

NEWS RELEASE

Distributed March 11, 2024

Announcing the 2024 Culture Award Recipients

The City of Nanaimo celebrates local excellence at the 2024 Culture Awards

Summary

Every year since 1998, the City of Nanaimo has celebrated local excellence in arts and culture through its annual Culture Awards event. The awards celebrate local excellence and honour achievement. Recognizing outstanding organizations, groups or individuals in the arts and culture fields, the Culture Awards foster community awareness and pride in the calibre of arts and culture activity in Nanaimo and the dynamic impact of the sector on our community's economic, social and cultural well-being.

2024 Culture Award recipients will be honoured at a free community event at the Port Theatre on the evening of Wednesday, Apr. 3, 2024. The public is invited to attend, celebrating the achievements of these extraordinary individuals, while enjoying an evening of free entertainment by Nanaimo's very own local talent including Nanaimo's Youth Poet Laureate, Vibrant Studios (vibe), Brigadoon Dance Academy, and Alternative-Island-Folk duo, From the Earth! Tickets are available through the Port Theatre: <https://www.porttheatre.com/event/city-of-nanaimo-2024-culture-awards-ceremony/>

Award recipients are named by Council. The City accepts Culture Award nominations from the community, which are reviewed by a panel comprised of leaders in the arts and culture sector, former Culture Award recipients and City staff. More information on the Culture Awards including past recipients can be found on the City's website: <https://www.nanaimo.ca/parks-recreation-culture/culture/culture-awards>

THE 2024 CULTURE AWARD RECIPIENTS:

EXCELLENCE IN CULTURE 2024: Paul Roland Gogo

This award is presented to an organization or individual that has achieved regional and/or national recognition in the field of arts and is recognized as a "Nanaimo Artist", has demonstrated excellence in their field, and is a significant inspiration to others. Past recipients include Grant Leier & Nixie Barton (2015), Susan Juby (2016), Jacqui Kaese (2017), Rick Scott (2018), and Devon Joiner (2020), Ay Lelum (2021), Brendan Tang (2022), and Joel Good (2023).

For thirty years, Paul Roland Gogo has been a keyboard player, and multi-instrumentalist, for recently-inducted Canadian Hall of Fame Band TROOPER. His parents were both prominent Nanaimo musicians, and his commitment to contributing culturally to Nanaimo began early as a child dance performer. Over the course of his career he has made significant strides in music, especially as a member of TROOPER. The band has toured across Canada, and was recently inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame. Paul has also actively contributed to the cultural community through music projects where he has served as songwriter, producer, and videographer, and made a significant impact on a local level through performances at Nanaimo schools and seniors residences. Paul's career is a reflection of his commitment to arts, culture and community.

HONOUR IN CULTURE 2024: Sukhi Sangha

This award is presented to an individual, group, or corporation that is known for its dedication and support of the development of the cultural fabric of Nanaimo. Past recipients include Arlene Blundell (2015), Debbie Trueman (2016), Gerda Hofman (2017), William Good (2018), Dean Chadwick (2019), Trish & Geoff Horrocks (2020), Marianne Turley (2021), Christine Whitelaw (2021), Bruce Halliday (2022), and Margot Holmes (2023).

Sukhi Sangha is the founder of Vancouver Island Bhangra. She comes from a small community in North Delta, settling in Nanaimo in 2020. Through her dedication to cultural education and outreach in the sharing and promotion of Bhangra, Sukhi has played a pivotal role in fostering inclusivity, cultural education and exchange, and cultural preservation. Sukhi also serves as a volunteer on the Board of Directors for the Crimson Coast Dance Society. Sukhi's contributions and commitment to community have played a foundational role in introducing South Asian Arts to Vancouver Island, enriching and contributing to the diversity of Nanaimo's cultural community.

EMERGING CULTURAL LEADER 2024: Annalise Lam

This award recognizes up-and-coming, Nanaimo-based cultural leaders. This award targets individuals under 30 years of age who have contributed significantly to the cultural life in Nanaimo. Recipients must be recognized by their peers and the community as a whole, to have given distinguished service in arts and culture and / or have been recognized for excellence in an arts or cultural field. Past recipients include Shayd Johnson (2014), Amanda Scott (2015), Lys Glassford (2016), Nico Rhodes (2019), Patrick Aleck (2020), and Eliot White-Hill (2022).

Annalise Lam is a dedicated, passionate, and talented young Highland dancer. Annalise was the first dancer from Vancouver Island to win the World Highland Dance Championships in forty years. There has never been a dancer from Nanaimo win a World Highland Dance Championship until Annalise. Annalise dedicates time to volunteering in the community, teaching younger dancers her craft, and performing at local festivals, seniors residences, and in cultural spaces such as the Nanaimo Museum. Annalise has represented Highland Dance nationally and internationally, representing BC at the Canadian Championships, being selected to represent Canada in the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and perform in Edinburgh Castle, and competing in the 2022 Commonwealth Championship in Scotland.

Strategic Link: The 2024 Culture Awards align with the goals of the City of Nanaimo's Strategic Plan and the Cultural Plan for a Creative Nanaimo by: creating a vibrant culture of innovation, stewardship and partnership to encourage a diverse and healthy economy now and into the future; supporting arts and culture as an integral part of everyday life; and strengthening the creative sector by investing in organizations and people who animate our cultural spaces.

Key Points

- The annual Culture Awards program celebrates and honours local excellence and achievement.
- 2024 recipients include: Excellence in Culture Award to Paul Roland Gogo; Honour in Culture Award to Sukhi Sangha; Emerging Cultural Leader to Annalise Lam.
- 2024 Culture Award recipients will be honoured at a free community event at the Port Theatre on the evening of Wednesday, Apr. 3, 2024. Tickets: <https://www.porttheatre.com/event/city-of-nanaimo-2024-culture-awards-ceremony/>

Quotes

"On behalf of City Council, I wish to congratulate our extraordinarily talented 2024 Culture Award recipients! The creativity, dedication, and leadership demonstrated by these esteemed individuals is an inspiration, highlighting the talent and diversity of our remarkable arts and culture community."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

"We are excited to welcome the community to a free evening of performances at the Port Theatre in celebration of this year's City of Nanaimo Culture Award recipients! Everyone is invited to this fun all-ages event featuring local performers from across the cultural community. Congratulations to the 2024 Culture Award winners – we look forward to seeing you on April 3."

Adrienne Mercer Breen
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