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The Music Center Names 112 Southern California High School Students in The Music Center's 35th Annual Spotlight Program

Nationally Recognized Arts Learning Program Offers \$100,000+ in Scholarships for Aspiring Artists with Performance Opportunities and Invaluable Professional Feedback

LOS ANGELES (February 28, 2023) -- The Music Center today announced 112 of Southern California's most talented high school students have advanced to become semifinalists in [The Music Center's 35th Annual Spotlight](#) program, a free, nationally acclaimed performing arts competition, scholarship and artistic development program for teens. This year, more than 1,300 teens, representing more than 245 schools, 170 cities and eight counties, auditioned for the prestigious program.

A program of The Music Center's programming arm TMC Arts, *Spotlight* offers Southern California teens expert advice, coaching, auditions and mastery classes taught by professional artists and arts administrators in seven categories: acting, ballet, dance, classical voice, non-classical voice, classical instrumental and jazz instrumental. The program recognizes and rewards participants throughout the competition with more than \$100,000 in cash awards following three rounds of auditions. To date, The Music Center has given over \$2.7 million in scholarships.

All *Spotlight* applicants receive written feedback from distinguished panels of judges following each audition round to help them improve and gain insight in their performing arts discipline. An initiative of The Music Center's fundamental support for arts learning, *Spotlight* provides students with the opportunity to develop and hone their performance abilities, receive crucial college preparedness skills and gain the confidence to pursue their dreams in the performing arts. Through a supportive environment, students also develop vital life skills, including self-esteem, preparation and perseverance, that benefit them beyond the stage.

"For many participants, *Spotlight* is their first step in the journey toward a successful future in the arts," said Rachel S. Moore, president and CEO of The Music Center. "We are proud to have provided thousands of aspiring young people with the opportunity to hone their skills and explore their potential. Congratulations to this year's *Spotlight* semifinalists for advancing this far in the competition! Your passion for the arts is making Los Angeles--and the world--a better and more joyful place."

Spotlight semifinalists have the rare opportunity to attend a special mastery class within their discipline with highly regarded artists, who share their expertise on performance technique, training and professional life. Experts provide students with invaluable feedback about their performances, offering the students a rich learning experience. Each semifinalist will audition again before a new panel of judges, who will then select the top two finalist performers in each category for a total of 14 Grand Prize Finalists. Judges will also name an Honorable Mention in each category. The Grand Prize Finalists will perform in *The Music Center's Spotlight Grand Finale* on Thursday, June 8, 2023, at 7:00 p.m., at The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

"Every year, our *Spotlight* judges are wowed by the artistic caliber of hundreds of students, and this year is no exception," said Jeri Gaile, Fredric Roberts director, *The Music Center's Spotlight*. "The Music Center launched this program 35 years ago because we recognized the enormous potential of young artists that deserved to be discovered and uplifted. *Spotlight* is not only an exploration of students' artistic skills but also a vessel to help them develop as valuable contributors to the world."

The Music Center's Spotlight program awards more than \$100,000 in cash scholarships annually. Semifinalists each receive \$500. Grand Prize Finalists will each receive \$5,000 scholarships; one Honorable Mention in each category will receive \$1,000. The Music Center also celebrates 10 students in each category with the Merit Award, which acknowledges students who inspire the judges by their commitment and dedication to their art form; *Spotlight* Merit Award recipients each receive \$100.

To help students interested in applying to the *Spotlight* program, The Music Center created **The Spotlight Academy** as an episodic series of online videos and tutorials. Designed for young artists, parents and educators, *The Spotlight Academy* features more than a dozen webisodes that focus on subjects related to applying for the *Spotlight* program as well as advice for anyone considering a career in the arts, both on- or offstage. The videos provide a deep dive into the program's seven categories and discuss curated topics featuring alumni and experts in the field, including *Superstore* actress Carla Renata, opera singer Suzanna Guzmán, New York City Ballet principal dancer Tiler Peck and more.

