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Winners of the 2009 Toronto Arts Foundation Awards Announced

Artists, cultural professionals and arts supporters gathered today in celebration of the **2009 Toronto Arts Foundation Awards** which were presented at the fourth annual **Mayor's Arts Awards Lunch** hosted by Mayor David Miller with emcee Jian Ghomeshi.

"Toronto's artists are visionaries who lead us into the future even while celebrating the past, who insist on excellence and offer inspiration," stated **Mayor Miller** in his welcome message. "Particularly this year, when the world has been tightening its belt, Toronto's artists continue to amaze with their resolute ambitions and stunning results."

"This awards lunch is about celebrating who and what makes our city great," said **Claire Hopkinson**, Executive Director of Toronto Arts Foundation. "The entire spectrum of Toronto's creative community is represented here today, breaking bread with civic leaders and community builders."

The winners of the 2009 Toronto Arts Foundation Awards are:

Arts for Youth Award - Mammalian Diving Reflex

Mammalian Diving Reflex is an interdisciplinary company that creates opportunities for youth to be valued creators in their own right and have their voices respected in collaboration with adults through various youth-driven events, theatre-based performances, theoretical texts and community happenings. Most notable programs for youth include their international touring projects *Haircuts by Children* and *The Children's Choice Awards*, and local projects *Parkdale Public School vs. Queen St. West I & II*. MDR is helmed by Artistic Director Darren O'Donnell and Producer Natalie De Vito.

The Globe and Mail Toronto Business for the Arts Award - Scotiabank

Over the past ten years, **Scotiabank** and its employees have provided more than \$23 million to Arts & Culture initiatives, including contributions in support of programs, projects and organizations in the communities in which we live and work. Scotiabank is a major supporter of the Art Gallery of Ontario, The Canadian Opera Company, The Canadian Stage Company, the National Ballet of Canada, Soulpepper Theatre Company and Scotiabank nuit blanche.

RBC Emerging Artist Award – Anusree Roy

Anusree Roy's theatre credits include playwright and performer of *Letters to my Grandma* (Theatre Passe Muraille) and *Pyaasa* (Theatre Passe Muraille) winning two Dora Mavor Moore Awards for Outstanding New Play and Outstanding Performance. Roy is a playwright in residence at The Canadian Stage Company writing her new play *Brothel #9* and will be the playwright in residence at Theatre Passe Muraille to write *Fire as the Witness*.

Muriel Sherrin Award for International Achievement in Dance – Christopher House

Artistic Director of Toronto Dance Theatre since 1994, **Christopher House** is one of Canada's leading choreographers. He has transformed TDT into a company known internationally for its fresh, intelligent, and provocative dance. His work is motivated by a profound curiosity about art and life. House has been resident choreographer at TDT since 1981 and has contributed over fifty works to the repertoire including *Glass Houses*, *Four Towers*, *Early Departures*, *Vena Cava* and *Sly Verb*.

Rita Davies and Margo Bindhardt Cultural Leadership Award – Miriam Adams

Miriam Adams, co-founder/Director of Dance Collection Danse, is a graduate of the National Ballet School and former dancer with the National Ballet of Canada. With her late husband Lawrence Adams, she founded 15 Dance Laboritorium – Toronto's first experimental dance venue; published the newspapers *SPILL* and *Canadian Dance News*; created Visus Foundation to videotape dance activity in Canada; and founded Dance Collection Danse, Canada's national dance archives and publishing house. DCD has published over 37 dance books and produces a semi-annual magazine.

For more information on the finalists and the awards visit <http://www.torontoartsfoundation.org/Our-Programs/TAF-AWARDS>

Toronto Arts Foundation exists to provide the creative opportunity for donors to support the arts in Toronto. TAF believes that a great city demands great art, and by supporting, celebrating, financing and advocating for Toronto's local artists, we're improving the quality of life of all Torontonians. Although separate entities, the Toronto Arts Council and Toronto Arts Foundation benefit by being run as sister organizations, ensuring close contact with the arts sector in Toronto and an ongoing awareness of activities and needs throughout the community.

For more information on the awards and the work of the Toronto Arts Foundation, please visit www.torontoarts.org/awards.html

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