



City of Hamilton 2026 **Arts Awards**

Nomination
Package

Deadline Friday 16 January 2026



Hamilton

Submit your nomination online:
hamilton.ca/artsawards



Celebrating 50 years of artistic legacy and vision in Hamilton.

Award Categories 2026

Lifetime Achievement Award (1 awarded)

| \$2,500 Award, All Disciplines

Creator Awards (up to 9 awarded)

| \$2,500 Award, All Disciplines

Arts Champion Awards (up to 4 awarded)

| Gift of Recognition,
Volunteers and Community Builders

See page 1 for Detailed Awards Categories

Hamilton Arts Awards 2026 Artist Statement

The Well Head

Dip into the creative well
of the mind and use all
your senses to both create
and experience.

About the Artist

Veronica Dyer brings to life
portraits, poems, and the
magical surrealism of
her imagination.

Visit www.veronicadyer.art

Submission Deadline

2026 Nomination Package Deadline Friday 16 January 2026

Online

Access the online nomination
form at the website below.

Digital submissions will be
accepted until 11:59PM EST.

hamilton.ca/artsawards

Mail or Drop Off to Reception

Attn: Hamilton Arts Council
City of Hamilton Arts Awards
115 King Street East, 3rd floor
Hamilton, ON L8N 1A9

Hard copy submissions will be
accepted until 4:00PM EST.

See page 6 for Drop Off Hours

City of Hamilton Arts Awards Commitment to Inclusion and Representation

The City's arts sector encompasses diverse individuals and groups who represent many demographics and intersections of lived experiences. They include individuals and collectives at different stages in their artistic careers, working in a wide diversity of disciplinary practices across Hamilton's 15 wards.

Hamilton's municipal Arts Awards strives to represent the diversity of this sector through all aspects of the program including:

Composition of Arts Sector Review
Panel and Award Selection Panel

Outreach to key individuals,
organizations and community groups
to encourage public nominations

Commissioning of artist
programming for the Arts Awards
event/celebration

Share in the City of Hamilton's pride in its arts community.

Submit by 16 January 2026 | Hamilton Arts Awards 50th Year

Detailed Awards Categories

Lifetime Achievement Award (1 Award, \$2,500)

The Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes living artists, arts professionals and artistic collectives who have contributed substantially to the city's artistic vitality over the course of a career and have inspired others through their leadership, creativity and artistic excellence. These individuals' experiences and impact may be local, national or international in scope.

Creator Awards (Up to 9 Awards, \$2,500 per Award)

The Creator Awards recognize living artists, arts professionals and artistic collectives working in any artistic discipline and at any career level. 9 Creator Awards will be given each year to recognize artistic excellence and/or innovation that contributes to artistic growth in the city, progresses the artform and expresses the cultural vitality and diversity of Hamilton's art scene.

Arts Champion Awards (Up to 4 Awards, Non Monetary)

The Arts Champion Awards recognize living individuals who are outstanding supporters of the arts in Hamilton as volunteers, advocates or board members. This is a non monetary award and recipients will be given a special gift of recognition. This award is open to adults and youth 14 years of age and older. **Note:** The Arts Champion Award is intended for volunteer recognition. Practicing artists and arts professionals should be nominated in the Creator Awards category.

Additional Opportunities for Recognition

Shirley Elford Emerging Artist Commission Prize

This prize awards paid commissions to two (2) emerging artists (any discipline) to create an artwork that will be presented at the 2027 Arts Awards event.

There is a separate application process for this commission. For more information, please visit hamilton.ca/artsawards.

Celebration of Life (Posthumous Recognition)

We welcome the opportunity to celebrate the life and contributions of Hamilton arts community members who have passed away in the previous year (2025). These individuals may be honoured in a special presentation at the Arts Awards event.

The process for recognizing artists and arts community leaders posthumously is distinct from the nomination process.

Please contact artsawards@hamilton.ca or call (905) 546-2424 ext. 7612 for more information.



Eligibility Criteria

Nominees and Nominators (All Award Categories)

Nominees may be individuals currently residing in Hamilton (including Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook, Stoney Creek, Waterdown), Six Nations of the Grand River and/or Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The nominee must have lived in Hamilton, Six Nations of the Grand River and/or Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation consecutively for the past two (2) years or longer.

Nominees must be a Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident (Landed Immigrant) or have an application pending for Permanent Residency.

Nominators are 18 years of age or older.

