

2020 CREATIVE NOVA SCOTIA AWARDS GALA

PRESS RELEASE

Artist Recognition Awards

2020 ARTIST RECOGNITION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Arts Nova Scotia and the Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council will celebrate artists **DARCIE BERNHARDT, ANDREA TSANG JACKSON, TAYLOR OLSON, SHAUNTAY GRANT, JUANITA PETERS** and **MAJORIE SIMMINS** as part of the 15th Creative Nova Scotia Awards Gala, to be held virtually through liveheist.com/livestream on Saturday, November 14, 2020 at 7 PM AST.

ARTISTIC VISION FOR THE 2020 GALA: GENERATIONS

As vital creative Nova Scotians, we must be willing to look into the past to see ourselves in the making. Nova Scotia is a name 400 years old, Mi'kma'ki is a name more than 10,000 years old. The actions, stories, and art of our ancestors is who we are, and our own actions, stories and art is who we will be. The past affects the present affects the future.

INDIGENOUS ARTIST RECOGNITION AWARD

DARCIE BERNHARDT

EMERGING ARTIST RECOGNITION AWARD

**ANDREA TSANG JACKSON
TAYLOR OLSON**

ESTABLISHED ARTIST RECOGNITION AWARD

**SHAUNTAY GRANT
JUANITA PETERS
MAJORIE SIMMINS**

GENERATIONS represents a snapshot in time: a group selfie for our archives in which we can highlight our achievements, celebrate beauty and diversity, critique our choices and decisions, and create a deliberate ripple forward in time to our future selves. Amidst a year of societal lockdowns, global pandemics and civil rights movements, Nova Scotians are also processing great loss. We must commit to look at how we contribute to our communities and the society around us. What ripples will you create?

DARCIE BERNHARDT will receive the 2020 Indigenous Artist Recognition Award.

ANDREA TSANG JACKSON and TAYLOR OLSON will each receive the 2020 Emerging Artist Recognition Award.

SHAUNTAY GRANT, JUANITA PETERS and MAJORIE SIMMINS will each receive the 2020 Established Artist Recognition Award.

Each artist will receive \$5,000.



DARCIE BERNHARDT

Darcie “Ouiyaghasiak” Bernhardt (she/her) is an Inuvialuk/Gwichin artist from Tuktoyaaqtuuq, NT Alumna of NSCADU in 2019 (BFA). Raised in Tuktoyaktuk where the ocean’s harsh winds carve into the Western Arctic landscape. Bernhardt has a special bond created from this ecosystem to her family and sense of place. Her oil

painting practice has primarily focused on the narrative of domestic life in the North stemming from memories of home. Darcie was the featured artist for the Inuit Art Foundation titled Nanuk and Jijuu at Art Toronto in October of 2019. She is looking to expand her practice by exploring new mediums.

ANDREA TSANG JACKSON

Andrea Tsang Jackson (she/her) is an emerging textile artist, quilt designer, author and educator based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. After working in various design fields and settings ranging from architecture to museums, the quilting medium called to her as a way to explore place, belonging, and agency. She holds a Master of Architecture from McGill University and a Master of



Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She was the 2017 Artist-in-Residence at the Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. In 2016, she was awarded the Etsy Canada Award for New Talent. Her work has been published in Flare, Design Milk Everyday, Uppercase, and various quilting publications. Andrea’s first book, Patchwork Lab: Gemology, was published by Lucky Spool in 2019.

Photos: Darcie Bernhardt (photo credit: courtesy of the artist), Andrea Tsang Jackson (photo credit: Deborah Wong)



TAYLOR OLSON

Taylor Olson (he/him) is an actor/writer/filmmaker based in K'Jipuktuk/ Halifax. His work generally centers itself in personal stories around deconstructing toxic ideals of masculinity, sexuality, struggling with eating disorders or the environment.

Taylor has written and/or directed several short films, which have won prizes at film festivals as well as CBC's Short Film Face Off.

