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CANADA

**BETTY WEBSTER AWARD**  
**Guidelines for 2026**  
***Celebrating Canadian Creativity***

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## THE BETTY WEBSTER AWARD

Orchestras Canada celebrates outstanding contributions to Canadian orchestras by awarding the prestigious **Betty Webster Award** each year.

Supporting and sustaining an orchestra in Canada in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a collective, collaborative effort, involving both high-profile artistic leaders *and* a significant number of people working tirelessly on stage and behind the scenes to create the conditions in which Canadian orchestras can flourish.

The Award specifically honours an individual who has made an under-recognized but sustained and significant contribution to the community of Canadian orchestras through their work, be it paid or volunteer.

To recognize meaningful leadership, service, and lasting impact within Canada's orchestral community, the 2026 theme for the Orchestras Canada Betty Webster Award is ***Celebrating Canadian Creativity***.

We know that the Canadian orchestral sector is richer because of the many people whose care, imagination, and commitment help Canadian music thrive, and this year, we want to honour those who support and champion creative projects by orchestras in ways both visible and behind the scenes.

Orchestras Canada now invites nominations for the 2026 Betty Webster Award. We'd like to hear about individuals who have collaborated with and celebrated Canadian composers, artists, and communities through one of, or a combination of, the following ways:

- Creating space for Indigenous artists and artists from equity-deserving and historically underrepresented communities on their own terms,
- Contributing to original Canadian programming, recording, touring, learning opportunities, and community partnerships, with impact in one or many Canadian geographic communities.

Orchestras Canada welcomes nominations from across the orchestral ecosystem including artists, cultural workers, administrators, educators, community partners, volunteers, board members, and collaborators.

We recognize that impactful work happens in many roles and in many forms, and we encourage nominations that reflect the full diversity of people and practices shaping orchestral music in Canada today.

The Betty Webster Award was established in 2002 to honour Betty Webster (1925-2018). The Award is a tribute to her visionary leadership and extraordinary contributions to the health and vitality of Canada's orchestral community. Betty served as joint Executive Director of the Association of Canadian Orchestras and the Ontario Federation of Symphony Orchestras from 1975 until their merger in 1997; she served as founding Executive

Director of Orchestras Canada/Orchestres Canada until her retirement in 2001. Betty envisioned a national network of Canadian orchestras that would enable unified advocacy and research, the creation of a forum for industry networking, professional development and sharing of best practices, and the development of next-generation audiences and performers through the promotion of orchestral youth and education programs. She was tireless in her efforts on behalf of orchestras and took great joy in the relationships she built with orchestra people across Canada and around the world.

The Award includes a cash prize to be presented to the Canadian orchestra of the winner's choice. The deadline for submission is **Friday, May 1, 2026 at 12:00pm Pacific Time/3:00pm Eastern Time.**

## **AWARD GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA**

1. The Award recipient is determined by the Betty Webster Award Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Committee).
2. The deadline for receipt of nominations is May 1, 2026 at 12:00pm Pacific Time/3:00pm Eastern Time.
3. Each nomination must be presented by one principal nominator. A nominator may submit a maximum of two nominations.
4. Nominators are responsible for completing the official nomination form, gathering the required documentation, and submitting it to Orchestras Canada. The official nomination form must be used to provide the required information. In addition, required documentation must include (1) a current, maximum two-page biography of the nominee, with a description of their work and achievements; and (2) a statement or letter (maximum two pages) prepared and signed by the nominator, describing the nominee's impact on the Canadian orchestral community under the theme *Celebrating Canadian Creativity* and why they should receive the Betty Webster Award; (3) if relevant, audio video or press materials that further illustrate the nominee's work. Nominations will be strengthened if supplemented by up to three additional letters of support.
5. Completed nominations must be received no later than 12:00pm Pacific Time/3:00pm Eastern Time on the deadline date.
6. Incomplete submissions and those that do not meet the requirements will not be presented to the Committee.
7. An individual may be awarded the Betty Webster Award only once, except under exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Committee, where an individual has made a significantly new or different contribution than previously recognized. All past recipients of the Orchestras Canada Awards are eligible.
8. Nominees may include, but are not limited to:

- Musician
  - Administrator
  - Member of a Board of Directors
  - Volunteer
  - Educator
  - Donor / Patron
  - Composer
  - Presenter
  - Member of the Media
9. To avoid conflicts of interest, current members of the OC board and staff cannot be nominated.
10. The jury will be applying the following criteria to their assessments:
- The quality, duration, and impact of the nominee's contributions to one or more orchestras;
  - The selfless spirit in which the nominee has undertaken their work – whether as a professional or a volunteer;
  - The nominee's commitment to community and/or organizational betterment;
  - In 2026, the jury will specifically consider the nominees' contributions under the theme *Celebrating Canadian Creativity*.

Orchestras Canada/Orchestres Canada is committed to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility. Because we care about the vitality of our art form, we seek to better understand, reflect, engage, and celebrate our diverse communities.

