



Young Texas Artists
MUSIC COMPETITION

YOUNG TEXAS ARTISTS MUSIC COMPETITION | 1608 Pine Oak Drive | Conroe, Texas 77304 | youngtexasartists.org

Co-Chairs Announced for Young Texas Artists' 35th Anniversary Gala

Group kicks off 2019 with panel discussion featuring area performing arts leaders

CONROE, Texas – Feb. 6, 2019 – Young Texas Artists (YTA) has announced that its 2019 benefit gala, Bach, Beethoven & Barbecue, which helps support YTA's acclaimed annual music competition, will be co-chaired by Terry Husbands Giles of Conroe and Allyson Ayton of April Sound on Lake Conroe.

The "jeans to jewels" gala, scheduled for Saturday, March 9, in Conroe's Downtown Historic District, will feature several special guests and entertainers.

"Everything this year centers around YTA's 35th anniversary," Giles said. "We have some new elements and surprises. It's going to be very exciting, a big Texas party!"

Bach, Beethoven & Barbecue will begin at 5 p.m. with a reception at the LoneStar Bar in Martin's Hall, 219 Simonton St. The reception will spotlight special Texas guests Gray Hawn of Austin and Joy Saxton of Houston, who each recently released a book. Hawn, a prolific and internationally known master photographer, will sign copies of her *Cowboy Heaven*, a stunning portfolio book of fine photographic art. The multi-talented Joy Saxton, author, illustrator, actor, director, producer and educator, will be signing her newest children's book, *Joy and the Far Away Land*, which has been selected by the Barbara Bush Literacy Foundation for their outreach program.

At 5:45 p.m., the gala will move from Martin's Hall to the Grand Tented Pavilion in the center of Simonton Street, for a big Texas barbecue dinner, a dazzling auction and live Texas music for dancing featuring special guest entertainers, Bill Mock and the Highway 105 Band.

The much-anticipated live auction will be presented by Lady Lyn Howard, auctioneer, and Emmett Kelly, master of ceremonies. Guests will have a chance to bid on unique gifts, dinners, getaways, fine art and more.

The highlight of the night will be the YTA Finalists' Concert and Awards, which will begin at 7:30 p.m. at Crighton Theatre, 234 N. Main St. There, finalists in YTA's four divisions—Piano; Voice; Strings; and Orchestral Instruments—will perform one last time for the nationally prominent panel of judges. Jade Simmons, concert pianist, motivational speaker, media personality and emerging artist specialist, will serve as mistress of ceremonies and conduct the finalists' interviews.

After the winners are named and the concert ends, gala guests are invited to return to the Grand Pavilion for more live Texas music, dancing, drinks and dessert buffet including the 35th anniversary cake and champagne toasts to the competition winners and special guests.

Gala proceeds help support the Young Texas Artists Music Competition, an Official Music Contest of the State of Texas, which provides performance, growth and career development opportunities for classical artists ages 18-30 (ages 20-32 for Voice)

who are Texas residents or enrolled in a Texas music school.

Gala Chair Terry Husbands Giles said her involvement with YTA began when she started volunteering with her mother, Georgia Husbands, a longtime volunteer with the organization. "My mom was involved for years," Giles said. "She still loves and supports YTA."

Until Giles moved to Montgomery County from Austin two years ago, she had only been able to volunteer for YTA on a limited basis. Now, she said, she's grateful for the chance to be more involved.

"YTA offers an excellent annual event," Giles commented. "Not only does it benefit aspiring young professionals in the music field, but it also gives the community a really fun opportunity to enjoy all kinds of music, great food, great company, dancing and dessert."

Co-Chair Allyson Ayton said she learned about YTA last year in her role as chairman of the April Sound Country Club board of governors. YTA was one of the organizations selected to benefit from April Sound's 2018 Charity Classic golf tournament, and the country club also hosted YTA's 35th anniversary launch party last fall.

"I was very impressed when I heard one of the artists perform during the launch party," Ayton said. "My goal is to make more people aware of this organization and the wonderful opportunities it offers young classical musicians."

Tickets to the gala and the Finalists' Concert and Awards are available at ytamc.com/bach-beethoven-barbecue.

Young Texas Artists sponsors and supporters this year include Dr. Douglas Aycock and Carol Aycock, Planet Lincoln (planetlincolnspring.com) and the Conroe Convention & Visitors Bureau (visitconroe.com).

For sponsorship information, contact Susie Pokorski, President/CEO of Young Texas Artists, at 936-756-7017 or e-mail suspokorski@gmail.com.

About the Young Texas Artists Music Competition

An official music competition of the State of Texas, Young Texas Artists, Inc. has, since its founding in 1983, encouraged excellence in young musicians, inspired their audiences and helped further the careers of thousands of young classical musicians. It is one of the few competitions in the country that features four divisions: Voice; Piano; Strings; and Orchestral Instruments. This Texas competition for Texas artists has helped produce many distinguished professionals who have gone on to join orchestras, opera companies, universities and music schools around the world. The Young Texas Artists Music Competition is a member of the Greater Conroe Arts Alliance. ytamc.com.



The co-chairs of this year's Bach, Beethoven & Barbecue gala are Terry Husbands Giles and Allyson Ayton.

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