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COCA PROUDLY ANNOUNCES STUDENT MILES ASHE HAS BEEN NAMED A 2021 NATIONAL YOUNGARTS FOUNDATION AWARD WINNER

Ashe Among 659 Early Career Artists from Across the Nation Who Will Receive Unparalleled Creative and Professional Development Support Throughout Their Careers

ST. LOUIS—[COCA](#), the fourth largest multidisciplinary community arts center in the country, congratulates student Miles Ashe on receiving a 2021 [National YoungArts Foundation \(YoungArts\)](#) award for his caliber of artistic achievement. Ashe won Honorable Mention in Dance/Modern/Contemporary.

Ashe is among 659 of the most accomplished young visual, literary, and performing artists from across the country and was selected through YoungArts' prestigious annual competition by esteemed discipline-specific panels of artists through a rigorous blind adjudication process. YoungArts award winners gain access to one of the most comprehensive programs for artists in the United States in which they will have opportunities for financial, creative, and professional development support throughout their entire careers.

Ashe started his training at COCA six years ago. He currently is a member of COCA's Ballet Eclectica, which provides students the rewarding experience to work in both classical and contemporary ballet, and COCA dance, which is an advanced student dance company focused on modern, jazz, and contemporary dance. During his tenure at COCA, he also has participated in COCA's Hip-Hop Crew. Ashe aspires to continue his dance training after high school at The Juilliard School for Dance and one day dance with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

"Miles Ashe is the first dancer from COCA to enter and place in this world-renowned scholarship program," said Antonio Douthit-Boyd, Co-Artistic Director of Dance for COCA. "Being recognized among some of the most talented young artists in the country is just a testament to the work happening at COCA and the beautiful journey ahead of Miles."

YoungArts awards are given in three categories: Finalist, Honorable Mention, and Merit. This year, YoungArts award winners at all levels will receive cash prizes between \$100 and \$10,000 and the opportunity to learn from leading artists, such as Debbie Allen, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Frank Gehry, Wynton Marsalis, Salman Rushdie, and Mickalene Thomas. YoungArts award winners become eligible for exclusive creative and professional development support including a wide range of fellowships, residencies, and awards; virtual and in-person presentation opportunities in collaboration with major venues nationwide; additional financial support; and access to YoungArts Post, a free, private digital network for YoungArts artists to connect, collaborate, and learn about additional opportunities.

"YoungArts empowers artists to pursue a life in the arts beginning at the critical time when many are faced with decisions about life after high school and we are thrilled to announce this year's YoungArts award winners. This group of extraordinary artists has reminded us yet again that extraordinary artistry is ageless, and I encourage everyone to get to know these faces and names as we will be seeing them for many years to come," said Executive Director Jewel Malone. "To all of this year's winners, congratulations! This is just the start of YoungArts' commitment to supporting your careers, we look forward to working with you and supporting your artistic and professional development."

YoungArts award winners join a distinguished group of accomplished artists, including Daniel Arsham, Terence Blanchard, Camille A. Brown, Viola Davis, Allegra Goodman, Josh Groban, Judith Hill, Tarell Alvin McCraney, Andrew Rannells, Desmond Richardson, and Hunter Schafer.

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ABOUT COCA

COCA's mission is to *enrich lives and build community through the arts*. With a commitment to equity and access, COCA serves as a regional hub for learning in and through the arts for all ages from all backgrounds. One of the most diverse cultural institutions in St. Louis, COCA serves over 50,000 students, audience members, artists and families from over 220 zip codes across the St. Louis region every year. The fourth largest multi-disciplinary arts organization in the country, COCA is committed to supporting the vitality and creativity of over 200 artists at the heart its work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and on-site at its campus in University City.