Since its launch in 1988, *Spotlight* has transformed the lives of more than 54,000 high school students hailing from Santa Barbara to San Diego. Numerous *Spotlight* participants have gone on to successful professional careers. For example, nearly two dozen finalists are Presidential Scholars, and many more have joined or performed with professional companies, such as Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theatre, Metropolitan Opera, LA Opera, Boston Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. Notable *Spotlight* alumni include Misty Copeland, who made history in the dance world as the first African American principal dancer for American Ballet Theatre; Adam Lambert and Josh Groban, pop recording artists; Kris Bowers, Emmy® Award-winning composer whose work includes the scores for *Bridgerton*, *Green Book* and *Dear White People*; Lindsay Mendez, Tony Award® winner for her role in the Broadway revival of *Carousel* and from the television drama *All Rise*; Erin Mackey, star of Broadway's *Wicked*, *Sondheim on Sondheim*, *Anything Goes*, *Chaplin*, and *Amazing Grace*; Matthew Rushing, associate artistic director for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater; Yao Guang Zhai, associate principal clarinet of the Toronto Symphony; and Gerald Clayton, GRAMMY® Award-winning jazz recording artist, among numerous others.

Major support for *The Music Center's Spotlight* program is provided by Fredric Roberts, Helen and Peter Bing, Terri and Jerry Kohl, Marie Song, The Hearst Foundations and an anonymous donor. Fredric Roberts is founding chairman of *Spotlight*. The late Walter E. Grauman is the creator.

For more information about *The Music Center's Spotlight* program, visit musiccenter.org/spotlight or follow [@musiccenterspotlight](#) on social media (Facebook, Instagram and TikTok).

About The Music Center

The Music Center convenes artists, communities and ideas with the goal of deepening the cultural lives of every resident in Los Angeles County. The \$70 million non-profit performing arts organization has two divisions: TMC Arts and TMC Ops. TMC Arts, The Music Center's programming engine, provides year- round programming inside The Music Center's four theatres, on Jerry Moss Plaza, outside at Grand Park--a 12-acre adjacent green space--in schools and other locations all over Los Angeles County and on a digital platform called The Music Center Offstage. TMC Arts presents world-class dance with Gloria Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, free and low-cost public concerts and events, as well as live and digital K-12 arts education programs, workshops, performances, interactive experiences and special events. TMC Ops manages the theatres, the Plaza and Grand Park, which comprise \$2 billion in county assets, on behalf of the County of Los Angeles. The Music Center is also home to four renowned resident companies--Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles Master Chorale, LA Opera and LA Phil. For more information, visit musiccenter.org. Follow The Music Center on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter [@MusicCenterLA](#).

The Music Center's 35th Annual Spotlight Semifinalists

Hometown	Full Name	Program Name	School	Grade
Agoura Hills	Charles French	Jazz Instrumental	Agoura High School	10
Agoura Hills	Jordan Klein	Jazz Instrumental	Agoura High School	10
Agoura Hills	Jack Lieberman	Jazz Instrumental	Agoura High School	11
Aliso Viejo	Sage Reeves	Dance	Santa Margarita Catholic High School	11
Anaheim	Haven Anneliese Ward	Ballet	Parkview School	12
Arcadia	Tiffany Hsu	Classical Voice	Mayfield Senior School of the Holy Child	10