Most recently, Taylor embarked on his feature film directorial debut, *Bone Cage*, which he adapted from Catherine Banks' play by the same name. *Bone Cage* premiered at FIN Atlantic International Film Festival 2020 and swept the awards winning Best Atlantic Feature, as well as

Best Atlantic Director, Screenwriting & Cinematography.

As a film actor, Taylor has received seven ACTRA Maritimes nominations and the David Renton Award for Outstanding Performance at FIN, 2018.

As a theatre artist, Taylor most recently performed and produced *Monster* by Daniel MacIvor which won Outstanding Lead Actor, Best Solo Show and Outstanding Drama at Halifax Fringe Festival 2019, and was nominated for a Robert Merritt Award for Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role 2020.

Taylor is grateful to receive this award and honoured to be added to the company of artists who have been recipients of this recognition.

Photo: Taylor Olson (photo credit: courtesy of the artist)



SHAUNTAY GRANT

Shauntay Grant (she/her) is a writer and literary performance artist who lives and works in K'jipuktuk (Halifax, Nova Scotia). She teaches creative writing at Dalhousie University, and she is a member of the College of New Scholars, Artists, and Scientists (Royal Society of Canada).

A published poet, playwright, and children's author, Shauntay has shared her print and performance work internationally at festivals and events. She served as the third poet laureate for Halifax Regional Municipality from 2009 to 2011, and her poetry has been published in several

anthologies including the Fieldstone Review and the Canadian Journal of Poetry and Critical Writing. Her six books for children include the picture book *Africville* with illustrator Eva Campbell, which won the 2019 Marilyn Baillie Picture Book Award. *Africville* was also a finalist for the 2018 Governor General's Literary Awards, the 2019 Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Awards, and the 2019 Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Masterworks Arts Awards. The book was also listed on the United States Board On Books for Young People (USBBY)'s Outstanding International Books List. A French translation of *Africville* by Josephine Watson was recently published by Bouton d'or Acadie.

As a playwright, Shauntay's most recent projects include works commissioned in 2020 for Vancouver-based Boca Del Lupo's Red Phone project and Toronto-based Obsidian Theatre Company's 21 Black Futures project. Her play *The Bridge* premiered at Neptune Theatre in 2019 – a co-production between 2b theatre and Neptune in association with Obsidian. *The Bridge* received eleven 2020 Robert Merritt Award nominations, winning four including the award for Outstanding New Play by a Nova Scotian. The book version of *The Bridge* will be published in 2021 by Playwrights Canada Press. Shauntay's other honours include a Best Atlantic-Published Book prize from the Atlantic Book Awards, a Poet of Honour prize from Spoken Word Canada, and a Joseph S. Stauffer Prize from the Canada Council for the Arts.

As a multidisciplinary artist, she has collaborated with visual artists and musicians, and curated multimedia art installations and exhibits for the Dalhousie Art Gallery (*Stitched Stories: The Family Quilts*, 2016) and the Art Gallery of Ontario (*Grandmother, Teach Me*, 2017).

Photo: Shauntay Grant (photo credit: courtesy of the artist)

JUANITA PETERS

Juanita Peters (she/her) is an award-winning storyteller, writer and director of multiple award-winning documentaries. She is also an actor and playwright. Some of her films include *Hannah's Story*, *I Made a Vow* and *Africville Can't Stop Now*.

Peters served as a journalist and news anchor for more than 15 years in the Maritimes. She hosted four seasons of CBC's documentary series *Doc Side* and directed two episodes of the award-winning television series *Studio Black* on CBC Television.



As a playwright, she has given us: *The San Family*, *The Mother Club*, *I M Possible* and *The Green Book*. Through 2019-2020, Peters lectured for Dalhousie University's class, *Playwriting in the Theatre*.

