



CANADIAN · CROATIAN
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

presents

Business Excellence
Awards Gala

BEA

May 10, 2019

Award
Recipients



STIKEMAN ELLIOTT







Celebrating leaders in the business community.

At CIBC, we're committed to building strong and vibrant communities across Canada. That's why we're proud to sponsor the Canadian-Croatian Chamber of Commerce's 17th Annual Business Excellence Awards Gala that recognizes leadership, innovation, and excellence.



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Large Business
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to an outstanding Croatian-Canadian business with more than 25 employees.

Small Business
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to an outstanding Croatian-Canadian business with 25 employees or less.

Executive
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to a Croatian-Canadian individual exemplifying extraordinary achievement in executive management and leadership within a major corporation.

Entrepreneur
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to a Croatian-Canadian entrepreneur who has achieved business success through vision, innovation, creativity, and risk-taking.

Professional
of the Year Award

This award will be presented to a Croatian-Canadian professional out of the following fields: accounting, architecture, chiroprody, chiropractic, consulting, dentistry, denturists, education, engineering, financial planning, law, medicine, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, psychology, real estate, and veterinary medicine.

Community
Achievement Award

This award will be presented to an individual whose selfless dedication, contribution or philanthropy has positively impacted the Croatian-Canadian community.



Friend of the Croatian-Canadian Community Award

Nomination Criteria

- Leadership and entrepreneurship
- Product/service/market innovation
- Any unique business achievements
- Sales and/or employment growth and technological advancement
- Excellence in community relations/promotion
- Customer service and reliability
- High standards of employee relations



Expressed through open forms and folkloric colors representing Croatia's spirit, "Rose of Croatia" is imbued with pride for the nation's cultural heritage.

The artwork was created in honor of this special event.

Ante Sardelić

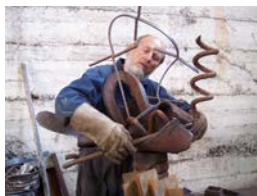
Sculptor, painter and printmaker

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Featured Artist

Ante Sardelić



Distinguished Croatian-Canadian sculptor, painter and printmaker, Ante Sardelić Kraljević was born on February 3, 1947 in Blato, on the island of Korčula in Croatia. He graduated from the School of Applied Arts in Split in 1967 and from the Academy of Fine Arts, Department of Sculpture in Zagreb in 1971. He moved to Canada in 1972 and settled in Toronto where he still lives and works as a professional artist.

Initially, he leaned towards sculpture in stone, wood and bronze, as well as mosaics. Vitality of movement in sculpture and dynamism of colour in painting were characteristic of this period.

On arrival in Canada, Sardelić's palette turned toward new surroundings and new inspirations, using acrylic to bring out the harmony of organic geometry and mythological symbolism. He experimented with new materials in graphics and painting, discovering individual technical ways of artistic expression. The presence of erotic forms in vivid polyphony of colour marked the passionate expression of the new environment and time, thus becoming the focal point of the cosmography of his perception.



Since 1978, Sardelić has often spent time in the United States, Mexico, Columbia, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Brazil, Peru and Venezuela, where he came into contact with the ancient cultures of North and South America. The experience is reflected in his work's search for new growth in the form of evolving expressiveness by capturing and evoking global coexistence in a happy union of man's primordial intuitions and the flow of the universal energy of life.

Sardelić has been exhibiting continually since 1969 in major museums and galleries throughout the world. To date he has had eighty three one man exhibitions and participated in over one hundred and fifty, international exhibitions and biennials, where he received numerous awards and honours.

With the support of the Canadian Council and National Museum of Canada, in 1984, he mounted a large one-man exhibition in the Art Gallery of Hamilton. In 1987, he participated in eleven international exhibitions and biennials. With the sponsorship of the Government of Canada he put on a comprehensive one-man travelling exhibition in 1988 in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1989, he was chosen Artist of the Year by the Canadian-Croatian Artists' Society in Toronto. In 1994, he spent a short period of time in Australia. In 1995, the Government of the Republic of Croatia awarded him the Order of the Croatian Danica for outstanding merit in the field of culture.