			Jesus	
Beverly Hills	Emily Gorin	Acting	Beverly Hills High School	12
Beverly Hills	Bradyn Prisand	Non-Classical Voice	Beverly Hills High School	10
Buena Park	Joan Park	Non-Classical Voice	Orange County School of the Arts	12
Burbank	Keilani Akina Bolhuis	Jazz Instrumental	California School of the Arts - San Gabriel Valley	11
Burbank	Aria Gunn	Non-Classical Voice	John Burroughs High School	12
Burbank	René Harris	Non-Classical Voice	Burbank High School	12
Burbank	Sophie Pollono	Non-Classical Voice	John Burroughs High School	12
Calabasas	Cassidy May Benullo	Acting	Calabasas High School	12
Carson	Rianne Thomas	Dance	Ramon C. Cortines High School	12
Chino Hills	Joseph Yoo	Classical Instrumental	Diamond Bar High School	10
Chula Vista	Victoria Curet	Classical Voice	San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts	11
Corona	Ivy Lanhardt	Dance	River Springs Charter School	11
Corona	Clara Riggs	Ballet	Epic Charter School	9
Costa Mesa	Ayanna Dowell	Dance	Orange County School of the Arts - OCSA	12
Coto de Caza	Fiona Poth	Ballet	Avenues Online: The World School	11
Diamond Bar	David Kwon	Classical Instrumental	Diamond Bar High School	12
Duarte	Felicity Robles	Classical Voice	California School of the Arts - San Gabriel Valley	11
Fullerton	Madison Heinle	Classical Voice	Fullerton Union High School	12
Fullerton	Alexis Helmer	Acting	Fullerton Union High School	12
Fullerton	Calene Lee	Classical Instrumental	Orange County School of the Arts	10
Huntington Beach	Noella Egelsee	Acting	Huntington Beach High School	11
Huntington Beach	Lilliana Mindel	Classical Voice	Orange County School of the Arts	11
Idyllwild-Pine Cove	Subin Kim	Classical Instrumental	Idyllwild Arts Academy	12
Irvine	Emma Chen	Ballet	Portola High School	12
Irvine	Aimee Cho	Ballet	Crean Lutheran High School	11
Irvine	Ariana Kim	Classical Instrumental	Orange County School of the Arts	10
Irvine	Madeleine Lee	Ballet	Laurel Springs School	10
Irvine	Kristine Lu	Classical Instrumental	University High School (Irvine)	11
Irvine	Michelle Lu	Ballet	Portola High School	10
Irvine	Ana Rodriguez	Acting	Woodbridge High School	12
Irvine	Ian Shin	Jazz Instrumental	Orange County School of the Arts	11
Irvine	Isabella Silva	Dance	Orange County School of the Arts	9
Irvine	Nakshatra Srinivasan	Classical Voice	Irvine High School	11

Irvine	Nathan Tatsuta	Jazz Instrumental	Orange County School of the Arts	11
Irvine	Genevieve Velarde	Classical Voice	Irvine High School	11
Irvine	Towako Wunsch	Ballet	Irvine High School	11
Irvine	Kyle Yeung	Classical Instrumental	Pacific Academy, Irvine	9
Irvine	Helaine Zhao	Classical Instrumental	Pacific Academy, Irvine	11
Irvine	Chunyi Zhou	Classical Instrumental	University High School (Irvine)	12
La Cañada Flintridge	Maxine Park	Non-Classical Voice	Flintridge Preparatory	12
Ladera Ranch	Chase Rogers	Ballet	California Preparatory Academy	12
Laguna Niguel	Pavel Kulev	Ballet	Cabrillo Point Academy	11
Lake Forest	Viveka Saravanan	Classical Voice	Orange County School of the Arts	11
Long Beach	Alfredo-Totocani García	Ballet	<i>Home Schooled</i>	11
Los Angeles	Anaiya Asomugha	Acting	The Archer School for Girls	11
Los Angeles	Brooke Bailey	Non-Classical Voice	John Burroughs High School	12
Los Angeles	Asher Bartfeld	Classical Voice	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	10
Los Angeles	Jesse Brasler	Acting	Calabasas High School	10
Los Angeles	Aiden Daneshrad	Jazz Instrumental	Harvard-Westlake (Upper)	12
Los Angeles	Dakotah Faunteroy	Dance	Calabasas High School	12
Los Angeles	Calder Feinstein	Ballet	<i>Home Schooled</i>	11
Los Angeles	Anais Feller	Classical Instrumental	Classical Academy High School	12
Los Angeles	Julianna Hatton	Ballet	The Archer School for Girls	10
Los Angeles	Taylor Lee	Jazz Instrumental	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	11
Los Angeles	Helen Martinez	Non-Classical Voice	Ramon C. Cortines High School	12
Los Angeles	Micah MikoLevine	Acting	Westridge School - Upper School	10
Los Angeles	Ruby Moncrieff-Karten	Acting	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	11
Los Angeles	Ruby Moncrieff-Karten	Non-Classical Voice	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	11
Los Angeles	Jackson Petty	Jazz Instrumental	Hamilton High School	10
Los Angeles	Callie Pyken	Classical Voice	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	9
Los Angeles	Callie Pyken	Non-Classical Voice	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	9
Los Angeles	Mae Ryness	Acting	California School of the Arts - San Gabriel Valley	11
Los Angeles	Stellan Swanlund	Jazz Instrumental	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	12
Los Angeles	Drew Tillman	Non-Classical Voice	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	11
Los Angeles	Elim Uraimov	Acting	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	10
Los Angeles	Daniel Wijedasa	Jazz Instrumental	North Hollywood High School	12
Monterey Park	Lila Tsang	Dance	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	12
Murrieta	Calli Perryman	Dance	Murrieta Valley High School	10
Newport Beach	Stella Stulik	Ballet	<i>Home Schooled</i>	10

