

Diana Bennett, *president* Yvonne Chiu, *past president* Claire Hopkinson, *executive director*

Arts Advisory Panel: Margaret Atwood, Richard Bradshaw, Atom Egoyan, Vera Frenkel, Mallory Gilbert, Norman Jewison, Molly Johnson, Karen Kain, David Mirvish, Sam Sniderman, Joyce Zemans

NOTED CULTURAL INNOVATORS SIGN ON FOR TACF AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE August 30, 2006, Toronto, ON – Some of Toronto’s champions for the creative spirit will be playing an integral part in selecting this year’s Toronto Arts Council Foundation award recipients. Due to their demonstrated passion and commitment to the arts, individuals representing the performing and visual arts, as well as corporate and independent philanthropy, have been invited to join the selection committee. The adjudication process is guided by the TACF Board of Directors.

The TACF Board is led by Board President **Diana Bennett**, a former educator and TVO executive, and Executive Director **Claire Hopkinson**, a well-known producer of groundbreaking theatre and opera works, most recently with Tapestry New Opera Works. Adept at assessing excellence in artistic contribution to community, the Foundation is the sister organization to the Toronto Arts Council (TAC), the arms-length agency which is responsible for administering grant programs for the majority of Toronto’s not-for-profit, professional arts organizations and artists.

From the emerging artist to the most established, from celebrated institutions to arts that challenge convention, TAC support cultivates a rich engagement between artists and audiences, and reflects the vibrancy and talent of the City of Toronto through the diversity of artists, arts communities and audiences that it serves.

The Mayor’s Arts Awards Lunch fulfills both TAC and TACF’s mission to increase awareness of the value that artists and arts organizations bring to Toronto.

“We’re delighted to be gathering those who create, inspire and enable art to flourish in this great city. They are all people with enormous energy and courage,” says Ms. Bennett, who is Chair of the Mayor’s Arts Award Lunch ’06, as well as a visual artist. “This lunch is a first for Toronto and unique in its celebration of both the few and the many who make a difference. It promises to be a joy-filled occasion.”

Visual arts representatives include **Matthew Teitelbaum**, director and chief executive officer of the AGO, and **Av Issacs**, art dealer and gallery owner.

“We are honoured that this incredible group of people has agreed to give their time to the Toronto Arts Council Foundation selection committee this year,” says Ms. Hopkinson, who is a past winner of both the M. Joan Chalmers Award and the Sandra Tulloch Award. “They understand how important it is to recognize and thank those artists and cultural citizens who contribute to the cultural fabric of our city. There will be an abundance of personal and professional stories to share as we take time on October 5 to celebrate how the arts happen in our imaginative, innovative and creative city.

The performing arts are represented so far by **Don McKellar**, award-winning actor, writer and filmmaker; **James Rolfe**, composer and the 2005 recipient of the Louis Applebaum Composers Award; **Lata Pada**, internationally renowned artistic director, Sampradaya Dance Creations;

Lynda Hill, acclaimed artistic director, Theatre Direct Canada; and **Megan Follows**, star of stage and screen.

Representing the philanthropic spirit on the selection panel are **Jim Fleck O.C.**, President of AGO Foundation and visionary contributor to the visual and performing arts; **Evan Siddall**, former Board President of The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery; **Tony Gagliano**, Co-Chair of Luminato and CEO of St. Joseph Communications; and **Andre Galipeault C.M.** who has served in leadership capacities on numerous arts boards.

The Toronto Arts Council Foundation Awards celebrate artists, cultural professionals and arts supporters from every creative discipline. Designed to highlight the significant contributions made by our city's cultural leadership, the awards will be presented at the Mayor's Arts Awards Lunch, on October 5, 2006 at the Fairmont Royal York. The Mayor's Arts Awards Lunch is supported by RBC and the Fairmont Royal York.

Toronto Arts Council Foundation is the voice for the arts in Toronto. Incorporated in 1995, TACF has a two-fold mission: to increase awareness of the value that artists and arts organizations bring to the city of Toronto, and to increase resources for the arts. For more information about the Toronto Arts Council Foundation Awards or to download a nomination form visit www.torontoarts.org.

Full bios for TACF Executives and Selection Committee are available on request.

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