Ante Sardelić is included in numerous international publications and "Who's Who". He has been writing poetry since his student days. The ten years of his artistic endeavour have been dedicated to the project The Eternal Homeland, which he dedicated to Croatia's independence. The first exhibition of The Eternal Homeland took place at the Museum Mimara in Zagreb, in 1997. The event was held under the high patronage of the President of the Republic of Croatia Dr. Franjo Tudman, and the Croatian Parliament. At that time Croatian Television produced a documentary on the Eternal Homeland project and the life of the artist.

In 2003, Sardelić completed a 8.5. square metre stone relief mural "The Life Journey of Blessed Marija of the Crucified Jesus Petković" in her Sanctuary in Blato, Croatia. In 2005, he was invited to participate at the First International Paint Biennial in Lima, Peru, as the guest artist with the one-man exhibition Eternal Homeland. In 2006, he completed a stone relief for the altar of the Our Lady Queen of Croatia Church in Toronto, Canada. In 2010, he donated a three meter high stone monument "Vukovar-beacon of courage and freedom" to the City of Vukovar, which is being placed in front of the War Memorial on Ovčara.

In 2015, he received a golden medal, code of arms from his home town Blato, for outstanding merit in the field of culture, globally promoting cultural-historic heritage of his motherland.

As an active member of the World Peace Gong committee (World Peace Movement) Indonesia, for ten years he has put his artistic effort and expertise to install a World Peace Gong monument in the City of Vukovar, which is a bronze gong with the flags of all the nations and symbols of the major faiths. The gong was donated by the Republic of Indonesia to the Republic of Croatia for the City of Vukovar.

Ante has designed the complex with 9 large metal sculptures 16 tons in total weight, which will be erected on a twenty square meters space this summer in the center of Vukovar. Ante is donating his sculptures dedicated to Vukovar and the Croatian struggle for peace and freedom. The artist is seeking out donors to aid in the completion of this remarkable project.

Sardelić's work can be found in galleries, museums, and private collections the world over.



Rapid Precision Machining & Gearing Ltd.



Rapid Gear was established in 1976 from modest beginnings after its founder Julian Sabados immigrated to Kitchener, Ontario in 1967 with a degree as a Mechanical Technician and \$50 in his pocket. With tenacity and determination, Julian worked several jobs before he found a position at Havlik Gear, owned by a Czech entrepreneur, where he worked for 10 years in roles from Purchasing to Engineering. During the mid 1970's, with a leap of faith, exceptional work ethic and support from his wife Ana, they bought their first piece of equipment and started to build Rapid Gear. They first built their business locally in agriculture and with unwavering drive and perseverance, secured another substantial contract with GM Diesel.

Over the next decade, Rapid Gear continued to grow from its first home in the basement of an old industrial building to a new 40,000 sq ft. fully equipped manufacturing shop built to support the growing business. Today, Rapid Gear has \$10 million in annual revenues, manufactures and re-builds gears and gearboxes for companies involved in mining, steel, pulp and paper, plastics, and food to customers in North America, South America and as far away as Australia.

Hundreds of people have been employed at Rapid Gear over the years, and today it stands at 62 employees with an average tenure of 26 years. Rapid Gear is as strong as ever, with the loyalty of its employees who are dedicated to quality, excellence and precision. After over 40 years, Julian is still very active at Rapid Gear and has instilled in his children the same work ethic and dedication, including his daughter Tania who says: "As a daughter, you have immigrant parents and you realize your parents not only gave you a life and a future, but gave 60 other people a future".



Tornado Electric Ltd.



Established in 1986, Tornado Electric is considered instrumental in the success of construction of innumerable businesses in Ontario; the preferred contractor on projects including a number of Pearson Airport Marquee Projects and the successful construction of hundreds of Starbucks stores and other QSR brands as well as retail shops.

