



**GOVERNOR GENERAL'S
PERFORMING ARTS AWARDS FOUNDATION
FONDATION DES PRIX DU GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL
POUR LES ARTS DU SPECTACLE**

NEWS RELEASE

**LAUREATES OF THE 2013
GOVERNOR GENERAL'S PERFORMING ARTS AWARDS
ANNOUNCED**

**Governor General's Performing Arts Awards
for Lifetime Artistic Achievement**

Andrew Dawes, Daniel Lanois, Jean Pierre Lefebvre,

Viola Léger, Eric Peterson, Menaka Thakkar

Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts

Jean Pierre Desrosiers

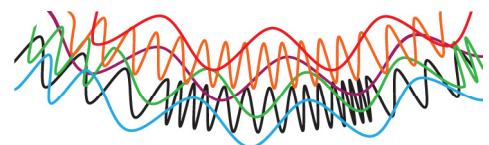
National Arts Centre Award

Sarah Polley

MONTREAL, April 10, 2013 – Andrew Dawes, Daniel Lanois, Jean Pierre Lefebvre, Viola Léger, Eric Peterson and Menaka Thakkar have been named the 2013 laureates of the prestigious **Governor General's Performing Arts Awards (GGPAA) for Lifetime Artistic Achievement**.

The Lifetime Artistic Achievement Awards are accompanied by two special awards, the **Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts** is given this year to **Jean Pierre Desrosiers** and **Sarah Polley** will receive the **National Arts Centre Award**, which recognizes exceptional achievement over the past performance year.

Created in 1992 under the distinguished patronage of the late Right Honourable Ramon John Hnatyshyn, then Governor General of Canada, these prestigious awards are presented annually to Canadians whose accomplishments have inspired and enriched the cultural life of our country.



“These Awards are Canada’s highest honour for our most accomplished performing artists” said Douglas Knight and Paul-André Fortier, Co-Chairs of the Governor General’s Performing Arts Foundation (GGPAAF).

“The Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate not only the careers of notable artists, but also those who give of their time, talent and resources to the arts,” said His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada. “I look forward to welcoming all the laureates to Rideau Hall and to acknowledging their contributions as cultural ambassadors.”

The six laureates of the **2013 Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards for Lifetime Artistic Achievement** are:

- **Andrew Dawes** (*Violinist and teacher*): One of the finest violinists Canada has ever produced, Andrew Dawes is an exceptional performer and gifted teacher who is known for his commitment to hard work, technical excellence, musical integrity, and excitement of performance. He is best known for his role as first violinist of Canada’s internationally acclaimed Orford String Quartet. In a career spanning half a century, his unique ability to share his enthusiasm for classical music has inspired listeners, students, and fellow musicians around the world.
- **Daniel Lanois** (*Record producer, songwriter and musician*): Hailed by *Rolling Stone* magazine as “the most important record producer to emerge in the ’80s”, Daniel Lanois has won international acclaim as one of the most distinctive and talented producers of his time. Through his work with such leading artists as U2, Bob Dylan, Peter Gabriel, Robbie Robertson and Neil Young, among many others, he has made an exceptional contribution to Canada’s music industry and inspired an entire generation of producers and engineers. He is also an award-winning songwriter and musician in his own right, with a dozen successful albums to his credit.
- **Jean Pierre Lefebvre** (*Independent filmmaker*): A seminal figure in Canadian cinema, Jean Pierre Lefebvre has received international acclaim for his innovative, thoughtful, fiercely independent films. His body of work includes close to 30 features and numerous short films, documentaries and videos. His work has been the subject of retrospectives in Canada and abroad, and his films have been screened at the Cannes Film Festival and the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), among many others. As a teacher and mentor, he has also played a key role in encouraging a younger generation of filmmakers.

