

38th Annual
ARTS AWARDS



Media Package

Friday, June 23, 2023
Arts & Culture Centre
Stephenville, NL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ArtsNL Announces Provincial Arts Awards Winners

June 23, 2023 (Stephenville, NL) – ArtsNL hosted the 38th Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Awards show this evening at the Stephenville Arts and Culture Centre. Six awards honouring the accomplishments of Newfoundland and Labrador's artists were presented.

The winners are:

Patron of the Arts Award: St. Michael's Printshop

Emerging Artist Award: Jessica Brown

Arts in Education Award: Anne Pickard-Vaandering

Hall of Honour Award: Susan Sherk

Artist Achievement Award: Wallace Ryan

Artist of the Year Award: PerSIStence Theatre

"What an incredible night! After three long years, we're beyond excited to be hosting the 38th Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Awards right here in Stephenville," says ArtsNL Executive Director, Melanie Martin. "This was a gathering designed to celebrate artistic achievement and those who dedicate so much of their time to supporting and preserving our art and culture. Over the last three years, we lost many colleagues—artistic giants—and we also took a moment to reflect on their lives, the indelible mark they left on this place, and the generations of artists to come."

"ArtsNL is proud to play an integral role in the lives of artists by fostering the creation and enjoyment of art, and supporting our cultural sector across all artistic disciplines, and throughout all regions of the province," ArtsNL Chair, Don Dunphy, added. "Thank you to the performers who entertained us tonight, and once again my sincere congratulations to all the nominees and the winners of the 38th Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Awards."

Nominations for the awards are submitted by the arts community and the public. This year, a multidisciplinary panel of six artists assessed the nominations, established a short list, and made the final selections. All winners received a \$2,500 cash prize.

Media enquiries:

Charlene Jackson

Communications Officer

charlene@artsnl.ca

The Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council (now known as ArtsNL) is a non-profit Crown agency created in 1980 by The Arts Council Act. Its mission is to foster and promote the creation and enjoyment of the arts for the benefit of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The Council is governed by a volunteer board of 13 appointed by government, reflecting regional representation of the province. This includes 10 professional artists who provide sectoral representation of the arts community; two community representatives (with an interest in the arts); and one representative of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation (non-voting). ArtsNL receives an annual allocation of \$5 million from the Province to support a variety of granting programs, program delivery, office administration, and communications. It also seeks support from the public and private sector. It supports the following artistic disciplines: dance, film, multidiscipline, music, theatre, visual art, and writing.

About the Newfoundland & Labrador Arts Awards

The annual Arts Awards show honours the accomplishments of Newfoundland and Labrador artists. It takes place each spring, alternating locations every second year between St. John's and various locations throughout the province.

Nominations for the Arts Awards are submitted by the arts community and the public. A multidisciplinary panel of artists assesses the nominations, establishes a short list, and makes the final selections. Awards are presented in six categories:

- Patron of the Arts Award
- Emerging Artist Award
- Arts in Education Award
- Hall of Honour Award
- Artist Achievement Award
- Artist of the Year Award

Each award comes with a cash prize of \$2,500. If a company or corporation is the recipient of the Patron of the Arts Award, a piece of art is awarded in lieu of a cash prize.



About the Awards

The **Patron of the Arts Award** recognizes a person, business, or organization that has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the arts in Newfoundland and Labrador through innovative, community, or sustained support of artistic activity.

The **Emerging Artist Award** recognizes new and undisputed talent. It is awarded to an emerging artist, arts group, or arts organization that has earned significant recognition for their professional artistic practice.

The **Arts in Education Award** recognizes an artist who has made an outstanding contribution to arts in education in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The **Hall of Honour Award** recognizes a person, group, or organization that has made a distinguished lifetime contribution to the cultural life of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The **Artist Achievement Award** is given annually to a practicing artist who has made an outstanding contribution to the cultural life of Newfoundland and Labrador over a number of years.

The **Artist of the Year Award** recognizes the art or activity of an artist, arts group, or arts organization that has made an outstanding contribution to the cultural life of Newfoundland and Labrador.

*Patron of the Arts Award
2022 Winner*



St. Michael's Printshop

St. Michael's Printshop may have started with humble beginnings in a small rural community in Newfoundland, but its mission and vision were lofty and clear even from the start. It attracted artists such as Mary Pratt, Bill Ritchie, Christopher Pratt, and more. In 1986 came a relocation to St. John's along the waterfront and a sharper focus on printmaking and print artists. St. Michael's Printshop hosts a Visiting Artist Program with six visual artists for one month each. St. Michael's Printshop has published two books, hosted 270 visiting artists, and has awarded 29 scholarships in honour of its co-creator Don Wright. It continues to be a strong foundation in the arts community some 46 years after it was founded.

Emerging Artist Award
2022 Winner



Jessica Brown

Jessica Brown already has multiple achievements under her belt. She is the owner and founder of Ujarak Media Inc., a registered Inuit film and TV production company, and Northern Film Initiative, Inc. Based in St. John's, Jessica is an award-winning triple threat in the form of producer, director, and screenwriter. Her priorities include telling Indigenous stories and ensuring the representation of Indigenous people in the entertainment industry through compelling stories and themes.

Arts in Education Award
2022 Winner



Anne Pickard-Vaandering

Anne Pickard-Vaandering considers herself a lifelong learner, and it is the community at large that benefits from her pursuit of knowledge and skills. She has served as the Education and Public Programming Officer at The Rooms for over a decade. It is in this role that Anne has designed learning programs for art, cultural literacy, and more. Community engagement is a priority in her approach to art education as someone who is autistic and hard of hearing. She is pursuing a Master of Education at Memorial University in Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning Studies.

Hall of Honour Award
2022 Winner



Susan Sherk

Susan Sherk's résumé has to be among the most varied and dynamic in the province. She has been seen as a game-changer for several organizations. During her time as Board Chair of Wonderbolt Circus, Inc., she transformed it from a family-owned circus to an international attraction while preserving its original integrity. Sherk's focus included regional and community development, always with an interest in the arts. Among her career highlights, she created the magazine *Decks Awash*. She served as commissioner with the Economic Recovery Commission and played a key role in creating the Craft Council of Newfoundland and Labrador. Her various roles have taken her to 70 countries across the globe. Susan is currently retired.

Artist Achievement Award 2022 Winner



Wallace Ryan

Wallace Ryan co-created Newfoundland's first comic book in the late 1970s and has been involved in that creative field ever since. He formed Island Comics along with Todd Lidstone and eventually owned his own comic book shop. Ryan has shared his passion for the genre by teaching drawing and cartooning at Memorial University and the Anna Templeton Centre for 20 years. After a short stint in New York, he moved back to St. John's, where he is currently working on a graphic novel and co-hosting a podcast called *Thursday Comics*.

Artist of the Year Award
2022 Winner



PerSIStence Theatre Company

It is hard to fully encompass just how big and long of a trail PerSIStence Theatre Company has blazed. It was founded by six women—Susan Bonnell, Alison Carr, Jenn Deon, Janet Edmonds, Natalie Falk, and Jean Graham—with the mission to promote and embrace the core beliefs of feminism through professional theatre and other initiatives. Since its launch, PerSIStence has produced 20 separate women-led productions, premiered five new full-length plays, and employed dozens of women in leadership theatre roles. PerSIStence has also created the Pink Tie Gala—a big-name event that brings together food, fun, and fundraising with women at the forefront.