

CREATIVE CITY

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NEIGHBOURHOOD ARTS NETWORK STRATEGIC PLAN PROVIDES A CLEAR 5-YEAR DIRECTION



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NEIGHBOURHOOD
ARTS NETWORK



After months of preparation, planning and research, Toronto Arts Foundation is pleased to announce the completion of the Strategic Plan for its Neighbourhood Arts Network initiative. This new plan will be vital in identifying the impact and programming that will be most effective for the Network to implement accessibility, equity and diversity in the arts. The Network will also create responsive programming in every corner of Toronto.

Toronto Arts Foundation launched Neighbourhood Arts Network in 2010. Over the past seven years, it has grown substantially, now serving over 1,700 members in a range of neighbourhoods across Toronto. The membership consists of artists, arts organizations and community-invested organizations. Toronto Arts Foundation and its core initiatives envision a city in which all artists and arts organizations have the capacity to make transformative art with, in and for diverse communities.

The next five years will allow the Foundation to convene, bridge, incubate and advocate for the arts through the Network, to continue investing time and resources into serving newcomer artists through professional development opportunities, and administer awards designed to kick start and enable the completion of arts projects. Neighbourhood Arts Network will create opportunities to cultivate, nurture and share knowledge, and advocate for community-engaged arts-making that is responsive and meaningful.

We look forward to sharing more updates with you and encourage you to send any feedback to Parul Pandya, Manager of Communications at parul@torontoarts.org.

To learn more about Neighbourhood Arts Network's upcoming events and activities, please visit neighbourhoodartsnetwork.org.

Cover photos by Kat Rizza

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Canadians believe that exposure to the arts and culture is important to their well-being.



ARTS IN THE PARKS

Toronto Arts Foundation's newest city-wide initiative, Arts in the Parks, is thrilled to be returning in early June. Over 34,000 Torontonians have experienced Arts in the Parks first-hand. Last summer, our events popped up in 33 parks in a series of 250 activities and performances including, but not limited to music, theatre, art installations, dance and film. None of this would have been possible without the assistance of the partners, donors and supporters, and the Arts in the Parks ambassadors who volunteered more than 800 hours of their time to ensure the success of our inaugural summer.

Looking forward, Arts in the Parks has big things in store. We are growing, improving and remaining dedicated to our goals of community building and securing access to free artistic programming for people of all ages. We have plans to return to some of our favourite green spaces and to expand to new parks in underserved neighbourhoods throughout Toronto.

We are also working to improve our volunteer program through the introduction of a youth component. The new youth-oriented roles will help to spotlight and spark interest in Arts in the Parks events, encourage community-building, and provide invaluable training and hands-on experience. By expanding our reach and scope of activities, we will be better suited to remove barriers, stimulate communities and increase access to the arts for everyone.

A special thank you goes out to the generous sponsors from the Mayor's Evening for the Arts, and the friends of the Foundation, who have made Arts in the Parks a possibility once again. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to making Arts in the Parks 2017 another vibrant summer of arts programming for all Torontonians!

For full event listings and to become an Arts in the Parks volunteer, please visit artsintheparksTO.org.



Parks N' Wreck. Photo by Jaclyn Rodrigues. Lawrence Park (North York)



Parks N' Wreck. Photo by Jaclyn Rodrigues. Lawrence Park (North York)



Toronto Bicycle Music Festival. Photo by Sarah Gladki. Prairie Drive Park (Scarborough)



Toronto Bicycle Music Festival. Photo by Sarah Gladki. Prairie Drive Park (Scarborough)



At Toronto Arts Foundation, we are committed to turning up the spotlight by recognizing artistic excellence and celebrating the city's creative, business and civic leaders through our awards programs. The Toronto Arts Foundation Awards illuminate Toronto's finest artists and provides opportunities to further their careers. We caught up with two of our past winners, Emilie LeBel and Ritesh Das, to learn more about their experiences.

Emilie LeBel, the recipient of the 2015 Emerging Artist Award, is an up-and-coming composer whose work has been featured in Canada and overseas. In 2013, she completed her Doctorate in Composition at University of Toronto. She now acts as the Associate Composer at the Canadian Music Centre, Composer-in-Residence for the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, and is a member of the Blue Moss Ensemble. Emilie had the following to say about receiving the Emerging Artist Award:

"I am still overwhelmed by the generosity of this award, and feel honoured that I was recognized by Toronto for my artistic contributions. I feel very fortunate to have had this support during a crucial time in my career, as I work towards establishing myself at the local, national and international levels."

