



**GOVERNOR GENERAL'S  
PERFORMING ARTS AWARDS FOUNDATION  
FONDATION DES PRIX DU GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL  
POUR LES ARTS DU SPECTACLE**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**LAUREATES OF THE 2011  
GOVERNOR GENERAL'S PERFORMING ARTS AWARDS  
ANNOUNCED**

**Governor General's Performing Arts Awards  
for Lifetime Artistic Achievement**

**YVON DESCHAMPS, MARGIE GILLIS, WILLIAM SHATNER,  
HOWARD SHORE, LESLEE SILVERMAN, PAUL THOMPSON**

**Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts**

**JEAN-ANDRÉ ÉLIE**

**National Arts Centre Award**

**DENIS VILLENEUVE**

**TORONTO, March 3, 2011 – Yvon Deschamps, Margie Gillis, William Shatner, Howard Shore, Leslee Silverman and Paul Thompson** have been named the 2011 laureates of the prestigious **Governor General's Performing Arts Awards (GGPAA) for Lifetime Artistic Achievement**, the ultimate recognition in Canada's performing arts. These individuals are being recognized for their outstanding body of work and enduring contribution to the performing arts in Canada. Presented annually since 1992, these Awards are bestowed by Canadians to Canadians whose accomplishments have inspired and enriched the cultural life of our country.

The Lifetime Artistic Achievement Awards are accompanied by two special awards which recognize individuals taking the performing arts in inspiring new directions. The **Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts** is given this year to **Jean-André Élie**, and **Denis Villeneuve** will receive the **National Arts Centre (NAC) Award**.

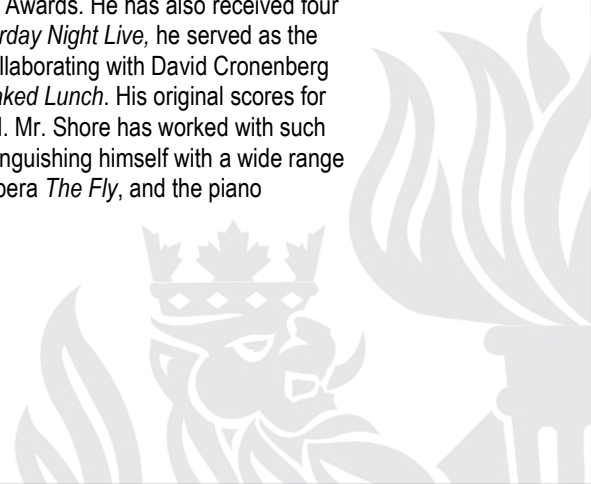


“The Canadian performers being recognized today have been blessed with a unique gift that has left a permanent mark on our Canadian artistic landscape,” said His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada. “It is important that we nurture Canada’s vibrant performing arts community so that they may continue to capture our spirits and to inspire our minds for years to come. My wife, Sharon, and I wish to express our sincere bravo to the winners of this year’s Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards.”

The six laureates of the **2011 Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards for Lifetime Artistic**

**Achievement** are:

- **Yvon Deschamps** (*Monologist*): Yvon Deschamps is one of Quebec’s greatest and most influential humorists. Best known for his satirical monologues, he held up a mirror to Quebec society during the Quiet Revolution and beyond. His subversive yet thoughtful monologues have tackled such diverse topics as money, happiness, racism, the media, Christian mythology, feminism, mental illness, and isolation. His sharply original humour launched a new tradition of francophone comedy that continues to this day. In 1968, with Robert Charlebois and Louise Forestier, he produced *L’Osstidcho*, an irreverent musical revue that revolutionized Quebec’s entertainment scene. Following this huge success, his career skyrocketed with a series of engagements in prestigious venues, notably Montreal’s Place des Arts, where he performed more than 500 times during his career.
- **Margie Gillis** (*Dance artist, choreographer and teacher*): Margie Gillis is one of Canada’s most prolific and acclaimed dance artists, choreographers and teachers. A courageous and free-spirited pioneer of modern dance, she has earned rave reviews and a loyal following throughout the world, and her unique naturalistic style has influenced an entire generation of dancers. In a brilliant career spanning nearly 40 years, she has choreographed and performed over 100 original dance works and collaborated with some of the greatest dancers and choreographers of her time. She has also been a guest artist with many companies such as The National Ballet of Canada, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and the Paul Taylor Dance Company, and has created works for organizations such as Alberta Ballet and Cirque du Soleil.
- **William Shatner** (*Actor, director, producer, writer, spokesman and philanthropist*): In a wide-ranging career spanning six decades, William Shatner has recreated himself many times over, each time revealing a new alter ego who seems to completely define him for the moment. Famous for his roles as Captain James Kirk in the original *Star Trek* TV series and attorney Denny Crane on *The Practice* and *Boston Legal*, he has starred in five TV series (*Star Trek*, *T.J. Hooker*, *The Practice*, *Boston Legal*, and *Third Rock from the Sun*) and more than 30 films, including *Judgment at Nuremberg*, seven *Star Trek* movies, *Airplane II: The Sequel*, and *Miss Congeniality*. He is an award-winning actor, accomplished director, best-selling author, and dedicated philanthropist and environmentalist whose compassion, creativity, and irrepressible sense of humour are integral to his life and work.
- **Howard Shore** (*Composer and musician*): Howard Shore is among today’s most respected, honoured, and active composers and music conductors. His composition for J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy stands as his most towering achievement to date, earning him three Academy Awards. He has also received four Grammy and three Golden Globe awards. One of the original creators of *Saturday Night Live*, he served as the music director on the show from 1975 to 1980. At the same time, he began collaborating with David Cronenberg and has scored 13 of the director’s films including *Videodrome*, *Crash*, and *Naked Lunch*. His original scores for *Dead Ringers* and *Eastern Promises* were each honoured with a Genie Award. Mr. Shore has worked with such notable directors as Martin Scorsese, Tim Burton, and Jonathan Demme, distinguishing himself with a wide range of projects. Recent concert works include a fanfare for organ and brass, the opera *The Fly*, and the piano concerto *Ruin and Memory*.

