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**VOTING NOW OPEN FOR 2015 JERSEYARTS.COM PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS
Yearly Awards Garner Record-Breaking Number of Nominations, Nominees**

BURLINGTON, NJ (January 8, 2015) — Discover Jersey Arts—a cosponsored project of the ArtPride New Jersey Foundation and New Jersey State Council on the Arts dedicated to increasing the awareness of and participation in the arts in New Jersey—is pleased to announce that the polls are now open for the 2015 JerseyArts.com People's Choice Awards. Ballots are prepped for arts lovers statewide to vote for their favorite N.J. arts organizations.

For the second year in a row, a record-breaking number of nominations were received in 16 categories. From favorite theater to see a play to favorite dance company, favorite art gallery to favorite choral group, it's the public's turn to decide who's who among the Garden State's cultural community. The JerseyArts.com People's Choice Awards take place annually to honor the work of N.J.'s vital, vibrant and diverse arts organizations. More than 100 organizations and downtown arts districts were nominated this year—the largest amount of nominees the Awards has received since its creation in 2008.

“The response from N.J.'s cultural organizations has been amazing,” said Jim Atkinson, ArtPride New Jersey Foundation's Director of Programs and Services. “The overwhelming number of nominations and nominees really speaks to the strong arts community we have here and the desire these groups have to see one another thrive.”

This year's nominations boast 13 first-time nominees. All organizations were nominated by their peers through the Jersey Arts Marketers network, which is made up of hundreds of nonprofit arts groups across the state.

“The nominees, as well as all who nominated, should be very proud of the work they're doing to bolster arts and culture in our state,” continued Atkinson.

Public voting began January 7, 2015 and runs through February 19, 2015. Winners will be announced in early March and will be honored at the New Jersey Conference on Tourism, held each year at the Golden Nugget in Atlantic City.

For a full list of nominees and categories, please visit www.JerseyArts.com/peopleschoice.

About JerseyArts.com and Discover Jersey Arts

JerseyArts.com is the official website of Discover Jersey Arts, a cosponsored project of the ArtPride New Jersey Foundation and New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State dedicated to increasing the awareness of and participation in the arts in New Jersey. The site features a comprehensive cultural events calendar and arts directory; feature stories on Culture Vultures Arts Weekly and the Jersey Arts Podcast; details on Jersey Arts Membership, including discounts and exclusive member events; an online gallery of New Jersey artists; and other content about the state's cultural community.

About the ArtPride New Jersey Foundation

The ArtPride New Jersey Foundation is the programs and services arm of ArtPride New Jersey, Inc., a nonprofit coalition of organizations and individuals that advocates at local, state and national levels for funding, support and recognition of the arts as vital to New Jersey's economy, education and overall quality of life. For more information about ArtPride visit ArtPrideNJ.com.

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