Nominators can be an individual, organization or business residing in any city.

Nominators cannot be an immediate family member of the nominee.

Nominators who are artists cannot self-nominate.

Nominators cannot be a member of the Arts Awards Selection Panel, Hamilton Arts Council staff or City of Hamilton staff, elected officials or representatives of their offices.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Individual artist or arts professional who is 18 years of age or older.

Artistic collectives (e.g., band, duo, troupe, collective, etc.) are eligible for nomination provided that a minimum of 75% of the collective has lived in Hamilton, Six Nations of the Grand River and/or Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation consecutively for the past two (2) years or longer.

Has been practicing professionally for a minimum of fifteen (15) years.

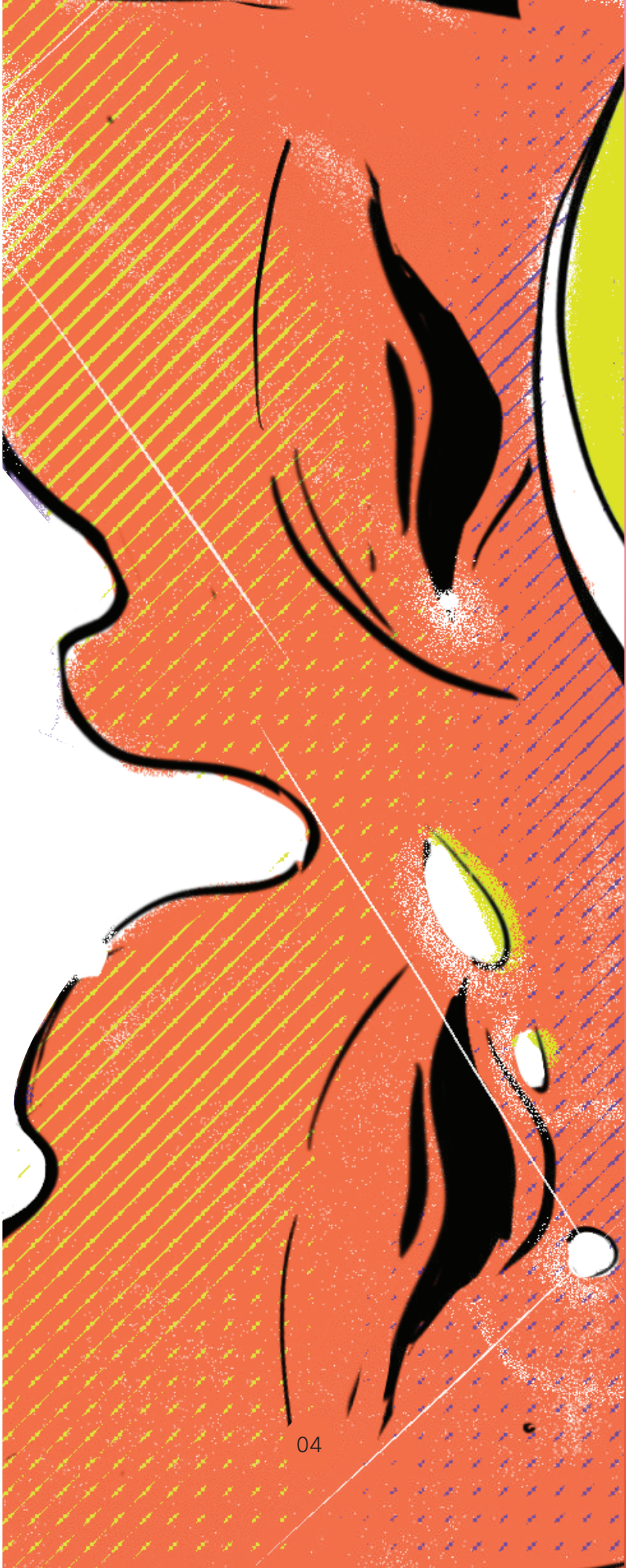
May be self-taught or have art training through formal education, apprenticeship, or with a mentor or elder.

Full-time students (high school or post-secondary) are not eligible.

Past award winners (in other categories) may be nominated for a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Open to all artistic disciplines including, but not limited to, dance, performing arts, fine craft, visual arts, media arts, music, theatre and writing.

Open to arts professionals including, but not limited to, arts education and community arts, arts management, artistic directors, arts programmers, curators, marketing and communications professionals, fundraising and development staff, and facility managers.



