



NEWS RELEASE

Mallory Gilbert Leadership Award presented to David Abel and protégé Rebecca Singh

Toronto, May 24, 2013 – The Professional Association of Canadian Theatres is proud to present the seventh annual Mallory Gilbert Leadership Award to **David Abel**.

David is a 25-year veteran of the arts management industry, with experience in large-scale commercial and not-for-profit theatre, organizations both large and small, and consensus building within factions of the national arts community. A graduate of the Economics program at the University of Western Ontario, he began his career with Mirvish Productions, becoming Associate Producer before joining Canadian Stage, where David moved from Associate to Executive Producer to General Manager to Managing Director, with responsibility for management of the \$10M company's business and theatrical affairs including all financial, producing, administrative, operations, marketing, volunteer activity. Mr. Abel spent six years as Director and Executive Committee member of the Board of PACT. As Chair of the Labour Relations Committee, David led two negotiating processes for the Canadian Theatre Agreement – the national contract between theatre producers and Canadian Actors' Equity Association, governing the working conditions for professional Canadian theatre artists - and the creation of the Tangerine Project, a pilot project for the expansion of theatre producing and artist contracting models, which was formally incorporated into the Canadian Theatre Agreement in 2013.

In choosing the 2013 recipient, the selection panel highlighted David's outstanding commitment to creating an equitable Canadian Theatre Agreement, whose impact on the community has dramatically changed the way theatre is made in Canada. David is well-regarded for his persistence in fostering a harmonious and productive relationship between PACT and the Canadian Actor's Equity Association (CAEA). He is a mentor to theatre professionals across the country, and is admired by his peers and colleagues for all his work in the community.

Says David, of receiving this honour: "I am thrilled to be recognized with an award in the name of Mallory Gilbert, one of the great leaders in Canadian theatre history. Equally gratifying is the recognition of my theatrical colleagues in Canada, to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for their inspiration and support. The commitment and dedication, to say nothing of the artistry, of theatre practitioners in this country is nothing short of extraordinary. If receiving the Mallory Gilbert Leadership Award so much as suggests that I am officially in the company of this illustrious group, I am humbled and thank them all."

The \$5000 award includes a \$1000 portion presented to a protégé chosen by the Award winner, underlining the importance of skills and knowledge transmission in leadership building. The deserving protégé selected by David is **Rebecca Singh**, has spent the last 20 years working as a producer, performer, writer, and curator in the Canadian performing arts, film and television industries. She has created several ground-breaking projects, including "Canada's Smallest Theatre" which seats 12. Rebecca explores theatre as an art form in its totality by continuing to produce, develop and curate work with creative and unconventional methods. She has three major projects in development, which reflect her interest in scale-able work and traditional formats. Rebecca is also the Director of Cultural Affairs for the Consulate General of Israel in Toronto and Western Canada.

David is thrilled to select a protégé: “I first met Rebecca Singh when she was enrolled in Canadian Stage's BASH program for emerging artists. Rebecca was always the person with the most and best questions. Possessing an insatiable curiosity and drive to create, Rebecca is a force of nature when in pursuit of an objective. A few years ago when she told me about her project Canada's Smallest Theatre, I thought it was a brilliant idea and the product of a fertile mind. Seeing Rebecca take the project from concept to fruition - through fundraising, friendraising, artistic partnerships, the grind of producing and the challenge of preparing for performance throughout these myriad other tasks - was inspiring to me. I was starting at the Art of Time Ensemble around that time, and what Rebecca was doing mirrored my own challenges (minus the performing, thank goodness). I learned a great deal from her, and used her example as motivation for this old dog to learn a few new tricks. Rebecca was of invaluable support in my early days at Art of Time, and I am delighted to acknowledge this and her many other contributions and accomplishments through the protégé portion of Mallory Gilbert Leadership Award.”

The award, named in honour of Mallory Gilbert - Tarragon Theatre's General Manager for 34 years and former President of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) - celebrates and recognizes significant and valuable leadership within the Canadian Theatre community.

In an exceptional collaboration based on their deep appreciation for Mallory Gilbert's contribution to both organizations and their shared commitment to leadership in the theatre community, Tarragon Theatre and PACT Communications Centre initiated the Mallory Gilbert Leadership Award in 2007.

This year the Metcalf Foundation is supporting this award both in recognition of Mallory Gilbert's long contribution to the sector and as part of their longstanding commitment to supporting the people who work in the professional performing arts sector, both onstage and off, throughout the course of their career.

The award ceremony took place on May 24 in Victoria, BC during the PACT annual conference, a highly regarded event that brings together theatre professionals from across the country.

Individuals and organizations are invited to contribute to the award through a charitable donation to the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres. Donations can be made online at pact.ca/Support-PACT, by contacting PACT at the contact details below or by visiting our [Canada Helps donation page](#).

Nomination forms for the 2014 Mallory Gilbert Leadership Award will be available on the PACT website in early 2014.

The Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) is a member-driven organization that serves as the collective voice of professional Canadian theatres. For the betterment of Canadian theatre, PACT provides leadership, national representation and a variety of programs and practical assistance to member companies, enabling members to do their own creative work.

For more information, please contact:

Lucy White, Executive Director, PACT.

Email: lucyw@pact.ca, Cell: 416 807-9106 or Phone: 416.595.6455 ext.11