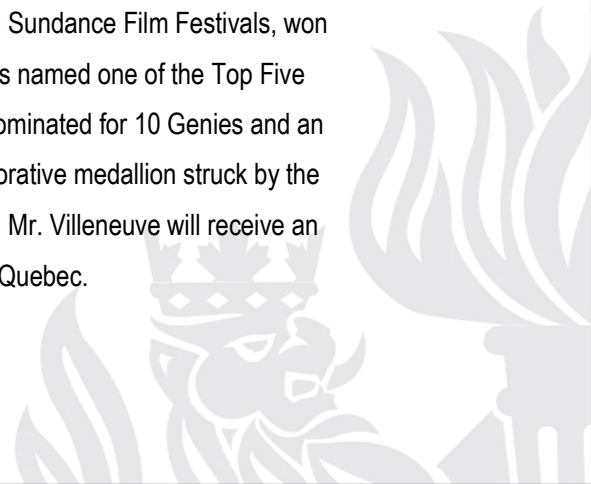


- **Leslee Silverman** (*Artistic director*): Leslee Silverman is recognized internationally as a leader in theatre for young audiences. As Artistic Director of Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP) since 1982, she has significantly raised the profile and standard of young people's theatre in Canada and established MTYP as one of this country's most respected professional theatre companies. An outstanding theatre artist, advocate for young people, and mentor for emerging artists, she has directed over 85 productions for MTYP and was instrumental in establishing Winnipeg's CanWest Global Performing Arts Centre, the only purpose-built young people's theatre facility in English Canada. Ms. Silverman has redefined young people's theatre in new artistic directions that embrace social awareness, leading-edge subject matter, and innovative approaches to traditional material.
- **Paul Thompson** (*Theatre creator, animateur and ideal audience*): Paul Thompson is one of the undisputed founders of English-language theatre in Canada. Writer, director, producer and maverick, co-founder and former Artistic Director of Toronto's Theatre Passe Muraille and former Director General of the National Theatre School of Canada, he was a pioneer of "collective creation," in which plays are developed by the actors themselves from their own experiences and improvisations. He has directed across the country and around the world, brought over 200 original productions to the stage, mentored several generations of Canadian theatre artists, and helped establish such influential theatre companies as Newfoundland's CODCO, Saskatoon's 25<sup>th</sup> Street Theatre, and Toronto's Nightwood Theatre.

Each laureate will receive a cash award of \$25,000 contributed by the Canada Council for the Arts [www.canadacouncil.ca](http://www.canadacouncil.ca) and a commemorative medallion struck by the Royal Canadian Mint.

**Jean-André Élie** is this year's recipient of the **Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award for Voluntarism in the Performing Arts**. A passionate supporter of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (OSM) for nearly 50 years, Jean-André Élie is numbered among the master builders of this internationally acclaimed ensemble. As a Board and committee member he has spearheaded numerous transformative projects, including notably the OSM Standard Life Competition for young Canadian musicians, and major fundraising initiatives. He has helped forge strong links between the OSM and its community, rallied Quebec's business sector in support of the organization, and made a significant contribution to Montreal's cultural profile. Mr. Élie will receive a specially commissioned work by Canadian glass artist Naoko Takenouchi of Vancouver, British Columbia, and a commemorative medallion struck by the Royal Canadian Mint.

Quebec film director and writer **Denis Villeneuve** is this year's recipient of the **National Arts Centre Award**, presented for exceptional achievement over the past performance year. Mr. Villeneuve is one of the hottest filmmakers on the international scene today. His latest feature, *Incendies* (2010), based on the play by acclaimed Canadian writer and director Wajdi Mouawad, has blazed a dazzling trail: it premiered at La Mostra in Venice, screened to rave reviews at the Toronto, Telluride and Sundance Film Festivals, won the Toronto and Vancouver Film Critics Awards for Best Canadian Film, was named one of the Top Five Foreign Films of 2010 by New York's National Board of Review, and was nominated for 10 Genies and an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. In addition to a commemorative medallion struck by the Royal Canadian Mint and a cash award of \$25,000 contributed by the NAC, Mr. Villeneuve will receive an original work created by Canadian ceramic artist Paula Murray of Chelsea, Quebec.



