

BACKGROUND: TORONTO ARTS FOUNDATION AWARDS 2019 FINALISTS

ABOUT – TORONTO ARTS FOUNDATION AWARDS

Toronto Arts Foundation Awards are presented to artists, cultural leaders and businesses in recognition of artistic excellence, cultural leadership and contribution to the arts. Financial support of the annual Toronto Arts Foundation Awards is provided through a combination of legacies and annual donations from private and corporate donors. The awards are presented annually at the Mayor's Arts Lunch.

ARTS FOR YOUTH AWARD

The Arts for Youth Award was established in 2007 by Martha Burns, Jim Fleck and Sandra and Jim Pitblado. The award celebrates an individual, collective or organization that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to engaging Toronto's youth through the arts and artistic creation. The winner of the award receives a \$20,000 cash prize, with each finalist receiving \$2,000. The finalist awards are supported by a generous donation from Diana Bennett and Spencer Lanthier.

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Molly Johnson, O.C.

David Mirvish, C.M.

Joyce Zemans, C.M.

FINALISTS – ARTS FOR YOUTH AWARD

Blank Canvas

Blank Canvas is an art collective that continues to build a vibrant art community that drives culture forward and creates platforms for marginalized artists through events, panels, workshops and content creation. Blank Canvas seeks to reimagine spaces that allow emerging artists to explore their intersectional identities, where the ability to share narratives and raise awareness of culturally critical issues facing our communities is fostered. Using varying forms of artistic and cultural expression, Blank Canvas focuses on what's best for our community, spreading positive energy, showcasing new artists, taking up space unapologetically and being a cultural conduit for creatives.

JAYU

JAYU is a registered charity committed to sharing human rights stories through the arts. Their year-round programming includes the Human Rights Film Festival, *The Hum* human rights podcast, and iAM, an arts and social-justice training program for underserved youth in Toronto which leads to exhibition opportunities, employment, peer-to-peer leadership and more.

Paprika Festival

Paprika Festival is a youth-led professional performing arts organization. Paprika provides year-round theatre training and mentorship programs that culminate in a festival of new work by young artists. The organization has served as an unparalleled professional launchpad for artists since 2001, providing free, personalized training and a direct bridge to the industry.

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Charitable Registration:
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EMERGING ARTIST AWARD

The Emerging Artist Award is a \$10,000 cash prize, with finalists receiving \$2,000. The award celebrates the accomplishments and future potential of an emerging Toronto artist working in any discipline. Established in 2006, the award is generously sponsored by Susan Crocker and John Hunkin to support the development or completion of new work. The award given to finalist honourees was established in 2014 through the generous donation of the Bulmash-Siegel Fund. The recipient of the award receives a complimentary week-long stay at Valleyview Artist Retreat.

FINALISTS – EMERGING ARTIST AWARD

Susanna Fournier

Susanna Fournier is a theatre-maker whose practice spans writing, producing, performing, directing and educating. She is the artistic producer of PARADIGM Productions. Her work is feminist, anti-imperial, experimental, rowdy and sometimes "impossible." In a culture of alienation, she's interested in performance that cultivates the intimate, the epic, the blasphemous and the sacred.

Brittany Exmiranda Manu

Brittany Exmiranda Manu, lyricist and spoken-word poet, has been turning heads with her unique sound, dynamic flow and ability to infuse various genres into her eclectic rap style. As an advocate for inclusion and diversity, she uses her artistic prowess to engage her community and inspire youth from vulnerable populations.

Joshua Vettivelu

Joshua Vettivelu is an artist, programmer and educator working within sculpture, video, installation and performance. Their works explore how larger frameworks of power manifest within intimate relationships. Recently their practice examines the tensions that emerge when personal experiences are mined for art production, and how this allows institutions to posture and position themselves as self-reflexive. Currently, Vettivelu teaches in the faculty of Art and Continuing Education at OCADU and is the previous Director of Programming of Whippersnapper Gallery.

MARGO BINDHARDT AND RITA DAVIES CULTURAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Margo Bindhardt and Rita Davies Cultural Leadership Award is a \$10,000 cash prize, with finalists receiving \$1,000. The award celebrates an individual artist, creator, volunteer or administrator who has demonstrated creative cultural leadership in the development of arts and culture in Toronto. The award is supported in part by John and Raphaela Dunlap. The finalist awards are supported by Neera Chopra. The Margo Bindhardt and Rita Davies Award presented every two years at the Mayor's Arts Lunch.

