



"Toronto's artists are city-builders."

Mayor David Miller

2007 Toronto Arts Council Foundation Award Recipients Announced at Star-Studded Mayor's Arts Awards Lunch

Five new Toronto Arts Council Foundation Award recipients were celebrated today at the second annual Mayor's Arts Awards Lunch at the Four Seasons Hotel in Yorkville. Among a star-studded throng of artists, producers and community leaders, **Lawrence Cherney, Franco Boni, Robert Lowrey, Lola Rasminsky** and **d'bi.young.anitafrika** accepted awards honouring them and their organizations for contributions to Toronto. **Mayor David Miller**, hosted the event with **Claire Hopkinson**, Executive Director of Toronto Arts Council Foundation, while media personality **Jian Ghomeshi** served as master of ceremonies.

The Four Season's Regency Ballroom was overflowing with local luminaries including Soulpepper Theatre Company's founding members **Albert Schultz** and **Martha Burns**; multi-disciplinary dance-artist **Peter Chin**; Waterfront Toronto CEO **John Campbell**; broadcaster **Andy Barrie**; Nuit Blanche lead programmer **Jenn Goodwin**; ROM Director and CEO **William Thorsell**, architect **Bruce Kuwabara**; entrepreneur **Sam (the Record Man) Sniderman**; urban strategist **Joe Berridge**, curator **Judith Tatar**; Luminato CEO **Janice Price**; City Councillors **Joe Pantalone, Kyle Rae**, and **Sandra Bussin**; Gardiner Museum Executive Director **Alexandra Montgomery**; fashion designer **Pat McDonagh**; United Way of Toronto CEO **Frances Lankin**; and OCAD President **Sara Diamond. Patricia O'Callaghan**, cabaret singer extraordinaire, entertained the 350 lunch guests.

Mayor Miller spoke to the gathering *"Toronto's artists are city-builders. They form the heart of the city and inspire the rest of us to do our best work. Our artists attract people to choose Toronto – choose to live here, choose to do business here and choose to visit."* The Mayor continued, *"I am delighted to share the room with all of you who show such vision and leadership in making Toronto a creative city."*

Recipients of the **2007 Toronto Arts Council Foundation Awards** are:

Muriel Sherrin Award for International Achievement in Music: LAWRENCE CHERNEY

Lawrence Cherney is the founding Artistic Director of Soundstreams Canada, now celebrating its 25th anniversary season. He developed Soundstreams into one of the world's leading producers of concerts and festivals of new music, renowned for the high quality of its innovative international collaborations that cross genres, cultural traditions and disciplines. Cherney is an internationally recognized oboist, known as an important interpreter of contemporary music who has commissioned and premiered some 150 works for the oboe and toured extensively as soloist and recitalist. He was inducted into the Order of Canada in 2003, was the first-ever recipient of the Chalmers National Music Award in 1993, and was awarded two consecutive Lt. Governor of Ontario Awards for the Arts on Soundstreams' behalf in 2001 and 2002. His recordings have earned him five JUNO nominations. Cherney was nominated for a Toronto Arts Council Foundation Award in 2006.

The Globe and Mail Toronto Business for the Arts Award: ROBERT LOWREY'S PIANO EXPERTS

Celebrating its 30th year in business, **Robert Lowrey's Piano Experts** is a highly recognized name among Toronto's music community. A former guitarist and songwriter himself, Robert Lowrey began tuning pianos to support his musical career after graduating from university in 1971. Since then, Robert Lowrey's Piano Experts has established itself as a generous and committed supporter of artists and arts organizations across the GTA. Whether it's through a children's concert series or a TSO emerging artist competition, Robert Lowrey continues to show his support for Toronto musicians by donating his time, pianos, moving and tuning services, as well as sponsoring competitions.

Arts for Youth Award: ARTS FOR CHILDREN

Arts for Children Under the leadership of Founding Director Lola Rasminsky, Arts for Children has pioneered arts programming for children and youth living in some of Toronto's most vulnerable neighbourhoods. They have built partnerships with Toronto Community Housing to ensure that arts programs led by some of Toronto's most gifted visual artists and performers are available for members of the community. They also provide scholarships, gallery tours, and other free programs for their participants. Since beginning in 1995, Arts for Children has reached over 20,000 children, youth, and educators.

Rita Davies Cultural Leadership Award: FRANCO BONI

Franco Boni is Artistic Director of The Theatre Centre, home to some of Toronto's most innovative and exciting theatrical experiences. The Theatre Centre creates and promotes accessible, interdisciplinary theatre by fostering creative collaboration between artists, staff and the community—something Boni has been doing throughout his career. As artistic director of SummerWorks and Rhubarb! Festivals, Director of Youth Initiatives at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, and now as Artistic Director for The Theatre Centre, Boni is committed to cultivating new work and fostering fresh talent in the community.

RBC Emerging Artist Award: d'bi.young.anitafrika

d'bi.young.anitafrika is a visionary artist whose accomplishments far surpass expectations of a twenty-nine year old. She is an internationally recognized dub poet, actor, playwright and community worker with two published books and four produced albums. She is also the recipient of countless awards and accolades as well as the mother of a three year old boy named moon. Toronto has experienced her magic in *'da Kink in My Hair*, *Lord Have Mercy!* Souleppper's *3 penny opera*, her very own Dora-award winning play *blood-claat* and most recently Souleppper's production of Anton Chekhov's *3 sisters*. d'bi. also mentors younger artists in a range of socio-economic, political and cultural settings. d'bi.young.anitafrika is currently preparing for the launch of her third book of poetry and completing the third play in her *blood.claat' trilogy, a dub opera: word! sound! powah!*

The Toronto Arts Council Foundation (TACF) Board is led by President Diana Bennett, former educator and TVO executive, and Executive Director Claire Hopkinson, a veteran producer of theatre and opera works. The TACF is a sister organization to the Toronto Arts Council (TAC), an arm's length agency responsible for administering grant programs for most of Toronto's not-for-profit arts organizations and artists.

Full bios of nominees, TACF executives and award jurors are available on request.

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