In addition to honouring the 2011 laureates, the Awards feature a unique **Mentorship Program**, a partnership inaugurated in 2008 between the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation (GGPAAF) and Canada's National Arts Centre. Designed to unite past Lifetime Artistic Achievement Award recipients and talented mid-career artists, the program serves as a creative catalyst and as an investment in future Canadian artistic achievement. World-renowned ballerina **Evelyn Hart**, who received a Governor General's Performing Arts Award in 2001, has chosen to mentor **Heather Ogden**, an extraordinarily talented young artist and principal dancer with the National Ballet of Canada. The program is a unique opportunity for the potential laureates of tomorrow to benefit from the creativity and experience of icons who have blazed the trail before them.

The 2011 laureates will be honoured at various events in Ottawa from May 12 to May 14. On May 12, the recipients will be introduced in the House of Commons, and will then attend a Parliamentary reception. On May 13, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, will present the Awards at a special ceremony and reception at Rideau Hall. On May 14, the National Arts Centre will host a sparkling Gala to celebrate the 2011 recipients, a star-studded celebration featuring **superb performances, evocative film portraits, and personal tributes by guest stars.**

The National Film Board of Canada (NFB), an important creative concept partner of the Gala since 2008, will once again produce eight unforgettable short films to celebrate the lives of the 2011 recipients, which will be screened at the May 14 Gala. The NFB brings together some of Canada's most talented documentary filmmakers for this project to create signature films that capture the essence of each Award laureate. These films will also be available online, free of charge, at NFB.ca and through the NFB's iPhone and iPad apps, starting May 14 at 10 p.m. Eastern Time.

The Awards continue to benefit from the significant partnership established in 2007 with the National Arts Centre. Dedicated to achieving the highest presence for the Awards, the NAC is responsible for the production of the annual Gala performance as well as the event's fundraising and marketing activities. The NAC's in-house expertise and experience in these key aspects of the annual celebrations significantly enhance the profile of the Awards and their distinguished recipients.



Created in 1992 under the auspices of the Right Honourable Ramon John Hnatyshyn, the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards (GGPAA) are Canada's highest honour in the performing arts. They are administered by the GGPAA Foundation, a private, not-for-profit charitable organization. Nominations for the awards are solicited from the public and the performing arts community. Peer selection committees from the various performing arts disciplines and regions of Canada review the nominations and submit a short list of nominees to the GGPAA Foundation Board of Directors, which makes the final selection of recipients for Lifetime Artistic Achievement Awards and the Ramon John Hnatyshyn Award. **Nominations for 2012 are now being accepted at [www.ggpaa.ca](http://www.ggpaa.ca).** The recipient of the National Arts Centre Award is selected by a committee of senior NAC artistic programmers.

*The National Arts Centre is proud to produce the 2011 Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Gala in partnership with the **Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation** and the **National Film Board of Canada**. The Awards are presented with the support of the **Department of Canadian Heritage** and the **Canada Council for the Arts**. The GGPAAF gratefully acknowledges **Enbridge** as Presenting Sponsor of the GGPAA Gala, as well as National Partners **McDonald's Restaurants of Canada**, **Pratt & Whitney Canada Corporation** and **Weber Shandwick Worldwide** and Print Sponsor **The Printing House**. The GGPAAF also acknowledges the significant contributions of Regional Partners **Cisco Canada**, **Corus Entertainment**, **Desjardins Group** and **Groupe Aeroplan**. Impresario Partners include **The Banff Centre**, **the Council for Canadian American Relations**, **Joe Fresh** and **Trinity Development Group**. In-kind support for the Awards is also received from **Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP**, technology partner **IBM**, **Llama Communications**, media partner **The Ottawa Citizen**, and **The Royal Canadian Mint**. Grateful thanks also go to the GGPAA's National Committee of volunteers, led by Honorary Chair The Hon. Hilary M. Weston, CM, OOnt; Co-Chairs M. Ann McCaig, CM, AOE, LLD, and James S. Kinnear; Vice-Chair Susan Glass, CM; and all the individuals and families whose philanthropic support helps make these Awards possible.*

Tickets for the **Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Gala** on Saturday, May 14, 2011 go on sale to the general public on March 3, 2011 at the NAC Box Office and through Ticketmaster, 1-888-991-2787 or [www.ticketmaster.ca](http://www.ticketmaster.ca).



**For information, please contact:**

Jessica Goldberg  
Weber Shandwick

416.642.7970  
416.418.7389 (cell)  
JGoldberg3@webershandwick.com

Christelle Legault  
Media Relations Officer  
Rideau Hall Press Office  
613.998.7280  
[christelle.legault@gg.ca](mailto:christelle.legault@gg.ca)

Or visit the Governor General's  
Performing Arts Awards Foundation  
website:

[www.ggpaa.ca](http://www.ggpaa.ca) (English)  
[www.pggas.ca](http://www.pggas.ca) (French)



