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Annual arts awards recognize local talent

Jill Summerhayes wins lifetime achievement award for work with arts centre

KITCHENER — Every year, artists in Waterloo Region are recognized for both their achievements and contributions to arts in their community in a gala that attracts hundreds of audience members. Sunday night was no exception.

Nearly 60 nominees in 11 categories joined the 25th annual 2012 Arts Awards Waterloo Region event at Centre in the Square, for an evening of music, food, an art auction and celebration of all that makes this community a cultural hot bed.

Sponsored by the Creative Enterprise Initiative, the awards recognized author and painter Jill Summerhayes for a 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award for her work as the driving force behind the Cambridge Centre for the Arts. Summerhayes was also recognized as a founding member of the Cambridge Writers Collective and supporter of the Cambridge Community Orchestra's transformation to the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra.

TLC Pet Food also received special recognition as a corporate sponsor for the company's consistent support of the arts, particularly New Hamburg Live! Festival, now on through June 2.

Other award winners included:

Comcor Environmental Leading Edge Award, Axel Villamil; Maxwell's Music House Leading Edge Award, Joanna Worthington; Uptown Waterloo BIA Leading Edge Award, Edward Cho; Leading Edge, Rachel Kalap; Gowlings Literary Award, Carrie Snyder; Wagner Livock Mentor Award, Lili Galbraith; Music Award, Edwin Outwater; Open Award, Stephen Preece; Hemmerich, Flanagan Performing Arts Award, Terry Barna; Machteld Fass Xander Visual Arts Award, Edward Schleimer; Amy Hallman Snyder Textile, Fibre and Quilting Arts Award, Nancy Yule; Special Jury Award, Klaus Engel and Special Jury Award, Coral Andrews.

In the event categories, winners were: Festival or Event Award, Royal Medieval Faire; Festival or Event Volunteer Award, Karen Oddson and Scotiabank New Festival or Event Award, Grand Porch Party.

The gala event also featured live performances by local singers, dance groups as well as artists who enjoy stellar reputations far beyond Waterloo Region, performers such as singers Kevin Ramessar and Bob Egan of Blue Rodeo.

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Jill Summerhayes

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