jayaram, YoungArts president and CEO. “I applaud all of our extraordinary panelists in making this year’s selection, one of the most competitive in YoungArts’ history.”

YoungArts Winners receive valuable support, including financial awards of up to \$10,000, professional development and educational experiences working with renowned mentors — such as Mikhail Baryshnikov, Sarah Brightman, Plácido Domingo, Frank Gehry, Jeff Koons, Wynton Marsalis, Rebecca Walker and Carrie Mae Weems — and performance and exhibition opportunities at some of the nation’s leading cultural institutions, including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.; The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; Sotheby’s in New York; and the New World Center in Miami.

“I’m thrilled to have been chosen as an Honorable Mention winner,” Ford said. “This was my first time auditioning for this competition, and it was such an interesting experience for me.”

As a 2018 award winner, Ford is also eligible to participate in YoungArts’ regional programs, including YoungArts Miami (Feb. 20–25, 2018), YoungArts Los Angeles (March 24–29, 2018) and YoungArts New York (April 24–29, 2018); and will join a professional network of distinguished artists.

“I’m especially excited to meet fellow winners at the regional program in New York City in 2018,” said Ford, who was also recently announced as the winner of the 2017-18 Oakland Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition and will have the opportunity to perform as a soloist with the OSO in February.

“I’ve already learned and grown so much from the many recitals I’ve seen here at Oakland University and other parts of Michigan, and I’m interested to see what I can learn from my peers at YoungArts,” Ford added.

A complete list of the 2018 winners is available online at youngarts.org/winners.

For more information, visit youngarts.org.



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