

Sandra Laronde

Multidisciplinary artist, artistic director, choreographer, producer and author

2025 GGPA Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement – Dance

“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.”

—Maya Angelou

Sandra Laronde is a highly accomplished arts innovator, multidisciplinary artist, and visionary leader, recognized across Canada and internationally for her exceptional work in bringing Indigenous arts to the forefront. She is the founding artistic director of Red Sky Performance, Canada’s leading contemporary Indigenous performance company. Renowned for its powerful storytelling and hybrid innovation in dance, theatre, music, and multimedia, her practice reflects a deep commitment to exploration and experimentation. Her inexhaustible energy extends to cultural diplomacy, forging stronger ties by representing Canada on prestigious global stages and at influential international events.

Sandra Laronde hails from the Teme-Augama Anishinaabe and grew up in Temagami, Ontario. She attended the University of Toronto (Honours Bachelor of Arts) and founded Red Sky Performance in 2000. Acclaimed for its groundbreaking collaborations and boundary-pushing approach, the company has toured 22 countries on 4 continents, driven by its mission to create inspiring experiences of contemporary Indigenous arts that bring meaningful transformation to society.

From 2007 to 2016, Ms. Laronde was Director of Indigenous Arts at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, providing visionary leadership and artistic and strategic direction for a compelling future of Indigenous arts at the Centre.

Much in demand as a speaker and lecturer, she has spoken at arts summits, educational institutions, and special events across Canada, the United States, Africa, and Asia.

She recently added “author” to her list of accomplishments with her debut novel, *She Holds Up the Stars* (Annick Press, 2022). The novel received the Kirkus Star, which recognizes books of exceptional merit, was named one of CBC Books’ Best Canadian Books for Young Adults, and won the Horace Mann Upstander Award.

“I love putting feet to my ideas,” she says. “I love putting ideas into motion to change the way people perceive and relate to the world.”

Sandra Laronde's many awards and honours include the Governor General of Canada's Meritorious Service Cross, the Order of Ontario, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario Heritage Award for Excellence in Conservation, the Canada Council for the Arts Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award for Outstanding Artist in Dance, the Indspire Award for the Arts, the Toronto Arts Foundation's Indigenous Artist Award, the Johanna Metcalf Performing Arts Prize, and an honorary doctorate from Trent University.