

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY TO RECEIVE 2018 SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM HERITAGE TORONTO

September 27, 2018 (Toronto, Ont.) – Heritage Toronto is honoured to name **Toronto Public Library** as the recipient of the *2018 Special Achievement Award*. Presented by the Heritage Toronto Board of Directors, the Special Achievement Award celebrates exceptional contributions by individuals or organizations to the preservation and education of Toronto's heritage. Toronto Public Library's continuing investment in its landmark architecture and new facilities has transformed Toronto's built fabric and enriched community life.

The 2018 Award recognizes the variety and history of Toronto's library branch buildings: from the earliest Beaux Arts-style, Carnegie-funded libraries (including Yorkville, the oldest branch still in operation today); to the red-brick clad Toronto Reference Library and its iconic curving central atrium; to Fairview's concrete Brutalist building, and Fort York's elegant glass pavilion.

"The Toronto Public Library is a great steward of its buildings", said Kate Marshall, Chair of the Heritage Toronto Board. "It is also an innovator that has worked with leading architectural firms to design vital community spaces to serve a growing city and its changing communities. This Award recognizes the Library's exemplary conservation work and its significant contributions as a city builder."

The world's busiest urban public library system, Toronto Public Library has embraced rapid technological change and maximized the unique architecture of its branches to create community hubs—places for learning, discovery, and civic engagement. Its 100 branches provide free access to information resources and public services that reflect current community needs. Among the branches are many heritage buildings with historical importance, and new facilities with architecture that celebrates place and Toronto's diverse stories.

"One of the great strengths of the public library is that we are not just one institution", said Vickery Bowles, Toronto Public Library's City Librarian. "We are 100 institutions in 100 different neighbourhoods, reaching and serving people where they live. Our buildings are part of local communities, designed to preserve and recognize the history of neighbourhoods. We appreciate this Award and its recognition of our efforts."

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Among the branch buildings noted for their heritage conservation and architecture are:

- **BLOOR/GLADSTONE** - Opened in 1913, this was the first Toronto Public Library building to be constructed solely with funds from the City of Toronto. The building boasted a unique innovation—a summer reading garden between the wings of its U-shaped footprint. Closed in 2006 for a major restoration and expansion, the building reopened in 2009 with a contemporary glass-walled addition that nearly doubled its size and incorporated new features such as a green roof.
- **FORT YORK** - Opened in 2014, this building's architecture and design references the history of Toronto's waterfront. The building features a public art installation on the west façade—a unique collaboration featuring Margaret Atwood's poetry from her book, *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*, and artwork from Charles Pachter.
- **SCARBOROUGH CIVIC CENTRE** – Beautifully designed with glass panels and wood timbers, the Library's 100th branch serves the local population living in nearby high-rises. On opening day, thousands of people lined up and many received a library card for the first time. The building has won a number of design awards including the Toronto Urban Design Award.

Images available for publication (with credit & [on Dropbox](#))



Bloor/Gladstone Branch,
Toronto Public Library



Fort York Learning Centre,
Toronto Public Library



Scarborough Civic Centre, children's
program, Toronto Public Library

EVENT DETAILS

The 44th Heritage Toronto Awards will be celebrated on Monday, **October 29**, at The Carlu (444 Yonge Street West). Winners will be announced from 53 nominees in five categories: [Community Heritage](#), [Public History](#), [Historical Writing: Short Publication](#), [Historical Writing: Book](#), and [William Greer Architectural Conservation and Craftsmanship](#). The Awards Ceremony will be hosted by Michael Serapio, nationally-recognized journalist and weekend host of CBC News Network.

MAYOR'S RECEPTION 5:30 PM **AWARDS CEREMONY** 7:00 PM

Heritage Toronto is a charity and agency of the City of Toronto that celebrates and commemorates the city's rich heritage and the diverse stories of its people, places, and events.

- 30 -

Tickets to the event are sold out. Members of the media are welcome to attend the Awards.

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