About

The mission of the City of Hamilton Arts Awards is to recognize the achievements of our local arts community, the individual artists, collectives and organizations who are its ambassadors, and the community members who support and engage in this work.

Award recipients will be announced at a public event in July 2026 in conjunction with Hamilton Arts Week Festival. 2026 marks the 50th Anniversary of the City of Hamilton Arts Awards program, and event attendees will experience a celebratory exhibition honouring the evolution and legacy of the arts in Hamilton.

Our Vision

To promote the City of Hamilton’s pride in its arts community, to inspire and enhance success, to foster growth in the sector, and to develop the talent that drives this vital part of our City.

Our Values

- The Arts Awards will consistently promote the following values:
- Inclusivity and diversity
 - A transparent and open process
 - Community building and public engagement
 - The core principle that the arts are central to our community’s identity, economy, civic pride and sustainability

Eligiblity Criteria *(Continued)*

Creator Awards

Individual artist or arts professional who is 18 years of age or older.	Full-time students (high school or post-secondary) are not eligible.
Artistic collectives (e.g., band, duo, troupe, collective, etc.) are eligible for nomination provided that a minimum of 75% of the collective has lived in Hamilton, Six Nations of the Grand River and/ or Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation consecutively for the past two (2) years or longer.	Individuals who have received a Lifetime Achievement or Creator Award through the City of Hamilton Arts Awards in the past five (5) years are not eligible.
Must be actively producing work (within the last three (3) years).	Open to all artistic disciplines including, but not limited to, dance, performing arts, fine craft, visual arts, media arts, music, theatre and writing.
May be self-taught or have art training through formal education, apprenticeship, or with a mentor or elder.	Open to arts professionals including, but not limited to, arts education and community arts, arts management, artistic directors, arts programmers, curators, marketing and communications professionals, fundraising and development staff, and facility managers.
May be an artist and arts professional at any career level (i.e. emerging, mid-career, established).	

Arts Champion Awards

Individual who is 14 years of age or older.	Past award winners (in other categories) may be nominated for an Arts Champion Award.
Must be a current volunteer (activity within the last three (3) years) with an arts-based organization, event or ad hoc group.	Volunteer activities may include, but are not limited to: Boards of Directors, events staff, administrative/operational assistance, arts community advocates, etc.
Full-time students (high-school or post-secondary) are eligible for this award.	

The Arts Champion Award is intended for volunteer recognition. Practicing artists and arts professionals should be nominated in the Creator Awards category.



Nominations are due on or before Friday 16th January 2026 and can be submitted digitally or by hard copy.

How to Submit

Online Access the online nomination form at the website below. Digital submissions will be accepted until 11:59PM EST. hamilton.ca/artsawards	Drop Off Hours Mon-Fri 9:00AM to 5:00PM Holiday Closure: 20 December 2025 to 4 January 2026
Mail or Drop Off to Reception <i>Attn: Hamilton Arts Council</i> City of Hamilton Arts Awards 115 King Street East, 3rd floor Hamilton, ON L8N 1A9 Hard copy submissions will be accepted until 4:00PM EST.	Questions? Contact Us Placemaking and Public Art, Tourism and Culture Division 905-546-2424 ext. 7612 artsawards@hamilton.ca



Nomination and Selection Process

Phase One: Public Nominations (Longlist)

Members of the public are invited to submit an Arts Awards nomination in any award category. Submit a brief statement outlining why you feel the individual or collective should be nominated. Use one nomination form per nomination. Nominees are scored based on the content of the nominations rather than number of nominations they receive.

Phase Two: Arts Sector Review Panel (Shortlist)

Public Nominations will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary panel of artists and arts professionals to create a shortlist of approximately 45 nominations (across the three (3) award categories). Shortlisted nominees and their nominators will be contacted directly to provide supporting documents.



Phase Three: Final Selection Panel

A Final Panel will score the Shortlist to select the 2026 Arts Awards Recipients in all award categories.

The Final Panel will be composed of arts community leaders who reflect the diversity of Hamilton's arts sector.

The panel will evaluate the nominations based on the artistic excellence, career and impact of the artists, arts professionals or artistic collectives.

Get updates and useful tips for completing your nomination.

Connect with us online

City of Hamilton Arts Awards

 [CityofHamiltonArtsAwards](#)
 [@HamArtsAwards](#)
 [@hamartsawards](#)

Check out **#HAA2026** on X to join in the conversation and anticipation for the 2026 Arts Awards!

