

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Lael Chmelyk and Charlie Larouche-Potvin win National Awards from Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery



Charlie Larouche-Potvin, *Le temps des cerises*, 2023. Blown glass, 24K gold leaf. 21.5 x 53 x 85.5cm. Photo by Hallie Arden.

WATERLOO (ONTARIO) CANADA, March 28, 2024: The Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery is thrilled to announce that **Lael Chmelyk of Calgary, Alberta** and **Charlie Larouche-Potvin of Montréal, QC** are the winners of the **2024 Winifred Shantz Award for Ceramics** and the **2024 RBC Award for Glass**, respectively. Chmelyk and Larouche-Potvin will each receive a **\$10,000 prize**, which will support the development of their careers at this critical time.

**This year, a total of \$37,000 will be awarded to the winners and finalists** through the addition of a runner-up prize of \$5,000 for each award. The **only national awards for emerging ceramic and glass artists in Canada**, the Winifred Shantz and RBC Awards are prestigious honours. Presented through ongoing partnerships with The Keith & Winifred Shantz Fund for the Arts held at Waterloo Region Community Foundation and RBC Emerging Artists, winners and finalists of these awards are recognized as the best and brightest of the future of Canadian ceramics and glass art.

We are pleased to celebrate this year's RBC Award runner-up, **Jérémie St-Onge** (Montréal, QC) and Shantz Award runner-up **Benjamin Oswald** (Edmonton, AB). We also celebrate the achievement of the finalists for this year's awards. The jurors have named **Nichol Marsch** (Stonewall, MB), **Alejandra Vera** (Markham, ON), **Sami Tsang** (Toronto, ON), and **Tomo Ingalls** (Surrey, BC) as finalists of the Winifred Shantz Award for Ceramics. The jurors of the



Lael Chmelyk, *Soft Bulk*, 2023. Soda fired limeware, slip transfers, underglaze, cobalt inlay. 25 x 25 x 11cm each. Photo by Matthew Huitema

RBC Award for Glass have selected to honour **Dorothée Bouliane** (Montréal, QC), **Gordon Boyd** (Oakville, ON), and **Leia Shijie Guo** (Calgary, AB) as this year's finalists. Each finalist will receive a prize of \$1,000 to further their practice.

This summer, the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery will feature the winners and finalists in our awards exhibition, **Emergence**. The exhibition will provide a rare opportunity for these emerging makers to share their work with an extensive audience while helping to build their careers at a pivotal moment. The winners will receive their prizes at the opening reception to be held on Sunday, June 2, 2024 at 2pm.

**The 2024 Winifred Shantz Award for Ceramics was juried by Marissa Y Alexander, Carole Epp, and Judith Schwartz.** The jurors commented about the overall quality of applications and how they are an indicator of the breadth of highly skilled talent in the Canadian Clay Community. They wish to congratulate all the winners and finalists for their thoughtful and considered applications. Unanimously they highlighted the winner, Lael Chmelyk for her clear and confident understanding of her career direction, her pursuit in developing new competencies, and her commitment to the growth of her local community. Runner-up, Benjamin Oswald, was selected for his sensitive and poetic explorations of the vessel with a fresh approach. The jurors wish all of the finalist artists success in their careers going forward. There is much talent in our community and this award is a testament to that.

**The 2024 RBC Award for Glass was juried by Susan Edgerley, Tyler Rock, and Aaron Schey.** The RBC Award for Glass is Canada's singular and most important prize awarded to emerging artists in glass, highlighting and celebrating new Canadian talent. This year the jurors were impressed by the strong applications and wholeheartedly congratulate the winner, runner up and finalists. Recognizing the work of winner Charlie Larouche-Potvin, they particularly appreciated his exquisite technical skills and deep understanding of historical Venetian glass within a contemporary exploration of the drinking vessel form. They also awarded Jérémie St-Onge with the runner-up prize for his innovative research project exploring landscape with blown glass. Overall, the wide range of creative approaches and techniques of all applicants reveals the strength of the emerging glass talent across the country and underscores the importance of the RBC Award to the continued support and development of their professional careers.

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For more information about the Winifred Shantz for Ceramics, [visit our website](#).

For more information about the RBC Award for Glass, [visit our website](#).

To schedule a media interview or for more information, contact Denis Longchamps, Executive Director & Chief Curator, at 519-746-1882 ext. 231 or [director@theclayandglass.ca](mailto:director@theclayandglass.ca).

#### **ABOUT THE CANADIAN CLAY & GLASS GALLERY**

The Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery is a long-standing site of excellence and a destination for contemporary art for international tourists and regional citizens. We present critically acclaimed exhibitions that challenge ideas and perceptions of the definitions of art, craft, and design today. The Gallery is a relevant and dynamic cultural organization providing supportive education programs to people from across the region. Using exhibitions as a starting point, individuals develop arts vocabulary and appreciation and cultivate confidence in their interpretation of contemporary artworks. For more information, visit:

<https://www.theclayandglass.ca/>