

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.

President George W. Bush presented the 2001 Medals in a ceremony delayed by the events of September 11, 2001.



National Medal of Arts awardee Kirk Douglas with the President and First Lady. Photo by Neshan Naltchayan

NATIONAL MEDALISTS FOR 2001

Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation
Modern Dance Company and School
New York, NY

Rudolfo Anaya
Writer
Albuquerque, NM

Johnny Cash
Singer and Songwriter
Hendersonville, TN

Kirk Douglas
Actor and Producer
Los Angeles, CA

Helen Frankenthaler
Painter
Darien, CT

Judith Jamison
Artistic Director,
Choreographer, Dancer
New York, NY

Yo-Yo Ma
Cellist
Cambridge, MA

Mike Nichols
Director and Producer
New York, NY