Tornado Electric's founder Marijan Vrbanić was born in Slokovec, Podravina and completed his education at the prestigious Nikola Tesla Elektotenička Škola in Zagreb, graduating at the top of his class. Marijan was never satisfied with the status quo and immigrated to Canada in 1979 to start a new chapter in his life. Working several jobs to

support himself, he obtained his Master Electrician License at Mohawk College and formed Tornado Electric which, with creativity and persistence, developed into a highly reputable firm in the local construction community. Marijan is viewed in many long-serving customer testimonials as conducting himself with the highest standards, reliability and exceptional service. Today, Tornado Electric continues to strengthen its niche in commercial electric projects, including custom design-build work.

Tornado Electric maintains a strong crew of 7-8 employees with several long service employees who value the quality of projects and challenges with which they are entrusted. Marijan and team also mentor youth entering the trades and, over the years, have taken on close to 20 apprentices by helping them through the process of obtaining their licences and even providing financial support for their education.

Marijan is grateful for the opportunities that Canada has provided him and he is also a proud Croatian who honours Croatian history, language and culture. Marijan has been active in the Croatian National Home in Hamilton and previously served as its Vice President, always available to help with repairs and the ongoing needs of the organization. He and his wife Marianne have raised two daughters; Vanessa, a practicing lawyer in Hamilton, and Lauren, a McGill biomedical student. Both are proud graduates of the Croatian National Home Folklore group and active members in their local Croatian communities. Marijan is considered not only a highly knowledgeable professional and business owner, but also passionately proud of his Croatian culture.

Marko Višić



Mark joined KUBRA in 1995 and has served in a variety of sales leadership and executive management roles. He was one of the original employees of Kubra starting off in the mailroom and working his way up the corporate ladder. He, along with four other partners bought out the founder in 2006 becoming the majority shareholders at that time. In 2014, 80% of the company was bought out by an American company, Hearst Corporation which is one of the largest diversified media and information companies in the US. They own 15 daily and 34 newspapers, hundreds of magazines including Good Housekeeping, Cosmopolitan, ELLE and 29 television stations including A&E, History and ESPN.

The company has won awards for their management and leadership:

2011-2014 – Canada's Best Managed Companies Award

2014-2019 - Canada's Most Admired Corporate Cultures Award

Mark has more than 20 years of sales, marketing, and consulting experience in the customer experience management and payment industries. He is responsible for mergers and acquisition activities, setting corporate business development strategy and developing and managing sales channels and partner alliances at Kubra. He holds a Bachelor of Arts with honors in Economics and Political Science from the University of Toronto and is currently part of several community-based non-profit organizations and is a member of various industry marketing associations.

When he is not attending his 4 children's school or sporting events he uses his spare time to coach. Mark has completed his trainer and senior coaching certificates in both hockey and soccer. He has coached minor league AA hockey with the Mississauga Terriers and Mississauga Braves from 2010 - 2016. He is also very proud of his accomplishments coaching the Mississauga Croatia Soccer club - 1998 Boys team for 14 years at the Elite level, helping to team to being one win away from the Ontario Youth Soccer League, the highest position in Ontario youth soccer. The team won numerous tournaments and received praise from both referees and their opponents for their style of play under his leadership. Mark continues to coach and is currently an assistant-coaching the 2007 Mississauga Croatia Boys soccer team.

Christopher Grubisa



An amateur filmmaker as a child, Christopher Grubiša honed his eye for moving images and laid the groundwork for creating style through exploring the eclectic city of Toronto through the lens of his father's HandyCam. Born to Sergio and Mary Grubiša, Christopher's passion and creativity was further developed while attending the Sheridan College Media Arts program where he also met his future wife and business partner Aleks Larson.

Together, Christopher and Aleks formed Chrilleks Productions, one of Toronto's very first digital agencies pushing social content. Within its first year of operation, Chrilleks managed to work alongside some of Canada's largest corporations, including Red Bull and Canadian Tire, and at one point, developing and overseeing the creative of 114 videos. In 2016, Chrilleks Productions expanded to Los Angeles and produced content for world renowned brands such as Kylie Cosmetics, Under Armour, Mountain Dew, Shopify and Red Bull Media House.

