

the **ALPERT AWARD**  
IN THE ARTS

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**Natalia Almada**  
Film/Video



**Jess Curtis**  
Dance



**Emily Jacir**  
Visual Arts



**Marc Bamuthi Joseph**  
Theatre



**Nicole Mitchell**  
Music

**The Herb Alpert Foundation and California Institute of the Arts (CalArts)  
Announce the 2011 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.**

Media release: Santa Monica, May 19<sup>th</sup>: **The Herb Alpert Foundation** and **California Institute of the Arts (CalArts)** have awarded the 17th **Alpert Award in the Arts** to five exceptional mid-career artists. The award, an annual prize of \$75,000, recognizes past performance and future promise to artists working in Dance, Film/Video, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts, the five major fields of investigation at CalArts. **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 2011 Winners are:

**Natalia Almada**, Film/Video

**Jess Curtis**, Dance

**Nicole Mitchell**, Music

**Emily Jacir**, Visual Arts

**Marc Bamuthi Joseph**, Theatre

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

“The Film/Video panel selected **Natalia Almada** for pushing against the strictures of nonfiction film, for telling nuanced, complex stories, and gracefully drawing viewer’s attention to the overlooked narratives in today’s challenging landscapes of immigration reform, border issues and human rights.

**Jess Curtis** is being recognized by the Dance panel for his unique sense of imagery, timing and rhythm, mesmerizing dream logic, inventiveness, provocative investigations of the body and for the unique way he is challenging assumptions about dance.

**Nicole Mitchell** was honored with the Music Award for her brilliant playing, artistic maturity and the ways she courageously break forms; the panelists were moved by her dedication as a deeply ethical member of the musical community, and for the way she consistently opens up new spaces in the world.

**Emily Jacir** was named the winner of the Visual Arts prize for creating incisive and aesthetically engaging work that bravely raises important questions, in this historic moment of social transition, without presuming to come up with solutions.

The Theatre panel selected **Marc Bamuthi Joseph** for the dynamic energies of his work in performance, on video and on the page, and its vital, cosmopolitan point of view. They admired his synthesis of art forms, his activism, teaching and autobiography into a single extraordinary quest.”

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 **Sara Rudner**, director of Dance at Sarah Lawrence College, **Twyla Tharp’s** lead dancer for years. **George Lewis**, composer, Case Professor American Music, Columbia University for music, and **Luis Alfaro** writer and MacArthur Award recipient, for theatre.

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.”

“Alpert Award artists make exceptional, innovative work,” said the **Dean of the Herb Alpert School of Music at CalArts and Acting Co-President David Rosenboom**. “The

awards are agents of transformation and, with the support of The Herb Alpert Foundation, awardees can create the next directions in their fields. CalArts students reap the benefit as these exemplary artists come to campus for the residencies, a component of the prize.”

**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 20<sup>th</sup>, being held at the Herb Alpert Foundation in Santa Monica.

For more information, please go to:

[www.alpertawards.org](http://www.alpertawards.org)

[www.herbalpertfoundation.org](http://www.herbalpertfoundation.org)

Photographs of the 2011 Alpert Award In the Arts recipients can be accessed at:

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

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