FINALISTS – MARGO BINDHARDT AND RITA DAVIES CULTURAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

Nina Lee Aquino

Nina Lee Aquino is a leading Filipina-Canadian director and dramaturge based in Toronto. She was founding Artistic Director of fu-GEN Asian Canadian Theatre, Artistic Director of Cahoots, and is currently Artistic Director of Factory Theatre. She is recipient of the Ken McDougall Award (2004), the Canada Council John Hirsch Prize (2008), and two Dora Mavor Moore Awards for Outstanding Direction.

Emelie Chhangur

Emelie Chhangur (Interim Director/Curator, AGYU) is an award-winning curator, writer and artist. Employing a socially-engaged curatorial practice with Toronto as its subject, she creates new civic ceremonies as collaborative artworks. Questioning the contemporary art gallery's civic role, her concept of "in-reach" has transformed institutional practice in the arts across Canada.

Ella Cooper

Ella Cooper, the founder of Black Women Film! Canada, is an award-winning multimedia artist, educator, facilitator, producer and community programmer who has been dedicated to the arts sector for over 19 years. Her transformational projects, programs and networks have created positive social change across our sector while impacting organizations, leaders and new creative communities of support for Black and diverse artists across the city.

MURIEL SHERRIN AWARD FOR INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN MUSIC

The \$10,000 award, created to honour Muriel Sherrin, founding producer of the 1984 Toronto International Festival, is presented to an artist or creator who has made a contribution to the cultural life of Toronto through outstanding achievement. The recipient will also have participated in international initiatives, including touring, studying abroad, and participating in artist exchanges.

FINALISTS – MURIEL SHERRIN AWARD FOR INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN MUSIC

Robert Aitken

World-renowned flutist, composer and conductor Robert Aitken has been artistic director of New Music Concerts, Toronto's senior contemporary music organization, since its inception in 1971. His many accolades include the Order of Canada, the National Flute Association's Lifetime Achievement Award and the Walter Carsen Prize for Excellence in the Performing Arts.

Eve Egoyan

Eve Egoyan is an internationally acclaimed concert pianist based in Toronto. She has released a dozen discs and toured worldwide. Eve's curiosity compels her to reinvent the piano for herself and her audiences, to curate exceptional programmes and to commission new works by like-minded artists and composers.

Vineet Vyas

Vineet Vyas is a disciple of the late legendary tabla maestro Pandit Kishan Maharaj and has performed across India, Europe and North America with some of India's eminent classical artists such as Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Pandits Rajan and Sajan Mishra, and Ustad Shahid Parvez. In 2015, Vineet was nominated for a Dora Mavor Moore Award and was a finalist for the Toronto Arts Foundation's Muriel Sherrin Award.

TORONTO ARTS AND BUSINESS AWARD

Every year at the Mayor's Arts Lunch, a local business that has made an important contribution to the arts in Toronto, through innovative and transformational partnerships, is recognized with the Toronto Arts & Business Award. Winners range from national financial institutions and real estate development to small design firms and local businesses. Presented in partnership with Toronto Arts Foundation, Business/Arts, and the Toronto Star, this award was established in 2006.

FINALISTS – TORONTO ARTS AND BUSINESS AWARD

A committee has selected one recipient for the Toronto Arts and Business Award. The winner will be announced at the Mayor's Arts Lunch on May 8.

APPOINTMENT OF JURORS

Each year, a jury of up to 10 members reviews candidate profiles and makes finalist and recipient recommendations for each award, excepting the Toronto Arts and Business Award, to Toronto Arts Foundation's Board of Directors, which approves final determinations. Jury members must have recognized expertise, prestige, credibility and experience, along with a sense of history and perspective. Each jury is comprised of participants who are practitioners of the arts, organizers, programmers, producers, curators, critics, commentators and lay specialists.

The 2019 jury members were: **Lawrence Cherney, Jason De Mata, Kumali Giles, Clayton Lee, Julia Paoli, and Devyani Saltzman.**