Public Nomination Form *(For Print)*

An online nomination form can be completed by visiting hamilton.ca/artsawards. For hard copy nominations (mail or drop off) please use the following form. Contact us for a paper copy if you do not have access to a printer.

A. Nominee Information

Name *(first, last)*

Organization *(if applicable)*

This nominee meets the eligibility criteria *(see pages 3 and 5)*.

☐ Yes ☐ Not Sure

Please fill in this nominee information to the best of your ability:

Phone Number

Email

Website

Instagram

X *(formerly Twitter)*

Facebook

Award Category *(check one)*

- ☐ Lifetime Achievement Award
- ☐ Creator Award
- ☐ Arts Champion Award

Nominee’s Primary Disciplines

For nominees in Lifetime Achievement or Creator categories.

Select a maximum of two (2).

- ☐ Arts Management
- ☐ Arts Education & Community Arts
- ☐ Fine Craft
- ☐ Media Arts
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Theatre
- ☐ Visual Arts
- ☐ Dance & Performing Arts
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Other *(please provide details)*

B. Nomination Statement

Why have you nominated this individual/collective?

Please provide a brief, point-form overview with specific details of your nominee’s activity as an artist, arts professional, or arts community supporter *(250 words maximum, attached as a separate document)*.

Category specific instructions:

Lifetime Achievement Award:

Nominee’s career and their impact on Hamilton’s community and beyond.

Creator Awards: Nominee’s current body of work and what impact you think it has on Hamilton’s art scene.

Arts Champion Awards: Nominee’s contributions to supporting Hamilton’s arts sector.

Writing Your Nomination Statement

Include:

Short, concise sentences that provide specific details about why your nominee deserves recognition.

Enough information for the panel to gain familiarity with your nominee’s career and/or volunteer work. Where possible, describe examples of their involvement with organizations, projects, exhibitions, shows, etc.

Highlights of your nominee’s accomplishments by not only stating what they did, but also describing why it matters.

Avoid: Generalities. *(i.e. “Nominee is an amazing painter”).*

C. Nominator Information

Address *(include postal code)*

Organization *(if applicable)*

Phone Number

Email

Date *(DD/MM/YYYY)*

Name *(first, last)*

Signature

The nominator agrees to the Terms of Nomination included *(see page 11)*.

Terms of Nomination

All nomination materials submitted to the City of Hamilton Arts Awards program must be true and accurate. Falsified information will result in disqualification from the Arts Awards process.

Phone numbers, emails and mailing addresses will not be made public as part of the Arts Awards program. All other content submitted as part of the Lifetime Achievement, Creator and Arts Champion Awards processes including but not limited to nominee and nominator names, websites and social media information (where applicable) and Nomination Statement (hereinafter referred to as "personal information") may be used on the internet, in print publications or in other methods of communication (whether verbal or written) for the purpose of organizing and administering the Arts Awards program, including evaluating the nominations and communicating with awards recipients and for the purpose of promoting the Arts Awards program. Personal information of successful nominees will be used to promote future Arts Awards programs. Nominator contact information will not be made public by the City of Hamilton.

Personal information collected on the nomination form, or as part of the nomination process, is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 s.227 (b).

Information collected is subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56. By providing your email address, you are consenting to receive emails from the City of Hamilton and/or their agents/contractors for information provision purposes. Information collected for this initiative may be stored on servers located in Canada and the United States and may be subject to Canadian and/or American laws. Questions about the collection of personal information should be directed to: Manager, Placemaking and Public Art, Tourism and Culture Division, Planning and Economic Development Department, City of Hamilton, P.O. Box 2040, Hamilton, ON, L8P 4Y5, telephone (905) 546-2424, ext. 6281.

A nominee or nominator may withdraw consent to the collection, use or disclosure of this personal information by providing written notice prior to the nomination closing date of Friday, January 16th, 2026 at 11:59PM EST to the City's Manager of Placemaking and Public Art, Tourism and Culture Division, City of Hamilton, P.O. Box 2040, Hamilton, ON, L8P 4Y5, in which case the nomination will no longer be eligible for consideration.



Ask questions or get assistance with the 2026 nomination process.

We're here to help!

Contact Our Team

Placemaking and Public Art Section
Tourism and Culture Division
City of Hamilton

905-546-2424 ext. 7612

artsawards@hamilton.ca

