

the *ALPERT AWARD*
IN THE ARTS

**The Herb Alpert Foundation and California Institute of the Arts (CalArts)
Announce the 2012 winners of the Alpert Award in the Arts**

Artists with extraordinary talent win the \$75,000 Alpert Award in the Arts for
Dance, Film/Video, Music, Theater and Visual Arts



Nora Chipaumire
Dance



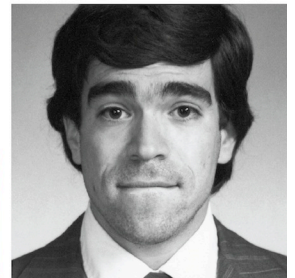
Kevin Everson
Film/Video



Myra Melford
Music



Eisa Davis
Theatre



Michael Smith
Visual Arts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, Santa Monica, May 11, 2012:

The Herb Alpert Foundation and California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) have awarded the 18th annual **Alpert Award in the Arts** to five exceptional mid-career artists. The award, a prize of \$75,000, recognizes past performance and future promise to artists working in Dance, Film/Video, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts. **Herb Alpert**, the legendary musician and artist who created the Herb Alpert Foundation with his wife **Lani Hall** and gave the first Alpert Award in the Arts in 1995, says, “All of this year’s winners represent the essence of the Alpert Award. They take aesthetic, intellectual and political risks, and challenge worn-out conventions. They’re unafraid of the unknown.”

The 2012 Winners are:

Nora Chipaumire, Dance

Eisa Davis, Theatre

Kevin Everson, Film/Video

Myra Melford, Music

Michael Smith, Visual Arts

Irene Borger, Director of the **Alpert Award in the Arts**, describes why each of the artists was chosen.

“The Film/Video panel selected **Kevin Everson**, a prolific polymath, for his relentless

curiosity, sustained inquiry, for elevating the visual power of expressive quotidian gestures of working people, and for his aesthetic caring gaze.

Nora Chipaumire is being recognized by the Dance panel for her profound movement intelligence, steaming hot and extraordinary presence, the dialogue she creates with audiences, and her visceral struggles with critical issues of the day.

Myra Melford was honored with the Music Award for her ascending and expansive trajectory, and great, generous musical mind. They celebrate her willingness to dive into the deep end of the pool and her ability to take multiple musical traditions into another sphere.

Michael Smith was named the winner of the Visual Arts prize for subversively using the visual languages of popular and corporate culture to take on big issues, for pioneering narrative within video art practice, and for rendering the everyday as truly strange. They appreciate his having taken on the role of picaresque hero moving through the world as a Charlie Chaplin of the late 20th century.

The Theatre panel selected **Eisa Davis** for her profound multiple gifts as playwright, performer and musician, her portrayal of the complex richness of our American character, and her work's relevance and epic sweep, expanding our notion of how one might live in the 21st Century.”

Over the years the distinguished Alpert Award panelists have selected a group of artists who have gone on to extraordinary careers after winning the **Alpert Award** including **Zhou Long**, 2011 Pulitzer Prize winner in Music; **Suzan-Lori Parks**, a Pulitzer winner for Drama 2002; four MacArthur Fellows and 22 Guggenheim Fellows.

This year's panelists include **Alma Guillermoprieto**, contributor to The New Yorker; **Romi Crawford**, Associate Professor, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago; **David Wessel**, Professor of Music and Director, Center for New Music and Audio Technologies at University of California, Berkeley; **Daniel Alexander Jones**, Head of the Playwriting Program; Acting and Theatre History Faculty, Fordham University; and **David Joselit**, Carnegie Professor, History of Art, Yale University. Past panelists have included **Tony Kushner**, **Julie Taymor**, **John Adams**, **Trisha Brown**, **Don Byron**, **Ann Hamilton**, and **David Henry Hwang**.

“The Herb Alpert Foundation is delighted to honor these courageous, independently minded artists,” said Foundation President **Rona Sebastian**. “Begun in 1995, on the heels of the NEA's cut backs of individual artists' grants, the Alpert Award was designed to acknowledge the importance of our artists and their significant contributions to society. CalArts has been the ideal partner to carry out Herb Alpert's vision for building a new and

innovative arts award program. CalArts shares our vision of the transformative power of the arts.”

“The awards recognize that a vital culture requires artistic experimentation on the highest level,” said **CalArts President Steven Lavine**. “A remarkable number of awardees have achieved heightened prominence during the years following the awards and this is due to the foundation’s continued acknowledgement and support of truly significant artists. Moreover, year in and year out, CalArts students benefit when these exemplary artists come to campus for the residence that is a component of the awards.”

Herb Alpert concludes, “CalArts is a really creative place where people push the edges and come up with things that are different from what we’ve heard in the past. It’s exciting to think about how winners of the Alpert Award will push CalArts students even farther.”

The Alpert Award in the Arts recipients will receive their awards at a brunch on May 11th held at the Herb Alpert Foundation in Santa Monica.

For more information about the Awards, please visit:

www.alpertawards.org

www.herbalpertfoundation.org

Photographs of the 2012 Alpert Award In the Arts recipients can be accessed at:

<http://photo.calarts.edu/alpert>

CalArts media requests, contact: Margaret Crane, CalArts Media Relations Manager, mcrane@calarts.edu Tel: 661 222 2787

Herb Alpert Foundation media requests, contact: Caroline Graham, C4 Global Communications, caroline@c4global.com Tel: 310 899 2727