

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Finalists and Community Arts Award Winners named for the 31st Annual Mississauga Arts Awards (MARTYS)!

Mississauga, ON - April 23, 2026

Mississauga Arts Council (MAC) is pleased to announce that, after challenging deliberations, our 11 juries (35 jurors) have released the names of the 68 finalists selected for the **31st Mississauga Arts Awards (MARTYS)** across 11 juried award categories and determined the 3 Community Arts Award Winners.

On **June 18, 2026**, at the **Mississauga Convention Centre**, the esteemed MARTY Awards will celebrate outstanding individual and organizational achievements across all artistic disciplines within Mississauga's arts and culture ecosystem.

"This year's MARTY Awards stands as Mississauga's biggest celebration of the arts, honouring exceptional artists whose work continues to inspire and strengthen, and even help to identify communities," says **Mike Douglas, MAC's Executive Director**. "We are proud to shine a spotlight on this year's outstanding honourees and warmly invite arts lovers, supporters, and the broader community to join us on June 18th at the Mississauga Convention Centre for an unforgettable evening of connection, recognition and celebration."

Congratulations to all of this year's finalists and community arts award recipients. **You can find the full list of award finalists at the end of this press release.**

MAC's Board of Directors reviewed outstanding leadership nominees in the arts and has selected the 2026 Community Arts Award Winners:

In recognition of his longstanding commitment to civic and cultural enrichment, as former President and current Chair of the Hazel McCallion Foundation for Arts, Heritage and Culture, and for his significant contributions to the Mayor's Galas that directed millions of dollars toward the funding of Mississauga's arts and community organizations, the **Laurie Pallett Patron of the Arts Award** will be presented to **Jim Murray**.

Andrew Da Câmara is honoured with the **Hazel McCallion Volunteer of the Year Award** in recognition of his 34 years of dedicated volunteer service to Mississauga's

arts community through the Portuguese Cultural Centre of Mississauga. His contributions include a decade as host of the Portuguese Pavilion at the Carassauga Festival and organizing nearly 800 participants successfully achieving a Guinness World Record for the Largest Portuguese Folklore Dance.

Zohra Zoberi is awarded the **Lifetime Achievement Award** in recognition of her 50-year legacy as an Author, Playwright, and Humanitarian. Author of multiple books and contributor to 36 anthologies exploring migration and identity, Zohra founded *Bridging the Gap Productions*, using theatre to address critical social and family health issues. Zohra's work exemplifies a profound commitment to fostering empathy and cultural understanding.

Join us in celebrating the [31st Mississauga Arts Awards \(MARTYS\)](#) - a night to remember! The evening kicks off at 6:00 PM with red-carpet photos, cocktails, and live music by MARTY Award Winner, **Majd Sukar**. At 7:00 PM, a delicious three-course dinner and an inspiring awards ceremony hosted by Ontario's Poet Laureate, **Matthew "Testament" Jones**. The night will feature more exciting live performances from past MARTY Award winners, including **JSAL**, **Karoline Podolak**, **Fiddlestix**, and **Andre Anthony**, with a special rendition of O Canada. All are welcome!

Tickets are selling fast; the event has assigned seating at tables of 10. Tickets are \$110 (MAC Member rate of \$85). Don't miss out! **Get your tickets through Zeffy:** <https://www.zeffy.com/en-CA/ticketing/the-2026-marty-awards>

To learn more about the awards, visit macarts.ca/martys. **Here are the Finalists...**

31st Annual Mississauga Arts Awards Finalists

Community Arts Group of the Year

Canadian Arabic Orchestra
Lakeshore Art Trail
Mississauga Music
NeoVoce Philharmonic Choir

Festival of the Year

InSitu Multi-Arts Festival
Mississauga Polish Days
Philippine Festival Mississauga
Puppet Festival Mississauga
Streetsville Founders' Bread and Honey Festival



Mississauga Arts Council

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Film/Video Arts (Emerging)

Anas Hasan
Emmanuel Teji
Srinivas Kasturi

**Literary Arts Fiction & Non-Fiction
(Emerging)**

Corlan Blissett
Cynthia Díaz Del Solar
Frank Paul Beghin

Literary Arts - Poetry (Emerging)

Angelo Brown
Leah Duarte
Tahira Rajwani

Music - Group (Emerging)

Crossfield Bend
Raquel's Riot
Sticks N' Stones
6IX PAL MUNDO

Music - Solo Vocalist (Emerging)

Hasanthika Bineshani Kodituwakku
Jasy
Maame G
Marielle Divino
Roze

Theatre Arts (Emerging)

Asha Ponnachan
Colleen Taffe
Kunal Choudhary

Film/Video Arts (Established)

Anubhav Singh
Eemaan Qadri
John Taylor

**Literary Arts - Poetry
(Established)**

Paul Edward Costa
Sneha Subramanian Kanta
Susan Ksiezopolski

Music - Group (Established)

Arlene & the People
El Ceibo
148

**Music - Instrumental
(Established)**

John Bride
ShallumX
Tom Frelek

**Music - Solo Vocalist
(Established)**

Alexis Martinez
Ankita Nandawat
Chase Stevens
Mike Celia
Neddy

Theatre Arts (Established)

Andreja Kovac
Anubha Jha
Nitin Sawant
Jasmine Sawant

Visual Arts - Multimedia Arts (Emerging)

Beatriz Simas
Chantelle Dorafshani
Miss Daisy
Vian Wrya

**Visual Arts - Multimedia Arts
(Established)**

The Aesthetics Studio
Sauga City

Visual Arts - Traditional Forms (Emerging)

Della Vaz
Olga Kharchuk
Pino Cao
Sandy Yaacoub
Taylor Hogan

**Visual Arts - Traditional Forms
(Established)**

Agata Wisniewski
Luan Quach
Lydia Panart
Stephen Uhraney
Veronika Benjamin

Thank you to our current 2026 MARTY Sponsors!

Champion Sponsor: Century Audio Visual

Resounding Sponsor: Express Scripts

Award Sponsors: Art Gallery of Mississauga; Bell; Hazel McCallion Foundation; Hyatt Place Toronto/Mississauga Centre & Luxe Convention Centre; Insuranceland Inc.; Laurie Pallett; Metalworks Institute; Mississauga Arts Council Board of Directors.

And to our Friends of the MARTYS

About The Mississauga Arts Awards (MARTYS)

This year, MAC received over 130 nominations for the MARTY Awards. Each year, MAC accepts nominations from any emerging or established professional artists who are residents of the City of Mississauga, have a significant connection to the city, or have made a major contribution to the arts within Mississauga. The Mississauga Arts Awards (The MARTYS) are MAC's annual awards show celebrating the accomplishments of individual artists and community arts organizations for their creative contributions to our city. Learn more: macarts.ca/martys

About Mississauga Arts Council

Mississauga Arts Council is a registered charity, dedicated to accelerating progress toward the attainment of our Vision of Mississauga, as a vibrant cultural community where arts and culture thrive! Our mission is to empower the Arts Economy by Creating more opportunities & capacity; Connecting artists to audiences and each other; and Celebrating artists' achievements. Learn more: macarts.ca

For more information about the 2026 MARTY Awards, please contact:
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