Juanita Peters is a founding member of Women in Film and Television - Atlantic. She is a member of Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), a member of Canadian Actors' Equity Association and a member of Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre. Peters is also a founding member of Nova MultiFest, Atlantic Canada's newest multicultural festival.

Peters is the Executive Director of the Africville Museum. The museum is a replica of Seaview Baptist Church which was the heart of the small black community which was razed in the 1960's. More than a memorial, the Africville Museum and its exhibits invite the visitor to experience life "out home" in Africville and recognize the courage that transcends racism and hatred to begin the journey to reconciliation.

Photo: Juanita Peters (photo credit: courtesy of the artist)



MAJORIE SIMMINS

Marjorie Simmins (she/her) is the author of *Coastal Lives*, a memoir about living on Canada's East and West Coasts (2014), and *Year of the Horse* (2016), which details her life with horses in British Columbia and Nova Scotia. In the spring of 2020, Simmins' third non-fiction book, *Memoir: Conversations and Craft* (2020) was published. All three books have received excellent reviews.

Simmins began her thirty-year career as a freelance journalist in Vancouver, appearing regularly in the *Vancouver Sun* and writing for trade magazines. She also published numerous essays and articles in magazines and newspapers across Canada and in the United States, and has stories in Canada and American anthologies.

She has won a Gold Medal at the National Magazine Awards for "One-of-a-Kind Journalism," and two Gold Medals at the Atlantic Journalism Awards for best Atlantic Magazine Article, and in Arts and Entertainment, Any Medium.

Among the magazines Simmins has written for are: *Canadian Living*, *Magazines Canada*, *United Church Observer*, *Halifax Magazine*, *Progress*, *Atlantic Business*, and *Saltsapes*. She is a regular reviewer for *The Antigonish Review* and *Atlantic Books Today*. She has also written feature interviews for *The Reporter*, the community newspaper in Port Hawkesbury, NS.

Marjorie Simmins has a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from the University of British Columbia, a Certificate in Adult Education from Dalhousie University, and a Research Master of Arts in Literacy Education, at Mount Saint Vincent University. She teaches memoir writing across Canada, at venues such as at the UBC Alumni Centre, in Vancouver, BC (2016); at StoryFest, in Hudson, QC (2017); at Thinkers Lodge, Pugwash, NS (2014-2019); and the Fortress of Louisbourg, NS (2019). In 2020, she took part in the Cabot Trail Writers Festival, participating in online panels, offering a memoir writing workshop on Zoom, and reading at an outdoor event in the Cape Breton Highlands.

Simmins's fourth title, *Somebeachsomewhere: A Harness Racing Legend from a One-Horse Stable*, is scheduled for publication in the spring of 2021, with Nimbus Publishing.

Photo: Marjorie Simmins (photo credit: courtesy of the artist)

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CREATIVE NOVA SCOTIA AWARDS 2020

ABOUT THE CREATIVE NOVA SCOTIA AWARDS GALA

Presented by Arts Nova Scotia and the Creative Nova Scotia Leadership Council, the Creative Nova Scotia Awards Gala is an annual event that celebrates excellence in artistic achievement, to include the announcements of the Portia White Prize, the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Masterworks Arts Award, winners of the Prix Grand-Pré, the Established Artist, Emerging Artist and Indigenous Artist Recognition awards, and the Creative Community Impact Award. Collectively, the awards are worth \$95,000.

The gala consists of live performances, presenters, appearances from the celebrated award winners and unique pre-recorded segments. The awards ceremony provides an opportunity for the presentation of the province's top arts and culture prizes.

MEDIA INQUIRIES

Briony Carros

Director

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2020 GALA DETAILS

November 14, 2020 at 7 PM AST

Artistic Directors and Event

Management team: Heist

Co-hosts: Nathan D. Simmons and
Linda Carvery

The event will be broadcast digitally
through liveheist.com/livestream



Accessibility: ASL interpreters will be present during the livestream and all pre-recorded segments will have closed captioning.