Oak Park	Max Gilbert	Jazz Instrumental	Agoura High School	11
Ontario	Allen Cai	Classical Voice	Santa Margarita Catholic High School	12
Orange	Preston Walker	Ballet	Orange County School of the Arts	9
Pasadena	Ryan Liddy	Classical Voice	Loyola High School of Los Angeles	12
Rancho Palos Verdes	Campbelle Malicse	Ballet	Palos Verdes Peninsula High School	11
Rancho Palos Verdes	Christine Ng	Dance	Palos Verdes Peninsula High School	10
Redondo Beach	Joseph Mintz	Jazz Instrumental	Redondo Union High School	12
Rosemead	Millie Liao	Acting	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	12
San Clemente	Annabel Kohn	Dance	San Clemente High School & California Preparatory Academy	9
San Diego	Avery Hall	Dance	Torrey Pines High School	10
San Diego	Erica Wang	Classical Instrumental	Canyon Crest Academy	12
San Dimas	Giovanna Martinez	Acting	Granite Mountain Charter School	12
San Dimas	Giovanna Martinez	Non-Classical Voice	Granite Mountain Charter School	12
San Gabriel	Michaela Lau	Classical Voice	Gabrielino High School	9
San Juan Capistrano	John Leslie	Classical Voice	JSerra Catholic High School	12
San Marino	Nathaniel Yue	Classical Instrumental	San Marino High School	10
Santa Ana	Henry Erhard	Acting	Mater Dei High School	12
Santa Ana	Andrea Martínez	Dance	Orange County School of the Arts	10
Santa Clarita	Lexi Hoek	Non-Classical Voice	Saugus High School	11
Santa Monica	Jaxson Glowacki	Classical Voice	Brentwood High School	11
Santa Monica	Rebekah Raphling	Acting	Santa Monica High School	12
Santa Monica	Marielle Rose	Acting	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	12
Santa Monica	William Schwartzman	Jazz Instrumental	Los Angeles County High School for the Arts	12
Simi Valley	Em Ellis	Classical Instrumental	Simi Valley High School	12
Simi Valley	Jassir Rivera	Non-Classical Voice	Grace Brethren	12
Stevenson Ranch	Jessica O'Brien	Classical Instrumental	West Ranch High School	11
Stevenson Ranch	Quinn Sims	Jazz Instrumental	West Ranch High School	12
Temecula	Aubrey Abella	Dance	Great Oak High School	9
Temple City	Alvin Wang	Classical Instrumental	California School of the Arts - San Gabriel Valley	11
Thousand Oaks	Garrett Khatchaturian	Jazz Instrumental	Agoura High School	11
Upland	Kennedy Percival	Non-Classical Voice	<i>Home Schooled</i>	12
Van Nuys	Maya Clayton	Non-Classical Voice	Champs Charter High School of the Arts	12
Westminster	Grace Huynh	Classical Voice	Orange County School of the Arts	12
Winchester	Luciana Vun	Dance	Great Oak High School	12
Yorba Linda	Sammi Chung	Dance	Orange County School of the Arts	11

Yorba Linda	Mallory McKenna	Dance	Orange County School of the Arts	12
Yorba Linda	Megan Reta	Dance	El Dorado High School	9
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