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News Release

R. H. Thomson to mentor Lennette Randall in 2026 Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Mentorship Program

The Mentorship Program marks its 17th year in partnership with The Keg Spirit Foundation

May 12, 2026 – OTTAWA (Canada) – The National Arts Centre proudly announces that acclaimed actor, director, producer, and arts advocate **R. H. Thomson** has chosen to mentor interdisciplinary artist **Lennette Randall** through the 2026 Governor General's Performing Arts Awards (GGPAA) Mentorship Program.

The Mentorship Program pairs past laureates of the GGPAA for Lifetime Artistic Achievement with mid-career artists whose work is shaping the future of the performing arts. The program supports long-term artistic growth and leadership within Canada's cultural sector.

The 2026 Mentorship Program brings together two artists whose practice reflects a deep commitment to craft, community, and the ongoing evolution of the performing arts in Canada.

R. H. Thomson 2026 Mentorship Program Mentor



R. H. (Robert) Thomson has worked for decades as an actor, director, writer, and producer. Recent acting credits include Matthew Cuthbert in *Anne with an E* (CBC TV), and Vladimir in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and Halvard Solness in Ibsen's *The Master Builder* (Atlantic Repertory Company). He has directed on stages across Canada, and his passion for mingling music and narrative has led to projects with Toronto's Tafelmusik and the Toronto Bach Festival. Among his many history-based projects, he co-produced the creation of three choral works for the WWI Centenary for the NAC Orchestra.

Lennette Randall
2026 Mentorship Program Protégée



Photo Courtesy: Michael Wharley

Lennette Randall is an interdisciplinary creative whose cosmopolitan background profoundly influences her worldview, fuelling a deep passion for storytelling that reflects and interrogates diasporic, cross-cultural, and intergenerational narratives. Her work as an actress, director, writer, speaker, singer, and educator is deeply rooted in ethnic storytelling techniques. Through hybrid art forms, she strives to create theatre that is both colossal in scope and rich in detail, blending movement, music, and technical artistry to engage audiences on multiple sensory levels.

A unique partnership inaugurated in 2008 between the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation and the National Arts Centre, generously supported by The Keg Spirit Foundation, the Mentorship Program provides an opportunity for past GGPAA recipients to inspire the next generation by offering guidance to talented Canadian artists at a pivotal stage in their career. Through sustained dialogue and shared experience, the program fosters professional development, reflection, and meaningful knowledge exchange.

"The Keg Spirit Foundation is proud to champion mentorship as a catalyst for artistic growth and community impact," said David Aisenstat, Chairman and Founder of The Keg Spirit Foundation. "We are delighted that esteemed actor, director, and playwright R.H. Thomson will be mentoring artist Lennette Randall over the coming year through the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Mentorship Program."

ABOUT THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S PERFORMING ARTS AWARDS

Created in 1992, the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards are Canada's highest distinction in the performing arts. This year's laureates for Lifetime Artistic Achievement are Susan Benson, James Cameron, Sylvain Émard, Daniel Lavoie and Tonya Williams. Sae Hoon (Stan) Chung will receive the Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts, and Barbara Hannigan will receive the National Arts Centre Award. The laureates will receive the Awards at a special ceremony and reception at Rideau Hall on Friday, June 5. Then on Saturday, June 6, the NAC will host a star-studded show featuring superb performances and evocative film portraits by the National Film Board of Canada.

Tickets for the GGPAA show at the NAC's Southam Hall on June 6 can be purchased online or by phone at 1-844-985-2787.

ABOUT THE NAC

The National Arts Centre is Canada's bilingual, multi-disciplinary home for the performing arts. The NAC presents, creates, produces, and co-produces performing arts programming in various streams—the NAC Orchestra, Dance, English Theatre, French Theatre, Indigenous Theatre, and

Popular Music and Variety—and nurtures the next generation of audiences and artists from across Canada. The NAC is located in the National Capital Region on the unceded territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation.

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