

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

And the Winners Are... 21 Local Artists Honoured at the Sold-Out 31st Mississauga Arts Awards (MARTYS)!

Mississauga, ON - June 25, 2026

Mayor Carolyn Parrish, *“Last time I spoke to you, I talked about expanding the Living Arts Centre (LAC) - we’ve gone so far beyond that...first off, we now have a Mayor’s Arts and Museums Taskforce. We will also be starting the next budget with 3.7 Million Dollars from Peel Art Gallery Museum and Archives (PAMA). But that’s only the beginning. We’ve put in a request to the Provincial Government for 500 Million Dollars for a new Music Centre & Convention Centre. The centre will include 40 units for artists, with a rent of 300 dollars...we are on the verge of becoming one of the best Music cities in Canada, and it’s not just music, it’s art, it’s dance, it’s everything that you folks here love, and I love. Thank you!”*

Welcoming a sold-out crowd of 500 arts leaders and supporters, the **31st Mississauga Arts Awards (The MARTYS) presented by Mississauga Arts Council (MAC)** took place on June 18, 2026, celebrating artistic excellence across all disciplines and recognizing the exceptional achievements of Mississauga’s vibrant arts community.

The awards ceremony recognized the accomplishments of 67 finalists competing across 11 juried award categories. 18 winners and 3 Arts Champions were honoured. **The list of MARTY winners can be found at the bottom of this press release.**

“MAC proudly congratulates the 2026 MARTY Award winners, Community Award recipients, and all of this year’s finalists,” exclaimed **Mike Douglas, MAC’s Executive Director**. *“The significance of the MARTYS extends far beyond the celebration of one evening. Receiving a MARTY Award marks a pivotal milestone — a moment where creative passion is recognized and connected to a path toward a thriving professional career. By being here tonight, you are helping to ensure that Mississauga remains a city where talent is discovered, supported, encouraged, and empowered to grow.”*

Warm greetings from MPP **Natalia Kusendova-Bashta** (Mississauga - Centre) cited the Province of Ontario’s recognition of MAC’s ongoing commitment to championing the exceptional talent of Mississauga’s artists and arts community. Our sincere thanks go to MP **Fares Al Soud** (Mississauga - Centre), MPP **Deepak Anand** (Mississauga -

Malton), and MPP **Sheref Sabawy** (Mississauga - Erin Mills) for joining us for this special evening.

*“I want to thank each of you for supporting MAC,” remarked MPP **Natalia Kusendova-Bashta** (Mississauga - Centre). “As the Minister of Long-Term Care, I can tell you without a doubt that the arts play such an important part in all of our lives...the Arts can be therapeutic - whether it’s music, visual art - they change our lives for the better. To the artists, you make a huge difference and bring joy to those around you. Congratulations to all of the honourees tonight and all of the recipients!”*

Matthew “Testament” Jones, Ontario’s Poet Laureate, hosted the event, welcoming guests to a night of celebration while keeping the energy at a level of delight. The evening included live performances from past MARTY Winners, including a red-carpet reception featuring live music from **Majd Sukar**, and show-stopping performances by **JSAL** and **Fiddlestix**. The night kicked off with a powerful rendition of O Canada by **Andre Anthony**.

*“It is an absolute honour to be recognized by MAC and to be in a room with so many talented creatives,” remarked **Anas Hasan, 2026 MARTYS Film/Video Arts Emerging winner**, after receiving the award. “Recognition like this truly matters...to my third-cultured kids, if you dream it, believe it, be it, and you will see it, because if this Palestinian-blooded UAE-born Canadian-raised kid can do it, so can you.”*

MAC would like to thank our Champion Sponsors: Century Audio Visual, The Daniels Corporation and Oxford Properties Group, and Resounding Sponsor: Express Scripts Canada. Without their gracious support, this event would not have been possible. Our full list of sponsors and more details about the 2026 MARTYS are available at macarts.ca/martys.

31st Annual Mississauga Arts Awards Winners

Community Arts Group of the Year
Mississauga Music

Festival of the Year
Streetsville Founders' Bread and
Honey Festival

Film/Video Arts (Emerging)

Anas Hasan

Film/Video Arts (Established)

Anubhav Singh

Literary Arts Fiction & Non-Fiction (Emerging)

Cynthia Díaz Del Solar

Literary Arts - Poetry (Established)

Sneha Subramanian Kanta

Literary Arts - Poetry (Emerging)

Tahira Rajwani

Music - Group (Emerging)

Sticks N' Stones

Music - Group (Established)

Arlene & the People

Music - Instrumental (Established)

Shallum Xavier

Music - Solo Vocalist (Emerging)

Marielle Divino

Music - Solo Vocalist (Established)

Alexis Martinez

Theatre Arts (Emerging)

Colleen Taffe

Theatre Arts (Established)

Jasmine Sawant

Visual Arts - Multimedia Arts (Emerging)

Chantelle Dorafshani

Visual Arts - Multimedia Arts (Established)

Sauga City

Visual Arts - Traditional Forms (Emerging)

Della Vaz

Visual Arts - Traditional Forms (Established)

Agata Wisniewski

Community Award Winners

Laurie Pallett Patron of the Arts Award

Jim Murray

Lifetime Achievement Award

Zohra Zoberi

Hazel McCallion Volunteer of the Year Award

Andrew Da Câmara

Thank you to our 2026 MARTY Sponsors

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Award Sponsors: Art Gallery of Mississauga; Bell; Food World Plus; Hazel McCallion Foundation; Hyatt Place Toronto/Mississauga Centre & Luxe Convention Centre; Insuranceland Inc.; Laurie Pallett; LiUNA! Local 183; Metalworks Institute; Mississauga Arts Council Board of Directors; Sam McDadi Real Estate Inc. Brokerage; Visit Mississauga.

And to our Friends of the MARTYS and Silent Auction Supporters.

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

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

Sherri Parliament, Communications Manager & Music Strategist

Mississauga Arts Council

sherri@macarts.ca