Christopher was recently named one of Canada's Top 30 Entrepreneurs/Innovators/Leaders under 30 by Marketing Magazine and landed a showcase on the magazine's cover. He also earned prestigious honours from the Telly awards for editing and cinematography. Chris has successfully launched "Be Right Back Creating Something", a creative outlet under the Chrilleks umbrella that focusses on the disseminating content about best tools in media and arts industry.

Chrilleks is a multi-award winning, full service digital agency that specialized in growing brands by producing unique and engaging social content through video and production services, content management and engagement. Christopher is thrilled to lead his team to take on the creative for Chrilleks' new e-commerce business. When Christopher is not travelling between Chrilleks' Toronto and Los Angeles offices or other exotic locations to film, his favourite place to visit is his father's childhood home in Pula, Croatia to connect with his Croatian roots and family.

Dr. Anton Škaro



Dr. Anton Škaro was born in Windsor Ontario Canada to Croatian immigrant parents. He was raised in a culturally rich environment typical of the Canadian mosaic and acquired team building skills, work ethic, and a competitive spirit as the benefits of extensive participation in organized sports such as soccer and hockey. Most importantly, his parents instilled in him a love for education, knowledge, and a deep sense of purpose. The suffering among family and friends as a result of the conflict in Croatia in the 1990's coupled with a strong desire to help laid the foundation for his pursuit of medicine and, ultimately, surgery as a career.

He completed an undergraduate degree in Biology at the University of Windsor, medical education at the University of Western Ontario and residency in General Surgery at

Dalhousie University in Halifax Nova Scotia. During surgical residency, Dr. Škaro obtained a PhD in transplantation immunology and later completed fellowship training in pediatric and adult multi-organ transplant surgery at Northwestern University in Chicago. He stayed at Northwestern as an Associate Professor of Surgery for 12 years before finally returning back to Canada after being recruited to be the Director of Liver Transplantation at Western University and London Health Sciences Centre. He has performed hundreds of successful liver, kidney, pancreas, and intestinal transplants in adults and children. When Dr. Škaro isn't performing transplants, he performs open, minimally invasive and robotic hepatopancreatobiliary oncology procedures.

Dr. Škaro has authored more than 100 peer-reviewed publications, book chapters, and abstracts. He has presented his research in transplantation and served prominently on committees nationally and internationally. Aside from speaking at conferences around the globe, has been interviewed for popular culture media outlets including Fox News, The Atlantic, and Science Daily. He has been awarded grant funding from the National Institutes of Health in the US and the Canadian Institute for Health Research. He has personally trained more than 30 Transplant Surgeons, and countless residents, medical and undergraduate students and has been formally recognized for his excellence in teaching.

All along the way he has been active in his Croatian communities, attending mass and parish functions including kolo/folklore dancing. He played soccer for Windsor Croatia and London/St. Thomas Croatia even during medical school. He has been a member of the Association of Croatian American Professionals and has attended their annual national conference to network with other like-minded Croatian professionals from across North America and abroad.

Dr. Škaro enjoys the love and support of his amazing wife, Mary Ann (also of Croatian Heritage) and their three young children. They most enjoy their regular visits to Croatia in the summer and are active members of the London-St. Thomas Croatian parish (S. Leopold Mandić), where their children sing in the church choir, dance in the folklore group, and play tambura. Aside from his family and work he has a passion for sport, in particular the underdog, and closely follows the Chicago Cubs, the Habs, the Fighting Irish, and his all-time favorite Hajduk Split.

Ivo Ćapin



For several decades, Ivo Ćapin has demonstrated unwavering commitment and has shown tireless dedication to the local Croatian community and beyond. He has proven to be a key figure in promoting, sharing and protecting the Croatian culture and through his efforts has helped to build this proud community into what it is today.

Upon arriving to Canada in the late 1950's from his beloved Imotski, he became an active member of the Croatian community and joined the folklore group "Hrvatska Mladost" which operated out of the Croatian National Home in Toronto. After starting a family with the love of his life, Marija, Ivo naturally enrolled their children in the Folklore Group "Hrvatsko Prelo" in Oakville, of the Holy Trinity Parish, and he was president of that organization for many years. Thirty years ago, Ivo saw an

opportunity to form a new group, the popular HKUD "Zvuci Hrvatske", of which he is still president to this day.