This year, she will join the Plumes Ensemble at the Many Visions concert tour, perform in Europe alongside the Cecilia String Quartet, and the 21C Music Festival in Toronto.

To learn more about Emilie LeBel and her body of work, please visit emilielebel.ca.

Musician and educator Ritesh Das founded the Toronto Tabla Ensemble. For over 25 years, he has brought his unique musical heritage and vision to Canadian audiences through his recordings, performances and tireless dedication to training future generations in the South Asian musical tradition. Ritesh received the Roy Thomson Hall Award of Recognition last year. He spoke to us about the significance of the tabla tradition, its influence on his career and what the future holds.

TAF: What is your style of tabla?

RD: Teaching is traditional, while the music I do with the Tabla Ensemble is much more of a collaboration. I find that there is similarity between each and every culture, and [the ensemble] explores that. With teaching, unless you have a very strong discipline, you cannot collaborate because the fusion becomes confusion. I think you need a solid background and then you can collaborate. There are two aspects: tradition and then innovation. But first you need tradition.

TAF: How has the tabla influenced you as an artist?

RD: Tabla to me is very spiritual; it's a form of meditation. It helps me with my own personal growth.

TAF: Why is teaching the tabla important to you?

RD: One of the factors is that by teaching you learn about yourself. Number two, you're teaching the next generation and passing on a very ancient tradition and heritage to kids who are born here, who are able to find a good personal identity for themselves.

TAF: Can you tell us about the Tabla Youth Ensemble?

RD: I'm looking at the future, celebrating the youth. This is what Canada's all about. The Youth Ensemble is not just learning about the tradition, the music, or how to perform, they're learning about administration as well. They learn how to produce their own shows. So the Youth Ensemble is not just a band, it's also an institution where you learn about arts and arts management.

To learn more about Ritesh Das and the Toronto Tabla Ensemble, please visit torontotabla.com.

Toronto Arts Foundation continues to celebrate the achievements of Ritesh and Emilie, and looks forward to announcing its incoming cohort of winners at the Mayor's Arts Lunch on May 17, 2017.

Photo of Emilie LeBel by Denise Grant.

Photo of Ritesh Das by Sean Howard.

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT: CIBC



Get on Board Workshop at CIBC – Commerce Court North. Photo by Sean Howard

“CIBC is committed to building strong, vibrant communities and by promoting artistic excellence, we are investing in the social and economic development of Toronto,” said Tracy Best, Region Head, Retail and Business Banking, CIBC.

Toronto Arts Foundation and CIBC began their fourth partnership year, supporting the Mayor’s Arts Lunch and the Get on Board Program. The Mayor’s Arts Lunch is an event that brings together the entire spectrum of Toronto’s creative community, with artists, business and civic leaders, corporate partners, politicians, and special guests in attendance. The Foundation’s Signature awards are given out at this event, recognizing artistic excellence in Toronto.

Get on Board is a workshop series designed with arts board members in mind and is a key component of

the Foundation’s Creative Champions initiative. It offers unique opportunities to learn, connect with others and generate new ideas. CIBC’s support goes towards providing arts board members with resources to learn about the practice of good governance, share experiences and understand the context, trends and outside forces that have an impact on their work. The next workshop is slated for April 4, 2017, and will be focusing on the themes of diversity and new perspectives. It is a discussion on the social imperative, benefits and best practices in expanding organizational diversity.

To learn more about this year’s Get on Board workshop series and upcoming events, please visit torontoartsfoundation.org/knowledge/creative-champions-network/get-on-board.



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Toronto Arts Foundation would like to thank all our wonderful Board Members and volunteers for their support and countless hours of service to our organization. We appreciate all that you do!

For more information and to make a donation to the Toronto Arts Foundation, please contact:
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Our donors are pacesetters for Creative City: Block by Block. Thank you for your generous annual donations, for believing in our initiatives and the transformative social and economic benefits of the arts. Toronto Arts Foundation is very grateful for your generosity and support.

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† Staff member.

Recognition as of March 3, 2017.