



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$86,000 AWARDED TO ARTS LEADERS AND INNOVATORS

Seven artists and organizations are honoured for transforming Toronto through the arts

TORONTO, September 24, 2020 – Their creativity, dedication to community and passion make Toronto the dynamic, world-renowned city that it is. Today, **Toronto Arts Foundation**, through the generosity of donors, celebrated seven leading artists and organizations for their work by presenting them with the 2020 Toronto Arts Foundation Awards.

The awards, totalling \$86,000, were announced and presented today at the 15th annual **Mayor's Arts Lunch**, attended by Mayor John Tory and a broad cross section of local politicians and arts and business leaders including the Honourable Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, MP Julie Dabrusin, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, and Canadian hip hop legend Maestro Fresh-Wes. The event was emceed by CBC radio host Errol Nazareth and Jesse Wente, broadcaster, Director of Indigenous Screen Office and Chair of Canada Council for the Arts.

This year, the Mayor's Arts Lunch was reimagined as a virtual online event in light of COVID-19 restrictions. Toronto Arts Foundation also expanded the 2020 Lunch to include two of its annual awards that are typically presented at separate celebrations: The Emerging Jazz Artist Award and The Community Arts Award.

The 2020 Toronto Arts Foundation Awards recipients are:

ARTS FOR YOUTH AWARD – \$20,000 prize (supported by Martha Burns, Jim Fleck, Sandra and Jim Pitblado)

- **JAYU** – a charity committed to sharing human rights stories through the arts

CELEBRATION OF CULTURAL LIFE AWARDS – \$10,000 prize (supported by Arthur Dalfen) & **a week-long retreat** (compliments of Valleyview Artist Retreat)

- **Sandra Laronde** – arts innovator, leader and Executive and Artistic Director of Red Sky Performance

COMMUNITY ARTS AWARD – \$10,000 prize (sponsored by MOD Developments Inc.)

- [Jamii](#) – local arts group serving the Esplanade

EMERGING ARTIST AWARD – \$10,000 prize (supported by Susan Crocker and John Hunkin)

- [jes sachse](#) – artist, writer and choreographer

EMERGING JAZZ ARTIST AWARD – \$10,000 prize (supported by Cheryl and Manuel Buchwald)

- [Jesse Ryan](#) – saxophonist and composer

ROY THOMSON HALL AWARD OF RECOGNITION – \$10,000 prize (supported by the Corporation of Massey Hall and Roy Thomson Hall)

- [PhemPhat Entertainment Group](#) – produces the Honey Jam programme for young female artists

TORONTO ARTS AND BUSINESS AWARD – (honourable Recognition, presented in partnership with Toronto Arts Foundation, Business/Arts, and the Toronto Star)

- [Concord Adex](#) – real estate developer and builder recognized for their investments in public art through Ethenonnhawahstihnen' Park in North York and support for artists. The award was received by company President and CEO Terry Hui

Recipients were presented with a [commissioned commemorative plate](#) designed by renowned Toronto artist **Luis Jacob**, whose work destabilizes viewing conventions and invites collisions of meaning.

“I’d like to thank you, the artists, the originals, the creators and your support teams for continuing to find ways to make meaning and connect us all whether online or outdoors, through your generosity, persistence, collaboration and creative visions,” said **John Tory, Mayor of Toronto**. “Let’s not lose sight of the arts. It will help us get through this pandemic and I am confident we will be stronger than ever.”

“2020 has been quite the year, full of uncertainty and heartbreak at the cancellation of so many arts events. I’m delighted that through the Toronto Arts Foundation Awards, the arts community is able to come together to celebrate those that bring fulfillment to our lives and enrich our city,” said **Claire Hopkinson, Director & CEO, Toronto Arts Council and Toronto Arts Foundation**. “Our finalists illustrate the vital and diverse spectrum of the arts in Toronto. They have shown incredible perseverance and commitment, and that has not stopped this year. I want to thank each and every one of them for their work – Toronto would not be the same without you.”

Ten of this year’s award finalists shared \$15,000 in prizes thanks to Diana Bennett and Spencer Lanthier, Arthur Dalfen, MOD Developments Inc., the Bulmash-Siegel Fund and Cheryl and

Manuel Buchwald. For more details about the finalists (including interviews and portraits of each finalist, featuring artwork by Amber Williams-King) visit the Toronto Arts Foundation [website](#).

The Mayor's Arts Lunch is Toronto Arts Foundation's annual awards ceremony that shines the spotlight on those who create, promote, and support the arts and culture which help make Toronto such a vibrant place to live.

Toronto Arts Foundation gratefully acknowledges the generosity of its sponsors who have continued their support of the arts in Toronto during this difficult time.

For a full list of the 2020 Mayor's Arts Lunch sponsors, click [here](#).

For more information on the winners, and to view the program booklet, see the media kit [here](#).

For more information about the Toronto Arts Foundation awards, please visit torontoartsfoundation.org/awards.

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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.

CONTACT

For more information or to book an interview with the recipients, finalists or Claire Hopkinson, please contact Sarah Gladki, Communications Manager, at sarah@torontoarts.org.