

Community Recognition: Kraft honoured as a cultural leader



By Brock Weir

If you have both a Grammy and Juno Award on your mantle, your contributions to music are hard to deny. But multi-award winning musician Bonnie Kraft received a hometown honour this past year, the Arts & Culture Award, part of the Town of Aurora's Community Recognition Awards program.

The Arts & Culture Award was inspired several years ago by the Johnson Family and is presented to an individual or group who has enhanced Aurora through their support or promotion of culture, music, visual, performing or literary arts.

As a founding Board Member of the Aurora Cultural Centre, as well as multi-year Board Chair, Ms. Kraft, a harpsichordist by training, ticked all five boxes.

"Bonnie Kraft is the driving force behind the development of Aurora's cultural scene," said Community Recognition Awards 2018 emcee Brian North, reading Ms. Kraft's citation. "Not only has she helped put Aurora on the cultural map with her Juno and Grammy awards, she is also a founding member of the Aurora Cultural Centre, instrumental in making the Centre a huge success. Bonnie is a person of vision and compassion. She also possesses excellent business abilities and believes in the youth of this Town. She has combined those talents and attributes making Aurora a better place to live—supporting artistic and cultural events, including a variety of art and music classes for children and adults."

Accepting the award, Ms. Kraft said she was "deeply honoured" for the recognition not just of herself, but for the arts community as a whole.

"I am deeply honoured by this award, but really though, I am rewarded every day because I am doing something I truly love to do, and it is so heartwarming to see people's lives being enriched by doing something that I can actually contribute to," she said. "Thank you to everyone who nominated me. It was a huge surprise. Thank you also to the Town of Aurora, who recognize the importance of arts to the wellbeing of our community. A big shout out to my friends and colleagues, past and present at the Aurora Cultural Centre. And my partner in life and in music, my husband Norbert, who has helped me develop the Great Artists Music Series.

"The arts in all its forms has the capacity to bring us together and as we experience it, we realise we are much more alike than we are different. It also gives us a breathing space, a place where we can find stillness and beauty in this world that can sometimes be quite chaotic. I share this award with all of you who have contributed to the cultural life of Aurora and I am so happy to be among you. Thank you so much for this award."

For more on the Great Artists Music Series, visit www.auroraculturalcentre.ca.