- **Viola Léger** (*Actress and teacher*): Viola Léger is one of the brightest stars in Canada’s artistic firmament. She is best known for her role of La Sagouine in the play of the same name by Acadian writer Antonine Maillet: she has performed it more than 2,500 times, winning rave reviews for her authentic and engaging portrayal. She has made an enduring creative contribution in both English and French, and is a passionate ambassador for Acadian culture in Canada and around the world.
- **Eric Peterson** (*Actor and arts advocate*): Eric Peterson is one of Canada’s most accomplished actors. In a career spanning over four decades he has portrayed a broad range of memorable characters, from a World War I flying ace in *Billy Bishop Goes to War* to left-wing lawyer Leon Robinovitch in *Street Legal* (CBC TV) and the irascible Oscar Leroy in *Corner Gas* (CTV). Through his long association with the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), he has been a strong advocate for original Canadian production as well as “Status of the Artist” legislation at all levels of government here and globally.
- **Menaka Thakkar** (*Dancer, choreographer, artistic director, institution builder and teacher*) In a career spanning some 50 years, Menaka Thakkar has made an extraordinary contribution as a dancer, choreographer, institution builder, and teacher. Acknowledged worldwide as a pioneer of Indian classical dance, this trail-blazing creator has had a profound effect on the appreciation and popularity of dance from a diversity of cultures. She is deeply committed to artistic integrity and excellence, and her vision and dedication have paved the way for countless emerging Canadian dance artists and organizations.

Each laureate will receive a cash award of \$25,000 contributed by the [Canada Council for the Arts](#) and a commemorative medallion struck by the Royal Canadian Mint.

Jean Pierre Desrosiers is this year’s recipient of the **Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts**. Mr. Desrosiers is well known in Montreal’s cultural community for his generous and enthusiastic support of performing arts organizations ranging from music ensembles to theatre and dance companies, and even a circus. His inspired leadership of several major fundraising campaigns has helped many organizations to flourish, and his energy and dedication have served as an inspiration to volunteers, artists, and arts supporters alike. Mr. Desrosiers will receive a specially commissioned work by Canadian glass artist Naoko Takenouchi of Vancouver, British Columbia, and a commemorative medallion struck by the Royal Canadian Mint.

Sarah Polley is this year's recipient of the **National Arts Centre Award**, presented for exceptional achievement over the past performance year. An award-winning director, screenwriter and actress, Ms Polley is at the forefront of Canadian filmmaking today. Her latest film, *Stories We Tell*, a feature length documentary about her family history, premiered at the 2012 Venice Film Festival, then screened to unanimous acclaim at the Telluride Film Festival, the Toronto International Film Festival, and the Sundance Film Festival. Produced by the National Film Board of Canada and hailed by *Maclean's* film critic Brian D. Johnson as "a brilliant film: an enthralling, exquisitely layered masterpiece of memoir that unravels an extraordinary world of family secrets," *Stories We Tell* won the 2012 Toronto Film Critics Association (TFCA)'s Rogers Best Canadian Film Award and Allan King Documentary Award, and took the prize for Best Feature Length Documentary at the inaugural Canadian Screen Awards in March 2013. In addition to a commemorative medallion struck by the Royal Canadian Mint and a cash award of \$25,000 contributed by the National Arts Centre, Ms Polley will receive an original work created by ceramic artist Paula Murray of Chelsea, Quebec.

In addition to honouring the 2013 laureates, the Awards feature a unique **Mentorship Program**, a partnership inaugurated in 2008 between the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation, Canada's National Arts Centre and The Keg Spirit Foundation. Designed to unite past Lifetime Artistic Achievement Award recipients and talented mid-career artists, the program serves as a creative catalyst and as an investment in future Canadian artistic achievement. This program is a unique opportunity for the potential laureates of tomorrow to benefit from the creativity and experience of icons who have blazed the trail before them. This year's **mentor** is renowned **Canadian playwright and Governor General's Performing Arts Award recipient John Murrell** and the protégée is **actress, dancer and playwright Anita Majumdar**.

The 2013 laureates will be honoured at various events in Ottawa from May 30 to June 1. On May 30, the recipients will attend a lunch hosted by the Honourable Andrew Scheer, Speaker of the House of Commons, be introduced in the House of Commons, and will then attend a parliamentary reception. On May 31, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, will present the Awards at a special ceremony and reception at Rideau Hall. On June 1, the National Arts Centre will host a sparkling Gala to celebrate the 2013 recipients, a star-studded celebration featuring superb performances, evocative film portraits, and personal tributes by guest stars. All Canadians can take part in the excitement by watching the red carpet portion of the evening, which will be live streamed on the National Arts Centre's website at nac-cna.ca/ggawards.

