

# Hnatyshyn Foundation gives \$1.5M in awards to 150 Indigenous artists

'This kind of acknowledgement means that people are hearing us,' says Inuk artist Laakkuluk Williamson

By Stephanie Cram, [CBC News](#) Posted: Apr 12, 2017 5:39 PM ET Last Updated: Apr 12, 2017 5:39 PM ET



Throat singer, performance artist and poet Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory will receive a Hnatyshyn Foundation Reveal Indigenous Art Award on May 22 in Winnipeg. (CBC Arts)

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A total of \$1.5 million is being presented to 150 Indigenous artists from across the country, who have been announced as recipients of the **Hnatyshyn Foundation Reveal Indigenous Art Award**.

Each artist will receive a \$10,000 award.

The award recognizes emerging and established Indigenous artists working in six media: visual arts, dance, music, theatre, literature and film.

Although not explicitly linked to Canada's 150th birthday celebrations, the foundation says the award was created to "fuel Indigenous art practice for the next 150 years."

## **Hnatyshyn Foundation launches Indigenous Art Awards: 150 prizes worth \$10K each**

Christi Belcourt, Kent Monkman and Ruth Cuthand are just a few of the visual artists receiving the award.

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Writers Eden Robinson, Katherena Vermette and Drew Hayden Taylor are a few laureates recognized in the literature category.

Musicians being awarded include Christa Couture, Don Amero and Tanya Tagaq.

"It's wonderful that Indigenous artists are being recognized for working within their own communities, their own languages and their own practices," said Inuk Reveal award winner Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory.

The throat singer, performance artist and poet from Iqaluit, Nunavut, will use the award to help fund the creation of a poetry book.

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"Through the forces of colonization and great cultural, religious and linguistic change, we have continued to be Inuit because we are creative and artistic," said Williamson Bathory.

"And to have this kind of acknowledgement means that people are hearing us."

For Anishinaabe musician Melody McKiver, from Obishikokaang Lac Seul First Nation, Ont., the Hnatyshyn Foundation award is an indication that Canadian art is finally catching up to contemporary Indigenous art.

"I know a lot of Indigenous artists feel marginalized by having our practice recognized in conjunction with our nationality," said McKiver.



"The Canadian arts

establishment  
has been very  
slow to catch up

Anishinaabe musician Melody McKiver is one  
of the reveal laureates. (John Paillé)

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to what Indigenous artists have been doing ... so it's  
nice to have recognition come in a way that can help us  
pay our credit card bills."

The winners will receive their awards on May 22 in  
Winnipeg, at an event hosted by the lieutenant-  
governor of Manitoba.

In addition to the 150 artists chosen for the award, four  
honorary patrons have also been recognized: CBC's  
Waubgeshig Rice, photographer Rosalie Favell, artist  
James Hart and writer James Bartleman.

Author Joseph Boyden was previously announced as  
an honorary patron, and was later removed.