



# 2011

OPEN CALL FINALISTS



PHOTOS: JACK HARTIN PHOTOGRAPHY



McCALLUM THEATRE. TO ENTERTAIN. TO EDUCATE. TO ENRICH.

# OPEN CALL 2011

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## DIAMOND ACOSTA

VOCALIST

**Age:** 10

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** Coachella

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

I saw last year's Open Call and it was amazing. This year I wanted to be a part of it.

### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

When I was little I wanted to sing and be on stage like Hannah Montana, but the people that truly push me to do and be better are Mrs. Klein, my choir instructor, and my mom.

### **What is your motto as a performer?**

Don't give up; keep moving forward.

## TRISTAN AKERS

SAXOPHONIST/COMPOSER

**Age:** 14

**Occupation:** Student

**Home Town:** Indian Wells

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

I was excited about auditioning my first original classical composition. I really enjoyed performing in Open Call before as a soloist and in a jazz combo. I think the people at Open Call are really nice.

### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

Paul McCartney, John Williams and John Coltrane are my favorites.

### **What is your motto as a performer?**

If everyone played music, life would be a song.



# SARIKA ANDAVOLU

## VOCALIST

**Age:** 14

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** Rancho Mirage

**Why did you audition for Open Call?**

I love to perform and showcase my talent and love for music. Open Call gives me the opportunity to do that.

**What or who inspires you as a performer?**

My love for music inspires me as a performer.

**What is your motto as a performer?**

Try and fail, but don't fail to try.



# GIANA DAVLANTES

## ACTRESS

**Age:** 11

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** Rancho Mirage

**Why did you audition for Open Call?**

My friend Sarika asked me to perform with her.

**What or who inspires you as a performer?**

Taylor Swift

**What is your motto as a performer?**

Follow your dreams; do what you love to do.



## DEVIN ARMSTRONG

### VOCALIST

**Age:** 16

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** La Quinta

#### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

I wanted to make a dream of mine come true. I want to share my gift as a singing artist with as many people as I can, and hopefully one day, the world.

#### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

The artists that have inspired me as a performer are those that have brought joy where there is sadness, hope where there is despair, and laughter where there are tears.

#### **What is your motto as a performer?**

If you believe in yourself, then you can achieve anything.

## MOLLIE BISKAR

### VOCALIST

**Age:** 13

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** Palm Desert

#### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

I love to perform! Open Call is such an amazing experience. It's an incredible opportunity to sing on the McCallum stage!

#### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

I am inspired by Kristin Chenoweth, Lea Michelle and my Grandpa John who gave me my voice.

#### **What is your motto as a performer?**

Laugh your heart out, dance in the rain, cherish the moment, ignore the pain, live, laugh, love, forgive and forget, life's too short to be living with regrets.





## CAXTON

### BAND

**Age:** 23-26

**Occupation:** Students

**Hometown:** Palm Desert

#### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

To get a chance to play at the McCallum Theatre and introduce our music to the locals who don't know us yet.

#### **What or who inspires you as performers?**

Other musicians we look up to like The Beatles, Radiohead, Queen, Fiona Apple and Blondie.

#### **What is your motto as performers?**

"A dream you dream together is reality."

- John Lennon

## CK DANCE - SENIOR TEAM

### DANCERS

**Age:** 13-17

**Occupation:** Students

**Hometown:** Palm Springs

#### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

CK Dance has had the honor of being a finalist in Open Call every year since 1999. We celebrate the McCallum Theatre Institute for its commitment to enriching the lives of young artists with the opportunity to perform in a professional theatre.

#### **What or who inspires you as performers?**

CK Dance alumni inspire us with their commitment to our company and the role models they provide for us. The love and support of our families and the knowledge and guidance of our dance teachers also inspire us.

#### **What is your motto as performers?**

Break the rules; stand apart; ignore your head; follow your heart!





# CAMILLE CRONK

## VOCALIST

**Age:** 17

**Occupation:** Student / Singing Host at Café Italia

**Hometown:** Palm Desert

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

I have always wanted to be a part of a McCallum production. Since I'm going away to college next year, I also thought it would be a truly awesome experience to end my senior year with.

### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

Singers from the 40's like Etta James definitely have a big influence on my singing style, but my biggest inspiration as a performer is my dad who taught me at a young age to appreciate music. We would dance around my living room to Simon & Garfunkel and Paul McCartney, so I give thanks to my dad for my love of music and my desire to perform.

### **What is your motto as a performer?**

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind."

- Dr. Seuss

# GRACE HAGGARD

## VOCALIST/PIANIST/SONGWRITER

**Age:** 14

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** Yucca Valley

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

It is such a great opportunity and I also know that this experience will help me grow as a performer. This is also my first time performing one of my original songs and I am very excited to share it with everyone.

### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

I love seeing the smiles on my audiences' faces. Their support inspires me to be the absolute best I can be! My family and my CK dance family also encourage and support me and I love them very much!

### **What is your motto as a performer?**

Don't dream it, be it!





# HARTIN DANCE COMPANY

## DANCERS

**Age:** 14-26

**Occupation:** Students

**Hometown:** Palm Desert

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

We have had the pleasure of being in Open Call since 2006 and have enjoyed every year. We have a great time meeting new people and performing at the McCallum theatre.

### **What or who inspires you as performers?**

Anyone who pursues their passion and just goes for it!

### **What is your motto as performers?**

You can dance anywhere, even if only in your heart.

# CRISTINA McKEEVER

## DANCER

**Age:** 15

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** Indio

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

I had heard that it was a really fun experience and my dance teacher suggested that I audition. I want to share the joy of dancing with anyone I can.

### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

For me, dancing is an inspiration in itself, though the two people that inspire me to dance are two people I have never had the chance to meet, my grandmothers. Knowing that they loved to entertain gives me dedication and passion as a performer to know that I have a connection with them that no one else has- the God given gift of dance.

### **What is your motto as a performer?**

"God is the dancer, creation is the dance; be silent and look at the dance; a star, a flower a fading leaf; and hopefully, it won't be long, until you see... The Dancer."

- Anthony de Mello



# KEN LEWIS

## VOCALIST

**Age:** 74

**Occupation:** Retired Special Education Teacher

**Hometown:** Indio

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

Open Call 2010 was a great experience for me. The talent was excellent and the people involved became very special to me. I wanted to see if I could enjoy that process one more time.

### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

Anyone who explores and expresses their talent and creativity inspires me. Whether it's my wife Judy, my singing buddy Wayne Russell, our karaoke group at Neil's in Indio or performers such as Yve Evans or Niel Diamond, I'm inspired by their efforts.

### **What is your motto as a performer?**

Life is Good!



# WAYNE RUSSELL

## VOCALIST

**Age:** 69

**Occupation:** Retired

**Hometown:** Indio

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

My singing buddy Ken and other friends encouraged me to audition. I thought that it would be fun.

### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

I have always enjoyed music and singing, starting when I was just a kid of 12 when I would sing solos in school. I enjoy singing with my friend Ken and others who I know in the karaoke circuit.

### **What is your motto as a performer?**

I love to sing!



# CESAR MORALES

VOCALIST

**Age:** 53

**Occupation:** Student / Waiter

**Hometown:** Palm Springs

### Why did you audition for Open Call?

I have always loved to sing and people ask me all the time if I perform as a professional singer or if I have studied vocal performance, but the fact is that I only took a semester of voice lessons in college. This is an opportunity of a lifetime to be able to perform at such a great venue as the McCallum Theatre and I feel very grateful for this. With so much talent in the desert I never thought I would be performing and be one of the finalists in Open Call 2011.

### What or who inspires you as a performer?

My mother loved to sing for the town she is from in Venezuela, and my two children also love to sing. They are my main inspiration. When I saw the video of Susan Boyle I learned that no matter your age, if you follow your passion and your dream for singing it could happen to you.

### What is your motto as a performer?

Whatever you do in life, do your best and give it your all!

# ONE 11

BAND

**Age:** 14-17

**Occupation:** Students

**Hometown:** Coachella Valley

### Why did you audition for Open Call?

To expose our fresh, new and unique type of rock music to the Valley and to be part of the McCallum experience working with professionals who can help us further develop our skills as musicians.

### What or who inspires you as performers?

Ronnie King, Robbie Allen, Raul Ramirez, Green Day, My Chemical Romance, Jimi Hendrix, and Golden Ear Ring inspire us.

### What is your motto as performers?

Pop music tells you everything is alright; rock music tells you that it's not; punk music doesn't care; we just write what we feel!





## OVER THE WALL

### BAND

**Age:** 20-24

**Occupation:** Students

**Hometown:** Coachella, Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage

#### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

To gain performance experience, share our musical talents with a large diverse crowd and get the exposure that Open Call will provide.

#### **What or who inspires you as performers?**

Our love of performing and the energy felt from the audiences for which we perform.

#### **What is your motto as performers?**

Music is always better in the garden.

## PALM DESERT JAZZ COMBO

### BAND

**Age:** 14-18

**Occupation:** Students

**Hometown:** Palm Desert

#### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

We have been fortunate enough to perform in Open Call for the past two years, and we love it! It's such a great experience and a wonderful opportunity for us to make music together.

#### **What or who inspires you as performers?**

Any musician with the passion to perfect their craft is an inspiration. All our past and current band directors and instructors motivate us to be the best we can be.

#### **What is your motto as performers?**

Today's preparation determines tomorrow's achievement; as our former school band director used to say, "Early is on-time, on time is late, and late is unacceptable!"