Once again this year the **National Film Board of Canada (NFB)**, an important creative concept partner of the Awards since 2008, will bring together some of Canada's most talented filmmakers to create eight unforgettable short films that capture the essence of each Award laureate. The films will be premiered at the June 1 Gala and will be available free of charge at the NFB's Online Screening Room at www.NFB.ca and through the NFB's apps for iPhone and iPads, starting June 1 at 10 p.m. (EDT).

The Awards continue to benefit from the significant partnership with **Canada's National Arts Centre (NAC)**. Dedicated to achieving the highest presence for the Awards, the NAC is responsible for the production of the annual Gala performance, as well as the event's fundraising and marketing activities. The NAC's in-house expertise significantly enhances the profile of the Awards and their distinguished recipients.

The National Arts Centre is proud to produce the 2013 Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Gala in partnership with the **Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation**. The Awards are presented with the support of the **Department of Canadian Heritage** and the **Canada Council for the Arts**.

The GGPAAF gratefully acknowledges **Enbridge** as Presenting Sponsor of the GGPAA Gala and sponsor of the press announcement event. “At Enbridge, we are proud investors in artists and arts organizations across Canada,” said D’Arcy Levesque, Vice-President, Public and Government Affairs. “As Presenting Sponsor of the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards Gala for four years, we are especially pleased to play a leading role in celebrating the incredible artists who inspire, challenge and define us as Canadians. As these Awards celebrate their 21st birthday, we continue to believe that arts and culture are critical to the health and vitality of communities across Canada, making them better places to live.”

The GGPAA Gala is made possible in part by its many sponsors. In particular, the National Arts Centre Foundation would like to thank Associate Sponsors **McDonald’s Restaurants of Canada Ltd.** for their support of the Inspiration Seats youth section and **Manulife Financial** for its support as our Dinner Sponsor. For the fifth year, Mentorship Program is supported by **The Keg Spirit Foundation**. National Partners are **Aimia, Desjardins Group, Onex Corporation,** and **Weber Shandwick Worldwide,** and **The Printing House** is our official Print Sponsor.

The GGPAAF also acknowledges the significant contributions of Regional Partners **Accenture Canada, The Alvin Segal Family Foundation, The Banff Centre, Bell Media, BMO Financial Group, Cineplex Media, Cisco Systems Canada Inc., Globalive Communications Corp., Groupe Germain, Invesco, The Keg Restaurants, NBC Universal Canada, Norton Rose LLP, Pratt & Whitney Canada, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, Rogers Communications Inc., Shangri-La Hotels, Vale, Venture Communications Ltd.** and **VIA Rail Canada**. Impresario Partners include **Aecon Group Inc., Barrick Gold Corporation, Cement Association of Canada, Holt Renfrew & Company, Jessiman Foundation, The Ledcor Group, McMillan LLP, Mackenzie Investments, Macquarie Capital Markets Canada Ltd., Mark Motors of Ottawa Ltd., PCL Constructors Canada Inc., Raymond James Ltd., Sun Life Financial, Temple Scott and Associates,** and **Trinity Development Group Inc.** Additional in-kind support for the Awards is received from **Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP, ecentricarts, Llama Communications, The Royal Canadian Mint, The Westin Ottawa,** and **PHI Centre,** media partners ***The Globe and Mail, The Ottawa Citizen, Le Droit, Clear Channel, The Hill Times*** and ***Embassy Magazine.***

Grateful thanks also go to the GGPAA Gala's National Committee of volunteers, led by Honorary Chair The Hon. Hilary M. Weston, CM, OOnt, of Toronto; Co-Chairs Susan Glass, CM, and Arni Thorsteinson of Winnipeg; and Vice-Chair Kate Alexander Daniels of Toronto.

Tickets for the **Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Gala** on Saturday, June 1, 2013 go on sale to the general public on Wednesday April 10, 2013 at 10 a.m. (EDT) at the NAC Box Office and through Ticketmaster, 1-888-991-2787 or www.ticketmaster.ca.

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www.ggpaa.ca (English)
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