

Arts Services Initiative of WNY announces 3rd annual 'Spark' Cultural Awards

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Artist of the Year nominee Chuck Tingley created a mural inside Artpark last summer.

Event "Celebrating Those Who Ignite Arts & Culture" is May 25 at The Hotel @ The Lafayette

Arts Services Initiative of Western New York has announced details of its third annual "Spark" Cultural Awards, presented by M&T Bank. The awards party, "Celebrating Those Who Ignite Arts & Culture," will take place from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 25, at the Hotel @The Lafayette. The event will feature the awards, live performances, a gallery featuring the works of the winners and finalists, open bar and food.

Tickets are \$75, with patron tickets, patron tables and sponsorships available at www.asiwny.org. A limited number of free tickets are available through ASI's arts access program at www.arts-access.org.

Following more than 100 nominations from the field, a panel of cultural representatives from throughout Western New York selected the 2016-16 winners. They are:

Lifetime Achievement - Saul Elkin

Arts Integration - Elgin Wolfe and Tri-Main Development

Advocate for the Cultural Sector - Niagara Tourism and Convention Corp.

Cultural Ambassador - Tom Toles

DEC Program of the Year - Buffalo Laboratory Theatre and 710 Main Theatre for "Mystery of the Silver Chalice"

Rising Star - University Heights Arts Association

Supporter of the Cultural Sector - Buffalo Spree

Unsung Hero - Carl Klingenschmitt and Sue Fay Allen (for their work with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra)

The panel also selected finalists in the following categories, with the winners to be announced at the event:

Artist of the Year:

- Zuri Elise Appleby
- Chuck Tingley
- Adam Zyglis

Cultural Organization of the Year:

- Buffalo Choral Arts Society
- Just Buffalo Literary Center
- Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site

"This year's winners and finalists once again show the incredible depth, breadth and quality of our area's cultural sector," ASI Executive Director Tod A. Kniazuk said. "Plus, as we've shown every year, 'Spark' is a great party worthy of celebrating arts and culture in Western New York."

This year's "Spark" Cultural Awards party is chaired by last year's Supporter of the Cultural Sector Rick Smith, and is hosted by WIVB's Teresa Weakley.

Proceeds of the "Spark" awards will benefit ASI's capacity building, collaboration and advocacy efforts for the cultural sector in five counties (all of which is provided free of charge).

<http://www.wnypapers.com/news/article/current/2016/03/30/124115/arts-services-initiative-of-wny-announces-3rd-annual-spark-cultural-awards>