## **AWARD COMMITTEE**

1. The OC Board shall annually appoint a chair (hereinafter referred to as the "Chair") of the Committee from its own membership. The Chair ideally shall have served on the Committee in a previous year.
2. The Chair and the Executive Director of OC shall appoint the Committee.
3. The Committee shall be composed of five experienced professionals or volunteers who shall be representative of the Canadian orchestral community at large and shall be chosen in consideration of the diversity of the Canadian population, Canada's two official languages, and the various regions of Canada.
4. At least two members of the Committee shall be non-members of the OC Board.
5. The Executive Director of OC shall be an ex-officio member of the Committee.

## SELECTION OF RECIPIENT

1. The Committee makes the final selection of the recipients and shall select one recipient each year.
2. The Committee shall make its decision by July 30.
3. All decisions of the Committee are final.
4. The Committee reserves the right to withhold presentation of the Award based on the level of suitable candidates in any given year.
5. The Committee reserves the right to bring forward nominations from its database of nominations in previous years.
6. No nominations shall be made posthumously.

## APPENDIX 1: BETTY WEBSTER AWARDS - HISTORY

<b>Year</b>	<b>Winner(s)</b>	<b>Associations</b>
2002	<b>Betty Webster</b>	
2005	<b>Stanley Shortt</b>	Orchestra Toronto, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Association of Canadian Orchestras and Orchestras Canada
	<b>Evelyne Robitaille</b>	Orchestre symphonique de Québec, Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians
	<b>Timmins Symphony Orchestra</b>	
2006	<b>Mario Bernardi</b>	National Arts Centre Orchestra; Calgary Philharmonic
	<b>John Hobday</b>	Canadian Council for the Arts, Seagram Symphonia program
	<b>Simon Streatfeild</b>	Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Regina Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre symphonique de Québec, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony
	<b>Dr. Glenn Mallory</b>	Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra
	<b>Beverley and James Coles</b>	Kingston Symphony Association
2007	<b>Jeanne Lamon</b>	Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra
	<b>National Youth Orchestra of Canada</b>	
	<b>Norman Nelson</b>	Sooke Philharmonic
2008	<b>Mina Grossman Ianni</b>	Windsor Symphony Orchestra

	<b>Patricia Middleton</b>	Regina Symphony Orchestra
	<b>New Brunswick Youth Orchestra</b>	
2009	<b>Jeff Alexander</b>	Vancouver Symphony Orchestra
	<b>Kathy Humphreys</b>	Kamloops Symphony
	<b>Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra</b>	
2011	<b>David Leighton</b>	National Arts Centre
	<b>Marsha Moffitt</b>	Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra
2012	<b>Francine Schutzman</b>	National Arts Centre Orchestra, Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians
2013	<b>Alison Mackay</b>	Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra
2014	<b>Annemarie Petrov</b>	Edmonton Symphony/Frances Winspear Centre for Music
2016	<b>John Gomez</b>	Ottawa Youth Orchestra Academy
2017	<b>Ardyth Brott</b>	National Academy Orchestra, Brott Festival
2018	<b>Bramwell Tovey</b>	Vancouver Symphony Orchestra
2019	<b>Claire Guimond</b>	Arion Orchestre baroque
2020	<b>Yannick Nézet-Séguin</b>	Orchestre Métropolitain
2021	<b>Linda Penner</b>	Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra
2022	<b>Katia Makdissi-Warren</b>	Ensemble Oktoécho
2023	<b>Janna Sailor</b>	Allegra Chamber Orchestra
2024	<b>Heather Wootton</b>	Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra
2025	<b>Yvonne DeRoller</b>	Symphony Nova Scotia

## **APPENDIX 2: ORCHESTRAS CANADA AWARDS - HISTORY (FORMERLY ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN ORCESTRAS AWARDS)**

<b>1976</b>	du Maurier Council for the Performing Arts
<b>1978</b>	Joseph E. Seagram & Sons Limited
<b>1986</b>	Walter Homburger, C.M., retired G.M. Toronto Symphony Orchestra Russell Johnson, Artec Consultants Inc.

- Franz Kraemer, O.C. retired Canada Council  
Rhombus Media Inc.  
Betty Webster, executive director ACO (now Orchestras Canada)
- 1988**  
Rosemary Bell, OSM volunteer  
Mario Duschenes, conductor  
Sam Levine, retired AFM  
François Magnan, retired Québec S.O. & ACO board
- 1990**  
Alexander Brott, conductor  
J. Alan Wood, retired AFM
- 1992**  
François Magnan – Honourary Life Membership in ACO  
Jan Matejcek, retired SOCAN  
Ezra Schabas, retired musicologist  
Robert Sunter, retired CBC Radio 2
- 1994**  
Dorothy Beckel, retired ACO board, Ottawa S.O.  
CBC / Radio Canada  
John Hobday, Seagram Canada  
Trudi Lecaine, Volunteer, Ottawa
- 1996**  
Hugh Hanson Davidson  
Peter Gardner, Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra  
Terence A. Wardrop, Board member, OFSO & ACO  
Kenneth Winters, retired CBC Radio
- 1998**  
Crownsnest Pass Symphony Orchestra  
Danny Newman, subscription sales guru, Lyric Opera Chicago  
John Shaw, past president, ACO
- 2000**  
The Canada Council for the Arts / Les Conseil des Arts du  
Canada  
Charles Dutoit, artistic director, Orchestre symphonique de  
Montréal  
Nicholas Goldschmidt, artistic director, MusicCanadaMusique 2000  
Ottie Lockey, managing director, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra