

One of the cherished legacies shared amongst performing artists in Canada, is the nurturing and encouraging of each other - the human, enduring chain of extending the generations. To have been the inaugural mentor for the GGPAA in 2008 was such an honour! It held as much meaning for me as receiving the Governor General's Performing Arts Award myself, if not more! This because - in our initiating this progressive phase of the Awards, Crystal Pite, the luminous dancer/choreographer/artistic director, was the ultimate, original, dynamic and most beautifully forceful choice to celebrate. She epitomized everything the GG's stand for with her intellectual, creative, innovative and full-flowering career. To this day I have never experienced such an explosive and spontaneously vocal standing ovation, as when she danced her solo-work, OLD SONG at the National Arts Centre. I came onstage to present her with the award, and witnessing this response was electrifying, it was like a tsunami! We are so proud of the success of the Mentorship program in the years and disciplines that have followed - in the catalyzing and inspiring that occurs on both sides of the equation. Underpinning the vital importance of the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards, it's this recognition with the connective imperative, of all the creative stages an artist undertakes, that infuses our multi-fold performance culture with the uniquely individual courage and passion that defines it.

Veronica Tennant, C.C.
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GGPAA Laureate, 2004
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