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GANYC ANNOUNCES HISTORIAN, AUTHOR, TOUR GUIDE ANTHONY ROBINS AND CABARET LEGEND STEVE ROSS AS 2017 LEGACY AWARD WINNERS

Guiding Spirit and Lifetime Achievement Awards to be Presented to Robins, Ross at 2017 GANYC Apple Awards Ceremony on March 6

NEW YORK, January 18 — **The Guides Association of New York City (GANYC)** today announced its 2017 legacy award winners. Longtime New York tour guide **Anthony W. Robins** will be honored with the 2017 Guiding Spirit Award, while legendary cabaret entertainer **Steve Ross** will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award. Robins and Ross will be presented with their awards at the **2017 GANYC Apple Awards**, which will take place Monday, March 6 at the SVA Theatre, 333 West 23rd St. in Manhattan. The third-annual awards honor organizations and individuals that encourage and promote New York City tourism, culture and preservation while supporting the work and contributions of professional New York City tour guides.

Robins has been leading New York walking tours for more than 25 years, with a focus on history and architecture. A distinguished author and historian, Robins teaches at NYU and Columbia University, and has lectured at the Sorbonne. The former deputy director of research and director of survey for the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission has written, edited, and supervised hundreds of research and survey reports. He's written half-a-dozen guidebooks to lower Manhattan, as well as 40 historic site markers that sit in front of downtown landmarks. His books include "Classics of American Architecture: The World Trade Center," "Subway Style" and "Grand Central Terminal, 100 Years of a New York Landmark;" his newest book, "[New York Art Deco: A Guide to Gotham's Jazz Age Architecture](#)" (SUNY Press) will be released this spring.

"I remember the first time I noticed buildings -- I was in graduate school, having a tough time in an architecture history course," Robins recalled. "I really didn't get it. Then one day, sitting in a bus going home, I looked out the window and suddenly noticed that all the buildings we were passing had personalities! Columns, arches, cornices -- these made up the face each one showed to the world. It was as though a third eye had opened in my forehead that saw architecture. I started walking all over New York with, so to speak, new eyes. When people on my tours tell me that they see the city with their own new eyes -- that's what I love best, knowing that I've passed on the gift."

Robins has been an integral member of GANYC, having led myriad FAM tours and professional-development programs, and serving as a mentor to scores of tour guides. A founding member and past Vice President of The Art Deco Society of New York, he created the Society's original tour program in 1981. He follows another legendary GANYC guide, Lee Gelber, who won the inaugural Guiding Spirit Award in 2016.

Tony Robins, Steve Ross to be Honored with 2017 GANYC Legacy Awards - 2

“Tony Robins is the definition of what GANYC looks for in an honoree for the Guiding Spirit Award, which honors an experienced guide who has not only gained great stature in our industry and throughout New York City, but who has given generously of him/herself to our professional community,” stated **GANYC President Michael Dillinger**. “To earn the title of Guiding Spirit, a guide must demonstrate leadership and mentorship for other guides, share the craft of touring and the contagious passion for the city with the next generation, and make New York a better place for travelers and residents alike. GANYC congratulates Tony on this well-deserved honor.”

Known as the American Songbook Man, Steve Ross will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award in honor of his 40 years of delighting audiences on six continents, but in particular in New York. Ross came to New York in the early 1970s, working as a background piano player. His career took off playing at Ted Hook’s Backstage, a well-known piano bar in the theater district where everyone from Liza Minnelli and Ginger Rogers to tourists sang along with Steve. In 1981, he helped reopen the legendary Oak Room at the Algonquin Hotel, where he performed regularly for four years. He hosted a popular series called “New York Cabaret Nights” on National Public Radio, broadcast live from New York cabaret rooms.

“The classic American Songbook was born and developed in New York, and few have done more to keep this music alive than Steve Ross,” stated GANYC President Dillinger. “As tour guides, we know how important this music is to the heart and rhythm of New York, and Steve’s contributions to New York’s cabaret scene cannot be understated. We are thrilled to honor Steve with our Lifetime Achievement Award for the joy he has brought to New Yorkers and visitors alike with his musical interpretations of the greats, from Cole Porter to Stephen Sondheim to Kander & Ebb.”

Ross joins artist James Turrell and Harlem jazz legend Marjorie Eliot as winners of GANYC’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

In addition to the legacy awards, the 2017 GANYC Apple Awards Ceremony will present awards in 13 categories including Outstanding Achievements in New York City culture, tourism, preservation, food, website, books (fiction and nonfiction), essay/article/series writing, museum exhibition, radio/podcast and photography. Nominees were determined by the GANYC Awards committee, and the GANYC membership will vote on the nominees through mid-January, with the winners announced at the third-annual gala awards ceremony on March 6.

The event kicks off with a red-carpet event and cocktail party at 6:30 pm. Doors to the theater will open at 7:30 pm, and the ceremony will commence at 8 pm. The event is open to the public, and tickets are now on sale. For more, including how to buy tickets, visit www.GANYC.org/2017-ganyc-apple-awards.

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ABOUT GANYC: The Guides Association of New York (GANYC) is New York City’s professional tour guides association. Founded in 1974 by licensed guides for licensed guides, GANYC is one of the oldest and most active tour-guide associations in America. All GANYC members are licensed by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs. For more information about GANYC, please visit www.ganyc.org.