

Awards and ceremonies carry power. We recognize award ceremonies can perpetuate colonial and oppressive viewpoints regarding what is considered worthy of “artistic excellence” or celebration. We are sorry for past behaviour that has enforced systemic barriers and seek to change this. We, the leading ad-hoc committee, oppose racism and marginalization. We stand in the circle with those in the Edmonton theatre community who have been oppressed because of their race, sexuality, gender, disability, or role as a caregiver and commit to continuing to seek members from many lived experiences to collaborate with on our committee and juries.

To address this we are:

- **May 2020 and ongoing:** Committing to creating a safer space in our committee meetings and during the yearly awards ceremony rehearsal and performance through our commitment to an egalitarian power structure and flexibility in engagement for our committee members.
- **May 2020 and ongoing:** Have taken and will continue to provide anti-oppression and anti-racism training for our committee members and jurors
- **February 2021:** Accepting feedback from the community through an anonymous form on the Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Awards' [website](#)
- **February 2021:** An open call for new members using [35//50 model](#)

We are looking to the future that commits itself to changing, growing, and removing barriers so that Edmonton theatre artists are valued, heard, and respected. We commit to a future of changing, growing, and removing barriers so that artists of all backgrounds, abilities and lifestyles are valued, heard, and respected. We commit to educating ourselves as a committee, and to amplifying voices and stories from underrepresented Edmonton theatre community members for a more equitable future.

It is time to listen and learn. We want to do the work and move forward together as a community. We aim to respond to the feedback openly to create an inclusive Sterling committee and community. ●

Thank you for your consideration.

The Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Awards Committee:

Kendra Connor, Mathew Hulshof, Jason Hardwick, Madelaine Knight, Taylor Chadwick, April Banigan and Kristi Hansen