



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

NEWS RELEASE

**CELEBRATING CANADIAN TALENT:
2025 GOVERNOR GENERAL'S PERFORMING ARTS AWARDS LAUREATES ANNOUNCED**

OTTAWA, February 20, 2025 – The Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation is pleased to announce this year's recipients of Canada's highest distinction in the performing arts.

The laureates of the **2025 Governor General's Performing Arts Awards (GGPAA) for Lifetime Artistic Achievement**, which recognize artists who have made an indelible contribution to cultural life in Canada and around the world, are:



Photo: (no credit)

Bob Ezrin, O.C. – Music and entertainment producer, music education advocate and serial activist

In a legendary career as a music and entertainment producer and entrepreneur, Bob Ezrin has worked around the world on recordings, TV, film, and live event production with such prominent international artists as Pink Floyd, U2, Deep Purple, Peter Gabriel, Rod Stewart, Andrea Bocelli, Taylor Swift, Alice Cooper, Edward Burtynsky, Kiss, Lou Reed, The Canadian Tenors, Aerosmith, Hollywood Vampires, Berlin, and Nine Inch Nails, among many others. One of the most highly respected and sought-after producers in the world, he is also a generous philanthropist and a passionate advocate for music education.

Watch Bob Ezrin's [announcement video](#).

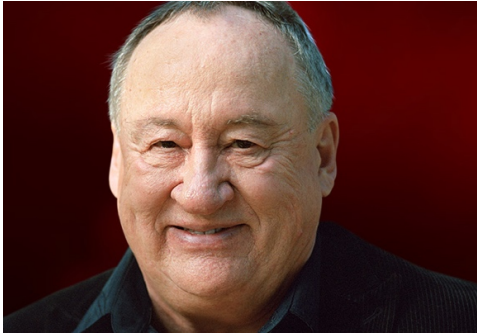


Photo: Florence Mennessier

Denis Gougeon – Composer

A prolific and versatile composer, Denis Gougeon is a prominent and influential figure on the contemporary classical music scene in Canada and internationally. The Canadian Music Centre has described his music as “at once accessible, dynamic, forceful and highly melodic.” Passionate about his craft, he is highly respected and trusted in the music community. With over 120 works to his credit—including music for solo instruments, chamber groups, orchestra, young audiences, voice, theatre, ballet, and opera—, he is one of Canada’s most widely recognized composers.

Watch Denis Gougeon’s [announcement video](#).



Photo: Terry Manzo

Graham Greene, C.M. – Actor

Graham Greene is one of the most respected actors of his generation. In a career spanning over five decades, he has worked on stage and in film and television productions in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Argentina, in roles ranging from police officers to judges, doctors, lawyers, and a Shakespearean antagonist. An accomplished character actor of uncommon intensity, he has served as a role model for countless aspiring performing artists.

Watch Graham Greene’s [announcement video](#).



Photo: Vivien Gaumand

Patrick Huard – Comedian, film and television actor, host, screenwriter and producer

Patrick Huard is a dynamic and versatile artist who has enjoyed great success in film and on television, stage and radio. One of Quebec and Canada’s most recognizable stars, he has appeared in many of the most successful Canadian films (notably the beer-league hockey story *Les Boys*, the bilingual comedy *Bon Cop, Bad Cop*, and their respective sequels) and Quebec television series. He has hosted several radio programs and prestigious award galas, and has received numerous acting and screenwriting awards.

Watch Patrick Huard’s [announcement video](#).



Photo: V. Tony Hauser

Sandra Laronde – Multidisciplinary artist, artistic director, choreographer, producer and author

Sandra Laronde is a highly accomplished arts innovator, multidisciplinary artist, and visionary leader, recognized across Canada and internationally for her exceptional work in bringing Indigenous arts to the forefront. She is the founding artistic director of Red Sky Performance, Canada’s leading contemporary Indigenous performance company. Renowned for its powerful storytelling and hybrid innovation in dance, theatre, music, and multimedia, her practice reflects a deep commitment to exploration and experimentation. Her inexhaustible energy extends to cultural diplomacy, forging stronger ties by representing Canada on prestigious global stages and at influential international events.

Watch Sandra Laronde’s [announcement video](#).

The **Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts**, which recognizes outstanding contribution by an individual or group in voluntary service to the performing arts in Canada:



Photo: Paul Vienneau

April Hubbard

April Hubbard is a Halifax-based performance artist, arts administrator, and Mad Disability advocate. Active in the cultural community for over 20 years, particularly through her association with the Halifax Fringe Festival, she is a passionate arts supporter and an outspoken advocate whose focus is to create inclusive and accessible spaces for disabled and underrepresented artists, and to empower disabled people to discover and celebrate their creativity.

Watch April Hubbard's [announcement video](#).

The **National Arts Centre Award**, which recognizes work of an extraordinary nature by an individual artist or company in the past performance year:



Photo: Vanessa Heins

Jeremy Dutcher – Composer, performer, language carrier, ethnomusicologist and activist

Jeremy Dutcher is a Two-Spirit composer, ethnomusicologist, and classically trained tenor, and a Wolastoqiyik member of the Tobique First Nation in northwest New Brunswick. His music transcends boundaries: it is deliberately playful in its incorporation of classical elements, respectful of the traditional songs of his community, and infused with the urgency of modern-day resistance. Through his music, he seeks to preserve Wolastoqiyik

culture and inspire Indigenous youth to appreciate the importance of language and heritage.

Watch Jeremy Dutcher's [announcement video](#).

