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DORA
MAVOR MOORE
AWARDS

Ruth Howard
Honoured as this year's Recipient of
The George Luscombe Award for Mentorship

Toronto, June 5, 2012 – **The George Luscombe Award** was inaugurated in 1999 and recognizes an individual for *mentorship in theatre*. Revolutionary theatre founder and artistic director George Luscombe founded Toronto Workshop Productions in 1959, marking the beginnings of Toronto's alternative theatre movement. His 27 years at TWP is the longest tenure of any artistic director in Canada.

This year's recipient is **Ruth Howard**, currently the founding Artistic Director of Jumblied Theatre. Since 2001, Ms. Howard and Jumblied have been working on large-scale projects in different communities, mentoring both professionals and non-professionals alike. Ms. Howard's inclusive style creates equal opportunity – regardless of physical, economic, social or cultural challenges. Jumblied's visually-based and socially-engaged performances often involve hundreds of people from the communities in which they are working in. Jumblied is increasingly cited as a pioneering and inspirational example of art that embraces and intertwines aesthetics and social engagement.

In 2006, Jumblied initiated a more intentional focus on learning and mentorship: the Jumblied Studio, a flexible, integrated, itinerant and interdisciplinary program for learning, mentorship and exploration in arts that engage with and create *community*. Ms. Howard's commitment and mentoring of these communities is illustrated in her dedicated outreach: it is not unusual for her to spend three years in a community creating connections, offering accessible creative opportunities, partnering with local agencies, associations and groups, and producing a culminating performance at the end of the term created and performed by community members with the support of professional artists.

She has strengthened the theatre ecology of Toronto and the artists who work in it. Ruth Howard has a gift of bringing diverse communities, organizations and artists together to create cutting-edge work and meaningful encounters. Mentorship and professional development have always been integral to Jumblied's work, producing original theatre events including *Like an Old Tale* (2011), *Bridge of One Hair* (2007) in Central Etobicoke, *Once A Shoreline* at Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre (2004), South Riverdale's *Twisted Metal and Mermaids Tears* (2000), and other projects that combine visual imagery, performance, music, movement, story gathering and telling.

Ms. Howard has helped to create three offshoots of Jumblied operating in Toronto: ARTS4All in Davenport West, Mabelle Arts in Etobicoke and the Arts Guild in Scarborough East. All three are incorporated entities run by artists and staff who have participated in Jumblied activities and internship programs, and continue to be an important part of their respective communities. The scope of her work is growing exponentially and Jumblied Theatre is currently looking outside Toronto to create connections with other community arts organizations across Ontario. She has given many presentations and workshops in Canada, the U.K. and the U.S. and has won several awards for her work, including a 2005 Toronto Community Foundation Vital People Award.

A graduate of Eastbourne College of Art and Design, the National Theatre School of Canada and the University of Toronto, Ms. Howard also has extensive professional experience across Canada and in England as a set and costume designer, with teaching credentials at many universities, colleges and schools.

Previous winners of The George Luscombe Award are Yvette Nolan, Leah Cherniak & Martha Ross, Iris Turcott, Andy McKim, ahdrizhina mandiel, Layne Coleman, Alison Sealy-Smith, Winston Morgan, Maja Ardal, Urjo Kareda, Ken Gass and Jenny Phipps. The George Luscombe Committee members are: Chair - Maja Ardal, Steven Bush, Ravi Jain and Anusree Roy. The George Luscombe Award comes with original artwork by Theo Dimson.

The Dora Mavor Moore Awards is a program of the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts (TAPA). TAPA is an arts service organization that represents nearly 200 professional theatre, dance and opera companies in Toronto. In addition to the Doras, other programs and services provided by TAPA include: T.O. TIX - Toronto's Official One Stop Ticket Shop at Yonge-Dundas Square and online at www.totix.ca; Toronto's official Theatre Guide; hipTIX, offering \$5 tickets to students; citySPECIAL; the Commercial Theatre Development Fund; and the Travel Retreat Initiatives Program. For more information visit www.tapa.ca and www.totix.ca.