



FINAL ADJUDICATION CREATOR AWARDS

JURY REPORT

April 25, 2022

BACKGROUND

This report is an overview of the discussion and decision of the volunteer citizen jury that met on the afternoon of Tuesday April 12, 2022 to determine which of the short-listed 2022 City of Hamilton Arts Awards nominees should be selected to receive a Creator Award. An annually rotating jury - comprised of discipline-specific artists, arts professionals and community leaders – are key to the selection of recipients in each category. The 2022 Final Jury are listed at the end of this report.

The adjudication session was facilitated by arts service organization Cobalt Connects Creativity and audited by a member of the Arts Advisory Commission to ensure a fair and transparent process. Where conflicts were declared those jurors did not participate in the discussion of those nominees. The Arts Awards Commitment to Inclusion and Representation was reviewed, emphasizing the jury's role in selecting recipients reflective of the breadth of Hamilton's arts community.

CREATOR AWARDS

The Creator Awards recognize living artists or artistic collectives working in any artistic discipline and at any career level. A minimum of eight 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.

JURY COMMENTS

The jury appreciate the 93 nominations submitted by the public in this category and recognize the work of the Arts Sector Review Panel in developing an extremely strong

Creator Award Short List which included a total of 29 individuals, duos and collectives spanning multiple artistic disciplines, practices, and career levels. The jury feel that all shortlisted nominees are deserving of recognition for the quality of their work and contribution to Hamilton's arts and culture sector.

The jury selected 9 individuals as recipients of 2022 City of Hamilton Creator Awards. Further details about why each artist was chosen to receive a Creator Award is outlined below.

Donna-Michelle St. Bernard

The jury feel that Donna-Michelle is one of most exciting directors in Canada, and that her accepting a leadership role at Theatre Aquarius is extremely beneficial to professional theatre in Hamilton. They recognize the vital work that she has done with the Indigenous community, layered with her lived experience as Black woman. The jury underline the impact of Donna-Michelle's community-embedded practice, such as her work with activists, elevating their experience in a way that is artful and generous. They acknowledge that Indigenous representation in theatre in Hamilton has historically been minimal with few mentors and feel that awarding Donna-Michelle may have a meaningful impact for elevating and building this community.

Emma Smith

The jury find Emma to be an excellent craftsperson who demonstrates a remarkable commitment to her process which is very time consuming and labour intensive. Her strong ceramic work has a monumental quality and formidable presence. The jury identify Emma as a role model, noting that historically firing in a wood-kiln has been the domain of male ceramicists; she built her kiln herself and learned the process on her own. The jury appreciate that Emma sources her kiln wood locally and when fired it is embedded in the object on a molecular level, making it deeply tied to the region.

Jaclyn Desforges

The jury celebrate Jaclyn for her excellent and engaging poetry representing an important a queer and neurodivergent lens. They value her work in educating and elevating up-and-coming poets – and see her as a leader amongst young writers making writing more accessible to the community. The jury is impressed with Jaclyn's level of accomplishment and impact given her young age and appreciate her clear commitment to Hamilton.

Joe Ollman

The jury recognizes Joe's unique dedication to and success in moving forward graphic novels as a serious discipline on a local, regional and national level. They celebrate the fact that his graphic novel was a finalist for the Governor General's as an incredible accomplishment. They also note that Joe has activated literature in other disciplinary

spaces such as the Art Gallery of Hamilton. The jury appreciates that Joe tells stories about ordinary people and acknowledges his work in teaching and mentoring emerging artists.

Kristina Durka

The jury commend Kristina as an emerging artist and arts manager and that has demonstrated enormous commitment to supporting vital local artist-run spaces. They note that she has accomplished much in a short time, including extensive community outreach and program development to support underrepresented artists working in media. They appreciate Kristina's advocacy for emerging artists such as McMaster media students. The jury find it remarkable that she carves out time for her own artistic practice given the energy and dedication she invests in her work in arts management.

Marla Panko

The jury feel that Marla stands out as a particularly strong visual artist. They find her work to be inspiring and characterized by an impressive attention to spatial detail. Though her career is extensive, they celebrate the fact that Marla's work is still evolving. Beyond the strength of her own artwork, the jury appreciate her curatorial skills and active encouragement of emerging artists, giving them their first shot at exhibiting work.

Santee Smith

The jury describe Santee's work and career as "phenomenal". They find her work incredibly moving, sophisticated and relevant. Beyond boasting an incredibly accomplished resume, she has uniquely communicated the stories of Six Nations to the Hamilton community. One juror notes that the power of her work goes beyond what a typical artist can do – in addition to being a creator – she is telling stories that have been erased and saving lives in the process.

Terrance Odette

The jury agree with a veteran Village Voice reporter that Terrance's film work is a "tour de force"; one juror notes that upon watching his films they became "immediately sucked in". They also praise his work advocating for repertoire cinemas. The jury finds his career to be particularly remarkable as it has progressed outside of mainstream channels. Terrance is self-taught and has worked for years in the film industry but carved out time to make many feature films, no easy feat. The jury find his to be confident, sophisticated filmmaking – "a whole conversation without many words".

Yuma Hester

The jury are particularly moved by the cinematic beauty and visual storytelling of Yuma's stunning film work. They find it to be remarkably powerful - a full body emotional and spiritual experience (communicated from an Indigenous perspective). They

recognize that Yuma is a very hardworking filmmaker – producing a huge volume of work over a short career – and collaborating across regional, national and international lines. The jury also note that his process breaks boundaries - synthesizing different perspectives, knowledges and talents under his guide. They are excited to see what he does next.

REFLECTIONS ON 2022 CREATOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

The jury were moved by the Creator Award recipients' contributions to and impact on Hamilton. Several common themes were noted amongst those selected for the awards. Many were found to be self-taught and forging unconventional career pathways, breaking barriers in their area of practice. A deep commitment to process is evident amongst many of the recipients. As is an emphasis on collaboration, mentorship and elevation of emerging artists. The jury applaud each of the 2022 Creator Award recipients for their distinctive voice that feels relevant and contemporary in Hamilton today.

THE JURY

Scott Barnim	Fine Craft
Heather Kanabe	Theatre / Arts Management
LTtheMonk	Music
Josh Taylor	Dance and Performance / Arts Education
Jennifer Gillies	Literature / Arts Management
Laura Couchie	Writing / Performance / Beadwork
Dan Edmonds	Music / Visual Art
Nancy McKibbin Gray	Arts Management/ Arts Champion
Liss Platt	Visual Art / Collective / Arts Education
Christina Tarsitano	Community Art / Arts Education
Carmela Langese	Visual Art / Arts Education
Luis Arrojo	Theatre

Regrets

Yvonne Felix	Community Art / Public Art
Nathan Fleet	Film / Arts Management

Jury Auditor

Lisa La Rocca	Arts Advisory Commission
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Advisors to the Jury:

Kim Selman, Cobalt Connects (Facilitator)
Jen Anisef, City of Hamilton