During this time, Ivo became a council member of the Canadian Croatian Folklore Federation (East), where he held a few positions, most notably as the longest serving president of the Federation. Under Ivo's guidance, "Zvuci Hrvatske" has hosted the annual Canadian Croatian Folklore Festival several times, promoting lifelong friendships throughout our Croatian communities in Canada, USA and Croatia. He has also led his groups on memorable tours of "Lijepa Nasa" in order to help instill and share his love of Croatian culture with the next generation.

Ivo was an active member and president of the Imotsko društvo for many years and he has also been dynamic in promoting his other joy: soccer.

In the 1990's, Ivo was president of the Hajduk soccer club in Oakville and in 1992 saw a chance to reenergize the team. It was named HNNK Dalmacija Streetsville, a member of the Hrvatski Nacionalni Nogometni Savez. Ivo is still the active president of this team. Under his guidance, in 2014 "Dalmacija Streetsville" successfully hosted the 50th Annual Croatian Soccer Tournament of Canada and USA and in 2018, they became champions of the 55th Annual Croatian Soccer Tournament. In addition the team won top spot in the Ontario Soccer League last season.

At the heart of all of this, is Ivo's unwavering faith and dedication to his Church and parish in Oakville, where he was active in fundraising, building and maintaining the church and still remains involved.

To show that Ivo Ćapin has made an impact on this community, one needs only to look at Ivo and Marija's family: to their children, who are themselves tireless advocates for the preservation of our culture. And of course to their grandchildren, who are continuing the tradition and following in their grandfather's footsteps.

Congratulations to Ivo Ćapin for his decades of selfless community service and for encouraging younger generations to love, respect and to be proud of their Croatian culture.

Borys Wrzesnewskyj



Member of Parliament for Etobicoke Centre Borys Wrzesnewskyj has consistently promoted issues of concerns to the Croatian Canadian community as a legislator in the House of Commons; in his constituency of Etobicoke Centre; and, through his engagement in international parliamentary diplomacy as a member of the Canada-Croatia Parliamentary Friendship Group and as Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association.

In 2006 and again in 2009 Borys introduced his Internment of Persons of Croatian Origin Recognition Act. This legislation sought to acknowledge and commemorate the internment by the Canadian government of more than 450 Croatian immigrants from 1914 to 1920.

In 2006 Borys introduced Motion M-99 and Motion M-247 in 2008 calling for the lifting of visitor visas for Croatia. He tirelessly raised the issue in the House of Commons, tabling petitions that were collected in coordination with the Canadian-Croatian Chamber of Commerce and others in the Croatian Canadian community.

When Etobicoke Centre teen Boris Ciković was gunned down by an offender out on bail, an act that forever shattered the lives of his parents Vesna and Davorin, Borys introduced legislation in 2010 in his memory seeking to make bail conditions tougher for perpetrators of crimes committed while in possession of a firearm. Since his election in 2004, Borys remained dedicated to enhancing Canada-Croatia relations and reinforcing a free, independent and successful Croatia through his membership in the Canada-Croatia Parliamentary Friendship Group, previously serving as its Vice Chair.

As Chair of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association Borys has pursued the bolstering of Canada's trans-Atlantic economic and military alliances, and particularly with newer NATO-member states. In March 2019 he traveled to Zagreb to attend NATO Parliamentary Assembly committee meetings hosted by Croatia.

In Zagreb he held bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Andrej Plenković, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs Marija Pejčinović Burić and Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Damir Krstičević, and attended the anniversary celebration of Croatia's Ascension into NATO where he met with President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović.

During these meetings, Borys underscored deepening Canada-Croatia economic ties and Canada-Croatia cooperation in NATO and its operations. Borys also thanked Croatia for its leadership in the European Union in advancing the passage of the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement.

Borys has always shown a deep understanding of the issues of concern to the Croatian Canadian community and has been a relentless advocate on behalf of the community.

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