

## Toronto Arts Foundation Announces 2019 Awards Finalists

*Five awards celebrating the city's emerging and established artists and cultural leaders will be presented at the annual Mayor's Arts Lunch on May 8.*

The arts are a vital part of what makes Toronto one of the most livable, vibrant cities in the world, inspiring creativity, challenging perceptions, and bringing communities together. Each year, [Toronto Arts Foundation](#) is proud to recognize individuals and organizations making their mark on Toronto's cultural landscape.

This year's Toronto Arts Foundation [awards finalists](#) range from established masters in their fields to emerging artists breaking new ground. From veteran classical musicians to a rising rapper, to cultural leaders and groups harnessing their expertise to train and support the next generation, they offer a snapshot of the incredible diversity and talent of Toronto's artistic scene.

The winners of the 2019 Toronto Arts Foundation awards will be announced at the annual Mayor's Arts Lunch on Wednesday, May 8 at the Omni King Edward Hotel, where a total of \$60,000 in prize money will be distributed.

The finalists are:

### Arts for Youth Award

**Blank Canvas** – an art collective building community and creating platforms for marginalized artists to explore their intersectional identities through events, panels, workshops and content creation.

**Jayu** – a registered charity committed to sharing human rights stories through the arts via year-round programming that includes a film festival, podcast, and training workshops.

**Paprika Festival** – a youth-led professional performing arts organization providing year-round theatre training and mentorship programs that culminate in a festival of new work by young artists.

### Emerging Artist Award

**Brittany Exmiranda Manu** – lyricist, rapper and spoken word artist

**Susanna Fournier** – writer, director, educator and artistic producer of PARADIGM Productions

**Joshua Vettivelu** – artist, programmer and educator working within sculpture, video, installation and performance

### The Margo Bindhardt and Rita Davies Cultural Leadership Award

**Nina Lee Aquino** – director and dramaturge; Artistic Director of Factory Theatre

**Emelie Chhangur** – curator, writer and artist; Interim Director/Curator at Art Gallery of York University

**Ella Cooper** – multimedia artist, educator, producer and community programmer; founder of Black Women Film! Canada

Kathleen Sharpe  
**Chair**

Richard Paquet  
**Vice Chair**

Susan Crocker, C.M.  
**Past Chair**

Claire Hopkinson, M.S.M.  
**Director & CEO**

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#### **Director Emeritus**

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#### **Arts Advisory Panel**

Margaret Atwood, C.C.

Atom Egoyan, O.C.

Norman Jewison, C.C.

Molly Johnson, O.C.

David Mirvish, C.M.

Joyce Zemans, C.M.

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Charitable Registration:  
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## [The Muriel Sherrin Award for International Achievement in Music](#)

**Robert Aitken, C.M.** – world-renowned flutist, composer and conductor, Artistic Director of New Music Concerts

**Eve Egoyan** – internationally acclaimed concert pianist

**Vineet Vyas** – master tabla player

The recipient of the **Toronto Arts and Business Award** will be announced at the Mayor's Arts Lunch on May 8, hosted by writer, performer, and radio host **Amanda Parris** and **Jesse Wente**, broadcaster and director of the Indigenous Screen Office.

"The Mayor's Arts Lunch shines the spotlight on the many artists and organizations helping to shape our creative city," said **Claire Hopkinson, Director & CEO, Toronto Arts Council and Toronto Arts Foundation**. "Toronto Arts Foundation is proud to recognize the contributions of these outstanding finalists, who inspire us through their diverse and dedicated work, exceptional craft, and commitment to community-building."

The 2019 finalists were selected by a jury of notable local artists and cultural leaders: Lawrence Cherney, Jason De Mata, Kumari Giles, Clayton Lee, Julia Paoli, and Devyani Saltzman.

"It was such a pleasure to see the amazing work nominated for this year's awards," said juror **Devyani Saltzman, Director of Public Programming, Art Gallery of Ontario**. "The GTA is home to incredible talent from across disciplines and Toronto is exploding with emerging artists and arts leaders. It is an honour to recognize their work."

This year marks the 14th Mayor's Arts Lunch awards ceremony, a celebration of Toronto's artistic community that brings together artists with cultural, government, and business leaders to recognize how the arts and those who support the sector benefit the city in meaningful ways.

For more details about the finalists (including interviews and portraits of each finalist) and the Toronto Arts Foundation awards, please visit [www.torontoartsfoundation.org/awards](http://www.torontoartsfoundation.org/awards).

## **ABOUT**

Toronto Arts Foundation is a charitable organization that sparks creative connections, spotlights artistic excellence, and supports vibrant cultural growth throughout our diverse city through private-sector investment. To learn more or to make a donation, visit [torontoartsfoundation.org](http://torontoartsfoundation.org).

## **CONTACT**

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