# PSUSD STEEL ORCHESTRA

## BAND

**Age:** 14-19

**Occupation:** Students

**Hometown:** Desert Hot Springs, Cathedral City and Palm Springs

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

When we started as a group a year ago, being part of the McCallum's Open Call competition was a dream for us, a quest. It was our goal from the very beginning to be able perform at the McCallum. We are extremely excited to have reached that goal!

### **What or who inspires you as performers?**

We are inspired by two things. First of all, we want to be the best possible musicians we can be, and are constantly seeking to improve our skills. Secondly, we desire to be excellent performers, and achieve a true connection with the audience, as artists.

### **What is your motto as performers?**

"Music is well said to be the speech of angels..."  
Thomas Carlyle

# KAYLA ROBLES

## DANCER

**Age:** 11

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** Palm Springs

### **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

It is an amazing experience to be able to dance on the beautiful McCallum stage. I also enjoy meeting all the talented people.

### **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

My parents, older sister and teacher inspire me as a performer. They always encourage me to believe in myself and dance from what I feel in my heart.

### **What is your motto as a performer?**

Dance like everyone is watching.  
Always try something new!





## HALEY VARELA

### VOCALIST

**Age:** 11

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** Palm Desert

**Why did you audition for Open Call?**

I enjoy singing and I love to share my talent by performing.

**What or who inspires you as a performer?**

The good feeling I get after I sing to anyone and the smiles on faces.

**What is your motto as a performer?**

We are all born with a talent, but it's up to us to use it.

## MAX WANG

### PIANIST

**Age:** 15

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** Palm Desert

**Why did you audition for Open Call?**

At the outset, I auditioned for Open Call as a way to perform and share piano music with others. It's always a privilege to be able to perform in front an audience with so many other talented people on stage. However, after participating in Open Call in previous years, I find myself returning continuously because it's A LOT of fun.

**What or who inspires you as a performer?**

Of course, my family inspires me in every facet of my life as they constantly push me towards my dreams. In addition, my piano teacher, Mr. James McCormick, has helped me immensely in my piano studies and I would not be close to anywhere I am today in piano without his compassion and perseverance. Also the Steinway Society has helped me immensely in pursuing my goals.

**What is your motto as a performer?**

The sky is the limit.



# ZACHARY GLANCE

**Age:** 22

**Occupation:** Server

**Hometown:** Palm Springs

**Why did you audition for Open Call?**

So I may gain more experience in the theatrical aspect of performing my art.

**What or who inspires you as a performer?**

The fire dancer Yuta, Alex Grey and my environment.

**What is your motto as a performer?**

Goodness gracious great balls of fire!

## NOCTURNAL ELEMENTS



FIRE DANCERS

# MANUEL GUERRA

**Age:** 21

**Occupation:** Cook & Server

**Hometown:** Palm Springs

**Why did you audition for Open Call?**

So that we may share our art form with people and hopefully inspire others to help make what we do known. Our competitive drive made it apparent for us to be here and participate.

**What or who inspires you as a performer?**

An audience, knowing that my performance touched and possibly changed someone's life in a positive way.

**What is your motto as a performer?**

Progressive lifestyles - the logical progression of free expression.

# ROB WATKINS

VENTRILOQUIST

**Age:** 51

**Occupation:** Pastor

**Hometown:** Yucca Valley



## **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

My friends kept saying I should try it for the experience as well as exposure.

## **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

People who work very hard at their craft, career or profession and make what they do look easy.

## **What is your motto as a performer?**

"Don't part with your illusions. When they are gone you may still exist, but you will have ceased to live."

– Mark Twain

# OLIVIA WONG

PIANIST

**Age:** 17

**Occupation:** Student

**Hometown:** La Quinta

## **Why did you audition for Open Call?**

Principally, I would like to communicate to the audience the significance of cultural diversity, uniqueness of the individual, and the divine language of music epitomized in George Gershwin/Earl Wild's Virtuoso Etude: Embraceable You. Not only do I want to evolve as a performer by interacting with talented individuals, I look forward to making long-lasting friendships and becoming part of the most surreal event. When I was in seventh grade, I was a finalist of the 2007 McCallum Open Call Competition and was fortunate to become best friends with Megan Wolfson, a dancer. Our friendship is a testimony to the enigmatic magic Open Call has always cultivated.



## **What or who inspires you as a performer?**

My personal relationship with the piano has been an integral part of my life and has always been my personal social leverage to escape the constant societal pressures. Additionally, my piano instructor, James McCormick, and music theory teacher, Marta Basham, have profoundly influenced my development as a musician. By enlightening the complex mechanisms of music, both instructors have inspired me to exercise freedom of expression as a performer.

## **What is your motto as a performer?**

I strongly believe in the power of love, one of the most harmonizing gifts of God, which transcends the downfalls of humanity: racism, war, jealousy, selflessness, etc.

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails...But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13: 4-7, 13