The unique **Mentorship Program**, generously supported by The Keg Spirit Foundation, provides a way for past GGPAA recipients to inspire the next generation by offering guidance to talented Canadian artists in mid-career.

The participants for 2025 are:



Photo: Tina Rowden

Atom Egoyan, C.C. – Mentor

Atom Egoyan (GGPAA 2015) is one of Canada's most respected and influential filmmakers. His body of work—which also includes theatre, opera, and visual art—explores issues of memory, displacement, and the impact of technology and media on modern life. He has mentored many emerging filmmakers, and his dedication to showcasing Canadian talent has raised the international profile of Canada's film industry. He has received the Cannes Grand Prix and International Critics awards, two Academy Award® nominations, and 25 Genies, and his work has been celebrated in several retrospectives, documentaries and books.



Photo: Claudia Jurt

Joshua Odjick – Protégé

Joshua Odjick is a rising star of Algonquin-Anishinabe/Cree heritage from Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation. A member of the Deer clan, he is deeply rooted in the teachings and traditions of his people. With a vision inspired by six years of acting experience,

Mr. Odjick is expanding his creative journey into filmmaking. Through the GGPAA Mentorship Program, he will work with iconic filmmaker Atom Egoyan to write, produce, and direct his first short film. He aspires to one day direct a feature film, using his knowledge to bring Indigenous stories to the screen with authenticity and depth.

Learn more about the GGPAA [Mentorship Program](#).

“The performing arts help us make sense of the world around us. They move us to laughter and bring us to tears. They help us understand experiences that are different from our own, and connect us to others,” said Douglas Knight, Chair and CEO of the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards Foundation (GGPAAF), and Anik Bissonnette, Co-Chair of the Foundation. “As we recognize the incredible, exceptional 2025 Awards laureates, we should also pause and be grateful to all Canadian artists, and their supporters, for creating the shared experiences that light up our lives and strengthen our sense of community.”

“On behalf of the Canada Council for the Arts, my warmest congratulations to each of the laureates being recognized this year with a Governor General’s Performing Arts Award,” said Michelle Chawla, Director and CEO of the Canada Council for the Arts. “With their brilliance, creativity and dedication, these artists have shaped our cultural landscape and enriched our shared experience of the arts. Their work resonates deeply within Canada; it transcends boundaries and is an inspiration to current and future generations around the globe.”

“The Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards allow us, as a country, to pay tribute to some of our greatest artists and arts volunteers, and to thank them for sharing their extraordinary gifts with us,” said Christopher Deacon, NAC President and CEO. “The National Arts Centre congratulates the 2025 laureates, and looks forward to celebrating their incredible achievements at the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards Show on June 14 in Southam Hall.”

The 2025 laureates will be celebrated at two events in Ottawa, culminating in the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards Show at the National Arts Centre on Saturday, June 14 at 8:00 p.m.

“As the performing arts sector continues to recover post-COVID, affirming the role of creativity in Canadian society has never been more important,” said Juniper Locilento, CEO of the National Arts Centre Foundation. “We’re thrilled to celebrate Canada’s performing arts luminaries and arts volunteers!”

Thank you to our partners

Thanks also to the many sponsors and donors who make the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards Show possible, including Lead Donor Donald K. Johnson, O.C., Boston Pizza, The Keg Spirit Foundation, The Azrieli Foundation, Meta, The Power Corporation of Canada, and Telefilm Canada.

These awards would not be possible without the support of our partners at the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the National Arts Centre (NAC). Compass Rose is our Communications Partner. As well, each year the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) creates incomparable short films that capture the essence of the laureates. This year’s films will première at the GGPAA Show at the NAC on June 14 and online on NFB.ca.

“The National Film Board of Canada is proud to be part of the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards since 2008, celebrating GGPAA laureates through film portraits that are cinematic gems in their own right. These films are a testament of the power of collaboration, jointly conceived by laureates, directors and NFB producers, capturing the essence of these extraordinary individuals and their passion, vision and dedication. Together, they’re a powerful tribute to the talents of great Canadian and Indigenous artists, patrons and volunteers across a range of performing arts disciplines, brought together from across the country. Seven new films join the NFB’s GGPAA collection this year, which now features 125 works freely available on nfb.ca. This precious audiovisual legacy is an ever-evolving homage to the remarkable individuals who have helped to shape our cultural landscape and the NFB is committed to sharing this collection with all Canadians, now and in the years to come,” said Suzanne Guèvremont, Government Film Commissioner and Chairperson of the National Film Board of Canada.

“CBC/Radio-Canada is proud to be a partner of the Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards — congratulations to all the laureates who have so profoundly enriched the arts and culture in our country. It is a pleasure to work with the National Arts Centre to further our shared mission of promoting Canadian artists to Canada and the world. These partnerships, and our work to advance Canadian culture, are more important than ever,” said Marie-Philippe Bouchard, President and CEO, CBC/Radio-Canada.

Tickets for the **GGPAA Show** go on sale to the public on Thursday, February 20 at 10:00 am ET, online at nac-cna.ca/ggawards or by phone at 1-844-985-2787.

Created in 1992 by the late Peter Herrndorf, C.C., and Brian Robertson, under the distinguished patronage of the late Right Honourable Ramon John Hnatyshyn, then-Governor General of Canada, and his late wife Gerda, these prestigious awards are presented annually to Canadians whose accomplishments have inspired and enriched the cultural life of our country. [Nominations](#) for these highly acclaimed awards are submitted by members of the public to recognize artists who have made a lifetime commitment and contribution to the performing arts in Canada.

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For more information or to arrange an interview with a 2025 laureate, please contact:

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